

**A study of the relationship between reflexivity and
habitus over the life course: exploring the roles of
emotion, recognition and generation**

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Abstract

This thesis contributes to understanding the experiences of social class across the life course and into the third age. It engages with and builds upon research that examines the relationship between Margaret Archer's conceptualization of reflexivity and Bourdieu's habitus. Analysis will be presented from narrative interviews with a sample of 19 participants, in retirement and from diverse social locations, recruited through University of the Third Age groups and social clubs in a city in Wales. It argues that processes of symbolic and affective recognition, and emotional and generational habitus, are significant in the relationship between reflexivity and habitus over the course of a life, and that social class is a key component of identity in the diverse landscape of the third age. The research supports and extends current work in social theory and gerontology and has implications for the development of policy.

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1. Introduction

This thesis explores interactions between reflexive choice-making and the constraining and enabling effects of recognition, emotion and generation through the life course and into the third age, with a particular focus on social class. Through this, it contributes to theoretical work that maps the relationship between Margaret Archer's reflexivity and the habitus of Bourdieu, and to extant literature on third age identities and social class. Conclusions are drawn from qualitative research that has been carried out with retired people from diverse social locations and with a range of work histories. They will contribute to a greater understanding of the relationship between reflexivity and habitus, and identity formation, over the life course and into the third age. This theoretically informed qualitative work brings together the fields of social theory, social class, and gerontology. It highlights where these fields intersect and influence each other while providing new insight into the substantive fields of ageing, identity, and social class.

a) Background

Before the start of my doctoral studies my academic background was in English Literature and I began to read Archer's work on reflexivity (2003, 2007, 2012) when applying for a funded studentship in Social Science, entitled "The Reflexive Imperative and the Third Age". The studentship was designed to bring together theoretical work on reflexivity (in particular by Archer) and a focus on later life; this was to include issues of health, wellbeing and social participation. I was working in the third sector, having become concerned with social justice during my years as an undergraduate, and felt that this was an opportunity to explore these important issues within a sociological framework.

Reading Archer's work introduced me to the ongoing debate around the relationship between structure and agency. I found this work fascinating but was frustrated by an under-acknowledgement of the impact that non-reflexive and stigmatised social identities, and embodied and relational experiences, have on our sense of ourselves in the world.

I have long regarded myself as a feminist and therefore the foundational and pre-reflexive role of social structure has informed my understanding of the social world for many years. Furthermore, when I began reading Archer's work I was working in a refuge as a support worker with vulnerable women fleeing domestic abuse, which perhaps made me particularly

sensitive to these absences in her work, since much of my working life was centered around the effects of embodied and relational suffering. On further reading, I became aware of a debate that had grown up around this work, in which an arguable excess of agency is mitigated by the re-introduction of Bourdieu's work on the habitus, in relation to issues such as class and gender.

The second book in Archer's trilogy on reflexivity looks at social mobility and makes bold assertions about social class (2007), while the third has an overt generational element, focusing on a sample of undergraduate students, most of whom were in their late teens and early twenties (2012). Yet it became apparent that these concepts, and the relationship between reflexivity and habitus, had not been explored through the life course experiences of a purposive sample of people in the third age with diverse class identities.

It was clear that empirical research into lives at the intersections of class and age could help to ground these very important issues in the lived realities of people's lives and also contribute to important discussions within gerontology. The theoretical debates that are addressed in this thesis help us to understand fundamental questions around class, identity and the life course, with the element of time positioning people in older age in identities that have been shaped over many decades and that are entangled with Bourdieusian notions of misrecognition.

Andrew Sayer, one of the foremost proponents of bringing together Archer's reflexive 'internal conversation' with Bourdieu's habitus, argues that we must "acknowledge the embodied capacities, susceptibilities, needs and concerns, both innate and acquired, that make us beings capable of flourishing or suffering, and hence evaluative beings", and "incorporate these fundamental facts into our theory of the formation and transformation of habitus" (2009b, p. 121)": This speaks to some of the fundamental concerns of this thesis, which applies an empirical lens to the relationship between situated experiences and identities on the one hand and reflexivity, habitus and related concepts on the other, through the life course and into the third age. It is therefore vital to use in-depth qualitative research to capture the shaping of people's lives over time, through choices made in specific contexts and with differential access to opportunities, in ways that shape, exist alongside, and exceed our ability to consciously reflect upon our relationship with the world which is at the core of Archer's reflexivity. Below is a more in-depth look at the rationale behind the research, followed by the research questions that shaped my analytic approach and a brief synopsis of each chapter of the thesis.

b) Research Rationale

My intention in carrying out this study has been to understand the relationship between reflexivity and the internalised constraints and enablements that are signified by the habitus, through processes of emotion, recognition, and generation, over the life course. This was in response to Archer's over-emphasis on conscious reflexivity, under-attention to the social constitution of reflexivity and agency, and deliberate retreat from social class as a causal or explanatory mechanism in the analysis. Allied to these was her focus on reflexive choice-making as the primary or only analytically relevant cause of social mobility or immobility (2003, 2007, 2012).

The intention was not to displace reflexivity but to understand the relationship between reflexive processes and the affective and embodied experiences that constitute the habitus. I therefore sought to complement, contest, and complicate Archer's empirical work by re-contextualising it within a broader understanding of the constitution of the social 'self' and of agency, over the course of a life.

As we will see in the empirical chapters, the complex "selves" that emerged in the interviews encompass a wide variety of situated experiences. Accounts of embodied suffering, violence, regret, loss and reflections on stigmatised identities sit alongside strength, resistance, resilience and joy at moments of remembered happiness. Stories of liberation and stifling under-confidence emerge alongside reflections on a sense of agency that has been enhanced through positive relations, or through getting older and events over the life course. By applying the concepts of reflexivity, habitus, recognition and generation to these lives, I have been able to illuminate components of the narratives that help to explain the shaping of a trajectory and of current identities, and the depth of feeling that lies behind both.

c) Research questions

1. What roles do recognition, emotional habitus, and generational habitus play in the relationship between Archer's work on reflexivity and Bourdieu's habitus over the life course?
2. How does this relate to the 'personal morphogenesis' of Archer, and the role of the (past and socially situated) 'Me'?

3. What significance does this have for questions of social class and identity in the third age?

d) Chapter synopses

Chapter Two: Reflexivity and the Third Age: theoretical approaches to emotion, recognition, and generation

Introduces the main theoretical foundations of the thesis, in Margaret Archer's work on reflexivity, Bourdieu's conceptualization of the habitus, and theoretical constructions of the 'third age'.

Chapter Three: Emotional Habitus, Recognition and Generation: their importance for understanding life course transitions

Discusses the importance of an 'emotional habitus', Honneth's theory of recognition, and the notion of generational habitus.

Chapter Four: Social Class and the Third Age

Reviews extant literature on social class and identity, in the third age and across the life course, and discusses Mouzelis' extension of Bourdieu's 'Structure-Disposition-Practice' schema.

Chapter Five: Methods

Discusses the methods that were used to generate and analyse data. This includes ethical considerations, positionality, and the ways in which experiences in the field helped to shape the process.

Chapter Six: The Social and Symbolic Space of the Third Age: Post-Retirement Class Identities

Uses the analysis of interview data to map the social and symbolic landscape of the third age and subjective reflections on class identity.

Chapter Seven: The making of a habitus: the effects of class, the symbolic order, and physical abuse

Presents two case studies looking at the making of a habitus over the course of a life, including the effects of symbolic and physical violence and the relationship between these, identity and reflexive choice-making.

Chapter Eight: Affective and symbolic misrecognition, 'relational harms', and a negative emotional habitus

Presents two case studies on the theme of recognition and emotional habitus, focusing on under confidence and low self-esteem as effects of social relationships that are durable over the life course.

Chapter Nine: Social Mobility and Reflexivity: internalised enablements to an upwards trajectory

Looks at four case studies of participants who have been socially and economically mobile, and the relationship between affective and symbolic recognition, generational habitus and reflexivity in these trajectories.

Chapter Ten: Discussion and Conclusion

This is a brief discussion and conclusion of the questions and themes explored throughout the thesis. This is presented as a series of chapter specific findings, general findings, limitations to the study, implications for policy, suggestions for further research and concluding remarks.

2. Reflexivity and the Third Age: theoretical approaches to emotion, recognition, and generation

a) Introduction

In this chapter I introduce and explain theoretical work by Margaret Archer. Archer's work forms the basis of my own approach, developed through this thesis, to explore the interplay between reflexivity, emotion, recognition and generation over the life course. I also explain the construction of the concept of the third age, which underpins the empirical work of the thesis. I will reflect on Archer's empirical research and her theoretical contributions to reflexivity alongside Bourdieu's writings on the habitus, and on previous work addressing the relationship between these theories¹. By bringing together these bodies of work and examining points of connection and difference, I propose an accommodation between the two that would entail adjustments to Archer's theory of personal and social identity, upon which the agency of an individual rests, while retaining Archerian insights into the importance of relational goods, harms and absences, and of the internal conversation. This chapter lays the foundations for subsequent chapters which go on to engage with emotional habitus, Honneth's theory of recognition, the generational habitus, and issues of social class in the third age.

b) Archer's trilogy on reflexivity

Archer defines reflexivity as 'the regular exercise of the mental ability, shared by all normal people, to consider themselves in relation to their (social) contexts and vice versa' (2007, p. 4)². She argues, in her trilogy of books that specifically address the topic (2003, 2007, 2012),

¹ I give a short overview of Archer's work on reflexivity below; there is not capacity to expand upon Bourdieu's development of the habitus in this chapter. Please see *The Logic of Practice* (1990), *An Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977) and *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984) in particular, for Bourdieu's work on the habitus and class, plus other works in the bibliography of this thesis. I refer to Bourdieu's theoretical work throughout the literature review (chapters two to four), and discuss some of his empirical work in the Methods chapter (Chapter Five, section d, part iii) and in the second empirical chapter (Chapter Seven, section b, part v).

² Archer does not explain her use of the term "normal people" in the volume that is referred to here but in an earlier work she describes "normal human beings" as "those who are not addicted, fixated by trauma or otherwise incapable of reflection" (2004, p. 221). This choice of phrasing is uncomfortable and suggests a (presumably unintentional) value judgment, in which those who suffer from addiction or serious trauma are by implication not 'normal'. It also speaks to a conceptualization of reflexivity that gives insufficient weight to

that reflexivity is the missing piece of the puzzle between structure and agency, the means by which the causal power of the social world is 'mediated *through* human agency' (2007 p. 15, emphasis in original).

She characterizes the 'reflexive modernization' of Beck and Giddens and the socialised habitus of Bourdieu as forms of "central conflation" for failing to separate the forces of structure, culture and agency (Archer 2012, p. 50). She argues instead for conditions of 'novelty' that are created by what she terms "morphogenesis", a process in which social structure is altered by the agentic actions of competing interest groups, which then creates new conditions for agency, leading to a "double morphogenesis" (2012, pp. 52-3). She describes how the positive feedback of ongoing structural elaboration amplifies deviations (2012 p. 23), as the morphogenetic process becomes "increasingly unbound from its morphostatic fetters" (2012 pp. 3-4). In this way she is able to account for and explain periods of social change and periods of social stasis.

Archer's trilogy consists of analysis of three separate empirical samples, beginning with an initial sample of 29 interviewees, recruited "ad hoc", for the first book, *Structure, Agency and the Internal Conversation* (2003, description taken from 2007, p. 326). This was followed by a group of 46 interviewees from Coventry, UK, chosen as examples of specific reflexive "modalities" based on survey data, in a second book that addresses reflexivity in relation to social mobility and immobility (2007). A third study focuses on 36 sociology undergraduates from Warwick who were interviewed at yearly intervals throughout their degrees. In this analysis she looks more closely at the relationship between modality and family background (2012).

This empirical work has some resonance with the life course approach, as the Coventry sample (2007) focuses on the trajectories of participants of various ages and backgrounds as they reflect on their lives so far, tracing their negotiations of structural forces and the struggles and opportunities in their working lives. However, her methodological and analytical approach foregrounds reflexivity as the sole lens of concern and applies this to a very diverse age-range stretching between 18 and 69; this thesis extends Archer's empirical work by taking a systematic approach to questions of age and class that introduces important non-reflexive elements.

psychosocial experiences, both positive and negative (including trauma), and which is explicitly challenged in this thesis.

c) Constructing the Third Age

The concept of the 'third age' was developed by Peter Laslett in the late 1980's, the decade in which, he argues, this new phase became part of the social structure of Western countries (1987). For the purposes of this study the 'third age' will refer to people currently in retirement who are active and socially engaged, following Laslett's original conception of this as a stage-based phenomenon which usually (although not always) comes after retirement from paid work and child-rearing responsibilities, and which precedes the dependency of the 'fourth age' (Laslett, 1987, p. 135, 1989, Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, Higgs and Jones, 2009).

Laslett's description of the third age emphasized the moral duties of this stage of life, but this has begun to be seen as overly prescriptive as the retirement of the baby-boom generation has transformed this stage into an "arena of lifestyle and consumption rather than education and responsibility" (Higgs and Jones, 2009, pp. 22-23, Gilleard and Higgs, 2002). Gilleard and Higgs, who have written extensively on the phenomena of the third age in more recent years (2002, 2005, 2009), describe it as a "cultural and social phenomenon" (2005, p. 17), but also, following Bourdieu, as a "cultural field" that is "realized through the activities and discourse of particular social actors within whose lives it acquires concrete form" and as a category that is "inevitably ambiguous" (2005, p. 3). They argue that it is closely tied to the 'generational habitus' that developed in the youth of the 'baby-boomer' generation born between 1946 and 1964 (see also Jones et al., 2008), but that the pervasive cultural changes that have created the third age have shaped multiple cohorts, including those born just before the Second World War (2002, p. 369). Ultimately the third age is defined by Gilleard and Higgs as a matter of agentic participation in its cultural field (Higgs and Jones, 2009, p. 92, Gilleard and Higgs 2005), with individual engagement not reducible to social location in terms of "age, class, status, race or gender" (Jones et al, 2008, p. 17).

The intention of this study is not to interrogate the concept or definition of the third age itself (see Higgs and Jones, 2009 pp. 90-95 for an outline of this debate). It sets out to explore both the lived trajectories and the current identities of an otherwise diverse sample at this stage in the life course, and to trace the relationship between reflexivity and habitus through their experiences. It will therefore, as previously noted, bring together the fields of social theory, social class, and gerontology in order to enhance our understanding of the diverse lives of people who are in the third age. With that in mind, I now consider previous writings that have brought Archer's work on reflexivity together with Bourdieu's concept of habitus.

d) Reflexivity and Habitus: The case for a reconciliation with Bourdieu

A series of arguments for a third way between Archer and Bourdieu have emerged in response to Archer's work on reflexivity (see in particular Sayer, 2005a, 2009a, 2009b, 2010, Elder-Vass 2007a, 2010, Fleetwood 2008, Mutch, 2004, Akram, 2013, Akram and Hogan, 2015, Caetano, 2015a, 2015b, 2017, Flam, 2009, Vogler, 2016), in which her theoretical gains are maintained but are balanced with an understanding of the continued relevance of habitus, without which we "would not be competent social actors" (Sayer, 2009b, p.120, 2009a). These challenges, and suggestions of a 'reconciliation', 'co-determination', or 'hybridization' of reflexivity and habitus will help to inform the theoretical foundations of my own approach to the lived experiences and identities of people currently in the third age.

A life course approach looking at the trajectories of people in this stage of life could address issues that are missing from previous empirical work. This would allow an exploration of the conjoined effects of habitus and reflexivity across the life course and into older age, without throwing, as Sayer cautions "the baby out with the bathwater" by substituting an over-focus on habitus with an over-focus on reflexivity (2005a, p. 50). It will also allow a potential new form of reconciliation to emerge as forms of emotional habitus and processes of recognition and generation are traced through the lives of a diverse sample of people, and through ongoing processes of 'becoming' over time (Jenkins, 2008, Crossley, 1996, Atkinson, 2016). I now go on to consider the foundational elements of a reconciliation.

i. Questions of internalisation

As indicated above, Archer is commonly criticized for a tendency to overstate the individual's reflexive agency in her work. She repeatedly emphasizes the externality of social constraints, arguing that constraints and enablements must be "activated" by the imagined or attempted 'projects' of an individual (2003, p. 8), with the definition of "project" being any "goal" that a person considers, ranging from basic biological necessity to "the Utopian construction of society" (1995, p. 198).

Archer rejects Rational Choice Theory, insists that we are not "isolated monads" (2012, pp. 66-7, 2015, p. 53), and acknowledges that we do not have access to an infinite choice out of the total 'role array' for our future selves (1995, p. 256, 2017a, p. 30). She also acknowledges that structure can have a role in influencing the 'anticipation' of constraints and even 'aspirations and designs', although this is primarily attributed to the different

‘opportunity costs’ (ie. the resources that are needed to pursue different ventures) and the effects of pursuing projects on different ‘vested interests’ (2007, pp. 10-22 and p. 54). Absent from this argument is the extent to which constraints and enablements can themselves become internalised through what Caetano terms the “internalization of exteriority” (2015a, p. 60).

Archer repeatedly rejects the idea that experiences in the social world become embodied and rendered unconscious in the “schemes of perception, thought. and action” that form the habitus (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 14, Archer, 2003, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012), yet, as Sayer observes, even today the continuity of school and home life and classed and gendered relations, for most children, contains enough stability for the development of “a feel for familiar games” (2009b, p. 119-120; see also Caetano, 2015a 2017, on the continued relevance of socialization). This internalisation can prevent even the consideration of a ‘project’ before any obstacles have become relevant (Fleetwood, 2008).

Archer does acknowledge the role of the unconscious elsewhere, writing of the way we become “enmeshed in society’s structural and cultural properties” and do so “involuntarily, unconsciously” (2004, p. 261). For Bourdieu, this unconscious is inherently historical and biographical, being “never anything other than the forgetting of history which history itself produces by incorporating the objective structures it produces in the second natures of habitus” (1977, pp. 78-9). Yet the unconscious is absent from Archer’s understanding of the reflexivity that shapes our actions in the world (2003, 2007, 2012).

ii. Ontological commitments and emergentism

So far we have been attending to Archer and Bourdieu’s theories through an unproblematic reading of constructs such as ‘agency’ and ‘social structure’. These are core building blocks of much sociological theory and yet their meaning and utilisation is “strikingly nebulous and diverse” (Lopez and Scott, 2000, cited in Elder-Vass, 2010, p. 77), and there is no “ontological consensus” on the two terms within social theory (Archer, 2003, p. 1). These theoretical debates are at the heart of this study and therefore a detailed engagement with them is necessary to lay the foundations and provide a framework for the study’s main analytical approach and findings.

(i) *Social Structure*

A fundamental difference between the approaches of Archer and Bourdieu is in their conceptualization of social structure. Archer's theory rests on a critical realist account of an emergentist ontology³, in which structure and culture possess Structural Emergent Properties (SEPs) and Cultural Emergent Properties (CEPs) that interact with the Personal Emergent Properties of individuals (PEPs). These personal emergent properties are said to themselves emerge from a dialectical relationship between personal identity and social identity that is expressed in our reflexive capability (2004, p. 12). Archer insists that her dualism is "never anything but *analytical* dualism" (2012, p. 50, emphasis in original), however, she is also, with legitimacy, accused of 'ontological dualism' (King, 1999⁴, see also Hay, 2002, p. 123) in her descriptions of the separation between the agent and the 'objective structural and cultural contexts' which they 'confront' (Archer, 2013, p. 1): indeed, Archer herself describes 'the people' and 'the parts' as "not different aspects of the same thing" but as "radically different in kind" (1995, p. 15).

Conversely, in an attempt to "transcend" the objectivist/subjectivist divide, Bourdieu describes social structure as essentially 'homologous' with the structures of our internal worlds and as embodied in our habitus (1990, p. p. 52-65, 1977); a process by which the external world is internalised as "structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures" (1977, p. 72), as our history and biography shape our expectations of and orientation towards the future. Yet he also notes that structures are themselves "objectivities" which are not reducible to the habitus in which they are expressed but which "tend to reproduce them" (p. 84).

Elder-Vass, who lauds Archer for the "strongly humanistic" nature of her concern for our conscious deliberations (2010, p. 103), offers a way out of this impasse that retains the vital elements of both approaches, with adjustments to both habitus and reflexivity. His model for reconciliation (2007a, 2010) has been disputed by Archer herself, who describes how "Elder-Vass sees the main ontological 'adjustments' falling upon Bourdieu's work and the main theoretical ones on mine" (2009, p. 127-8), but it is a sound basis for further work. The extent to which structure can be said to be internalised, a process that is foundational to Bourdieu's work, is a source of concern for Elder-Vass. He seeks to absolve Bourdieu's work from charges of central conflationism by rejecting a "literal" interpretation of the

³ For a comprehensive account of emergentism and its role in critical realism please see Elder-Vass, 2005 and 2010.

⁴ Although King appears to also see emergentism itself as a form of ontological dualism, which has been strongly refuted by Elder-Vass (2007b).

internalisation of structure in favour of a “metaphorical” one, concluding that what we internalise are the emergent *effects* of social structure (2007a, p. 334, 2010). This ontological distinction allows the word structure in Bourdieu’s work to act as a proxy for its own effects and to work together with reflexivity in an “emergentist theory of action”, with Elder-Vass arguing that reflexivity and habitus work in conjunction with each other to shape “many and perhaps most” of our actions (2007a, p. 335).

Sayer is not concerned with the semantic construction of ‘structure’ and points out that Bourdieu himself confessed to “bend[ing] the stick the other way” in the apparent conflation of subject and object (2009b, pp. 110-111). Yet he also has concerns about the over-complicity between habitus and habitat, and self and society, that is implied by Bourdieu’s conceptualisation of the habitus (p. 111). He proposes a moderation of the “exaggerated” ontological complicity that renders Bourdieu’s own work on the struggles and resistances (large and small) of ordinary people in *The Weight of the World* “unintelligible” (pp. 110-112). He acknowledges the need for alternative explanations for why people act as they do while also (as noted) emphasizing that there is sufficient continuity for classed and gendered forms of socialisation, with the classic “feel for the game” remaining largely untroubled (2009b, p. 120). He therefore argues for a combined analysis of habitus and the internal conversation in order to understand our relations to the world, and the “flourishing and suffering” that this entails (p. 121, see also Sayer, 2005a, 2009a and 2010 for more on the arguments outlined in this paragraph).

(ii) Agency

As described earlier in this section, Archer sees our agency as an expression of our Personal Emergent Properties that arise from our Personal Identity and Social Identity (these will be discussed further in part iii). Her description of the relationship between agency and subjectivity appears to fluctuate; she claims that reflexivity is only an “aspect of subjectivity” (2007, p. 15), while elsewhere, in relation to a debate between objectivity and subjectivity, that agency “stands for” subjectivity (2004, p. 313). This speaks to concerns that agency and reflexivity are “elided” in Archer’s work and treated as though they are the same or interchangeable (Akram and Hogan, 2015, p. 2). These issues speak to an underestimation of non-reflexive or non-agentic forms of subjective experience.

In her analysis, Archer risks committing what Bourdieu calls the ‘scholastic illusion’ of framing the world as an object to be faced by a subject, losing the very ‘immanence’ that characterizes our ‘being in the world’ (2000, pp. 141-142). This sense of separateness or

isolation has led to criticisms that her subjects seem to be insufficiently affected by their social bonds (Caetano, 2015a, 2017, Burkitt, 2012, 2016, Vandenberghe, 2005, Dépelteau 2008, King, 2010). King for example describes “a strange loneliness” in her work, “where the agent wanders as an isolated figure, engaged in a private conversation” (2010, p. 257)⁵, while, for Dépelteau, the internal conversation becomes “a conversation about the society, not within the society” (2008, p. 58, cited in Burkitt, 2016, p. 325). Vandenberghe argues for the intersubjective nature of our self-narration from the perspective of language, describing Archer’s internal conversation as “too much of an *internal* conversation” (2005, p. 233, emphasis added). Similarly, Caetano notes that, for Archer, communication is relevant to only one form of reflexivity, “communicative reflexivity”, in contrast with a lack of attention to “interactional dynamics” across the different modalities (2015a, pp. 67-68; the question of different ‘modalities’ will be discussed in section f of this chapter).

Archer has more recently written specifically on ‘the relational subject’ in a work of the same name (Donati and Archer, 2015), but even here the “relational goods and evils” are insufficiently integrated with an individual’s sense of self in the world and the focus is upon our “voluntary relations with others” (p. 13). This is quite distinct from Burkitt’s argument (contra Archer) that our very sense of self is created historically and biographically, with the emotional responses and evaluation of others, and our interpretations of these response, helping to shape this core sense of self (2012, 2014, 2016). These ideas begin to foreground the importance of the emotional habitus and of all types of social recognition, which are concepts I describe in more detail in the next chapter.

Nevertheless, this criticism of a lack of true being in the world or “being-in-relation” of Archer’s subject (Burkitt, 2016, p. 329) has its counterpart in the exaggerated ontological complicity with which Bourdieu is charged (Archer, 2010, Sayer, 2005a, 2009b, 2010, McNay 2004, Skeggs, 2004b, Witz, 2004). While we cannot, as Bourdieu points out, see the world “as an object placed before a self-conscious perceiving subject, as a spectacle or representation capable of being taken in with a single gaze” (2000 p. 142), we can nevertheless objectify parts of it through an ongoing internal conversation, which, as Archer rightly points out, is integral to how we navigate the world (2004, 2003, 2007, 2012, Sayer, 2005a, 2009a, 2009b, 2010).

Ahearn, writing on the relationship between privilege, affect and agency, suggests a useful, and usefully succinct, definition of agency, which she describes as “the socio-culturally

⁵ It must be noted here that King’s overall criticisms are not commensurate with the ontology of this thesis, as he rejects emergentism itself, arguing that it is a form of reification. He allows the use of the term ‘structure’ only with a “strong proviso” that “this structure amounts to the relations of other people in different times and places and never refers to any metaphysical entity which exists above and beyond all individuals or is more than the sum of all individuals and their interactions” (1999, p. 24-5).

mediated capacity to act” (2013, p.240). This appears to position agency as an emergent property of the relationship between self and society, which is broad enough to encompass many permutations and that speaks to the concerns at the heart of this thesis. It helps us to capture the mutually constitutive nature of society and the individual as described by Nielsen (2017, p. 3)⁶ and which Crossley calls “the intersubjective fabric” of the social world (1996), while also holding space for an emergent reflexivity that is not reducible to any of its component parts. With this in mind, I now turn to the topic of the internal conversation and ‘personal morphogenesis’.

iii. Personal morphogenesis and social identity

The process of social morphogenesis that was alluded to in section b has its counterpart in changes in the individual over the life course, theorized by Archer as a ‘personal morphogenesis’⁷. This theory provides significant insight into the life course in that it contains processes of both change and stasis and has obvious application to empirical work on the third age. However, as Elder-Vass observes, the morphogenetic approach is attuned to the “diachronic” elements that work to change or maintain entities, but a missing “synchronic relational element” is needed in order to understand the ‘causal power’ of an entity at any one time (2007b, in particular p. 31, 2010). This is a point that has been refuted by Archer, who argues that it is “both a diachronic *and* a synchronic account” (2012, pp. 52), but which will be seen here to hold true as we explore questions of personal morphogenesis and identity.

Archer sets out a “stratified ontology” of the individual. This ontology is made up of four parts: the reflexive ‘I’ which is defined as selfhood; the ‘Me’ which represents the accumulated past and objective ‘involuntary’ social positioning; the ‘You’ which depicts the desires and possibilities of a future self; and finally, the ‘We’ which refers to our ‘voluntary’ relations with a collective (2015, pp. 13 and 99-113, 2017a, p. 32, 2004). With the passage of time the current internal ‘I’ then moves along to take the place of ‘You’ as the previous ‘I’ becomes the past ‘Me’, who also “accrues further objective social characteristics” over the life course (2015, p. 13), in cycles of internal dialogue that (as with social morphogenesis)

⁶ Nielsen (2017), has written on the complex relationship between gender, class, generation and social change, emphasising the artificiality of using terms such as the ‘social’, the ‘personal’ or the ‘cultural’ in contrast with each other. However, like Archer, Nielsen also argues against the flattening effect of treating these parts as mutually reducible to one another (p. 3).

⁷ Archer describes the morphogenetic approach as an “explanatory framework” that can be used to generate theory, rather than as a form of theory itself (1995, p. 6),

end at a new beginning, and which monitor and shape our ongoing interactions with the world.

Archer argues for bracketing off a pre-social part of a person which she calls our “continuous sense of self”, which is also our sense of ourselves as the same over time (2004, p. 87). She creates a separation between the ‘natural’, ‘practical’ and ‘social’ realms which goes beyond the merely analytical, creating the notion of an original and non-social ‘sense of self’ which emerges from our engagement in the practical world as very young children, before we (under her description) become social beings (2004). This separation of the different realms, with ‘the social’ belonging to that which is ‘discursive’, has been criticized by others (Benton, 2001, Burkitt, 2016, King, 1999). King observes that the notion of a pre-social self “has been consistently rejected in sociological thought” (1999, p. 218); it is a dichotomy that is at odds with the ‘turn to the body’ within sociology, in which the complex relationship between the social world and the corporeal is brought to the fore (Gilleard and Higgs, 2013, 2015, Burkitt, 1997).⁸

The very ‘Me’ that Archer refers to when discussing positioning through class, race or gender must always be embodied (see Higgs and Jones, 2009, pp.43-4, Charlesworth, 2003, Young, 2005, on collective identities, oppression and embodiment). Indeed, Bourdieu describes the explicitly corporeal elements of the habitus, in which “the effects of biological necessity” also play their part, “leading to a social re-use of biological properties and a biological re-use of social properties” (1990, p. 79). This issue also speaks to the embodied experiences of misrecognition which I address in the next chapter, drawing on Honneth’s concern with “the violation of the body” which he sees as a specific form of this (1995a).

This separation between the natural, practical and social spheres also creates a potentially flawed basis for the initial development of a personal identity (PI) that is overly-reflexive in its constitution; a concern that is also noted by Burkitt (2016). Social identity is said, by Archer, to be both in a dialectical relationship with, *and* a subset’ of personal identity (2004, p. 12), which is “achieved by assuming a role(s) and personifying it, by investing oneself in it and executing it in a singular manner” (pp. 11-12). In this interpretation the social world intrudes only to evaluate an individual’s performance after an initial project has already (fallibly) been chosen, albeit with the effects also of regulating our behaviour through “anticipations of social approbation/disapprobation” (p. 219).

Archer certainly allows for the role of an unchosen collective identity within a hierarchical or stratified society, but this is not integrated into the theory of what makes a social identity

⁸ This ‘entanglement’ between the self and the social, the material and the discursive has been specifically addressed in recent decades by ‘new materialist’ theorists such as Barad (2007).

beyond the ways in which it may prompt acts of collective resistance. She describes the 'Me' of social groups with differential forms of privilege, or "*collectivities sharing the same life-chances*", as "Primary Agents" (2004, p. 261-264). The "Agent (plural)" is described as "the parent of the Actor (singular)" who comes to "personify" a chosen role (p. 61), insofar as they are the same person at different times (p. 287). "Corporate Agents" are "interest groups" which act collectively in pursuit of a shared aim and are able to shape and reshape society (2004, p. 265, 2007, pp. 189-190).

In theorizing the role of the 'Me', her concern is to explain how Primary Agency becomes Corporate Agency, a process by which collective dissatisfaction becomes politicized in order to compete with different interest groups and to create structural change, producing social morphogenesis. This signifies a jump from the micro to the macro, from the individual to the wider social context, with a focus on social change despite the significant tracts of stasis that characterize the context in which identities are created. This focus derails a potential explanation of the ongoing effects of these positions on an individual's social identity within a stratified society. She argues for a distinction between these 'positions' on the one hand and 'roles' on the other, due to "the impossibility of specifying any but the fuzziest and most highly contested normative expectations associated with them" (2004, p. 262). This distinction may be analytically useful, but it does not properly allow for the entanglement between stratified social position and social identity in all of its fullness as a lived reality.

It is similarly argued that since personal and social identity are, at their core, our personal concerns and commitments made manifest, albeit not "under the circumstances of our own choosing" (2004, p. 10), then children have not yet "attained" these identities and some adults never do (pp. 10-11 and 314). Despite Archer's insistence that the acquisition of social identity is not just a voluntary question of assuming a role, it is framed as an inherently reflexive project, and therefore fails to properly capture stigmatised, ambiguous or oppressed identities within the remit of the theory. As this study goes on to demonstrate, in attending to stigmatised and ambiguous identities, these omissions in Archer's theory create challenges for understanding people's life histories and trajectories.

Yet a focus on the more reflexive aspects of identity formation, the understanding that we are motivated by that which we care about and that this is fundamental to who we are in the world, must also be maintained. Similarly, the concept of a layered, or 'stratified' individual, with the ability to step back from the world and consider their relationship to the world as an object of reflection is essential. It opens up possibilities for greater self-orientation and a richer inner world that run counter to Bourdieu's excess of 'ontological complicity'. What is proposed here is to retain Archer's concept of personal morphogenesis, with its usefulness

for a life course approach, but with a more amplified role for the 'Me', the past and socially situated self. The amplification of the 'Me' provides a route of admittance into the conversation for an emotional habitus that contains, but is not limited to, experiences of recognition and misrecognition (which will be discussed in the following chapters). It will also allow the accumulative effect of the past on current social positions and perspectives in a way that has a more diffuse and significant influence. I will now move on to Archer's theory of emotions, in which the internal conversation is further discussed.

e) Archer's Theory of Emotions

Archer has been commended for her account of emotions that brings together emotion and rationality, intertwining what she terms 'pathos' with 'logos' (Archer, 2004, p. 194, Clegg, 2013, 2013b, Yar, 2009, Sayer, 2009b). Clegg describes the way in which she allows emotion a "central role" in the development of personal and social identity (2013, p. 74) as a reaction against their "discursive erasure" within the academy (p. 75), while Sayer expresses surprise at Archer's rejection of habitus considering the "excellent analysis of emotions" in her own work (2009b, p. 114). Elsewhere it is argued that this emotional component does not go far enough, and that although Archer does not see the internal conversation as "purely cognitive" (Archer, 2003, p. 102), the role of emotions in reflexive action is under-developed (Holmes, 2010, Burkitt, 2012, 2016, Flam, 2009).

It is certainly true that Archer sees our emotionality as playing an important role in our negotiation of the world around us, rejecting both the completely rational (wo)man and the figure of "homo economicus" who is motivated purely by self-interest (2010, p. 6 and p.124). The emotional aspects of our internal landscapes are theorized as "commentaries upon our concerns" (2004, pp. 193-221), with a "shoving power" that is needed so that we care about these concerns (p. 83). She also sees the pursuit of self-worth as "the most important of our social concerns" (pp. 219) and describes emotions as being 'socially constituted properties' which emerge from the relationship between a subject's concerns and social normativity (p. 215). Yet, as described in the previous section, this relationship with normativity, and the attendant questions of self-worth, occur after our initial concerns have been identified, since 'It is because we have invested ourselves in these social projects that we are susceptible of emotionality in relation to society's normative evaluation of our performance in these roles.' (2004 p. 219). The extent to which the emotional weight and direction of these concerns are shaped by an embodied, relational and situated social context is insufficiently addressed, in ways that have been touched upon elsewhere (Burkitt, 2012, 2016, Caetano, 2015a, 2017,

Atkinson, 2014a). It is the intention of this thesis to contribute to a development of these arguments as part of a new proposed reconciliation.

i. Transvaluation

The concept of 'transvaluation' is at the heart of Archer's theory of emotions (2004, pp. 222-249). It describes the process of turning unmediated emotional reactions, which she calls "first-order emotions" into those which are modulated by an individual's "concerns and commitments" in the world, called "second-order emotions". In this process our feelings become refracted through the "prism" of our concerns, as our commitments create "a new sounding-board" through which emotional reactions are parsed. As our commitments develop, things that we might previously have desired are experienced as a threat to our concerns, or regret is felt over behaviour that we had previously felt to be acceptable. At this point we are deemed to be "In an important sense...no longer capable of the simplicity of a first-order response" in our reactions to "relevant events" (2004, pp. 242-43).

This process occurs through an internal conversation between the current 'I' and the future 'You', with both activating an internal entity that Archer calls 'myself', which is described as the "store of all first-order emotional commentaries on past concerns" (2004, p. 230). This dialogue is also characterized by a dialectical relationship between the cognitive and emotional parts of our internal world which, Archer argues, is the way in which we come to define our concerns. It is this process, the "balance" that we strike between our different concerns, and the nature of those concerns, that is said to give us "our strict identity as particular persons" (p. 221). It is also part of an ongoing lifelong process since our concerns can be subject to change (p. 228).

This account of emotion, which by Archer's own admission focuses on the more "voluntary" aspects of personal identity formation (2004, p. 249), does not make sufficient room for the unmediated and unreflexive emotional experiences in which we are constantly engaged. It creates a false binary between first-order and second-order emotional states and experiences, and it obscures the messy complexity of emotional experience as an ongoing lived reality that is central to reflexive action, as described by Burkitt (2012, 2014, 2016). It underestimates the extent to which first-order emotions contribute to the creation of a habitus and the way in which emotions (first and second-order) can consolidate over time to become a distinct 'emotional habitus'. We are not, as Fleetwood points out, capable of "hyperdeliberation" (2008), and this description risks overlooking the lived reality of emotional experiences. For example, an ambitious man may be emotionally affected by promotions at work because that is his primary concern, but if he were to resent being

superseded by a woman then this would surely indicate a non-transvalued emotion arising from a gendered habitus. Similarly, under or over-confidence in any project is also itself dispositional, arising in a large part from previous interactions with the world (as will be discussed in the next chapter). These emotions are, as Archer would say, 'relevant' to our concerns but have not been reflexively reshaped.

There are key moments in the process of transvaluation at which different forms of emotional habitus, drawn from our 'first-order' emotions, can gain a purchase, and ought to form part of the explanation. Perhaps the most obvious is when Archer describes the part of the conversation between the 'I' and the 'You' where future possibilities are imagined and are evaluated depending upon whether we can "live with" them, and whether they *feel* emotionally possible for us; "Together they re-prioritize their concerns, promoting and demoting, cutting the coat as the emotional cloth allows" (2004, pp. 236-237). It is here that different possibilities that present themselves to the imagination can either be pursued or stymied before ever coming into being, and that the relationship between past, present and future that is found in Bourdieu's habitus (1990) can modulate expectations with positive or negative effects.

Archer seems to acknowledge the specifically internal and emotional effects of social location in describing the ways in which parents can influence children by endorsing or resisting the effects of this social positioning, since "it will be highly dependent on the early caretakers (whose personal and social identity formation is complete) and upon whether they reinforce the 'I' ('You can become anything you choose') or weigh in on behalf of the 'Me' ('Know your place')" (2004, p. 265).

Yet she also vehemently resists the idea that social structure can be the source of internal constraints since, as noted in section d, the emergent properties of structures can only assert themselves, to constrain or enable, when a 'project' (a desire or plan) is conceived of and not before (2007, p. 11). She allows that differential distribution of information may play a part (2007, p. 19), but not differential distribution of recognition or of internal constraints and enablements, and professes herself unable to see "what grants any disposition immunity from reflexive scrutiny and transcendence on the part of the active agent" (2013, p. 9). This idea of modulating the effects of social structure within the family indicates a relational aspect to the generation of emotion, and to the emotional experience of social structure, that does not appear to be properly accounted for in her theory of emotions.

The description of parental influence above foreshadows Flam's mechanism of "shielding", by which the family or social circle can "shield" a person from the harmful social norms and expectations that relate to a stigmatised or disadvantaged social position (2009, pp. 191-2).

Flam discusses the external “silencing” of the inner ‘I’ through systems of power and domination and along lines of gender, class, sexuality and race, as male, middle-class, heterosexual and white voices are amplified, and others relatively muted. This can lead to an inhibited or damaged internal ‘I’ but must also be set against the “rebellious *self-seeing-self*” whose experience of this can be modulated by the positive example or regard of others (pp. 191-192). She cites (but does not elaborate upon) Crossley’s use of the “emotional habitus” as a form of internalisation that is both enduring (although not deterministic), and potentially restrictive.

The ability of others to ‘shield’ a person from negative evaluation by wider society is also pointed to by Burkitt, who describes the role that loving parents can play as they “refract, and perhaps to some degree deflect” the social values that are communicated through them to their children (2014, pp. 117-118). He points to the theoretical support that Bourdieu’s work can provide for his notion of the emotional, embodied and relational self, with emotional responses that are created through a sense of ourselves that is reflected through the eyes of others, which “are at the base of our ‘self-feeling’, or ‘my-feeling’”, but also to the limitations of Bourdieu’s use of the mimetic faculty as a means of directly reproducing an embodied habitus (p. 117-118). Flam (2009) and Burkitt (2012) both draw on Cooley’s concept of the “looking-glass self” (1983) to emphasize the ways in which emotions themselves are intensely social and constitutive of, or obstructive to, our internal conversations, as a normal part of our everyday world. Burkitt in particular outlines the ways in which social scripts, such as the (emotionally charged) moral concerns of religion can be internalised, and the way new information and experiences are interpreted through the prism of previous social experiences, reproducing a habituated response (2012).

Archer herself commended Bourdieu’s “perceptively analysed” work on symbolic violence (2017a, p. 17), which raises questions as to why this concept, and the emotional import of it, is not more integrated into her theory of reflexivity. This becomes clear when she goes on to legitimately critique the way in which symbolic violence is “always presumed by (Bourdieu) to be lastingly successful”. Yet insufficient attention is paid to the ways in which we are all enmeshed in networks of shame and pride (Burkitt, 2012), for an influence does not need to be deterministic to be casually efficacious; no causal power determines an outcome but can only “*contribute* causally” to it (Elder-Vass, 2010, p. 123), and human behaviour is “co-determined” by the powers of many entities (p. 196).

Again, while Archer’s arguments for emotional transvaluation are legitimate insofar as concerns do shape emotional engagement and vice-versa, I argue for a greater role for the entity known as ‘myself’ (“a store of all first-order emotional commentaries on past

concerns"). Under Archer's description this is "activated" by the 'I' and the 'You' of the internal conversation, who "review" and "negotiate" this store of emotions (2004, p. 230). This positions the role of these emotions in the internal conversation as a passive object of discussion, however 'myself' is also described as having a "subject to subject dialog" with the 'I' (p. 299), and these two entities are also described as having "the most intimate relationship" in which they share insecurities and hesitations about the world (p. 300).

It must therefore be through 'myself' that experiences of recognition or misrecognition can intrude upon the internal conversation, and this must be properly integrated into an understanding of reflexivity. It must also be understood to work alongside the 'Me' that was discussed in section d (the past and socially situated self), in the development and maintenance of the emotional habitus and of the wider individual habitus within the internal conversation.

f) Introducing Reflexive Modalities

In this section I will introduce and explain Archer's theory of reflexive modalities that have emerged throughout her trilogy and contrast this with Bourdieu's work on the family. It will be argued that these modes partly emerge from traditional socialization processes but that they also have empirical relevance.

The concerns and commitments described by Archer are said by her to relate to four distinct 'modes' of reflexive decision making, as 'generative mechanisms' that can be subject to change, (2012). For the benefit of clarity, I will reproduce Archer's description of each of them here (2007, p. 93):

Communicative reflexives: Those whose internal conversation requires completion and confirmation by others before resulting in courses of action.

Meta-reflexives: Those who are critically reflexive about their own internal conversations and critical about effective action in society.

Autonomous reflexives: Those who sustain self-contained internal conversations, leading directly to action.

Fractured reflexives: Those whose internal conversations intensify their distress and disorientation rather than leading to purposeful courses of action.

i. Relational ‘goods’, ‘harms’, and ‘absences’

As described in section d, Archer has been criticized by many for not properly synthesizing social relations into her theory of the reflexive capacities and actions of the self.

Nevertheless, relations are important in her work in other ways, as productive of different modes of reflexivity that are created by relations in the natal environment. These are seen as emergent properties of three types of relational contexts; broadly speaking, those that create ‘relational goods’, those that create ‘relational harms’, and the ‘absence’ of relational goods or evils (2012, pp. 97-102 and p. 167).⁹

This is a concept that has given rise to some skepticism for what is seen as a reification of these relational experiences as overly separate to the individual (Burkitt, 2016, p. 329), but also some approbation and curiosity at this new avenue for research (Sayer, 2009a). Yet, while it is important to remember that we are “always embedded in some aspect of manifold relationships” that shape our sense of self and our agency in tandem (Burkitt, 2016, p. 331), the greater or lesser amplification of the internal voice that may be created through distinct relational configurations (beyond merely negative and positive) must also be considered. Archer develops and uses these modes throughout the trilogy on reflexivity, but it is with her student sample that she fleshes out a relationship between relational properties and reflexive modalities most fully (2012).

‘Communicative reflexives’, the smallest group in the student sample (2012) were said to have been in receipt of familial ‘relational goods’ in the form of ‘internal goods’, such as ‘love, reliance, caring and trust’ (2012, pp. 98-99); the persons in receipt of these were said to have been ‘identifiers’ with the family of origin. Conversely, ‘fractured reflexives’ were said to have been in receipt of ‘relational harms’ in their family, with circumstances such as ‘excessive maternal dependency or domination as well as coercion, antagonism and exploitation’; these were described as ‘rejectors’ (p. 100). However, most interviewees in the 2012 sample were described as either ‘independents’ or ‘disengaged’, becoming ‘autonomous reflexives’ and ‘meta-reflexives’ respectively.

⁹ Archer is very clear that the ‘realist relational sociology’ of Donati, upon which her approach is based, should not be confused with a focus on “interpersonal relations”, which are argued to have a “flat ontology” (Archer, 2012, pp. 97-98).

The 'independents' or 'autonomous reflexives' are described as having experienced "much less severe" relational harm than the 'rejecters' but as not having had 'relational goods' either (2012, p. 100). This group has experienced a disproportionate amount of discord or separation between parents, with "divorced parents, 'rocky relationships' and parents effectively living apart", and their own relationship with their parents was described as "cordial but uninvolved". This created an 'early independence' among this group, who were said to therefore 'relish' the idea of pursuing their own choices and lives. The 'disengaged' or 'meta-reflexives', who were the largest group of the sample, had the 'relational good' of family stability but also experienced tension between parents, which led to a 'critical detachment' and the urge to seek something different, often finding a cause which they felt strongly about as teenagers (pp. 100-102). While a significant amount of 'contextual continuity' is seen as characterizing the background of the identifiers or communicative reflexives, "micro-'contextual discontinuity'", for example geographic mobility or parental separation, is related to the 'independents' or autonomous reflexives, for whom this independence is 'enforced' through circumstance. 'Contextual incongruity', as seen in a lack of parental consensus, is linked with those who develop meta reflexivity (see in particular p. 84).

It is clear that these descriptions of harms and goods and the typologies that they lead to is something of an abstraction; Archer notes that we all use the full range of reflexive forms in our daily lives but that for most people one mode is dominant, and it appears to be quite normal for a person to have a subordinate mode as well as a dominant mode (2007, p. 94). It can also be difficult to differentiate between what might be seen as a primary characteristic of these modalities and what may be secondary characteristics that signify tendencies or contingent relationships in the data (2012)¹⁰. The issue of generalizing and overclaiming based on a small and socio-economically privileged sample has been commented upon by others (Camic, 2013, p. 260). Archer herself acknowledges that these students should not be taken as in any way representative of the wider population (Archer, 2012, pp. 8 and 291-294) but also appears to make significant claims for the implications of the study, declaring that the world that the students were heading out into was no longer made for "Bourdieu's people" (2012, p. 68).

Nevertheless, it is important not to dismiss the potential significance of these modalities completely; the idea of different relational experiences that are not just reducible to positive

¹⁰ Archer appears to acknowledge this issue in the conclusion to the book; "in such a new area of research it is impossible to specify which factors would qualify as typical. Thus, it is advisable to regard the volunteers as nothing more than an exploratory group whose responses form the basis for advancing tentative hypotheses inviting further investigation" (2012, p 321). Nevertheless, strong assertions are made on the basis of these interviews.

or negative effects but to specific contextual configurations is potentially very important. The idea of 'enforced' independence as encouraging a greater self-reliance and internal reflexivity is particularly notable, and the idea that someone with strong relationships within the family may have grown to externalize large parts of their reflexive processes in the 'thought and talk' method, leading to less variation in their future trajectory, is also significant.

ii. Reflexive modalities and 'concerns'

These modalities, and the context in which they develop, are described as aligning with particular dominant concerns, as a consequence of the ways in which they shape the internal conversation (2007, 2012). The 'communicative reflexives' who use the 'thought and talk method' with friends and family ('similar and familiars') are said to value the 'contextual continuity' that is found in family and stability. 'Autonomous reflexives' who have an independent and internalised process tend to value "self-advantageous action" over "normative conventionalism" (2007, p. 95), and are often drawn towards the independence of self-employment (2012, p. 166), while 'meta-reflexives' tend to be oriented towards a cause or pursuit of a deeper meaning rather than ambition for its own sake. 'Fractured reflexives' lack orientation in the world and struggle to act consistently and decisively. Again, the idea of different forms of reflexivity relating to different concerns that guide us through our lives is significant; the different choices that are made are not merely shaped by circumstance and possibility but by reflection on those circumstances and different sets of priorities.

However, the issue of over-claiming for the role of reflexivity again comes to the fore, Archer's description of the role of 'similar and familiars' seems to be as a series of mirrors reflecting back the same thoughts and experiences, allowing for no possibility of change, since, it is argued, someone who has no direct experience of a situation "has nothing positive to contribute" to the imagined possibilities of a different future (2007, p. 272). This is contrasted with the ambitious autonomous reflexives, who are said to have an enhanced internal reflexive process that self-orientates them towards social mobility (2007), due precisely to their reflexive separation from their environment. While there is undoubtedly some validity in these claims, they, unfortunately, position friends and family as only ever obstructions to mobility or novelty, and overlook the possibility of affective recognition as a form of vital

support in the development of plans and aspirations¹¹; this will be discussed further in the next subsection and in the following chapter.

I will now turn to a comparison with Bourdieu's work on the doxa that is developed within the family, before making some concluding remarks to end the chapter.

iii. Family doxa and social relations

Archer's work on relations within the natal family and reflexive modalities sits in stark contrast with Bourdieu's notion of the development of primary habitus within the 'family field' as the site of the 'original *illusio*', in which "the child incorporates the social in the form of affects" (2000, p. 166-167, emphasis in original). He writes of the effectiveness of classed transmission of cultural capital within the family (1986)¹², and of the importance of 'doxa' or the "taken for granted knowledge" that underpins the habitus (Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 159-171, 1998, 1990).

This work on the family has been extended by Atkinson, who describes the "field of the family" as "paramount" in the lifeworld of a person (2016, p. 52, 2014b). He rejects Reay et al's formulation of the family as itself a habitus (2005), arguing that it occludes discussion around the inner workings of the family field and its internal struggles (2016, p. 53). Charges of passivity in some of Bourdieu's work on familial class reproduction are overcome by theorising the process of reproduction in terms of a struggle over the field-specific capital that is typically held by parents, with the children emulating or attempting to emulate that which the parents value in actively seeking love or 'affective recognition'. Thus, the need for recognition and the risks and shame involved in lack of recognition, are central to life in the 'family field', operating in accordance with a "family doxa", and playing a vital role in the initial development of a habitus in childhood (2016, pp. 52-112).

Interaction and social networks are also very important in Atkinson's description of the ways in which forms of habitus are shaped, reshaped and 'sedimented' (2016, p. 124), as

¹¹ Here is Archer's explanation of this in full: "there are very strong reasons why sharing one's flights of fancy or inmost urges with a familiar interlocutor will invariably curtail them. Clearly, if the castle in the air is outside the shared context of the interlocutor, then the dialogical partner has nothing positive to contribute because it is beyond his or her experience. However, they can have plenty that is negative to say, ranging from the 'Don't be daft – get real', to perfunctorily entertaining the attractions of being a famous footballer or pop star, yet quickly concluding, 'It'd be great, but it's not on is it?' The problem of offering up one's dreams (or nightmares) for outside commentary is that they are regularly cut down to size – the size that the shared context can accommodate, which thus serves to reinforce 'contextual continuity'." (2007, p. 272).

¹² Archer allows for the advantages of those born into families with greater cultural capital, but not the ways in which this can become part of an embodied disposition as per Bourdieu's description of this form of capital (Bourdieu, 1986, see Archer, 1995).

'shapers' as well as 'effects' of habitus and our perceptual horizons (p.27). However, we are also drawn to others like us, who offer 'like-mindedness' and 'affinity' (p. 38), people whose experience of the world is similar to ours. The formative experiences of an individual shape and inform their further engagement with the world as they move through space and time, as "perhaps no micro-field is more significant than the family" (p. 24 and p. 101). Bourdieu describes these "affinities of habitus experienced as sympathy or antipathy" as being "at the basis of all forms of cooptation, friendships, love affairs, marriages, associations, and so on" (1989, p. 17).

These affinities can be directly related to the 'norm circles' of Elder-Vass (2010, pp. 122-133), which are any social grouping in which shared ideas and perspectives are treated as shared norms, including of course family and friendship groups. Elder-Vass himself links these shared perspectives to the habitus (2010, p. 122), and it is a concept that is argued by Archer to represent a "flattened ontology" (Archer and Elder-Vass, 2012, p. 98), which is incompatible with the emergentist core of Realism (p. 96). However, it is a concept that she finds some use for in her empirical work, describing the families of 'identifiers' as acting as "consensual 'norm circles' *through* the relational goods generated" (2012, p. 99). She also, notably, sees lack of membership in a "norm circle" as forming part of a 'relational deficit' that is suffered by fractured reflexives (pp. 307-308), describing how their lack of 'relational goods' deprive this group of the encouragement needed to pursue a purpose, or of "a network capable of nurturing them into commitments" (pp. 307-308). It is an argument that tacitly acknowledges the importance of the unreflexively normative influence of groups of people, and of the mutual recognition (and enhanced sense of agency) that other people can impart.

The importance that is placed on these social networks is significant in Atkinson's critique of Archer's analysis of the reflexive lives of her student sample (2014a). He suggests that although her work on the different relational experiences of young people in their families of origin is 'fruitful' there is nothing (in his opinion) that cannot also be found in earlier works by Mead or Bourdieu (p.125). He does however commend the "deep and nuanced analysis of the formation of 'bounded variety' in decision making, the development of concerns out of classed natal contexts and even the powers of 'diffuse cultural capital'", and therefore argues that "far from supporting the critical rejection of Bourdieu, her analysis nicely captures the detail and mess of habitus formation 'on the ground' in twenty-first-century Britain" (p. 126).

It is clear that the 'bounded variety' by which Archer describes the natal environment acting as a general guide to choice-making for all but the fractured 'rejectors' in the student sample (2012, p. 271) appears to undercut some of the claims that were previously made in the analysis regarding the ways in which the students reflexively consider their possible choices.

It speaks directly to the role of the family field and friendship groups in setting the unconscious parameters, or at least guidance, of future possibilities (of whatever sort). Yet, it is also held here that Archer's concern with reflexivity as originally an emergent property of different configurations of relations in the students' upbringing (2012) is a novel approach to the impact of relational or natal contexts and one that cannot be easily discarded.

Caetano argues that "it is hard to imagine how reflexive modes cannot be formed in a socially differentiated manner", citing, as an example, the differential distribution of literacy skills, reflecting both educational levels and greater access to reflexivity (2015a, p. 70). She has worked to synthesise the role of family socialization and social class into an understanding of reflexivity and has created new typologies of 'personal reflexivity' based on empirical research with twenty participants in Poland aged between 21 and 80 years old, with diverse backgrounds, occupations and levels of education (2017). She concludes that it is not a matter of merely choosing Archer's and Bourdieu's theories, or even 'merging' their approaches, but that, "It is possible to work with the concepts of reflexivity and dispositions as different notions that account for distinct components of action: the conscious and nonconscious mechanisms behind practices." (2017, pp. 48-49).

For the purposes of this study these modalities will be maintained as empirically useful, and therefore the appearance in the data of traits that are associated with different modalities will be noted and possible interpretations offered. However, the notions of 'relational goods' and 'relational harms', that are said to create these different modalities will be shown to overlap with Honneth's concept of 'affective recognition', which has been referred to in this section in the context of Atkinson's work on Bourdieu's family field. As the next chapter will go on to demonstrate, this overlap helps shape the habitus and forms the basis of a partial reconciliation between Bourdieu and Archer.

g) Conclusion

In this chapter I have briefly introduced Margaret Archer's work on reflexivity and the relationship between this and Bourdieu's habitus, and have begun to outline the relevance of this work to the lived experiences of people in the third age. I have suggested maintaining elements from Archer's work with some adjustment, for example, using the concept of personal morphogenesis to discuss life course trajectories while amplifying the role of the 'Me' (the past and socially situated self over time), and maintaining the concept of transvaluation while amplifying the role of 'myself' which is the "store of all first-order emotions". I have also briefly introduced Archer's work on reflexive modalities and reflected

on the importance of placing these within a Bourdieusian social context, while also retaining insights into the effects of particular relational configurations on the internal conversation. In the following chapter I propose ways in which attending to emotions and an emotional habitus, Honneth's theoretical work on recognition, and generational habitus, could offer a new form of partial reconciliation between reflexivity and the habitus over the life course and into the third age.

3. Emotional Habitus, Recognition and Generation: their importance for understanding life course transitions

a) Introduction

Having introduced and discussed the fundamental elements of Archer's theoretical work on reflexivity and emotion, this chapter will outline the significance of emotion to Bourdieu's habitus, exploring ways in which emotional dispositions or an 'emotional habitus' (Crossley, 1996, 1998), can be used to supplement Archer's work on the internal conversation, and suggests ways in which this habitus can be traced within her own reflexive modalities. It then explores Honneth's theoretical work on the importance of recognition and suggests its potential usefulness as a partial bridge between the work of Archer and Bourdieu. Finally, I turn to a brief exploration of generational habitus as the third central element in understanding the trajectory of a life. In doing this, I will review these theoretical concepts in the context of the empirical work undertaken by Archer and others and will use this to inform my approach to field work and the analysis that will be presented in this thesis.

b) Emotions and the Habitus

In this section I will describe the significance of emotions to Bourdieu's habitus, review literature on the concept of the 'emotional habitus' as a distinct entity, and explore the relevance of this, and of social structure, to Archer's reflexive modalities.

i. The role of emotion in the constitution of the habitus

Emotion is, for Bourdieu, key to the internalisation of the structures of the field. As indicated in the previous chapter, this begins with the development of the primary habitus within the family, through a relationship between parent and child that is "highly charged with affectivity" (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 167). Similarly, the emotional significance of the external world is found in the dominant system of symbolic value or 'misrecognition' that has the capacity of shaping emotional responses, creating feelings of "timidity or arrogance" (1989, p. 17). This is a system of 'soft' violence (Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1994, p. 270) in which that

associated with the dominant class of people is afforded more worth, while that associated with the subordinate class is devalued.

More recent work by others on the habitus has noted the importance of emotion and has elaborated on Bourdieu's own account. Flam lauds Bourdieu for his work on humiliation as the "missing emotional link" between power structures and a subjective sense of self (2009, p. 188), while Sayer expresses surprise that Bourdieu did not focus more on emotions as a topic in their own right, considering his development of the habitus and the obvious emotional consequences of symbolic domination (2009b, p. 114, 2010, p. 93). Probyn suggests that Bourdieu was "rather vague on the place of emotion" (2004, p. 225), emphasizing the role of shame and the embodied nature of feelings in what she calls the "affective habitus", and Diane Reay has advocated for a refocus on the emotional aspect of the habitus when looking at "the mutual constitution of the individual and the social relations within which they are enmeshed" (2015, p. 9, see also 2004a). Nevertheless, the habitus as both constituted through and expressive of an emotional charge has been firmly established (Reed-Danahay, 2004, pp. 99-128).

This emotional weight modulates our projections into the future, orienting us through our sense of what is likely and unlikely, or rather what is probable and what is merely possible (Probyn, 2004, p. 230, Reed-Danahay, 2004, Bourdieu, 1990¹³) and is here held to intercede in the internal conversation when Archer's the 'I' projects forward to the 'You', without nullifying the conversation itself. Indeed, this conversation can work to extend the parameters of this very sense of probability or possibility into the future, for, it is through it that we can consciously amend and adapt the habitus and develop new practices, as described by Sayer (2005a, p. 30).

The importance of multiple forms of recognition that help to create, shape, and maintain the emotional weight of a habitus will be discussed in section c of this chapter, but first we will turn to a discussion of the 'emotional habitus' as a distinct entity.

ii. Emotional habitus

A further way in which the relationship between emotion and the habitus can be theorized is in the concept of an 'emotional habitus', an incredibly useful theoretical device that will help

¹³ Bourdieu describes this anticipation as sometimes being so great that it is as though the future becomes a part of the present; "the extreme case of such anticipation, is a hallucinatory 'presenting' of 'the impending future, which, as bodily reactions identical to those of the real situation bear witness, leads a person to live a still suspended future as already present, or even already past, and necessary and inevitable 'I'm a dead man', 'I'm done for'" (1990, p. 292).

to illustrate the ways in which emotional experiences become consolidated as a form of habitus, as an internalised constraint or enablement that can be found, on re-evaluation, to exist at the heart of Archer's own modalities.

Crossley draws on Merleau-Ponty's notion of an "individual emotional repertoire" which we all develop, in his conception of an emotional habitus (1998, p. 66-67, see also Crossley, 1996). He quotes his powerful description of the ongoing and self-sustaining nature of low 'self-esteem', which I will reproduce here,

"It is improbable' that I should at this moment destroy an inferiority complex in which I have been content to live for twenty years. That means that I have committed myself to inferiority, that I have made it my abode, that this past, though not a fate, has at least a specific weight and is not a set of events over there, at a distance from me, but the atmosphere of my present." (Merleau-Ponty 1962, p. 442, cited in Crossley, 1998, p. 67)

Crossley describes this insistence on the 'institution' of personal history; the repetition of responses and interpretations that become 'sedimented' in our ways of being in the world (a disposition that is developed through 'communicative action'), in contrast with the 'ahistoricity' of Sartre's belief in the novelty of each response to a situation (1998, pp. 66-68). Although "radical personal change" is held to be possible, Crossley describes how, for Merleau-Ponty (1962), a complete transformation of emotional responses in this way is "very unlikely or improbable" (1998, p. 67).

Similarly, Diane Reay, who has written extensively on contemporary experiences of class and education using Bourdieu's concepts of capital and habitus (2000, 2004a, 2004b, 2015, 2017), suggests something like an emotional habitus in reflecting on the ways in which positive or negative emotions such as superiority or entitlement, guilt or discomfort become "sedimented in certain habitus" as a result of particular "affective and psychological transactions" (2015, p. 13), emphasizing the importance of relations in describing "the mutual constitution of the individual and the social relations within which they are enmeshed" (p. 9).

The term 'emotional habitus' is seen as problematic by Scheer (2012), who disagrees with dividing the habitus in a manner that she sees as contrary to Bourdieu's intentions, preferring to discuss 'emotional practices' as emerging from culturally and historically contingent contexts. However, it is argued here that to speak of emotional habitus helps us to understand both the durable nature of emotional dispositions that can exist within processes of change or stasis as a result of previous experiences, and to point to the ways in which these may be partly constitutive of Archer's reflexive modalities themselves.

A positive and optimistic emotional habitus, although not named as such, seems to be at the centre of Sayer's description of the middle-class habitus as bringing a sense of ease, enterprise, entitlement and security to its bearers (2009a). It is this sense of ease that he sees as marking out the group of young people who are seen to be pursuing their various reflexive projects at the beginning of *Making Our Way in the World*, and who are described by her as "not Bourdieu's people" (2007, p. 61). Perhaps surprisingly, Archer appears to partly agree with this, citing Sayer's review of her work (2009a) and noting that social capital "works through transmitting a confidence and a lack of trepidation...*in pursuing* the situational logic of opportunity" (2009, p. 137, emphasis in original). Yet she rejects the extent of the privilege that it affords in the "unpredictable" world of "nascent globalisation" (2007, p. 56), reverting again to a discussion of reflexive deliberations, contextual incongruities, and personal concerns (2009, pp. 137-138).

Burkitt made direct links to Bourdieu's work in describing an 'emotional habitus' that is an explicitly cultural way of "speaking about emotions and acting out and upon bodily feelings within everyday life" (1997, p. 43). His use of the term relates partly to the culturally contingent (including classed, raced and gendered) ways that emotion is talked of and practiced through "techniques of the body" (1999, p. 127), and partly to "a tendency to certain emotional or intellectual habitual actions" (2002, p. 232), which are themselves embodied and visible. In the latter instance an emotional habitus is described as something which we all "possess" and which "tends to mark out our character in the eyes of others", such as being calm or quick to anger (2002, p. 231).

These descriptions are quite distinct from Crossley's use of the term as previously described, since they speak to the ways in which our experiences and practices of emotion are culturally created and/or visibly enacted, rather than to a subjective but enduring feeling of positive or negative emotions in respect of the self. The latter instance is closer to Crossley's notion of the emotional habitus, as a durable and transposable subjective sense of self that we carry between and across social fields, however the focus is still on the externality of emotions and emotional responses, and relates to "open displays of temperament" (Burkitt, 2002, p. 231).

Nevertheless, Burkitt also describes "emotional habits", which are "the sedimentation of past patterns of relationships and actions" (2014, pp. 7-8), and "emotional dispositions", signifying "the habitual way in which we are disposed to act according to our feelings" (2014, pp. 59). These habits and dispositions are, it is emphasized, "open to change", adaptive to new situations (pp. 7-8), and are responsive to relations that are themselves "constantly in flux" (p.168). As noted in Chapter Two, he argues for a re-centering of emotions in the reflexive or agentic action that is described by Archer, by understanding the self and reflexive responses as created biographically and through emotionally charged interactions with others (2012,

2014, 2016). He also writes of the distinction between emotional reflexivity in which emotions are seen to shape our reflexive responses to the world, and reflexivity *about* emotions, as described by Holmes (2010), in which we are able to interpret and reflexively respond to objectified emotions (Burkitt, 2012). Holmes suggests that empirical work on “what type of individuals” are able to perform this type of reflexivity is “in urgent need of further theoretical and empirical attention” (2010, p. 147).

The definition of emotional habitus that is used in this study is informed both by Crossley’s focus on the durable nature of positive and negative dispositions that form an “abode”, and Burkitt’s “emotional dispositions” or “habits” that are shaped by social relations and biographical elements, but with an emphasis on change and adaptation in response to changing circumstances. The analysis is also significantly informed by Burkitt’s concept of the relational and emotional “social self” (in opposition to Archer’s overly reflexive self), which is the foundation of reflexive or agentic action, since our “self-feeling” and our agency are shaped by our interpretation of the responses of others, with an imagination that can be shaped by past interactions with people, perhaps stretching back to “early infancy”,

“we are...inclined to imagine certain judgements in the minds of other depending on the self-feelings we have developed throughout our life-experiences in social interaction. Here, not only imagination but also memory is central to the sense of self and is therefore a crucial part of our agency – the stance we take towards others and the way we act.” (Burkitt, 2012, p. 466, see also 2008, 2016).

The sense of a specific emotional habitus as something that endures as a result of social experiences and can shape choices made over the life course, but with a responsiveness to changing relational circumstances, will be explored in the empirical chapters (chapters Six to Nine) and is relevant to theories of recognition that will be discussed in section c of this chapter. I will now move on to look at the relevance and potential role of this emotional habitus to Archer’s own reflexive modalities.

iii. Archer’s modalities and an emotional habitus

In the final part of this section I will describe the ways in which affective and emotional experiences, internalised as an emotional habitus, can be found within Archer’s own

description of reflexive modalities and of her participants' reasons for choice-making, diminishing or enhancing their agentic actions in the world.

A sense of the internal voice being itself subject to external structuring is very much at the heart of Flam's argument on the emotional effects of social structure on Archer's internal conversation (2009, p. 190-191). She mentions Crossley's concepts of emotional habitus and of 'communicative action' (1998) in arguing that emotions of shame and humiliation, created by structural oppression, can 'silence' and even 'destroy' the internal 'I' (p. 189). She describes how external silencing and the diminishment of self-worth can create a 'silenced' or 'ambivalent' internal voice, beset with low self-esteem and debilitating under-confidence, which leads to a diminished ability to act agentially, albeit this can be specific to particular areas of a life (p. 200). Flam suggests that this silenced or ambivalent 'I' may correlate with the 'fractured reflexives' of Archer, whose internal conversation is circular and tends to intensify distress, leading to inaction (pp. 199-200). However, she also points out that "for all the disclaimers", Archer's concern is with "self-confident reflexivity" (p. 201) as the defacto norm. For Flam, although "domination is never perfect" as the disrespected 'I' may develop "subversive" emotions that are linked to transvaluation, as a result of the positive example or regard of others (p. 200), its effect on the internal conversation is crucial. Domination can create "deep and debilitating shame", working "as an action predisposition, as part of one's habitus" (pp. 188-189) and can lead to "humiliated, possibly angered, yet 'voiceless' selves" (p. 198).

Moreover, it is pointed out by Flam that, far from being a marginal or pathological internal process, the short-circuited thinking that is characterized by obsessions, self-blame, scapegoating and 'S-DDD' (self-deception, self-delusion and self-denial) is "normal" rather than 'deviant'. These disruptions are based in "exaggerated insecurities, anxieties [and] overconfidence" which can 'block' reflexivity, "constructive decision-making", and a healthy "(self-) critical voice" (2009, pp. 195-197).

A lack of confidence can be found in Archer's descriptions of a functioning (ie. non 'fractured') modality; that of 'communicative reflexives'. Archer's insistence on the reflexive desire for continuity as a priority for this group has weight, since, as discussed in the previous chapter, our 'commitment to concerns' is an important way of orienting ourselves in the world. Yet, when reading the descriptions of the young communicative reflexives in her student sample (2012), it is hard to avoid the undercurrent of insecurity and under-confidence in some of the voices of these young women, which appears to diminish their sense of agency. Their affiliation with the natal family over other possibilities appeared, for many, to spring from under-confidence and timidity as much as from true reflexive commitment, judging by how often references to confidence came up in this group, in both this and an earlier study (2012, 2007 pp. 102-103). This suggests that, for at least some, one

causal mechanism at play was not wholehearted rejection of change or novelty but a diminished or constrained agentic capacity. Archer describes this sample of six interviewees as all characterized by lack of confidence and timidity, displaying “diffidence, uncertainty, indecisiveness and a lack of self-confidence” (2012, p. 132). Archer does not seem to consider that they may have an emotional habitus that has predisposed them to presenting as such for reasons that are not immediately apparent, instead, rejecting any assumptions that they may be “weak students” by reassuring us of their academic capabilities (pp. 132-133). Indeed, the role played by under-confidence in this particular mode is indicated by Archer when she suggests that the three reasons for a reflexive process that requires talking things through with people is for the “completion” of an idea by others, “confirmation” of having considered the issues fully, and the “enhancement of their self-confidence to act upon their ratiocinations” (2007, p. 114). Two out of this group in the student sample are described as working-class, or, as Archer put it, “*non-middle-class*” (p. 130) yet for all of them, Lynsey Hanley’s suggestion that (for working-class people) home and family acts as a “refuge” from the travails of the outside world (2016) may be applicable, with Archer’s ‘similar and familiars’ seeming to represent a place of safety as much as anything else.

All six ‘communicative’ interviewees in this sample were female. Archer explains this relationship between gender and mode by noting that four fifths of the entry population were female and that there was no statistically significant result in cross-tabulating mode with gender throughout the whole sample (2012, p. 129). Yet the fact that women were slightly over-represented in the sample of ‘communicatives’ (of those surveyed as well as interviewed), with only two men in the subset of seventeen (pp. 128-9) may be notable, considering the diffidence that is described by many of the interviewees. This correlates with Flam’s description of the effect of a gendered hierarchy on the internal conversations of women, as external devaluation of women’s thoughts and feelings can create a lack of trust in their own judgments and emotions, which can have a deeply inhibiting effect on the reflexive process (2010, p. 188).

Contrastingly, autonomous reflexivity is described by Archer herself as the “precise opposite in every respect”, when compared with the ‘communicatives’ who need to talk things through with friends and family (2007, p. 95). The internal emotional habitus of this group is highlighted in their description as,

“practitioners (who) display confidence in relying upon their own mental resources and, when these require supplementing, generally prefer expert advice or a search for independent information, such as reference books or the Internet” (2007, p. 95).

This description of the ways in which the 'autonomous' group's self-oriented reflexivity functions reflects what Flam would call a "self-confident (internal) voice" (2009, p. 198). Archer also acknowledges that for the autonomous reflexives to have positive relational experiences that reinforce their approach to the world it is necessary to begin with a pre-existing sense of confidence that is then re-confirmed by positive experiences (2007, p. 194). This confidence is not theorised by Archer as a form of emotional habitus, but it seems to signify a habituated emotional and social response and it is argued here that it is reasonable to describe it as such.

There also appears to be a relationship between gender and mode in the Coventry sample, as eight out of the twelve "autonomous" interviewees are male (p. 118). Archer explains this as being 'solely' the result of the availability and willingness of interviewees (p. 118), declaring that membership of any modal group 'did not appear' to be connected to gender (p. 336). However, it is also admitted that choosing the "highest scorer" in the relationship between survey questions and modalities (ie. interviewees that represent a best fit for the reflexive mode) did create a gender imbalance for the autonomous, in what appears to be a contradictory explanation (2007, p. 336). Similarly, the 'mostly male' nature of the autonomous group of the 'ad hoc' 2003 sample is noted by Vandenberghe in his (very positive) review of the reflexivity project (2005, p. 235).

In terms of class, Archer appeared to find a relationship between modality and class of origin early on in the reflexivity trilogy; in the first sample it was found that the majority of communicative reflexives were working class in origin, with a percentage of those who began as working class developing autonomous reflexivity (Porpora and Shumar, 2009, p. 209, referencing Archer, 2003). This is presented by Archer as an argument against a relationship between class and reflexivity but Porpora and Shumar rightly query this. They suggest that what Archer may have captured is a form of intergenerational mobility, in which those who have had the opportunity to develop "a more internalized style of self-reflection" are more likely to succeed in education and become upwardly mobile, therefore representing a "counter-trajectory" of a socially mobile minority within an overall tendency towards class reproduction (2009, p. 209).

As noted, Archer concedes that her student sample was not "representative" of their cohort; selected for entry to Warwick university they certainly had above average education and were mostly "extremely articulate" (2012, p. 8). However, in the cross-class Coventry sample, a 'tendential' similarity between autonomous and meta-reflexive participants in terms of class background, current occupational status and level of education is noted (2007, p. 153). Although the only one of these relationships that was found to be statistically significant was between education and autonomous and meta-reflexivity (which is itself notable from a classed perspective), the overlap that seemed to have emerged is important.

If we accept that modes are, as Archer suggests, distinct ways of engaging with the world, then it is not argued here that these different forms of reflexivity are simply reducible to the classed or gendered structures of society that are so often expressed and made manifest through systems of social recognition and misrecognition (as will be discussed in the following section of this chapter). However, the extent to which emotional habitus or social structure is correlative with, or exists within, the experience of different forms of reflexivity is highly significant. It can indicate the ways in which agency may *also* be structured in relation to differential access to resources (including emotional resources), with effects that can be enhanced or exacerbated by repeated social experiences, returning us to the definition of a “socio-culturally mediated capacity to act” that was suggested by Ahearn (2013) and discussed in the previous chapter. These points correspond with arguments about the diverse relational and emotional experiences that are said to underpin specific behaviours that Archer ascribes to particular modalities, and with the continued relevance of gender in shaping our behaviour and its underlying rationale, as described by Burkitt (2016) and Caetano (2017).

Sophie Mills (2016) has written on the emotional habitus and Archer’s modalities in research conducted with twelve Business and Management doctoral students across eight UK universities. She used Burkitt’s definition of emotional habitus, which she describes as “a series of emotional dispositions that equip people with certain language and behaviours that are accepted or expected ways of being” (p. 268), and as “preconceived and generally accepted understandings of feelings and associated behaviours” (p. 294), to argue that “Emotional Habitus + Reflexivity = Emotional Reflexivity” (p. 294). This is a point with which I concur, and although her definition of emotional habitus uses Burkitt’s description of socially contingent understandings of emotion and emotional behaviours, the negative and positive feelings that are discussed in the empirical chapters are internal and subjective qualitative experiences. She also points to the presence or lack of confidence in participants as part of the functioning of Archer’s modalities.

Mills’ empirical findings are of interest in identifying the functioning of positive and negative emotional experiences within Archer’s modalities. She found that Archer’s four modes had empirical resonance within her sample but that participants moved between different modes as contextually appropriate and sometimes experienced “fracturing” of their reflexivity, with “displaced reflexivity” associated with participants having “crises of confidence in their own abilities” (p. 278). It was also found that while ‘fractured reflexivity’ is characterized by purely negative emotion, the experience of all other modalities contained a mixture of both positive and negative emotions. The importance of relational and emotional experiences to reflexivity is also emphasized.

However, her research differs in some important respects from the data and analysis that will be presented in this thesis. For example, all participants in Mills' study were doctoral students and therefore have similar amounts of educational capital, and their backgrounds and childhood experiences are not explored. The only details regarding their natal and sociological origins that were gathered were age, sex and country of birth (p. 6), and, perhaps most importantly, the research focused purely on their doctoral studies and (where applicable) their employment within higher education. Rather than tracing the relationship between events, emotional habitus, and forms of reflexivity over an extended period of time, the focus is on the current challenges that are faced and negotiated by the participants. This can be seen when Mills maps experiences of positive emotions for different modes; for example, she notes that meta-reflexives feel positive emotions when they talk about the focus of their research and negative emotions when they are confronted with other academics who do not share the same values and motivations (2016, p. 249-250). My approach to emotional habitus focuses more on the inner sense of self and possibility that can be traced, in hindsight and over many years, in a mutually causal relationship between events, habitus, and orientations towards the world.

While Mills' findings are of interest, this study will approach questions of emotion and emotional habitus quite differently. Data analysis will explore emotional experiences of recognition, misrecognition and generation over the life course, mapping out the relationships between these, the development of an emotional habitus, and reflexive choice-making or acts of resistance. It will explore possible relationships with traits of specific modalities as a secondary rather than a primary concern in the analysis and will look for points of comparison and contrast within a deliberately diverse sample of people.

iv. Conclusion

To conclude, the emotional component of habitus, and an emotional habitus, is a means by which social structure and relational experiences are incorporated into our subjectivities, and represent a form of habitus that can, at times, be found at the centre of Archer's modalities. This is an area that would greatly benefit from empirical exploration in relation to Archer's reflexivity over the life course, and to the emotional impacts of formative experiences, in the narratives of a group of people from different social locations in the third age. A life course approach, looking at links between natal background and the trajectory of a life also provides the opportunity to explore Porpora and Shumar's idea of "counter-trajectories" (2009) that was discussed in this section, and the contexts in which these may occur.

We will now turn to recognition theory to explore its usefulness for bringing together the symbolic economy of Bourdieu and the relational goods and harms of Archer which, it is argued, can have a direct influence on our internal conversations and agentic capacities, in an approach that will prove useful for the analysis of life course trajectories.

c) Recognition theory

In this section, I will describe Honneth's theory of recognition (1986, 1995a, 1995b, 2002, 2003), explain the points of overlap between this and the work of both Archer and Bourdieu, and outline its potential usefulness as a new approach to conceptualizing the relationship between these two theories and their application to individual trajectories over the life course.

i. Honneth's theory of recognition and its proposed role in a new accommodation between habitus and reflexivity

It is proposed here that a new way forward in developing an accommodation between Archer's work on reflexivity and Bourdieu's work on the habitus is possible through Honneth's theory of recognition, in conjunction with the emotional habitus that was described in the previous section. Honneth argues that the development of a positive 'relation-to-self' is predicated upon external experiences of intersubjective recognition in three different spheres: the love of family and friends that is found in 'affective recognition', legal recognition through equal rights, and social esteem or the 'achievement principle' (2003, p. 142). This interpretation of the relationship between the internal and the external world allows us to bring together Bourdieu's system of symbolic value or misrecognition with Archer's 'relational harms' and 'relational goods' that are said to shape a reflexive modality but that, from the point of view of work that foregrounds the importance of social recognition, can do much more.

Flam, as noted, turned to Cooley's 'looking glass self' to parse the emotional effects of social recognition on the internal conversation. She describes how essential social recognition is for the internal 'I', lack of which causes it to "become endangered and shrivel" when it "sees itself negatively reflected in the *mirroring eyes* of the other", (2009, p. 199, emphasis in original). This has obvious similarities to the amplified role of 'Me' and 'myself' that I have proposed in the previous chapter, since as one part of the conversation becomes enhanced,

the other may be diminished and vice versa. In the following section I will outline why Honneth's theory has a particular applicability for understanding this process as it not only overlaps with significant parts of Bourdieu and Archer's work, it also speaks to the very diverse and specific types of recognition that are necessary for "full human flourishing" (Anderson, 1995a, p. xxvi) and without which terrible suffering may be caused (Honneth 1995a).

ii. The symbolic economy and social esteem

The primary overlap between the work of Honneth and Bourdieu is through systems of 'recognition' that, in Bourdieu's understanding, are a principle means of structural oppression. This is described as "the transfiguration of relations of domination and submission into affective relations" in the form of a "symbolic alchemy" that can include emotional effects such as feelings of love (Bourdieu 1998, p. 102).

Bourdieu describes the compelling effect of the symbolic economy as "a fascinated pursuit of the approval of others" (2000, p. 166) which is achieved through the "accumulation of symbolic capital (a capital of recognition, honour, nobility, etc.)" (p.195). Similarly, Sayer draws on the vocabulary of Bourdieu in describing the "systematic misrecognition" (in which social groups are overlooked or stigmatised) that is inherent in class inequality (2005a, p. 52). Individuals depend upon others for "recognition, respect, approval and trust" which are "essential" for a person's well-being and their sense of their own self-worth, lack of which can lead to "severe distress, shame and self-contempt" (p. 54).

In comparison, Honneth discusses 'social esteem' (the esteem of others) that leads to 'self-esteem' (or feelings of 'self-worth'). This is a form of recognition for personal achievements that is dependent upon which culturally and historically contingent forms of living and working are seen as worthwhile and are rewarded in any given society (1995a, 2003). There are obvious points of overlap between these two distinct approaches, although there are clear differences too. Honneth offers distinct forms of recognition that have a particular usefulness in understanding the effects of structural, and specifically relational, experiences over the trajectory of a life.

iii. Affective recognition and relational goods

Crucially for the purposes of this study, Honneth offers an explanation of the importance of love, affection and care to our "positive-relation-to-self", in the form of 'affective recognition'

(2003, pp. 138-139, 1995a), which is critical for our self-confidence and can be found in the parent-child relationship, through romantic relations and within friendships. For, Honneth believes, “we live in a social order in which individuals owe the possibility of an intact identity to affective care, legal equality, and social-esteem” (2003, p. 181).

As noted in the previous chapter, Archer argues for an emergentist concept of relational ‘goods’ and ‘evils’ that is not concerned with the direct effects of these on a person but with the reflexive responses that they create, shaping people as ‘identifiers’, ‘independents’, ‘disengaged’, or ‘rejecters’ of the natal environment (2012, pp. 98-102). She argues that fractured reflexivity, which is described as a form of internal distress and a lack of agentic action, is caused by “relational evils” (2012, p. 257) and that relational goods can heal this mode of reflexivity. She describes various forms of fracturing, including “displaced”, “impeded” and “underdeveloped”, all of which, it is argued, can be overcome through relational means such as “effective support from (a) chosen network of friends” (2012, p. 289). This support can lead to an increased agentic capacity, as fracturing “can be overcome given the appropriate relational conditions and, with it, passive agency can be left behind” (p. 290).

The healing effects of these goods are, for Archer, a means of offering “directional guidance” for those who are reflexively lost (2012, p. 289), just as the ‘evils’ cause a rejection of the natal environment and a relational ‘deficit’, providing no guidance for reflexive endeavours. Yet it is hard to avoid the conclusion that these relational goods also provide a means of emotional support and confidence, namely, affective recognition, in situations where it is badly needed. Therefore, the influence they have far exceeds the creation of a positive context for reflexive action and includes the more direct effect of enhancing a positive sense of self.

This can be seen in the example of Julie, described as a “communicative” reflexive who was badly bullied by her housemates but lacked the confidence to look for other accommodation and dreaded giving offence (2012, p. 255). She is described as being displaced to fractured reflexivity because her isolated situation depriving her of interlocutors, as she had found no trusted partner for ‘thought and talk’ in the house and could not talk things through with family due to fear of being overheard. But what she was also experiencing was a significant amount of misrecognition in her domestic life that seemed to exacerbate her already low confidence, and a lack of affective recognition to compensate for this. In the course of her studies Julie resolved this by moving in with course friends where she was much happier, having restored her ability to talk things through with trusted interlocutors, but also, crucially, restored herself to a situation in which she was surrounded with much needed friendship (p. 257).

Similarly, another of Archer's case studies in the student sample, Shirin, is described as entering university as a fractured reflexive having experienced significant bullying by her family. At university she was isolated and underconfident, and describes feeling intimidated by the self-assurance of the middle-class students that she met,

"I'm so anti-social, that's not good...I have problems with confidence and talking to people because you haven't done it for so long you don't know how to interact with people...it's too daunting, too intimidating and I want to run away, especially when they are middle class and self-assured." (2012, p. 266).

She ascribes 'confidence' to her fellow students as part of an embodied habitus that chimes with the 'habitus of possibility' found by Forbes and Lingard in their work in an 'elite' school (2013), and with the 'security, enterprise and entitlement' that was described by Sayer as characterizing the middle-class habitus (2009b, p. 120).

Shirin's own agentic capacity, her "instrumental rationality" is developed after a friend "took her under her wing", introduced her to a network of friends and encouraged her to pursue opportunities (2012, p. 266). While Archer focuses on the guidance offered by the friend and the opportunities for reflexive action this opened up, it is very clear that what Shirin received more than anything was a huge boost in her confidence through affective recognition,

"Shirin recognizes that her friend 'helped me be ambitious as well. I (was) like "I shouldn't apply here, I'm aiming too high" and she (was) like "don't be stupid, apply, of course you can do it"...so it's (been) really, really helpful to have a friend like that because then you actually do it if you have someone to tell you that you can." (2012, p. 266).

An argument for 'relational goods' as a form of Honneth's affective care, in the creation of a confident and agentic form of self-orientation, is described by Lopes and Calapez (2012). They use the term 'relational goods' (albeit with no connection to Archer) to discuss the importance of Honneth's mutual recognition to "the development of a positive identity" throughout a person's life (p. 81). They describe the creation of self-confidence through emotional support in a wide range of relationships (p. 84), and the importance of a high degree of relational goods in order to develop a "trust in oneself" (p. 86). This Honnethian "positive relation to self" brings with it feelings of being "efficient, effective, and confident of our ability to achieve our goals", which, although they do not name it as such, indicates a heightened sense of agency.

It is precisely these affective and loving relations to which Murphy refers when reviewing McNay's (2008a) argument against the use of recognition theory and in favour of Bourdieu (Murphy, 2014); he argues that there is an inherent limitation to being concerned with relations purely as the effects of social structure. He also argues for the importance of "a Honneth-like intersubjectivity" (para. 2) and for the consideration of "the 'real' 'relational' everyday environments within which people live their lives....that cannot simply be reduced to class and gender", arguing for "a strong intersubjective affective domain that could feasibly operate as a mediator of Bourdieu's embodied habitus" (para. 5). This speaks directly to one of the primary themes of this study and the particular contribution that can be made by the idea of affective care as a form of recognition.

I am, in part, indebted to the work of Atkinson for introducing me to Honneth's notion of 'affective recognition' in his elaboration of Bourdieu's own work. He describes what he sees as an overlooked focus in Bourdieu's work on the 'three R's' that, for him, form the foundation of his "vision of the social world", with 'recognition, relationalism and applied or historicized rationalism' as the focus, 'linking up with,' and giving depth to, Honneth's own work on recognition (2016, p. 11-12). As noted in the previous chapter, Atkinson's use of this form of recognition as vital to the socialisation of children who pursue recognition in the family unit (Atkinson 2016, p. 2014b), is itself an extension of Bourdieu's own work describing the processes by which the child aims to please the parents in pursuance of "recognition, consideration and admiration" (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 167).

Yet for Bourdieu, structural forms of recognition are the primary concern, while for Archer it is reflexive responses to interpersonal relations; Honneth's affective recognition can therefore sit between the work of Archer and Bourdieu, helping to extend extant aspects of both.

iv. Bodily Violations

Honneth's argument that physical violence represents a specific form of withheld recognition in relation to a person's "physical integrity" (1995a, pp. 131-133, 1995b), can be used to enhance Bourdieu's understanding of the ramifications of symbolic violence. Bourdieu makes clear in *Masculine Domination* that physical assault is, for him, a facet of symbolic violence and a form of domination. He argues against a false separation between symbolic violence on the one hand and "real, actual violence" on the other, calling this a "naive distinction, characteristic of a crude materialism" (2001, p. 34). This argument is indeed resonant; the function of the symbolic economy is to create and maintain a hierarchy of

worth, with all that that entails. Yet the extremes of physical violence that he describes, of 'battered, raped and exploited women' (2001, p. 34), sits at odds with his own description of symbolic violence as a form of 'soft' violence (Bourdieu and Eagleton, 1994), or with the description that he gives at the beginning of *Masculine Domination* itself, of this type of violence as a "gentle violence imperceptible and invisible even to its victims." (2001, p. 1). This disjuncture speaks to work by Probyn (2004) that focuses on the materiality of the body within theories of the habitus, with a proposed turn to "a new feminist materialism" which embraces the need to "rethink matter – and not just social or cultural matter but the brute force of the world and the weight of it, including the body and its sheer physicality" (Adkins, 2004, p. 15). A need to focus on the "specificity" of physical violence is argued for by Walby et al, (2014) in relation to domestic and gender-based violence, for as they rightly argue, "if violence is merely symbolic power, then it is no more than other forms of symbolic power" (p. 190).

Honneth's work on "the violation of the body" supplements this apparent gap, describing physical abuse as "a type of disrespect that does lasting damage to one's basic confidence (learned through love) that one can autonomously coordinate one's own body" (1995a, p. 132). He describes the ways in which forms of physical abuse in which a person's control over their own body is removed, such as rape and torture, can make a person feel as though they have been "deprived of reality" (p. 32), and are "always accompanied by a breakdown in one's trust in the reliability of the world and hence by a collapse in one's own basic self-confidence" (1995a, p. 33). In this way the profound and visceral effects of abuse and physical harm are brought to the fore.

This idea of bodily violations, fundamental to experiences of flourishing and suffering that will be discussed below, can be used to enhance Bourdieu's concept of the role of physical violence in relation to social structures rather than to replace it. It also obviates Archer's dichotomy between the natural, practical and social realms (discussed in the previous chapter) through what has been described as the "intense affective grip" (Aarseth, 2016, p. 93) that the habitus exerts upon us all. In the analysis presented in the empirical chapters of this thesis the enduring effects of physical violence, with both classed and gendered undertones, will be seen to carry an emotional significance that functions within, but should not be subordinated to, discussion of symbolic violence.

v. Social suffering

The suffering, physical, relational and otherwise that these theories capture, speaks to Bourdieu's concern with what he called the "social weightlessness" of a scholastic approach

to the world (2000, p. 13-14), as discussed by McNay (2012). McNay applauds the work of both Bourdieu and Honneth in this area, rejecting accusations against Honneth of “suffer mongering” by those who have overlooked the “theoretical significance” of social suffering as an idea (2012, p. 230). She rejects Nancy Fraser’s argument that Honneth’s concern with suffering is a form of (in McNay’s words) “unqualified subjectivism”, pointing out that both Bourdieu and Honneth offer a phenomenological approach to embodied experiences that illuminates rather than obviates the objective importance of social structure (2012, p. 233). I would add to this that, while Fraser’s notion of recognition that separates “maldistribution” from “misrecognition”, and centres on the “parity of participation” of different groups (2003), has much to recommend it as a model of justice¹⁴, her claim that there is no single shared universal conception of the good life that can form the basis of recognition claims is problematic (p. 30). Groups with different recognition claims may have different notions of ‘the good life’ in practice, and, as Fraser points out, if recognition as a question of social justice is purely a question of self-esteem then racist groups could make legitimate claims for recognition (p. 38). Yet an understanding of the importance of suffering and flourishing, however these are conceptualized, must underpin her model of justice and any claims for recognition that can be made therein, for without this nothing can be either just or unjust, legitimate or illegitimate. Therefore, as Honneth argues, “a conception of the good life” is essential (2003, p. 114).

McNay ultimately concludes that Honneth’s concept of recognition is too reductive and indeed, “romanticised”, to do justice to social suffering as a ‘disclosing critique’ of the effects of social structure (2012, p. 231, see also McNay 2008a and 2008b), but here it is held to work in conjunction with Bourdieu’s habitus and Archer’s reflexivity, in order to more fully explicate processes of flourishing and suffering and the sedimentation of these in the habitus. We may also remember the criticism of Murphy that McNay should not overlook the purely relational, and it is Honneth’s affective recognition and his emphasis on the need for physical integrity that carry the most weight in this regard.

A symbiotic use of recognition theory and habitus in the analysis of empirical research is not entirely without precedent; West et al. (2013) found that applying both theories in their analysis of the higher education journeys of non-traditional students was very productive. They found that changes in the habitus that can be brought about by movement into higher education could be usefully parsed through the work of Honneth and explained by the positive recognition of the people that they interacted with in those fields, or of the institution

¹⁴ It is particularly useful in helping us to think through the problems of conflicting or competing claims for recognition by different groups in a modern and pluralistic society.

itself, which had the power to boost confidence and alter subjective responses to future interactions and opportunities.

vi. Honneth's view on the habitus

It must be noted that Honneth expressed skepticism about the habitus on more than one occasion, objecting to its apparently 'utilitarian' attributes (1986,1995b) and the tension he saw between the idea of classed forms of collective habitus and the impulse toward capital maximization; a tension, or 'contradiction' that has been expressed elsewhere (King, 2000, Blunden, 2004). However, this reading of the habitus is too reductive, and seems to overlook the fuzzy nature of it as an underlying "generative principle", productive of practices that "tend to reproduce" that which can be found in the "objective conditions" in which the habitus was itself produced, but that are capable of "adjusting to the objective potentialities in the situation", albeit, with these penalties "defined by the cognitive and motivating structures making up the habitus" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 78). Change is "a necessary consequence" of the interrelationship between habitus and field (Hardy, 2012, p. 126), with habitus as a form of embodied history that is explicitly *not* "a mechanistic theory of practice as mechanical reaction". (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 62).

Despite Honneth's criticisms of the habitus, it is said that he "borrowed" his concept of social suffering from Bourdieu (McNay, 2012, p. 230), that he is indebted to Bourdieu's conceptualization of "social suffering as embodied power relations" (p. 233), and that he connected his work to Bourdieu's "at the sociological end" (Atkinson, 2016, p. 81). This shared imaginary of social suffering and flourishing, together with the differences in their approaches, means that bringing them together makes for effective theoretical tools for empirical analysis. As we will see, these concepts are important for understanding people's sense of identity, their life histories and trajectories, and how they conceive of their successes and failures.

vii. Conclusion

To conclude this section before moving on to discuss generation; it is proposed that Honneth's theory of recognition, in conjunction with the concept of emotional habitus, will be particularly useful in developing a new approach to the relationship between the work of Archer and Bourdieu over the life course. Honneth's work will complement and illuminate themes that were underexplored in both bodies of work, bringing in new concepts such as

'affective recognition' and the visceral and lasting effects of physical violence. This helps us to trace processes of flourishing and suffering, and the relationship between the effects of these and reflexivity or agency, across the life course. I now turn to a brief discussion of generational habitus in order to complete this introduction to the main analytical concepts of the study.

d) Generation and generational habitus

Having established the importance of the emotional habitus and recognition as interacting with reflexivity over the life course, it is important not to overlook the generational aspect of the unconscious or semi-conscious schema that is the habitus, which must also play a part in the analysis of diverse life course experiences for those in the third age.

'Generational habitus' is a concept that was implicitly suggested by Bourdieu in his description of generational conflict, in which he touched upon habitus as a property of generation, declaring that, "generational conflicts oppose not age classes separated by natural properties but habitus which have been produced by different modes of generation" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 78, cited in Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, p. 70). Gilleard and Higgs among others (Eyerman and Turner, 1998, Edmunds and Turner, 2002) have developed Bourdieu's work, in conjunction with Mannheim's theory of generation, into the concept of 'generational habitus'.

Writing in 1928, Mannheim proposed bringing together a shared point in history that he called "generational location" with a shared consciousness, or "a new generation style", that he called "entelechie" (1952), in a definition that has retained its relevance despite subsequent debates, due to a "resonance that cannot be easily ignored" (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, p. 64).

Mannheim's concept of "location" has been "redefined" by Gilleard and Higgs as Bourdieu's 'field', and generational consciousness has become generational 'habitus', defined by shared discourses and practices rather than by conscious awareness of these (2005, p. 70). This use of habitus has echoes of Turner's earlier description of generation as "a cohort of persons passing through time who come to share a common habitus and lifestyle" (1998, p. 302), but Bourdieu's concepts have been given greater definition in the notion of 'generational habitus' that, for Gilleard and Higgs, is produced by multiple and overlapping birth cohorts engaging in the "temporally located cultural field" that represents generation (2005, p. 70).

This notion of generational habitus is argued by Gilleard and Higgs to have a particular application to the cohorts who came of age in the 1960's and were at the forefront of youth

culture and the rise of consumer society. These social changes were themselves said to create a “generational break” between the habitus of working-class young people and their parents’ generation, which was “one of the central features” in the cultural revolution of the 1960’s (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, p. 75).

The generational habitus that emerged during the post-war development of mass markets, with new modes of consumption as expressions of identity, and a preoccupation with youthfulness, is now seen to be reshaping or redefining post-retirement identities (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, 2009, 2015, Jones et al, 2008a, Blaikie, 2006). The “logic of consumption” and concomitant individualizing processes that emerged at this time is seen to be integral to the third age itself (p. 25), as it was within these that “many of the habitus of the third age were formed” (Gilleard and Higgs, 2009, p. 30).

This focus on the significance of generation is not without dissenters; Purhonen (2016) argues that this type of ‘generationalism’ is an oversimplified interpretation of Bourdieu’s diverse or inconsistent comments on generation. He accuses Mannheim, Gilleard and Higgs, Turner, and others of essentially reifying a concept that for Bourdieu was, like class, a question of classificatory struggles. Yet, attention to the constructed nature of ‘class’ did not prevent Bourdieu naming the objective reality and the lived experience of an embodied ‘class habitus’, created by homogenous ‘conditions of existence’ (1984, p. 101, 1977, p. 80). Ultimately, it is conceded by Purhonen that ‘the objective reality’ of generations leads to a situation in which “generationalism itself *is* a part of *common sense* and thus, of social reality” (p. 108), although one to be approached with care.

Purhonen’s concerns of generation being prioritized over other forms of social division such as class has merit for some approaches (here he cites Wohl, 1979), as will be seen in the following chapter. However, this is a question of theorization and empirical application, and should not be used to undermine sociological inquiry into generation or generational habitus as an objective reality, provided we take note of his advice to use this instrument with precision. It may be useful to remind ourselves that for a disposition to be described as a form of generational habitus it is not necessary for it to have complete saturation, but only to describe a lived identity or unconscious way of being in the world that links members of a generation (Jones et al. 2008, p. 35, Gilleard and Higgs, 2005).

As this study is concerned with multiple influences on a person’s identity and trajectory, including class, recognition, and emotional habitus, it is unlikely that generation-as-an-explanation will take up more space in the analysis than it merits. However, it is necessary to explore generational habitus in the study alongside questions of emotional habitus and recognition, in order to further account for the varied unconscious dispositions and identities of participants who are in Laslett’s third age but from different generational locations. This avoids ‘finding for’ a relatively untrammelled reflexivity at times when a particular form of

agentic engagement with the world and its possibilities, or indeed disengagement, may have been shaped by a particular generational field. If life course research is the study of members of birth cohorts through time then generation in this sense must always be a consideration (Jones et al, 2008).

e) Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined the relationship between the habitus and emotion, introduced and explored the concept of emotional habitus and its relevance to Archer's reflexivity, and explained the usefulness of this to understanding the effects of formative experiences over the life course. I have explored Bourdieu's symbolic economy as a system of misrecognition, and Honneth's theoretical work on multiple forms of recognition, and pointed to the possibilities of a new accommodation between the work of Bourdieu and Archer. I have also introduced and explained the concept of 'generational habitus'. In the following chapter I will turn to questions of the social and symbolic space of the third age, social class identity, and an extension of Bourdieu's 'Structure-Disposition-Agency' schema, before outlining my methodological decisions and approach in the methods chapter, and then turning to an analysis of the data to explore these issues empirically.

4. Social Class and the Third Age

a) Introduction

In this chapter I will explore social class and identity in relation to the work of Archer and Bourdieu and engage with contemporary debates on class and the third age. I will begin by comparing Archer and Bourdieu's formulations of class and mobility, then look at literature on life course inequalities and the symbolic landscape of the third age, before moving onto questions of subjective or articulated class identities, and finishing with a proposal to adapt Mouzelis' extension to Bourdieu's Structure-Disposition-Practice schema, which has particular relevance for the life course and the third age. This chapter of the literature review therefore acts as a precursor to the first empirical chapter that is specifically on class and identity, and it informs the analysis of mobility, immobility, and identity in the eight case studies that make up the further three chapters of analysis.

b) Archer and social mobility

As described in the previous chapter, Archer has written extensively on reflexivity itself, but it is in the second book in her trilogy, *Making Our Way Through the World: Human Reflexivity and Social Mobility* (2007), that she directly engages with questions of class and mobility. This book parses the social "stability, mobility or volatility" (2007, p. 65) of participants through the lens of their respective 'modalities'. She argues that autonomous reflexivity leads to social mobility (or at least repeated attempts at mobility), that communicative reflexivity leads to 'stability' or immobility and that meta-reflexivity leads to 'volatile' patterns of work as people seek occupations that are meaningful to them, often changing careers in search of this. It is also claimed that immobility is itself a choice, or a product of choices rather than a sought for end in itself, as what is important to us in life shapes whether we prioritize ambition and promotion or other concerns, such as contextual continuity or social and familial bonds (2007, pp. 158-191), and that "'staying put' has to be worked at by an active agent" (p. 158).

As noted in Chapter Two, Archer concedes that we do not have access to an infinite choice in the "role array" and that different groups incur different costs and have different "vested interests" (2007, pp. 10-22). Yet, despite her very brief discussion of the ability of parents to

modulate the effects of social structure (as noted in Chapter Two), the development of a career that yields economic or symbolic rewards is seen as inherently reflexive, with mobility framed as a unilateral endeavour. Not accounted for in this analysis are internal constraints and enablements to mobility; the kind of constraints that Hanley alludes to in her description of the “psychological effects” of a metaphorical door slamming on notions of mobility or “respectability”, prompting the question “Which side – *whose* side – were you on when it did?” (2016, emphasis in original).

Bourdieu’s “finalist illusion” that lays out a path into a future that we believe we are choosing, and his description of the drive to maximize different forms of capital (1990, p. 61, 1986), are insufficient for understanding the internal workings of our self-orientation in the world. However, it is necessary to understand the social and symbolic world that helps to shape the internal ‘I’ throughout the life course, and that forms a context for the past and socially situated ‘Me’ of the third age, in whom the effects of life course experience are accumulated.

c) Bourdieu and social class

Bourdieu sees identity as comprised of differences within social space (1989, 1998) and occupation as ‘generally a good and economical indicator’ of position within this space (1987, p. 4). One of Bourdieu’s central works on class is *Distinction*, in which ‘class habitus’ is described as “the internalized form of class condition and of the conditionings it entails” (p. 1). This is directly related to classificatory processes since “taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier” (p. 6), within a “social hierarchy of consumers” which “predisposes tastes to function as a marker of class” (pp.1-2). Hanley’s metaphor of the doors that slam shut on avenues of possibility echoes Bottero’s description of class as indicative of resources that allow greater control, and that “open doors that might otherwise be closed” (2015, p. 15), and both are reflected in Bourdieu’s metaphorical “closed doors”, which, he argues, we internalise in the habitus, and which curtail our possible pathways through social space (1990, p. 60).

Atkinson has written extensively on the continued relevance of Bourdieu’s social space to contemporary Britain, documenting the “transformations” of this space, and the importance of lifestyle, through a Bourdieusian lens (2013, 2017). He declares that “in terms of class and capital in the social space, we are very much ‘Bourdieu’s people’”, likening class composition in contemporary Britain to that of France in the 1960s and 1970s (Atkinson 2017, p. 13). This is a statement that sits in direct contradistinction with Archer’s argument that young people in

the twenty-first century “are no longer Bourdieu’s people because they no longer live in Bourdieu’s world”, but are instead something entirely new, shaped by the reflexive imperative (2012, p. 68). The understanding of class explored throughout this chapter is informed by a Bourdieusian approach, identifying its relation to lifestyle and capital.

Bourdieu’s argument that identity is formed by weighting and composition of capital and processes of differentiation (1998) is key to an understanding of class for the purposes of this study. Bringing this together with Archer’s understanding of identity as something that is achieved primarily through reflexive processes speaks to the idea of identity as itself a site of “struggle” within power relations, and as part of a process of “endlessly becoming” over the life course (Hockey and James, 2003, pp. 17-18 and p. 136, Jenkins 2008), since our identities have many dimensions and it is “never a final or settled matter” (Jenkins, 2008, p. 17, Hockey and Jenkins, 2003, p. 9).

i. Habitus and Mobility

Archer’s concern with reflexivity and the internal conversation is of course partly a necessary response to the undertheorizing of reflexivity in Bourdieu’s work (see Sayer, 2010). For Bourdieu, reflexivity is normally attributed to the academic approach as described in *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology* (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992), but can be brought about in lay people under certain conditions. This is primarily through a disjuncture between habitus and field (Barrett, 2015, Adkins, 2003, Mouzelis, 2008, Sayer 2010, Sweetman, 2003), or ‘politicization’ from an external source (Sayer, 2010, p. 92). Although Bourdieu’s work contains a concept of social mobility, as the composition of the social space is created by capital volume, capital composition, and changes in this over time, it is one that is “somewhat limiting” (Friedman, 2016, p. 131). He wrote of his own social mobility with poignancy in *Pascalian Meditations* as leading to a “cleft, tormented habitus bearing in the form of tensions and contradictions the mark of the contradictory conditions of formation of which they are the product” (2000, p. 64), with an affective weight that speaks to the power of habitus itself (Reay, 2015, pp. 11-12), but which was also seen as the “exception that proved the rule” (Friedman, 2016, p. 132).

However, a capacity for mutation and adaptation is inherent in the habitus. For Bourdieu, an individual’s disposition is “progressively constituted through a whole social trajectory” (1993, p. 56). The habitus, which is constantly changing due to new experiences (Aarseth et al, 2016), can only be understood through analyzing its position, its positionings, and its “trajectory over time, within social space” (Reed-Danahay, 2017, p. 7). A sense of the

mutations that can be brought about by movement through social space and time is brought to the fore in the work of Atkinson in particular, expanding on concepts that were sketched out by Bourdieu that emphasize the individual as opposed to the field as the unit of analysis (2016).

Atkinson develops the concept of the habitus in relation to habitat as mobile and changing entities over time and space by introducing the concept of the 'now line' (pp. 28-31). The 'now line' encourages analysis of the movement of the individual between fields or 'micro-fields', which both shape and are shaped by the individual's habitus as an ongoing process. This is a theoretical approach which was only briefly touched upon by Bourdieu in his concept of the 'empirical individual', as an approach to "individuals in their full specificity" (Atkinson, 2016, p. 16). Atkinson similarly "reimagine[s]" the habitat as the "lifeworld" of an individual, which encompasses "the totality of the physical and social environment" that constitutes our everyday worlds as we move through different fields (2016 p. 30).

This approach obviously has particular relevance for life course research and research into the third age and will be synthesized into the analysis, mitigating a tendency towards stasis and immobility in some of Bourdieu's work on the habitus. However, the idea of a mutually changing habitus and lifeworld, where the habitus "comprises the 'horizons' of perception" (p. 13) and the lifeworld is made up of "a *multitude* of fields" (p. 15, emphasis in original), is both incredibly useful and also, somewhat inevitably, finite in its analytical application. While our choices and the subjective shaping of our own worlds may ultimately all be traceable to unique configurations of elements in our previous biography, we must also hold space for a greater understanding of reflexive processes themselves.

Having given a brief overview of Archer and Bourdieu's approach to class and social mobility, I now turn to a review of class and gerontology.

d) Social class within gerontology

In this section I explore the importance of social class to the third age and to the lived trajectory, which is a matter of both objective conditions and subjective identity (Hyde and Jones, 2015, Formosa and Higgs, 2015, see also Bottero 2004, Savage 2000, Devine, 2010). Class will therefore be discussed as a structuring condition, and as a subject of self-articulation that speaks to the efficacy of symbolic violence and systems of misrecognition.

There has, in recent years, been a small but important renewal of interest in the question of social class within gerontology. Wendy Bottero has, for example, written on the relevance of last occupation, the accumulation of resources, and post-retirement lifestyles (2015), Alexandra Lopes writes on ways of measuring class and questions of post-retirement social mobility (2015), while Hyde and Jones have discussed the extent to which class itself is a salient descriptor, or is rejected by people living in retirement, in this period of late modernity (2015). Chris Phillipson writes of the “return” of class to “transform daily life in old age” (2015, p. 48), while Higgs and Formosa emphasise the importance of not allowing the power of class, the moral significance, to be obscured by a focus on social stratification and its measurable outcomes, within gerontology (2015). This correlates with an increase in discussion around the ‘moral’ dimensions of class (Skeggs 1997, 2004a, 2004b, 2005, Sayer 2002, 2005a, 2005b, Savage et al, 2001) with arguments that for the majority of people class is a difficult and embarrassing subject to discuss, and that while they are willing to talk about class ‘out there’, they are not comfortable claiming a class identity (Savage et al. 2001). Tyler (2013) describes the concerted effort that is behind this erasure of class, with a “three-decades-long struggle on the part of the elites to jettison the language of class struggle” in order to make class itself into a “revolting subject” (Tyler, 2013, p. 147).

i. Inequality and the life course

This gerontological return to class can be contextualised in research into life course inequalities, the manner in which these can be exacerbated by life course-related processes such as ageing (eg. Irwin 1999), and in response to arguments that class may itself have been replaced by lifestyle and consumption practices as markers of identity during retirement (Gilleard 1996).

One area of disagreement in the literature has focused on the point of ‘cleavage’ in conceptual models of the interrelation between ageing and other forms of inequality. Life-course process arguments, such as those of Sarah Irwin, assert the primary relevance of structures which are applicable across the stages of life, while life-course differentiation theories, for example Bryan Turner’s model, focus on the primary importance of age as a driver of inequality.

Irwin has criticized much mainstream gerontological literature for, in her view, neglecting socio-economic class and other forms of ‘life-course inequalities’ which intersect with the process of ageing, and for using class as a ‘metaphor’ for the social and economic disadvantages of ageing (1999, pp.1-2). Her argument against ‘marginalizing assumptions’

in gerontology, in which other forms of inequality are ignored (1999, p. 692), is important, and chimes with Bill Bytheway's caution not to ignore heterogeneity or reinforce homogenising assumptions (1997, p. 7). Irwin critiques the work of, and is critiqued by, Turner, for whom the point of cleavage is set very differently. Turner uses quantitative analysis to develop a conceptual model around life-course inequality; age is seen as a primary structure of social organisation and conflict, in what he calls a "multi-dimensional model of stratification which considers ageing in relation to economic class, political entitlement, or citizenship, and cultural lifestyles" (1989, p. 588). He argues that age and generation, made manifest in a cultural valuation of productivity and independence (termed the reciprocity-maturation curve), is a crucial manifestation of inequality. He acknowledges that an individual's experience of the reciprocity-maturation curve is "mediated" by their socio-economic class, among other inequalities, but does not give proper consideration to the relationship between these different inequalities and that of ageing. He prefers instead, as Irwin observes, to use class as a 'metaphor' for age, rather than evaluating these interrelationships. It can be argued that far from constructing a 'multi-dimensional' framework, Turner appears to have created a flawed model for understanding these concepts, by abstracting age as a primary form of structural inequality and failing to comprehensively synthesise this with other forms of inequality. Sayer describes this type of model as one that will "try to identify an abstract concept which single-handedly will 'explain' (often in a merely statistical sense) the complexities of the concrete." (2005a, pp. 73-74). Turner's approach appears to be in denial about the extent of its own abstraction and therefore legitimises Irwin's accusations of homogenization of the lives of older people (1999, p. 693).

Other and more recent work has, like Irwin's, pointed to the durable nature of class across the life course and into older age; O'Rand and Hanretta have written of different pathways into retirement and the intersections of social structure and individual trajectories (1999), citing Kohli's "biographical conception of class", in which "class" signifies more than an economic or social position and "implies an individual's self-concept and subjective understanding" (p. 35). Similarly, Walker and Foster point to class as a "critical factor" in the experience of old age (2006, p. 44), and Jones et al write of the 'lock-in' effect of class, consumption patterns and health indicators (2011). Others discuss the importance of cumulative advantages and disadvantages across the life course (Dannefer, 2003, Wilson et al, 2007), the effects of familial advantage and disadvantage on life course expectations (Johnson and Hitlin, 2017), and the relationship between the accumulation of advantages and lifestyles in retirement (Bottero, 2015).

O'Rand (2006) gives a comprehensive overview of research around 'life course capital' and 'life course risks'. Multiple forms of interdependent capital have been identified as being differentially accumulated, depending on variables such as socio-economic status (SES) or gender. This relationship begins pre-natally, with investment in early childhood and educational experiences a key concern. These forms of capital include human capital, psychosocial capital, social capital, personal capital (such as "resiliency, positive affect, self-confidence, and locus of control"), and cultural capital (pp. 147-148). A "strong association over time" is found in the literature between a lack of these forms of capital and lower SES in childhood, which include "psychosocial characteristics such as depression, hostility and hopelessness" (p. 149). This latter point in particular speaks directly to questions of recognition and emotional habitus over the life course that were outlined in the previous chapter.

Moreover, the "pivotal" role of education in later well-being is identified (O'Rand, 2006, p. 151, citing Reynolds and Ross, 1998, and Ross and Wu, 1995); it is noted that although other pathways taken in adulthood may mediate this effect, success in education is directly linked with the accumulation of other forms of capital in adulthood, including economic and social capital and a greater sense of control, which are "interdependent and mutually reinforcing" over time (p. 152). This allows us to make direct links with the work of Reay, for example, in relation to difficult (classed) experiences of education (2015, 2017), and indeed with Bourdieu (whom O'Rand also references), who points to the investment of parents with higher cultural capital in the educational field, on behalf of their children's future possibilities and in pursuit of educational "titles of nobility" (1984, p. 2). This is the means by which cultural capital is "converted" into educational capital and is done so with the support of "economic capital", by which involvement in education can be extended (1986, pp.17-22).

However, Hendricks and Hatch in particular caution against "reifying" class and other forms of inequality through the life course, citing Bourdieu's caution against conflating models of actors with individuals who interact with others, make choices, and confront a variety of constraints and opportunities in a range of contexts. (2006, p. 310). A phenomenological approach is advised, allowing space for structure, agency, and interactions between them, in order to capture the fullness of a perceiving and acting individual in the study of lifestyle and ageing (p.302). It is an approach that speaks directly to the aims of this study, which synthesizes reflexivity, emotion, generation and multiple forms of recognition and misrecognition, through the narratives of people with, at times, widely divergent lifestyles in older age. It is to the social landscape of the third age, including questions of lifestyle, that I now turn.

ii. The social and symbolic landscape of the third age

In this part of the section on class within gerontology, I reflect on research into the social and symbolic landscape of the third age, which forms the social and temporal space in which participants in this study currently live, and within which they reflect on their past trajectories. The overall theme is of lifestyles, which for Bourdieu are “the systematic products of habitus, which, perceived in their mutual relations through the schemes of the habitus, become sign systems that are socially qualified” (1998, p. 172).

Lifestyle is described by Hendricks and Hatch as “a defining attribute of social life and a key concept in social gerontology”, one that is “both cause and consequence...used as a construct to explicate preferences, modes of living, and as an indicator of social standing” (2016, p. 301). This is echoed by Jones et al., noting lifestyle’s increasing importance as a signifier of “status and identity” (2008, p. 9, citing Warde, 2002), in relation to consumption patterns in the third age, the rise of economic affluence among retirees, and class and economic disparity within this age group. It is a relationship that has a connection to class and to place, as both create a “strong social structuring” effect over the life course and into older age (Jones et al, 2011, p. 415).

The importance of generational habitus has been discussed in the previous chapter, but Marvin Formosa in particular argues for an explicitly Bourdieusian interpretation of class identities and forms of habitus in the social space of the third age (2007, 2009, 2014, Formosa and Higgs, 2015). For Formosa, the University of the Third Age (U3A), one of the organisations from which participants have been recruited for this study, itself acts as a tool for symbolic violence in creating a space for the re-investment of cultural capital post-retirement (2007), which is reflected in the classed make-up of the organisation (see also Patterson et al, 2016, Glendenning, 2000, Casado-Diaz, 2009). He makes a distinction between class ‘position’ and class ‘condition’, arguing that the loss of the first, which he ties to occupation, pushes people into a condition of ‘role ambiguity’ in retirement, which some middle-class people mitigate by investing their cultural capital into joining the U3A, in order to sustain a classed identity. He writes of the “lack of confidence and fears” that prevent other older people from joining due to their lack of formal education (p. 90), and of the relationship between membership and “middle-class dispositions” formed by life course experiences (p. 10); he feels that “in its extreme form” membership is a type of “social closure” (p. 12).

It can be argued that the contrast that is made between middle-class members of the U3A and working-class retirees “whose lives revolve around experiences of material, residential,

and psychological exclusion” (2007, p. 10) risks over-defining people by their own marginalisation and omitting the richness of lives lived in the absences of dominant forms of symbolic and material capital. It omits the strength of community and mutual support that is described elsewhere (Mckenzie, 2012, 2015, Skeggs, 2011, Shildrick, 2018) and alternate sources of meaning and value (Skeggs, 2011).

However, it must be noted that this research was carried out in Malta so it is not entirely applicable to the British context. For example, the divergence in cultural capital and therefore the barriers to joining, and relevant distance in social space, seems to be more marked in Formosa’s sample. He tells us that 26% of people over 60 are illiterate (p. 7) and suggests that not understanding English as well as Maltese is a barrier (p. 8), also this U3A has university-like ‘didactic lectures’, rather than more informal groups. Nevertheless, this mapping of the Bourdieusian nature of the social and symbolic space of the third age provides a useful context for this study. Formosa describes a social landscape organised by processes of differentiation, and his description of the U3A as a middle-class organisation for people with high levels of education is reflected in research in the UK carried out by Patterson et al. (2016), pointing again to lifestyle divisions within the third age.

How social class in retirement is measured and evaluated is a complex issue (Lopes, 2015, Higgs and Formosa, 2015) which is no longer seen as being reducible to previous occupation (Higgs and Formosa, 2015, pp. 71-73). Bottero suggests that post-retirement class positions should be seen as connected with occupational trajectories, accumulation of capital over the life course, ‘lifestyle’ inequalities, social connections, cultural resources, and “unequal access to consumption based lifestyles” (2015, p. 29). Blaxter argues, that from a health perspective,

“One of the problems of occupational classifications at a cross-sectional level is that increasingly a current (or a ‘last’) occupation may not represent a lifecourse or even a life position in any real way. Such things as education, relationship to the labour market, or class ‘trajectories’, may be better indicators of the accumulation of social capital which can be linked to health” (2000, p. 35).

Formosa takes a similar approach, defining class not just by previous occupation and resources but also by “a common lifestyle, educational background, kinship networks, consumption patterns, and beliefs”, all of which form “a coherent social and cultural existence” (p. 11). He found clear correlations in life course trajectories, identifying culturally

difficult or dissonant experiences of education among the working-class participants in childhood and a “culture of necessity” in a later life. This is compared with a “culture of reflexivity” among middle-class interviewees, in relation to their higher cultural capital and their “bodily dispositions”, and the higher than average levels of confidence and self-assurance (or what we might call a confident emotional habitus) among the “dominant” class due to private schooling and parental investment in this area.

iii. Successful ageing

The paradigm of successful ageing has itself been described as “a code for lifestyle” (Henricks and Hatch, 2006, pp. 306), and while analysis of the data in this study will not focus on successful ageing per se, this part of the section reflects on it as a normative and evaluative discourse that is part of the context of contemporary experiences of retirement, and which is interlinked with class and inequality.

The link between ‘successful ageing’ and widely different material conditions is described by Glenda Laws, who sees it as central to the “active construction” of “an active, affluent, senior population”, mobilising in response to an increase in private pensions and social security benefits in America (Laws, 1997, p. 97). She describes this identity as made manifest in the literature for ‘Sun City’, a housing community for (healthy and wealthy) retirees. These communities offer not just a home, but a lifestyle and a sense of self which is founded in socially approved consumption and in ‘activity’. The promotional material suggests that the ageing process can be ‘offset’ by having the resources to embrace this positive identity, which is by nature both exclusive and excluding. Again, a positive ageing identity is only for those who can afford it and ‘actively’ manage it. As Laws notes, not all older people have the resources to choose their mode of identity, suggesting that more research is needed in the area of “social power, prestige and the restructuring of the land of the old.” (p. 99).

Similarly, Calasanti and Slevin (2006) describe a culture in denial about ageing, in which to age ‘successfully’ is the only valid choice, describing the way in which this option is only accessible to those with money and status. The word ‘choice’ in this instance is very salient. The paradigm of ‘successful ageing’, a term which can be traced back to 1961, but was popularised and promoted by Rowe and Kahn in the late 1990s, is dependent upon, and operationalized by, an ideology of choice and individual actions, at the expense of the recognition of structural causality and contingencies (Lamb, 2014, Katz, 2013).

Sarah Lamb illustrates the emphasis placed on an individual's choices and actions in this paradigm, with reference to Rowe and Kahn's 1998 text,

"Our concept of success connotes more than a happy outcome; *it implies achievement* rather than mere good luck...*successful aging is dependent on individual choices and behaviours. It can be attained through individual choice and effort.*" (Rowe and Kahn, 1998, p. 37, cited in Lamb, 2013, p. 44, emphasis added by Lamb).

This quote also illustrates the extent to which ageing in this paradigm is framed in the very overt language of success and failure, reminiscent of the corporate world, as though the ageing process in contemporary (Western) society were a business venture whose success rests entirely upon individual action. Indeed, both authors relate this paradigm to a specific social and political context; Katz describes the "neo-liberal and entrepreneurial style of thought about ageing" related to "gerontological ideals aimed at active and successful lifestyles" (2013 p. 6), while Lamb notes the way in which an emphasis on "personal responsibility complements prevalent neoliberal ideals about individual freedom, self-governance and minimizing public support popular in many quarters in North America." (2013, p. 43).

Lamb analysed both academic texts and popular culture and finds an image of personhood as a 'project', with a strong emphasis on independence and personal responsibility (2013, p. 44). For Lamb, the paradigm does not have a specific definition, but appears to be a diffuse and widely used concept, which arose out of discourses in the areas of gerontology, medicine, public health and psychology, and is also ubiquitous in popular discourse and in self-help literature. The idea of 'permanent personhood' is intrinsic to the concept, and this 'personhood', Lamb argues, is based upon a culturally specific ideal, which requires independence (including financial), autonomy, self-management, denial of death, and most importantly, refusal (again framed as 'choice' as far as possible) to *really* age.

As noted, successful ageing will not form a key part of the analysis in this study but reflections on this contribute to a social context in which identity, self-esteem, and inequality in older age are interlinked. It is also a theme that will be returned to in the conclusion of the thesis, as I take a broader perspective on the themes that will be discussed in detail in the empirical chapters. I will now turn to questions of class identity, which allows insight into the ways in which individuals reflect on or experience what Archer terms their 'Me' (the aspect of

themselves that is positioned as part of a collective identity within a hierarchy), and into class habitus and experiences of misrecognition.

e) Classed identities in the third age

Whether or not a person consciously sees class as important to their identity does not define its role in their lives, but reflections on and responses to questions of class are “valuable” and can help researchers to understand this role (Savage et al, 2010, p. 73).

Bottero emphasizes that this awareness is not necessary as she reflects on the move in sociology in general to an analysis of class that draws heavily on Bourdieusian ideas of habitus and capital in order to focus on questions of culture, tastes and lifestyle (2004, see also 2015),

“People do not have to explicitly recognize class issues, or identify with discrete class groupings, for class processes to operate. All that is required is for specific cultural practices to be bound up with the reproduction of hierarchy. The emphasis is not on the development (or not) of class consciousness, but rather on the classed nature of particular social and cultural practices” (Bottero, 2004, p. 989).

People who are currently in the third age have seen immense changes during their lifetimes with regard to politics and discourse around class. They have both experienced great social changes (Hyde and Jones, 2015) and been at the forefront of those changes (Jones et al, 2008, p.1). Since the 1980s class as a site of political struggle has been replaced by struggles of a different kind, with recognition claims in relation to issues such as religion and sexuality coming to the fore instead (Sayer, 2005a, p. 52). However, neoliberal politics has been actively working since this time to “legitimise class inequalities” (p. 52), which has continued unabated with the post-class rhetoric of New Labour, the stigmatisation of welfare recipients and people living with poverty by successive governments, and the rise of “poverty propaganda” (Tyler, 2013, Tyler and Slater, 2018, Shildrick, 2018). An “erosion of the ‘working class’” has taken place, both as a form of sociological interpretation and as a political identity signifying a collective struggle (Tyler, 2015, p. 498). However, as Skeggs notes, the resources that are involved in self-creation are themselves classed and are predicated upon conditional notions of valued “personhood” (2004a, 2004b).

Hyde and Jones (2015) address the question of class, age, and identity directly, advocating a “culturalist approach” to class in later life (p. 73) and suggesting a relationship between class and age identities. They present survey data from cross-national research with retirees that indicates that neither age nor class were perceived to be of primary importance to the identity of the respondents, but the very low figure of positive responses rose a little when class was framed as the second or third most important aspect of identity. It is suggested therefore that class “still lurks in the background” of people’s sense of themselves, which may be related to a habitus that is itself related to other factors such as family and social networks (p. 82). It is concluded that the findings offer “some support” for theories of dis-identification, which will be discussed in the next part of this section of the chapter. The possibility that both age and class as identities have declined in importance due to the changes of late modernity and reflexive individual biographies is noted, as is the need for more detailed (qualitative) work on this, with consideration of identities (including classed identities) that are taken into later life or adopted there (p. 89).

As noted in section d, Formosa carried out interviews with people from diverse social locations in Malta looking at social class and identity (2014). He found that the language of class was not used “spontaneously and unambiguously” (p. 22), but that his participants held ‘distinct’ class identities that were conceived along more cultural than economic lines (abstract), and that class is ‘encoded’ in their sense of worth and attitudes to other people (p. 23). He argues that this does not imply the ‘negation’ of class, but that a Bourdieusian “hierarchy of lifestyles” takes precedence (p. 24). Formosa critiques Gilleard and Higgs’ (2003) over-emphasis on the displacement of class by modes of consumption in the identity of people in the third age, arguing that this is itself “directly associated with class position” (2014, p. 7). This chimes with findings by Jones et al. on the heterogeneity of older households, with a capacity to engage with ‘this new consumer-oriented social order’ that is “uneven” (2008, p. 75); Formosa encourages a “renewal’ of the gerontological class project”, calling for further studies to be carried out (2014, p. 23).

i. The ‘politics of classification’

In this part I will give a brief overview of current debates in research on class identity outside of gerontology, in which the nature of different responses, questions of class as a moral issue, and the many possible signifiers for an articulated class identity, are reflected upon. This will be used to contextualise the reflections of participants in this study in existing

research on the relationship between subjective accounts of class and objective class positions.

The continued relevance of class, in contradiction to the claim that class is a 'zombie category' that is no longer relevant in the age of late modernity (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002), has been made throughout this chapter. As has been noted, it is also a subject that is deeply relevant as a moral discourse, with class identity bound up with questions of moral worth and value, and as such, it is not a neutral evaluation for either the self or for others (Sayer, 2002, 2005b).

This 'moral unease' (see Irwin, 2015, p. 259) that can lead to an avoidance of class labels has been empirically explored in semi-structured interviews with participants from a range of social locations by Savage et al. (2001). They found that class as a personal identity is often difficult to articulate, and that people are often able to describe class as an objective social reality but hesitate when asked to position themselves definitively within that structure. Many interviewees were "ambivalent" about their own class identity, while recognising that class has an objective existence. This analysis has, however, been criticised as over-reaching in some respects. It has been accused of over-emphasising the apparent hesitation encountered in some responses, which may have been engendered by the line of questioning, and for over-interpreting a 'defensive' response where other interpretations may be more valid (Payne and Grew 2005, Irwin 2015).

In analysing data from a replication of Savage et al's 2001 study, and re-analysing the original data, Payne and Grew have called for greater focus on the ways in which class talk may be implicit rather than explicit while remaining relevant in understanding the way that people orient themselves within a classed society (2005). They suggest fourteen categories under which people may implicitly talk of class, including housing, education, and lifestyle (p. 900). They also discussed the problem of 'conceptual confusion' in which people struggle to coherently connect the macro idea of class to their individual lives, arguing that it is surprising that people can respond as cogently as they do on such a complex issue. Similarly, Irwin advises consideration of the "intellectual doubts" that are expressed by participants regarding traditional class identities, and of the "poor fit" that may emerge within interviews (2015). The ways in which the interview itself may have shaped the data in the context of this particular analysis is also called into question; it is argued that moving swiftly from a question about class in general to the specificity of class identity could have introduced complexity and/or hesitation into responses to the second question (Payne and Grew, 2005, p. 896).

As indicated on the previous page, Savage et al. recognise that class is “not an innocent descriptive term, but a loaded moral signifier” (2001, p. 887), but this awareness is not always brought into the analysis. For example, it is significant that they describe the hesitation exhibited by a man who identified as working class, but who does not “find [class identity] helpful or meaningful”, as “defensiveness”, of the same kind which the respondent himself describes when speaking of people who position themselves in a higher social class, but who express denial when questioned about it (2001, pp. 881-2). These two forms of denial are very different; for the respondent to express his own difficulties in using class as a form of self-categorisation, possibly due to the complexity of his life and what he understands by the term ‘working class’, is very different from the denial and defensiveness exhibited by those who have a perceived (by the respondent) sense of superiority or class advantage and appear to be claiming the advantages of that position while simultaneously denying them. Rejection, ambivalence about, or embracement of class identity has a very different significance depending upon which class identity is being claimed or refuted.

The working-class women in Beverley Skeggs’ 1997 study, for example, had good reason to reject a stigmatised classed identity that was being imposed upon them, since “class is experienced by the women as exclusion.” (1997, p. 74). Skeggs described, “their multitudinous efforts *not to be* recognised as working class. They misidentified and dissimulated. Theirs was a refusal of recognition rather than for the right to be recognised” (p. 74, emphasis in original). Class was experienced as something that was being ‘done’ to them, a form of symbolic violence, and their subjective reality was that this stigmatising and moralising action was personally damaging; class struggle is here “a struggle against classification” (Tyler 2013, p 165). Savage et al. discuss this in a later work (2010); at first they consider whether Skeggs’ work may project onto the women a “false consciousness”, in which class is not mentioned by the women but assumed by the researcher, but then later describe the “sensitivity” to the “politics of positioning and classification” that is signified by this dis-identification (2010, pp. 62 and 72).

Payne and Grew also disagree with Savage et al’s categorisation of those who see their class identity in relative terms, as ‘defensive’ (2005, p. 908). This is a very important distinction; class is, by its nature, a relational structure, a person cannot be ‘middle-class’ for example without having points of comparison. A relational identity also accords with Sayer’s description of the way in which class identity has moved from one “based on affiliation to one based on differentiation” (2002, 5.4, 2005, p. 181). Savage et al’s blurring of relational and defensive positions overlooks the important distinction between those who dis-identify or actively reject class, and those who can recognise class and can position themselves within it. Payne and Grew make a clear distinction between actively rejecting a negative identity

and an 'ambivalent' position, which may use a range of different personal and social criteria for class descriptions (p. 904). As they observe, there are many, shifting, lay understandings of class, since "the criteria invoked can still differ from person to person, and may even be inconsistently held by an individual" (2005, p. 901). It is an active and dynamic concept and is constantly being (re)constructed.

More recently Savage et al have analyzed results from the Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion survey from between 2003-2005 (2010). Again, questions of dis-identification come to the fore across age ranges and occupations, in response to the two questions in the survey on class identity: whether respondents saw themselves as belonging to a class and, if they had to choose a class, which one it would be. Although class identification was somewhat higher among people over 65, at 37%, compared with 25% among 18–24-year-olds, this figure is not significantly higher than the 33% of the overall sample of 1,557 people that identified by class, broken down by age, gender, occupational class (professional and executive, intermediate, and working class) and educational level. Well over half of the people in this age group did not claim a class identity. The survey data was supplemented by focus groups and interviews, from which they noted that people are very aware of the "politics of classification" (p. 61) and that this very awareness shapes their responses. Some emphasized their own mobility, a minority had a pronounced class consciousness, some claimed 'exceptionalism' due to seeing themselves as outside of class, and others gave a range of reference points and idioms to avoid speaking of class directly.

Due to this, Savage et al have suggested moving beyond questions of dis-identification to the ways in which "ambivalent and hesitant" identities are created, the complexity and nuance in people's responses, in order to gain a more complex understanding of how participants construct identities within the intersecting modes of classification that surround talk of class and identity (2010, pp. 72-73). This would seem to overlap with the importance that Payne and Grew placed on the multiple ways in which people talk about class without *directly* talking about class, and is linked with the general emphasis on Bourdieusian notions of capital and lifestyle that has been evident through the analysis, for the "primary and powerful structuring effect" of class on participation and cultural tastes is noted (Savage et al, 2010, p. 63).

Furthermore, the changing nature of participant responses to "class talk" through the decades is also noted, with levels of evasiveness or responsiveness among participants described as being historically contingent over the latter half of the 20th century (Savage, 2007, cited in Savage et al, 2010, p. 73). This is a relevant consideration not only for the

sociology of class but, in the context of this study, the ways in which historical experiences may shape the class talk of interviewees who have lived through these decades.

ii. Conclusion

In this section I have reflected on research on class identity within gerontology and across a range of ages. It has been made clear that subjective naming of class is not necessary for the experience of a classed identity, that 'class talk' can be implicit as well as explicit, that discomfort or ambivalence around class can inform people's responses, and that 'dis-identification', for multiple reasons, is common across age categories and into older age. However, research into class identity (an articulation of Archer's 'Me') is useful precisely because it opens avenues into understanding people's subjective experiences of class and prompts reflections that can illuminate their class habitus. I will now complete this chapter by turning to a discussion on habitus in older age in relation to Bourdieu's Structure-Disposition-Practice schema.

f) Dispositions, interactions, and the life course

In this section I will discuss the ways in which themes of habitus, reflexivity, personal morphogenesis, and the third age, that have been explored so far in this study, can plausibly signify an addition to Mouzelis' extension of Bourdieu's Structure-Disposition-Practice schema, in ways that are of particular relevance to social class and lifestyles in retirement.

i. Bourdieu's Structure-Disposition-Practice (SDP) schema and personal morphogenesis

Bourdieu's Structure-Dispositions-Practice schema of action, in which Structure leads directly to Disposition that leads directly to Practice (Mouzelis, 2008) sits in direct contradistinction with Archer's 'Concerns-Projects-Practices' explanation of the ways in which reflexivity, as a personal emergent property, leads to action, and specifically to a 'modus vivendi' or 'life project' (Archer, 2007, p.p, 87-90). As described in Chapter Two, Archer's concept of personal morphogenesis centres on an internal conversation in which the current 'I' talks to itself internally, reflecting on the past (and socially situated) 'Me' and the future 'You', with reference to the 'We' of shared values and commitments. In this

explanation, a greater role has been advocated for the 'Me', and for the 'first-order emotions' that are held by the internal entity referred to as 'myself'.

As has also been noted, the morphogenetic approach that this is based on emphasizes 'diachronic' over 'synchronic' processes (Elder-Vass, 2007b), while the conceptualisation of emergence that is put forward by Elder-Vass (and which underpins his 'reconciliation' between habitus and reflexivity) is described as "a synchronic relation amongst the parts of an entity that gives the entity as a whole the ability to have a particular (diachronic) causal impact." (2010, p. 23). Here, therefore, forms of habitus are held to be the emergent effects of synchronic relations between particular parts, and also (as argued by Atkinson, 2016) to be both shapers of and shaped by our lifeworld, along the 'now line' of Bourdieu's empirical individual. Processes of change and continuity are a feature of any life course (Hockey, 2008 for a discussion of this), and the dispositional effects of these can (it is argued here) be illuminated as an addition to Mouzelis' pre-existing extension of Bourdieu's SDP schema; as a resultant form of habitus or 'Disposition'.

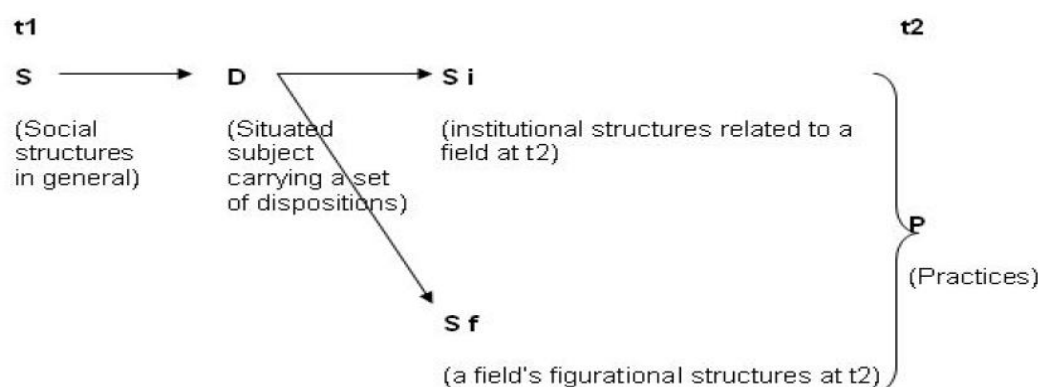
ii. Mouzelis extension to the SDP schema

Mouzelis describes Bourdieu's attempt to "transcend" the subject-object divide through the habitus as "ambitious but unsuccessful" (2008, p. 1, see also 2000). He argues that it is necessary to maintain an "objective-subjective distinction" in order to theorize situations in which people reflect, at a distance, on social structures that are "relatively external" to them, considering constraints, enablements, and possible strategies (2008, p. 4); an argument that Archer cites in support of her separation of structure and agency (2017b, p. 288). He also argues for a role for reflexivity beyond Bourdieu's lack of fit between field position and habitus, including the result of "intra-habitus tensions" and other "more general incongruences between dispositions, positions, and interactive/figurational structures, as well as by situations unrelated to them" (2008, p. 1). However, rather than discard the relationship between social structure and disposition that Bourdieu describes in his 'SDP' model he suggests an extension to this model that allows for "the interactive dimension of social games" (2008, p. 1).

For Mouzelis, both 'institutional structures', as the relations between roles or positions in the field, and 'figurational structures' which are the relations between people (not reducible to roles) (2007, p. 2) should be inserted between point 'D' (dispositions) and 'P' (practices). In this way, Mouzelis explains, practices are produced through dispositions *and* 'in light of' the constraints and enablements that are produced by the interactive elements of a field.

I have reproduced Mouzelis' suggested schema below (2008, p. 4)¹⁵,

Figure: 1. Mouzelis' extension to Bourdieu's SDP schema



This concern for interaction as generating a distinct causal effect on practices speaks directly to the themes of relationality that have been discussed as important to the shaping of (reflexive) action over the life course. It also speaks directly to the importance of the 'relational structures' of fields that are described by Atkinson in his work on 'social becoming' through lived experiences (2016, p. 111)¹⁶

iii. An addition to Mouzelis' extension

I propose that this schema could be further extended, so that a new form of disposition can be inserted after point t2, in order that, as with Archer's cyclical morphogenetic process in which the final sequence becomes a new beginning (Archer, 1995, p. 79), a point of stasis is re-established.

This argument for an additional stage positions the habitus (or disposition) in the third age as emergent from life course experiences and is congruent with the idea of habitus itself as an emergent property. Lau describes it as a "practical sense emergent, in the critical realist sense, from experience" (2004, p. 369), while Pickel sees 'habitus' as products of

¹⁵ In the terminology that Mouzelis is using, 'institutional structures' refers to "relations between positions" and 'figurational structures' refers to "the actual relations between actors" (2008, p. 2).

¹⁶ Atkinson also cites earlier work by Mouzelis regarding the importance of interactionist sociology in fleshing out our material environment (2016, p. 26).

“biopsychosocial processes” that “loosely structure” our actions and personalities (2005). Elder-Vass, whose work on emergence was discussed in Chapter Two, offers an alternative model that focuses on the ways in which experiences, and the resultant mental states, are laid down in our neural networks as connections that “do not represent individual experiences, one at a time, but a kind of weighted summary of them” (2007a, p. 337). For Elder-Vass, subsequent mental states signify an emergent property of both the particular neurons and the connections between them, that have been shaped by prior experience (p. 336). However the details of this process of emergence is understood, this thesis will treat habitus as an emergent property of lived experience, congruous with Elder-Vass’ definition of emergence which he terms ‘relational emergence’. This describes the production of a property that is created when parts of a whole exist in a specific relationship to each other, where that property would not have been produced if they did not exist in that configuration (2010, p. 66-67). In this, lived experience can be seen as representing the multitudinous parts and the relationship between these parts as creating a habitus that is a unique product of that experience over time.

Importantly, this argument does not negate the role of reflexivity, or the negotiation of external social structures. Habitus, in this analysis, would be a partial cause and accumulative effect of meaningful interaction with the world, as “a product of history (which) ensures the active presence of past experiences” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 54), although still not deterministic of our engagement with the world, still only functioning through ‘generative principles’ as opposed to ‘mechanical’ rules (Bourdieu, 1990, see in particular pp. 52-65), that exists in a complex relationship with reflexivity.

This should also not be seen as an argument in favour of an ‘age habitus’ (Tulle, 2007), that has been rejected by Higgs and Jones since it does not have the power of a structuring force (2009, pp. 35-36), but instead as a position on the ‘now line’ in the shaping of an individual’s habitus as they move along a trajectory, or a form of stasis within the personal morphogenetic process. Similarly, it would not negate Matthew Adams’ concern for ‘post-reflexive resources’ (2006, 2007), which focuses on the resources needed to fulfil desires or ambitions that result from reflexive consideration, since experience of social structures (both positive and negative) and subjective responses to this, form part of our lived experience of the world. Adams rightly makes a point of describing the strategies and calculations of poor women in urban ghettos who are aware of the material limits of their options, and reflects on the residents of Cheadle interviewed by Savage (2005), who were fully aware of the economic resources they lacked in order to ‘reflexively’ realise their dreams (2007, pp. 152-3). Yet he also writes of the feelings of “muteness and powerlessness”, lowered self-esteem and the impact on future aspirations that can result from this awareness (p. 157). Lived

experience in this way will inevitably have an impact on the habitus since, to again defer to Fleetwood, we are none of us capable of 'hyperdeliberatiion' (2008). Thus the 'Me' in retirement is shaped by our personal biography in ways that are not reflexively accessed and considered, and Mouzelis' extension to the SDP schema can result in further dispositions as part of an ongoing trajectory that contains elements of closure, but also of ongoing agentic possibilities.

g) Conclusion

In this chapter I have briefly reviewed Archer and Bourdieu's work on class and mobility in relation to reflexivity, habitus, and principles of differentiation. I have reviewed work on social class within gerontology (with a focus on life course effects and lifestyles in retirement), explored work on class and identity in the third age and across age categories, explained Mouzelis' extension to Bourdieu's SDP schema, and suggested an addition to this extension. In doing so I have explored extant research that forms the context of the analysis in subsequent chapters, pointed to areas that would benefit from further enquiry, added to the conceptual tools that will be used to illuminate the analysis, and posed a theoretical argument that will be substantiated in the data. In the following chapter, I will discuss the methodological foundations of the study and reflect on processes of data generation¹⁷, analysis, and representation.

¹⁷ I am using the term 'data generation' instead of 'data collection' following arguments that framing the process as one of 'collection' is "problematic" (see Goldkuhl, 2019, in particular p. 577). This is because it may be seen to obscure the role of the researcher in shaping the conditions and making the choices that lead to the production of data, such as arranging interviews with particular people, asking particular questions, and paying attention to particular responses. In a similar vein, I also refer to the 'production' and 'creation' of data at later points.

5. Methods

a) Introduction

This chapter will tell the story of my methods, weaving together methodological issues with issues of design, and the generation, analysis and representation of the data. First, I will restate the research questions and explain how the aims and purpose of the study shaped the research design. I will then give an account of how the data was generated, before moving on to discuss experiences of being in the field and how they helped to shape this process, and finish with a discussion of my approach to analysis and representation. These reflections will be situated within a methodological framework, and contextualised within the theoretical framework of the research, with specific reference to the work of both Archer and Bourdieu.

b) Research questions

1. What roles do recognition, emotional habitus, and generational habitus play in the relationship between Archers work on reflexivity and Bourdieu's habitus over the life course?
2. How does this relate to the 'personal morphogenesis' of Archer, and the role of the (past and socially situated) 'Me'?
3. What significance does this have for questions of social class and identity in the third age?

c) Research Design

In order to answer these questions, life story interviews were conducted with people in the third age from a range of social locations. I also did some participant observation to supplement this data and to contextualise these interviews within the socio-cultural setting from which participants were recruited. The interviews were intended to be the primary method of data generation and became the focus for analysis as the fieldwork progressed.

While the data that are presented in this study focus almost exclusively on the interviews, my experiences in the field helped to inform the analysis and provided an interpretive context.

i. Purposive sample

Two specific groups were chosen for the recruitment of participants: University of the Third Age (U3A) groups and Social Clubs, such as working men's clubs and political or ex-political clubs, in the same city in Wales. Both U3A groups and social clubs project a particular organisational identity and I was confident that I would be able to recruit participants with diverse work and educational histories, and with diverse class identities, which would enable me to draw points of comparison and contrast in both current, and biographical, experiences. I planned to have an even split of interviewees between the two halves of the sample, with ten participants in each, although I was ultimately only able to recruit nine rather than ten participants from social clubs. Although I was successful in recruiting an equal number of men and women in the U3A half of the sample, in the other half I was only able to recruit 3 women, in comparison with six men. However, I met two of the three women on multiple occasions and carried out long interviews with them, which led to rich and interesting data. Recruitment was carried out through leaflets that were put in the U3A newsletter and displayed at the general meeting, and were put on the bar in social clubs, and also through informal conversations in the clubs (please see Appendices 1-2 for copies of the leaflets).

My original intention was for the second part of the sample to focus on just one working men's club, but during my time in the field it became necessary to expand my recruitment to other clubs across the city, which I will explain later in the chapter (please see section g). All participants in this half of the sample were members, or at least regular visitors, of social clubs around the city, apart from one outlier who was not a regular but lived nearby and had "popped in" for a drink and picked up a leaflet. This participant was an interesting anomaly within this half of the sample as he was a retired financial adviser who had moved to a street very near to the club around 35 years before and felt himself to have been at the very forefront of the gentrification of the area. He thus offered an interesting perspective on changes to the social space of the neighbourhood that contrasted with the experiences of other people whom I met in the club.

The U3A tends to attract members with higher levels of formal education (or cultural capital) and is implicitly 'middle-class' (Formosa, 2007, Patterson et al, 2016, Glendenning, 2000, Casado-Diaz, 2009). Most of the interviewees from this half of the sample were retired professionals with careers that had required higher educational qualifications. This

homogeneity in terms of both class and ethnicity was commented upon by two different interviewees, who expressed concern that I might be recruiting only from the U3A, since in the words of one “we’re all the *same*”. The fact that this organisation exists in a particular position within the Bourdieusian social and symbolic space of the third age has been discussed in a previous chapter, and here I suggest that members of social clubs in the same city offered an appropriate form of comparison. Most of these participants had left education much earlier and had gone into jobs that had not required these kinds of formal qualifications, although the differences between the samples are not binary but represent a variety of social positions and classed experiences.

Recruitment in the informal environment of social clubs was partly influenced by the research of Sennett and Cobb, in which they explored the, now famous, “hidden injuries of class”, and visited spaces in the local community, including clubs and bars, for participant-observation as well as carrying out interviews with local people (1973). I was also influenced by Charlesworth’s ethnography of his economically deprived hometown of Rotherham (2003), in which he spoke with local people whom he met informally in pubs, clubs, and similar public or semi-public spaces. This passionate and morally compelling piece of work, on the deep and abiding effects of abjection and dispossession, describes how the effects of deprivation can become embodied and internalised, and the capacity for internal deliberations arrested, for those suffering poverty, unemployment, and marginalization.

ii. Age-range

As noted in Chapter Two, the definition of ‘third age’ that is being used in this study is Laslett’s notion of a stage after career and childrearing is completed and before the dependency of the fourth age (1987, 1989). Both U3A and social clubs are explicitly social spaces, which suggests that participants who were recruited there were socially engaged, and that they embodied, to a sufficient extent, Laslett’s stage-based model of the third age as involving active engagement with the world (1987, 1989). Indeed, Laslett described the University of the Third Age in some detail in his seminal book *A Fresh Map of Life: The Emergence of the Third Age*, in which he partly credits the spread of the movement from the early 1980s onwards with popularising the idea of ‘the third age’ in Britain (1989, p. 3).

Following Laslett’s association between the third age and retirement, it was specified in the leaflets that all interviewees must be retired and within an age-range of between 65 and 90 years old. The edges of this age parameter were a little fuzzy; two participants were a year

younger than this at the time of interview and another a year older, but all fitted the basic requirements that constituted belonging to the third age for my purposes.

d) Interview Methods

I decided to approach the interview as a life story in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the broad range of causal mechanisms at play over the trajectory of a life, and to allow participants to reflect upon experiences and relationships that are or were meaningful to them. This approach allows us access to the everyday lifeworlds of individuals and to “glimpse the categories and logic by which he or she sees the world” (McCracken, 1998, p. 9), and in this way we can contextualize reflexive choice-making in lived experience. Like Kathleen Blee (1998), who used unstructured life story interviewing with a very different group of people, American white supremacists, my aim was to understand what mattered to participants, how they understood changes in their lives, and how their sense of meaning shaped their lives and their identity.

The lifeworld of a participant can never of course be inhabited by the researcher but can only be approached indirectly through the voice of the interviewee, while interviews are themselves a “co-creation” in the interaction between researcher and participant (Kaminsky, 1992), and are a “joint accomplishment” by both participants (Atkinson and Silverman, 1997, p. 311). They are also, inescapably, a contextually contingent “dramaturgy” or “performance” on the part of the interviewee (Atkinson and Silverman, 1997, p. 313). However, as we shall see later in this section and in the empirical chapters, they also have a resonance, a meaning, and an analytic usefulness, that far exceeds this.

i. Life stories

A life story is “any retrospective account by the individual of his/her life in whole or in part that has been elicited or prompted by another person” (Formosa, 2014, p. 13), and is part of a range of approaches that fall under the term “biographical methods” (Bornat, 2008, p. 345). I decided to use the approach designed by Fritz Schütze, who played a significant role in the development of narrative life story methods as an alternative to the standard interview (Riemann, 2003, see also Domecka et al, 2012).

Schütze felt that traditional interviews placed the interviewee in a “passive” role, in an artificial situation that was outside of their normal experience, and that narrative interviews prompted by a single “generative question” would create space for the participant to reflect upon their own trajectory, with the interviewer remaining silent until the narrative was completed. At this point questions that prompted further reflections on themes that had emerged from the interview, and the introduction of new lines of questioning, were encouraged (Riemann, 2003). This method seemed particularly suited to exploring the relationship between habitus and reflexivity, and capturing experiences of flourishing and suffering, since it strives to “reproduce the inner form of the sedimentation of experiences in which the interviewee was involved, in which she/he acted and/or suffered” (Riemann, 2003, p. 13, drawing on Schütze 1983).

Participants were aware in advance that I would be asking them to tell me a “life story”, and I began the interviews by inviting them to do so. I found this approach allowed access to rich and affective accounts of lives, with forms of habitus that both shape, and are shaped by, the lifeworld and which interact with reflexivity over time. However, the strict formula that was advised by Schütze and Riemann, in which the interviewer was expected to be silent for the majority of the interview, until a final ‘coda’ is completed, was not always possible or desirable.

Schütze felt that his approach offered a purity of interaction, in contrast to what he called the “Schemasalat” (‘schema salad’) of standard interview methods (Riemann 2003, p. 9). Yet, as De Garay points out, every interaction is different as they are shaped by “the diverse cultural contexts of the interviews, the personalities, backgrounds, and ideologies” of both parties, and require a flexible and adaptive interviewer who is responsive to the needs of the interviewee (1999, p. 7). I found that participants differed vastly in how much input was required or expected. Some were happy to speak at length with no (or very little) guidance, some needed some interjections or reassurance, and some needed much more prompting in order to elicit (or to flesh out) a narrative and to tease out reflections. A minority of participants appeared to feel that a request for a “life story” was in fact another layer of artifice and seemed not entirely comfortable with the expectations of such a performance (doing the ‘work’ of the interview). In these instances, a story was elicited but required more questioning and direction. The participants also differed greatly in how much time they had mentally allocated for the interview, and how long they were willing (or expected) to talk for, which partly explains the great differences in the length of the interviews.

Ultimately, the majority of the interviews began with a self-directed narrative and devolved into a guided monologue, or guided conversation (De Garay, 1999). I found that participants

appeared to be most relaxed and responsive when this could appear to be as 'natural' as possible, guided both by my areas of interest and their memories and reflections, but with (as much as possible) the appearance of a spontaneous (albeit one-sided) conversation. Indeed, one participant said at the end of the interview that he had forgotten that it was being recorded, implying that the conversation that had developed from his narrative had felt so natural to him. To this end I kept note-taking (for the asking of questions later) very much to a minimum and only occasionally, or towards the end, glanced down at a handwritten list of topics or prompts in order to check if these had been covered.

Followers of Schütze's guide to life story interviewing are advised to build a rapport with participants before the interview by discussing the research and the process in which they are engaged (Riemann, 2003). For the first few interviews I arranged for us to meet informally in advance, in a café or library, or (on one occasion) in the interviewee's home, before deciding that these meetings were not necessary and may have even been counterproductive. Participants seemed unsure of the purpose of a preparatory meeting and inevitably began telling me about themselves, offering me pieces of their narrative and of their current lives, which was talk that I had wanted to capture in the interview itself rather than beforehand. As Frank tells us, this kind of storytelling is integral to social interaction, in which people narrate lives "that are always in progress" and in doing so use "whatever narrative components are at hand." (2010, p. 15). I decided to discontinue these pre-interview meetings after visiting Angela for the first time, as when I met her for an unrecorded chat she spoke extensively about her life for a long time, drawing me into her lifeworld from the beginning. I made notes and we returned to some of the topics that had arisen in a taped interview when I returned to her house soon after. However, I realised that I had failed to capture the immediacy of the first telling on the tape, some details had been lost, and that, for me, pre-interview meetings in this way offered little to the research and risked the loss of important interview data.

ii. Prompts and questions

The addition of prompts was to encourage participants to elaborate on points that had come up in narratives and to ensure that certain topics were covered, including delving more deeply into 'choice-making' processes and questions of class identity. A list of topics or prompts was drawn up and extended as the fieldwork progressed, as particular themes emerged in early interviews that I wished to look out for and elaborate on in subsequent

interviews, teasing out points of comparison and contrast. In this way there was an iterative element in the study (please see Appendix 3 for a list of these prompts and themes).

Any question on class was grounded in references previously made by the participant themselves, if they had done so. If they had not spoken of class then a method was developed over the course of the interviews in which the question was grounded in the experiential reflections of other participants, citing others who had spoken of their own lives in classed terms, and asking if this was something to which the interviewee could relate. By this means, a potential “battery of questions” relating to class was avoided (Savage et al. 2001, p. 878), and the topic was deliberately contextualised in the unprompted reflections of the participant themselves, where possible.

Class can be, as noted in the previous chapter, “an embarrassing subject” (Sayer, 2002, 2005a, p. 1) and it invoked a wide range of responses when it was raised in the interviews. For Bourdieu, the language and concept of class is itself the site of a ‘classification struggle’ between groups (1987, 1984, pp. 479-481), but it is also meaningful for him in the shaping of social space through volume and composition of capital, the difference and affinities produced by distance and proximity in this space, individual trajectories, and in the perception of self and others (including of class itself) that different “conditioning factors” create (1987); conditioning factors which, as noted, are argued to be internalised as a “class habitus” (1984).

Mindful of this struggle, and of the discomfort that can be potentially caused by questions on class, I took care not to impose classifications on people but to ask if and how these classifications were meaningful to them in order to, as Irwin describes, create a “window on highly diverse experiences and perspectives” (2015, p. 269).

iii. Methodological debates

Bourdieu seems to have had contradictory feelings about the use of life history methods, as described by Barrett (2015). He critiqued the assumptions of transparency that he felt these methods implied, pointing to the ways in which language is enmeshed in system(s) of domination and of symbolic power (Barrett, 2015, p. 5, drawing on Bourdieu, 1991), as is the interview itself (Bourdieu, 1999, pp. 607-626), and the ways in which a person’s capacity for self-reflection is shaped by social structure. It also seems that, despite seeing some people as “practical analysts” due to occupying “precarious positions” in social space, he underestimated the level of insight that most people have into their condition (Barrett, 2015, pp. 7-8). Yet he also treated “insider accounts” as having value and used life history

methods in his empirical work, such as in his compendium of social suffering, *The Weight of the World* (pp. 6 and 3). In this book he also reflects on ethical and practical issues that were encountered in this research, in the manner of a guide for other researchers, including the consequences of, and responses to, the intrusion of social structure and symbolic power in the interview relationship (1999, pp. 607-626).

A life history approach was chosen not because, contra Atkinson and Silverman's controversial critique (1997, see also Atkinson, 1997) I felt it to be "more authentic" (p. 316) than any other method, but because it was the most appropriate means of finding answers for the particular kind of questions I set out to explore. I will not spend too much time revisiting the 'transatlantic debate' between Atkinson and Silverman on the one hand and proponents of certain kinds of narrative methods on the other, which has been soundly reviewed by Carol Thomas (2010). I will however note the anger that, I, like Bochner (2001), felt in reading of the relegation of emotion to "sentimentality", the unreflexive claims to "objectivity", the reduction of embodied suffering to "stories", and the dismissive attitude to the significance of biographical experience, which is described by Atkinson and Silverman as a "Romantic impulse" to elevate "the experiential as the authentic" (1997, p. 305). It is an approach that "seems unmistakably macho" (Bochner, 2001, p. 144) and appears unconcerned with empathy. This discussion brings to mind not only the debates around embodied and social suffering of previous chapters, but also Sayer's call-to-arms for an ethical approach that has room for normative evaluations, that critiques social practices, and that promotes flourishing and identifies "avoidable suffering", in a critical social science that is fit for purpose (2009c). Sayer elsewhere critiques a sociology that is abstracted from the fears and concerns of its subjects, arguing for the importance of "things that matter very much to people – things which involve vulnerability and powerful feelings", and notes how "tempting" it can be for some researchers to "remain loftily aloof" from these (2011, p. 10). Indeed, as Archer, whose topic is the concerns, struggles, and successes of ordinary people, points out, without "the shoving power" of emotion we would have no reason to do anything at all (2004, p. 225).

Ultimately, like Thomas, I sympathise with Atkinson and Silverman's concerns about the socially constructed nature of these narratives, including the "fallible" nature of biographical constructions (Atkinson and Silverman, 1997, p. 319), while also arguing for the validity of the meanings that are found therein. For, like her, I see life stories as a means of generating particular forms of data, and one that allows us to pursue particular avenues of research that other approaches do not. Therefore, as noted, I do not regard this as "more authentic" than any other method that is used by social scientists to generate "socially constructed

knowledge” of people’s lives (Thomas, 2010, p. 656), but one that can yield important data provided the research is approached with the requisite “methodological rigour” (p. 657).

iv. The interview as a site of recognition

The life story interview can, for some participants, act as a site of recognition. Robert Atkinson describes the cathartic effect that can be found in the experience, through which burdens can be released, personal experiences validated, and self-esteem enhanced (2001, p. 127), while Essers writes of the researchers’ responsibility to give “enough room” to the interviewee, within which they can themselves choose what to reveal (2009, p. 176, see also West et al., 2013), and Bourdieu describes the “relief” that can be found by interviewees who use the interaction to understand and explain their own experiences in the world (1999, p. 615).

It is perhaps significant that one of the participants who most readily told me of her life, in all its fullness, and her (at times fractured) relationships with family members, was Angela, who, as we shall see, suffered from various kinds of misrecognition throughout her life. These included difficulties in school, work and at home, which may have left her with some mistrust in the possibility of emotionally intimate friendships or a fear of being judged. She told me that, although she has in the past talked to others about her difficult relationship with her adult daughter, she doesn’t want to “burden” people and has regretted it if she felt that she revealed something that was too “private” since “I don’t want them to think of me like that”. I offered her something unusual, which was the opportunity to disclose her thoughts and feelings to someone with no judgement, who offered complete confidentiality (or rather, anonymity), and whom she would likely never see again, which seemed to have a liberating effect and allowed her to treat me as a temporary confidant.

The personal nature of what was sometimes revealed, and the context of these revelations, belie the claims of Atkinson and Silverman that would reduce these moments to mere “stories” to be exchanged (1997, p. 316). Although they are *also* ‘stories’ being told in a certain context, they reveal genuine sorrow, fear and pain. One man whom I arranged to meet for an interview in the bar of a social club told me early on his son had been sent to prison that day for domestic abuse and that he was now worried about what would happen when he got out. A woman who had lost her husband some years ago told me of his emotional cruelty, of his refusal of any physical contact during their marriage, and of how, it was only after his death she realised that he had been secretly gay (something which she had only told one other person before me). Others told me of loneliness and isolation, of

physical and sexual violence, and of fear and feelings of self-doubt. In these instances, I was called upon to play my part through “empathic witnessing”; that is to be present with someone talking of their suffering, helping to validate their experiences, which is itself a “moral act” (Kleinman, 1998, p. 154).

I made clear to interviewees that I was happy to meet with them wherever they were most comfortable but sometimes suggested that their home may afford greater privacy. All interviews with U3A participants were conducted in their homes, and in the other half of the sample, five were carried out at their home and four chose to meet at their regular club.

v. Ethical Considerations

(i) Ethical approval and emotional risk

The project was given ethical approval by the School of Social Sciences (Cardiff University) Research Ethics Committee and all interviewees gave informed consent before beginning the interview (see Appendices 4-6 for a letter of ethical approval, and copies of the information sheet and consent form). My primary ethical concern during fieldwork was the emotional harm that might be caused, even temporarily, by in-depth reflective interviews that could involve the remembering of unhappy and traumatic events and fears for the future. I assured participants that they could decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study without giving a reason, and was conscious of allowing them to set their own emotional parameters. It is the nature of life story interviews that sometimes people disclose incredibly sensitive and personal information; I strove to be mindful of this and responsive to interviewee’s emotional states, and to create a supportive context for these disclosures. Issues of positionality, analysis and representation also raise ethical questions, which I will discuss in more detail later in the chapter (please see section g, part ii., and section h).

(ii) Confidentiality

Saunders et al. (2015) have reflected on the fact that much of the writing that exists on anonymization has been theoretical and so they offer a practical guide for researchers. They write of the anonymization process as a “balancing act” between two different priorities; the need to protect the identities of participants and the need to maintain the “value and integrity” of the data (p. 618). Six main areas are discussed in relation to attempts to

“subvert” identification; the names of people, places, religion or cultural backgrounds, occupations, familial relationships and other information that could potentially lead to identification (p. 620).

I have, of course, given pseudonyms to participants and to geographically specific places. Where third parties have been named in the data, I have either created another pseudonym or given them a fictitious initial letter followed by a line. I chose to substitute typically Welsh names for specific locations so that I could avoid decontextualizing the geography of the narratives more than necessary. In an analysis in which place is at times very important I was concerned that the narratives should not feel “placeless” (Cresswell, 2014), as though the embodied and temporally specific lives that emerged were not also shaped by their physical contexts.

Other personal details, such as age at the time of interview and job role prior to retirement, were left unaltered. Unlike Saunders et al., who in their own work carried out interviews with a very specific sample (families of patients in the UK who were suffering a ‘prolonged disorder of consciousness’) so needed to do more to mitigate the possibility of identification, I did not feel that it was necessary to alter these kinds of details in order to avoid identification, and age and specific work histories are integral to my analysis of the data. However, it was necessary to follow their lead in one further instance, by attributing some minor words and actions of one participant to a secondary, different, pseudonym. In this way a “smoke screen” (p. 621) was created in a manner that did not unduly threaten the integrity of the data but that strengthened the participant’s anonymity.

(iii) Presenting dialogue

When working with the interview data I found that the occasional word was impossible to decipher from the tapes; these were generally minor words in a sentence that would not change the intended meaning. Therefore, when it was necessary to present dialogue that included words that were inaudible, I have substituted an approximate or likely word in order to avoid unnecessary visual disruptions for the reader and have put square brackets around these words in the excerpts. In this matter I followed the spirit of Van Maanen, who wrote of the challenges of conveying the meaning of data from the field to the reader, and the different processes this can involve (1988).

e) Going into the Field

i. An overview of the data

I interviewed 23 people in all. Four of these were pilot interviews with two women and two men, aged between 58 and 79, two of whom were recruited through an age strategy group in a nearby town and two through family and friends. These interviews were carried out in order to test and develop the process and my own comfort with the methods, and they brought to the fore themes and points of interest that I was able to reflect on and pursue when they appeared in later interviews within the sample.

In terms of ethnicity and nationality, all interviewees were white and all but one were British. This was not deliberate but appeared to be a product of the organisations in which I was recruiting. From observation, the social clubs that I visited appeared to attract mostly white, British clientele, while one of the U3A participants commented upon the fact that that organisation was very homogenous in this regard; in her experience it was “very ‘white’” as well as middle-class, and she was concerned about the possible exclusionary nature of the groups, both in terms of class and ethnicity.

The charts below contain details of each participant’s age, occupation before retirement, and the time that I spent with them, as a brief introduction and overview. These are arranged into two charts by place of recruitment, and then subdivided into gender and, within each chart, ordered by age going from youngest to oldest. Some of these will be discussed in detail as case studies in subsequent chapters and I have highlighted these in green.

Participants recruited through social clubs			
Name	Age at time of interview	Occupation prior to retirement	Time spent together
Female participants ordered by age			
Jenny	64	Legal secretary (previously small-business owner, of a café,	One meeting: an interview at her home of an hour and twenty minutes.

		and before that, briefly, a club)	
Joanie	78	Typist	Three meetings: two long conversations in the social club after she invited me to sit with her during the bingo session. One recorded interview of two and a half hours at her home
Barbara	79	Auxiliary nurse	Three meetings: two of these were brief informal conversations in the social club and one four hour recorded interview at her home.
Male participants ordered by age			
Geoff	64	Independent Financial Advisor	One meeting: a recorded interview at his home lasting an hour and forty minutes. Geoff was not a member or a frequent visitor but lived near to the club and had seen my leaflets on the occasion that he had “popped in” for a drink.
Gareth	74	Committee member of the General Medical Council, prior to this he was a Personnel Director for a company.	One meeting: a recorded interview of around one hour in office of the club of which he was the chairman.
Jack	76	Company Secretary	We met twice: once very briefly when I first visited the social club of which he was a long-standing member, and one recorded interview lasting around 35 minutes in the back room of the club.

Rob	76	'Accredited Police Station Representative' on behalf of a firm of solicitors for five years. Prior to this he was a Police Sergeant.	One meeting: a fifty-minute recorded interview in the bar of the social club of which he was a committee member.
John	79	Truck driver	One meeting: a recorded interview at John's home, lasting two hours and 45 minutes.
Harry	79	Manager of bingo halls	One meeting: a recorded interview of 50 minutes in the back room of the social club of which he is longstanding member.

Participants recruited through University of the Third Age			
Female participants ordered by age			
Name	Age at time of interview	Occupation prior to retirement	Time spent together
Sarah	67	Social worker: Department Manager at time of retirement.	One meeting: a recorded interview at her home lasting around one hour.

Angela	70	Accounts clerk (call-centre).	Two meetings: one initial conversation at her home, unrecorded, which last around an hour and a half, followed by a recorded interview of three hours when I returned for another visit soon after.
Alison	85	Teacher	One meeting: a recorded interview of just over forty minutes at her home.
Violet	86	Teacher	One meeting: a recorded interview at her home, lasting around one and a half hours.
Jessica	91	Line manager with British Telecom	One meeting: a recorded interview of two hours at her home. This was followed by a short email conversation as she had become tired after telling me her story and I had not had the opportunity to ask questions. I contacted Jessica later and she answered a few questions by email
Male participants ordered by age			
Robert	69	Pharmacist (and owner of the pharmacy).	Two meetings: One pre-interview meeting in a café and one recorded interview at his home of around one hour and forty minutes.
Brian	74	Solicitor and lecturer	One meeting: a recorded interview at his home of one and a half hours.
Jonathon	72	Social worker	Three meetings: one pre-interview meeting in a café and two recorded interviews at his home. The recorded interviews lasted three and a half hours in total.
Glenn	70	Consultant Project Manager	Three meetings: once for a pre-interview conversation in a café and two recorded interviews at his home. The recorded

			interviews lasted around two and half hours in total.
David	85	Lecturer	One meeting: a recorded interview at his home lasting one hour and a quarter.

ii. Negotiating Access

I negotiated access to U3A participants by contacting the membership secretary for the local branch. She discussed this with the committee, who were happy to put a leaflet up at the monthly General Meetings and in the newsletter that was sent to all members but vetoed any participant observation due to the impossibility of gaining consent from every member of a group. When approaching the working men's club, I contacted the Chairman who seemed happy to help and discussed the matter with the club committee at their next meeting. He asked for assurances of the anonymity of anyone I spoke to and gave permission for me to come to the club to recruit participants, by putting leaflets on the bar and speaking with them, and to observe. In the two further clubs I visited I spoke to the club steward who immediately gave permission, and in one pub (that functioned like a club), I spoke to the Landlord across the bar.

iii. Recruitment

I decided to stagger recruitment from the two halves of the sample as I wanted my interviews to mutually influence each other as part of the iterative process for developing prompts, for the latter part of the interview. It quickly became apparent that recruitment in the U3A half of the sample was going to be easier than recruiting from the working men's club as people began emailing with offers to participate very soon after the newsletter was sent out. Although it was necessary to re-advertise in the U3A at a later date in order to fill this half of the sample, recruitment was quite straightforward, through people seeing the leaflet and contacting me independently. In the social clubs I found that recruitment was much slower

and more difficult. This difference can partly be attributed to practicalities, as the U3A newsletter would have reached many people in one mail-out, and partly to different levels of enthusiasm for, or reluctance to engage with, the study. Reaching social club members, as well as finding those who were willing to be interviewed, required a more persistent and creative approach.

f) Field relations

There are bingo afternoons twice a week in a large room at the back of the working men's club, with raffles of store-cupboard essentials and tea and biscuits brought around in the break. I attended these sessions several times in order to conduct some participant observation and to recruit potential interviewees.

I was welcomed warmly by the woman who ran the first afternoon that I attended. She was herself in the third age and had taken on the role as a service to the community as she told me that for some of the women here (both groups were either entirely or almost entirely women) it was their only form of social contact in the week. She helped to introduce me to some of the group and I moved between the tables during the breaks in the bingo, to try and strike up informal conversations and recruit interviewees.

Through this I managed to develop a rapport with two particular members who agreed for me to visit them in their homes to conduct in-depth interviews. I formed a temporary bond with one of these women in particular who invited me to sit with her to play bingo and with whom I had quite long conversations on a couple of occasions before interviewing her, while the other I chatted with briefly during breaks.

Another member of the club encouraged her friend to take part in an interview; he was a 'regular' at another local club where he went to meet up with old friends and to reminisce about "the old days". These were some of my richest and most in-depth interviews, with people who I am certain would not have responded to a leaflet or contacted me independently.

However, it also became apparent that my expectations for my own role as researcher in the social space of the club were overly ambitious. I had initially hoped to become well integrated into these afternoon sessions but it became obvious that this would not be possible. The gap in terms of age, which is itself a "social location" that affects the processes and outcomes of research (Grenier, 2007) and life experience, which included my (embodied) cultural capital and my position as a student or researcher, between myself and

those whom I was trying to recruit was more acutely visible than I had anticipated. Also, the groups were not terribly cohesive, with people sitting in the same pairs or small groups every week, with some movement between them in the breaks to catch up with other friends. Some people were willing to chat to me to a certain extent, and others reluctant; some were helpful in talking to me briefly then pointed me in the direction of others who may be willing to talk. However, my identity was always very obviously 'marked' in relation to the people around me, and of those who spoke to me in my role as 'researcher' very few seemed to want to have sustained contact or meet for an interview. Some said that they would not have much to tell me in an interview, or deflected in another way, and after an initial flurry of interest, there now seemed to be an increasing reluctance as those who felt they had something to tell me had done so.

After a few weeks I realised that my ongoing presence there was likely confusing and perhaps represented an expectation or pressure on the attendees to engage with me. I had explained that I was looking for people to interview, and part of the reason I continued going was to make fieldnotes for observations, but I realized that (with my repeated visits) it could appear as though I was putting implicit pressure on people to agree to an interview. I also began to feel that my continued attendance could be somewhat resented, noticing a very subtle 'freeze out' (Johnson, 1983), as I found one of the women who helped to run a session and had seemed to feel displaced by my interactions with one of her friends, staring at me on more than one occasion.

The sense of dislocation I felt here, and in other clubs, partly speaks to the ways in which the "personal and social attributes" of the researcher shape the kind of data that it is possible to produce through fieldwork (Emerson, 1983, p. 184), which has itself been described as a process of "creative trial and blunder" (Karp and Kendall, 1982, 270, cited in Emerson, 1983 p. 184). Since, as Coffey observes "Our own sense of personhood – which will include age, race, gender, class, history, sexuality – engages with the personalities, histories and subjectivities of others present in the field," (1999. p. 57), and while a certain amount of identity work can be expected in the field (pp. 3-4), we cannot extricate ourselves from our own embodiment.

I became at times hyper-aware of my own physical presence, with a feeling that has been described by Hillman as like "matter out of place" in the strange environment of the field (2013, p. 11, drawing on Douglas, 1966), leading to feelings of discomfort as a "reluctant researcher" (Scott et al., 2012). Yet there was also an objective truth to this sense of dislocation that spoke to the inherent limitations of my role in a space that was not as conducive to sustained fieldwork as I had hoped. Ultimately, I felt that my presence was intrusive, and that while discomfort in the field is a quite normal researcher response

(Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p. 89), in this particular environment it also signalled to me that further engagement would not, I felt, reap empirical rewards.

The sheaves of leaflets that I had left on the bar had prompted three other possible interviewees in this club to contact me but only one of these came to fruition. I met with one man, a retired construction worker for a pre-interview chat in a local library, but he chose not to go forward when I explained that anonymised parts of his interview may be published. Another man also offered to be interviewed but, after a very long conversation about his life on one day and a promise to do a recorded interview at the club the next day, when we reconvened he appeared to be very agitated and a little angry and asked if we could re-arrange. This interview did not take place as, although he tried to contact me again on a couple of occasions, it seemed to me that he did not want to be interviewed but to obtain my help in other matters that I had already given him some assistance with. As noted in section d of this chapter, a retired financial adviser who lived locally but was not a regular made a visit to the club and picked up one of the leaflets then contacted me by email. Therefore, these visits had been fruitful; I had made some observations and secured three interviews before deciding it was time to move on to other clubs in the city.

i. Expanding the search

On expanding my recruitment to other social clubs in the city I began carrying out participant observation in two clubs and one pub that (as noted) functioned as a club. It also became obvious to me through this that, in order to access the lifeworlds and internal process of the people I wished to understand, recruiting for interviews must take precedence, especially in light of the rich interview data that I had managed to generate at that point. Due to this, and further experiences in social clubs that spoke to the barriers of integrating socially in an ethnographic sense¹⁸, I made recruiting for interviews my priority.

Two members of one of these clubs, who had been regulars for decades while membership had dwindled and the suburb around them had changed, volunteered to meet with me. I conducted both interviews in the cozy room that was separated off from the bar but used by members. I then recruited three more interviewees for this half of the sample through two

¹⁸ This included one negative response from a member who ripped up one of my leaflets and told me and my friend to leave the club. Although It should be noted that this was in no way indicative of the overall response from people I met, with committee members and some patrons showing me a warm welcome and engaging in conversation. Nevertheless, it became clear that our lifeworlds were too far apart for me to successfully integrate and, perhaps more importantly, that interviews ought to be my focus for obtaining the type of data in which I was interested.

friends who acted as gatekeepers. One of these gatekeepers was a fellow doctoral student who had grown up in the city and frequented social clubs in the past, and who introduced me to a woman with whom he used to play darts. The second gatekeeper was a friend whose late father had been a committee member in a social club in another suburb. I visited that club on three occasions, interviewing two of her father's old friends who had agreed to take part as (we assumed) a favour to her.

All researcher identities in the field require a certain amount of performative work and self-conscious "management" (Coffey, 1999, Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). I realised that a common way that the women at the bingo session in the working men's club had tried to 'place' me is through geography, with more than one asking me where I was from. In response to this I adapted my leaflets, adding the name of the town that I grew up in (which is about an hour's drive away), and that I now lived in the city itself, in order to position myself as someone who could be 'placed' as a partial insider with a shared national identity and with a partially shared geography. This appeared to have some positive effect, as when I went to a club in a different part of the city, put the leaflets on the bar and began talking to the club steward, a patron quickly began engaging me in a discussion about events near the town in which I grew up. Later, a patron of another club who had agreed to an interview saw my leaflet and exclaimed 'from C____, can't be bad!'.

ii. Positionality in interviewing

As indicated above, it became apparent during my fieldwork in the clubs that the intersecting points of generation, age, class, and geography, meant that I was positioned often as an outsider, but at times as an insider, since the statuses of 'insider' and 'outsider' is not static, but is mobile, contingent and contextually produced, depending upon multiple intersections (Merriam et al, 2001, Grenier, 2007). The one consistent difference between myself and all of my participants was that of age. I was in my mid-thirties at the time and the youngest interviewee was around 30 years older than me, while the oldest was around 55 years older. Lundgren (2012), experienced a similar age gap in her fieldwork, interviewing 15 classroom volunteers aged over 65 when she was 35, and has written on the construction of age positionings, which became visible, or were constituted, in different ways in her interviews, oscillating "between a constitution of difference on the one hand and an eagerness to tone down these differences on the other" (p. 681).

In my interviews this difference was highlighted at certain times, such as when an ex-competitive cyclist who talked of how acutely aware he is of his own physical precarity and

expressed significant fear of the fourth age, spoke of how “young” I was (discursive age constructions being, of course, relative), and a participant in her 90s who had suffered quite a lot of unhappiness wrote, in a later email exchange, of how “Life is stretching ahead for you now”. Neither comment carried any resentment but served to highlight the gap that was inherent in all of my interviews, where I had the advantage of time.

Grenier (2007) reflects on the significance of “multidimensional” points of positionality for cross-generational research, arguing for greater attention to be paid to the complexities of both “matched interviewing” (of those of a similar age) and “intergenerational interviewing”. She notes that age differences can enhance interviews in some ways, leading to new reflections and interpretations of past events as they are communicated across generational lines. This is something that emerged in some of my interviews, when explanations were given that maybe would not have been thought of for a ‘matched’ interviewer, leading to more explanation and disclosures of a different kind, as a common understanding cannot always be assumed, which is a potential advantage of all outsider positions (see also Merriam et al., 2001, Emerson, 1983).

At times I became aware of a line that was being drawn elsewhere, between myself as a PhD student and those participants who had accrued greater educational capital. For example, the nervousness of Joanie, a social club member who was worried that the interview might involve a “test” or that it may be “broadcast”, can be contrasted with the cheerful ease of David, a retired lecturer and U3A member who told me “we were all students once” when I thanked him for giving up his time for my study. This placed us both within a shared community, with the use of “we” universalizing what is in many ways still a classed experience, and which was also more obviously classed when he was a student.

It was sometimes necessary to suppress my own feelings on issues such as race, sexuality and immigration, in contrast with interviews where I had similar attitudes and cultural touchstones and a rapport could be developed with less conscious effort or self-monitoring. This required a certain “tolerance” that is essential in fieldwork (Hammersly, 2005), but it also required an understanding that, as Franks tells us, “[l]istening is not so much a willing suspension of disbelief as a willing acceptance of different beliefs and of lives in which these beliefs make sense” (2000, pp. 360-361).

It is perhaps inevitable that those interviews where our values and ideals diverged significantly required more conscious effort in modulating my responses. In this sense they demanded, if not more “emotional labour” (Hoschild, 2003) then emotional labour of a different kind. This involved elements of “surface acting” as well as “deep acting”, in that my

responses were consciously shaped rather than spontaneous¹⁹. But these responses also related to an internal (partially conscious) suspension of judgement. Here it became more important than ever to understand the internal logic of a life in which these feelings and sentiments were created, and to “take their point of view”, which has been created by their specific experiences, as it is only through doing this that a proper analysis can be wrought (Bourdieu, 1999, pp. 625-626).

Ethical considerations are an ongoing process through the field work rather than a one-off event (Van Maanen, 1983, Coffey, 1999). Bourdieu discusses the importance of “non-violent communication” by researchers, in which an “asymmetry” between researcher and participant is exacerbated at points when the researcher is seen to possess greater capital than the interviewee, in “[t]he *market for linguistic and symbolic goods*” that forms part of the interview (1999, pp. 608-609). He argues that it is the task of the researcher to “*reduce as much as possible the symbolic violence exerted through that relationship*” (p. 609, emphasis in original). This intrusion of the symbolic economy can be seen, for example, in instances in which the working-class men and women in Sennett and Cobb’s study felt that, due the social distance between them, the researcher “was in a position to judge them” and that they could be found wanting (1973, p. 38).’

There were inevitably moments in my research where the symbolic power of relative educational capital became visible, or miscommunication occurred. This was seen when interviewing a 74-year-old member of a social club who had had significant success in his career and in the many projects he had taken on outside of this (such as setting up and running a charity), but who had not been successful in his school exams many years ago, and who described himself as therefore “not clever enough” for university. Keen to understand this apparent disjuncture between his professional achievements and his private sense of himself as being “not clever enough”, which I felt might speak to the long-term emotional impact of negative experiences of education, I probed him a little on this point. However, I quickly became aware that he did not share my interpretation of this as a disjuncture, and therefore seemed to feel that I, as someone who was clearly in the process of accruing significant educational capital, was in fact concerned with the importance of educational achievement. I seemed to have unwittingly, and temporarily, become an embodiment of the processes of misrecognition that I was attempting to uncover. In this exchange I had perhaps been guilty of the “scholastic fallacy” (Bourdieu, 2000) of projecting a sociological interpretation of a life onto an interviewee who was speaking from the point of view of not only his current self, but also as the “former child” who was also present in the

¹⁹ For the difference between deep acting and surface acting please see Hoschild (2003, pp. 35-55).

interview (Warren 2001, pp. 83-84), and who had, for many years, perceived himself to be “not clever enough” despite having also later studied at night school and (as noted) had much success in his career.

It should be noted that there were also times when the social distance between myself and my participants become visible in the opposite direction, either in terms of amount of capital, composition of capital, or the symbolic value that had been accrued at the end of a ‘successful’ career when I was at the beginning of mine. However, the experience described above caused me to reflect on the importance of not allowing apparent similarities between interviewer and interviewee to cause me to assume too great a commonality of perspective, or conversely, too great a difference. Each interview must be ‘felt’ as we go along, as a ‘life story’ is simultaneously created and responded to in the moment. This involves a necessary anticipation, as the researcher has to consider what might be acceptable and what may surprise or potentially offend.

g) Analysis and Representation

As indicated earlier in the chapter (see sections b and e), the constraints and enablements with which the analysis was concerned became visible in the data partly through narratives of individual flourishing and suffering. I often found that upon finishing an interview the parts that stayed with me most clearly were those where participants spoke of moments of pain, fear and anger, and, (conversely) of joy, liberation, pride, and personal achievement. It was these parts that, in Maclure’s words, seemed to “glow” in the “entangled relationship” between a researcher and their data, and which created moments of “wonder” (2013). In some respects, this resonance was shaped through theoretical influences and other literature that helped to inform my interaction with the interview data, but significant parts that stood out also mattered to me precisely because they mattered to the interviewee. It became clear to me that these moments were key in understanding the logic of a lived trajectory.

I did not use Nvivo to code as I wanted to maintain the coherence and completeness of each interview as a whole story and I felt that that would create an artificial separation of different parts of the narrative, echoing the “slicing, dicing” of an interview that Bochner describes (2001, p. 141). Instead I analysed each transcript as a word document, highlighting text and making notes in the margins, in connection to certain themes and in relation to possible interpretations or points of relevance. In this way I treated the texts like a ‘river’, to use the analogy suggested by Thomas et al, in which,

“Like the river itself, the life subjectivity captured in words on a page is a force in creative motion. And like the river observer, the interpreter wades into the “word data” and endeavors to make sense of the storylines or narrative threads that run longitudinally through the text; these are the “currents” that convey meaning and contextual detail. To discern and explain the storylines, the interpreter empathetically studies both their content and their form, making use of information shared on: the impact and influence on life and self of other people, present and past (the river’s tributaries); the social and cultural landscape that is “lived,” present and past (the terrain traversed by the river); the events and experiences that are perceived by the narrator to be of significance (the material carried and deposited by the river as it passes by).” (2009, p. 791).

This analogy also helps to capture the experience of sitting with a participant as an engaged witness to an extended narrative, as it ‘flows’ and takes shape, plotting the retrospective course of a life. In these instances I found that the narrative may even bend back upon itself, revisiting earlier topics in order to re-present these in a quite different light as a person becomes absorbed in their own reflections, which happened in some of the longest and most engaged interviews that I carried out.

i. Reflexivity and researcher biographies

Both the creation and the interpretation of life story narratives are “affected by power, emotions (and) social locations” (Essers, 2009, p. 172) and the cultural experiences of the researcher are unavoidable references for their understanding (p.174). During the process of analysis and writing I strove to be conscious of that which shapes my own schemes of perception in relation to the research, and which Bourdieu cautions we must ourselves “objectify” to the extent that we are able to do so (1999, pp. 625-626).

In order to mitigate this intrusion as much as possible I remained deeply engaged with extant literature throughout the analysis and writing phases, allowing the reading to inform my interpretation of the data and vice versa in an ongoing dialectic. I also spent a lot of time reflecting on the veracity of my claims and alternative interpretations and talked these through with supervisors and a close friend whose own sociological imagination I greatly respect.

Moreover, the process of doing fieldwork itself helps to reshape the self as “(t)he knowledge thus gained from these relationships, not only changes the knower, it becomes part of the knower” (Clarke, 1975, p.118). A lifeworld is made up of “people, place, timings and objects” and shaped by “all manner of objects, spaces, symbols and signs” (Atkinson, 2016, p. 36). Therefore, the fields in which I moved (both empirical and academic), the articles and books I read, and discussions I had, all, in some way, reshaped my own habitus and perceptions as they helped to shape my understanding of the data.

My status as an outsider in some ways facilitated my analysis due to the distancing effect that was created that helped me to see as objects of intellectual curiosity what otherwise might be “take[n] for granted” (Essers, 2009, p. 174, citing Lal, 1999, see also Merriam et al, 2001). I also consciously developed a critical lens with which to view experiences that I shared with participants, such as the reproduction of cultural capital within the natal family or success in education. Ongoing engagement with theory and other research helped me in making (in the often-quoted phrase) “the strange familiar and the familiar strange”²⁰, throughout the analysis. Again, continuously engaging with the work of Bourdieu, Archer and others helped me to do this, as did the comparative elements of the study.

Through constructing case studies and comparing narratives I was able to compare and contrast participants’ emotional and social experiences of family, school, work, affective recognition or misrecognition, and interpersonal goods or harms. It is perhaps inevitable that this caused me to reflect on my own biographical experiences of these things, sometimes eliciting quite intense emotions. But in this way I feel that I was able to use my biographical experiences in a positive and reflective way, as touchstones in my empathetic engagement with the intensely personal experiences of my participants, as described by Bochner (2001, p. 138). In this way, reflections on my own reactions to the interviews, whether familiar or distant, could be used as a “resource” to be reflected upon, through thinking and feeling conjoined (Essers, 2009, p. 171 and 174).

ii. A question of authority

Archer deliberately contrasts her first-person approach with Bourdieu’s analytic approach, describing habitus as working “behind actors’ backs” (2007, p. 41). She argues for re-centring the perspective of the participant when analysing reasons for actions, giving primacy to people’s own explanation of why they do what they do, over what she (unfairly)

²⁰ Please see Myers (2011) for a detailed history of this phrase.

sees as “simply being written off in the third person for their gullibility” (2012, p. 189). She further argues that an individual may be fallible in their beliefs, but they cannot be wrong that those are their beliefs, contrasting ‘first-person warrant’ meaning ‘I believe something about myself’ on the one hand with ‘first-person infallibility’ or ‘first-person omniscience’ (this belief must be true) on the other. Yet the solution that she arrives at, ‘warranted first-person authority’, otherwise known simply as ‘first-person authority’, risks slipping back into the first-person infallibility that she earlier rejected, as she appears to move from giving credence to the authenticity of subjective beliefs to giving credence to the idea that these beliefs are the sole or only analytically relevant causal mechanism leading to action (2017c, p. 147, 2017d, pp. 159-160).

On this basis, it is inevitable that she rejects the notion of habitus since it is a description of a causal mechanism that, although it may be spoken of indirectly as its effects are reflected upon, and may be seen retrospectively by an individual looking back over a life that has changed, is also, by definition, an unconscious or semi-conscious process. It is not possible to find against something that we are not looking for, and by taking the narrative “at face value” (as described by Camic, 2013, p. 260), Archer undermines her over-arching claim to have found ‘against’ habitus, since habitus is not always consciously accessible. Indeed, this approach, also by definition, precludes a proper understanding of the ‘unacknowledged conditions’ of action that she describes, but which, it is argued, need to “first to be found good by a person before they can influence the projects she entertains” (2007, pp. 17). By this she means that these conditions can “shape” the motivation of a person by shaping the situations with which they are confronted, making continued involvement in a “project” more or less likely, although the influence of these social factors does not require that they first “*become internalised as part of a subject’s dispositions*” (p. 18, emphasis in original). However, it is precisely this relationship between social comfort and discomfort, motivation and the internalisation of the effects of these, as dispositions, that this thesis will trace, as well as looking at instances in which difficult situations have not been “found good” by those within them and have led to reflexive resistance.

It is held here, that a first-person account and a third-person account are not only not mutually exclusive but are both necessary for an integrated understanding of our actions. Indeed, Archer’s own reflexive typologies are themselves, arguably, partly third-person accounts of underlying causal mechanisms. In creating a typology of different forms of reflexivity from her own research she extrapolates from data in a way that her participants would likely not have foreseen, using concepts that they are not familiar with, and places them into categories based upon a sociological interpretation of their responses.

Furthermore, the description of reflexivity as a “generative mechanism” (2007, p. 192, 2012), that is itself an emergent property of particular experiences in the world, is similar to Bourdieu’s description of the “acquired system of generative schemes” that form the habitus (1990, p. 55), despite Archer’s framing of the habitus as a “guide to action” (2012 p. 11). Indeed, Archer herself has conceded that reflexive modalities may be called ‘dispositions’ under a certain definition, since they are “*interior to subjects* and predispose them towards equally different trajectories”, but with the caveat that they should not be seen to lead to these trajectories “pre-reflexively” (2012, p. 84, emphasis in original). Therefore, despite Archer’s suggestions to the contrary, neither reflexivity nor the effects of habitus are tied entirely to the first-person perspective or to third-person interpretation, since both can be given voice to by participants, and both rely on sociological interpretations and identifications of causal mechanisms.

Nevertheless, her argument for recognising the integrity of the first-person perspective is very important. Indeed, Bourdieu repeatedly defers to first-person explanations throughout *The Weight of the World*, which, as has been noted before, sits in contradiction with the excessive ‘ontological complicity’ that has been identified in his theoretical work. In my analysis I have sought to balance the perspective of first-person explanations with interpretations of the mechanisms that created these experiences and perspectives, and the contexts of the lived trajectory within which they are articulated.

i. A critical realist approach

The question that is at the heart of this thesis, the relationship between structure and agency and how these entities are conceptualised, with an emergentist account that follows Elder-Vass’ “reconciliation” between habitus and reflexivity (2007s)²¹, places it firmly within the paradigm of critical realism and its concern with “the nature of causation, agency, structure, and relations, and the implicit or explicit ontologies we are operating with.” (Archer et al., 2016, p. 5).

In this context the subjective meaning making of the participants, to which I refer at the beginning of section d in this chapter, is important insofar as it can be understood in terms of a causal relationship between (on the one hand) an understanding of the world that is shaped by experience and the sediments effects of past actions, and (on the other) the development of self-feeling, identity, actions and concerns.

²¹ Elder-Vass, like Archer (2012), explicitly frames his contribution to this debate in terms of a critical realist commitment to “an emergentist account of social structure” (2010, p. 8).

In exploring this causal relationship the intent is not, as Archer et al. caution, to imagine a simple and direct relationship in which “event A is always followed by event B”, but to use “the partial, regularities, facts, and events we encounter in the social world as a springboard or gateway to understand the complex, layered, and contingent processes or structures which cause those regularities, facts, and events.” (pp. 5-6). In this way, the influences on, and effects of, reflexivity and habitus will be traced through the narratives, and the concomitant relationship between structure and agency reflected upon.

ii. Writing and representation

Ethical concerns are not only a matter for interactions in the field but are also a concern in processes of analysis and representation (Neale et al. 2012, Coltart and Henwood, 2012, Merriam et al, 2001, Bourdieu, 1999), Coltart and Henwood, for example, write of the challenge of representing the effects of unequal resources, and of differential access to practices and identities that invite respect, without “fixing them within the evaluative logic of class inequality” in the process (2012, p. 39). Similarly, Skeggs writes of the importance of not reaching for an interpretation of ‘habitus’ too easily, and of giving voice to working class anger, which she argues is often overlooked in research (2004b). She rejects interpretations of working-class lives that are understood only through the dominant symbolic, positioning them always in terms of “lack”, and sees Bourdieu’s “resigned, adaptive working-class habitus” as “closing off the positive, affective, justifiable experiences of anger and exclusion” of those who are disadvantaged and marginalised (p. 87). She regrets that voices of “class hatred: anger, rage, frustration, defiance, intransigence, envy (and) antagonism” are not more often represented (p. 89, see also McNay, 2012 on the importance of not over-emphasizing the powerlessness that is created by domination). The need for complex representations of the fullness of working-class lives is echoed by Fiona Devine, who emphasizes the importance of representing a life beyond the “hidden injuries” in order to include “the dignity of ordinary people’s lives, their pleasures in life as well as their pains, their hopes and dreams as well as their setbacks and losses” (2010, p. 155).

On this note, we must be careful not to approach discourses of aspiration uncritically, since, as Walkerdine (2011, 2015) reminds us, to construct a narrative of ‘lack’ around aspiration (common to policy literature on class and education) is to risk reproducing 19th Century attitudes of defective ‘pauperism’. She suggests an alternative focus on intergenerational transmission of embodied affect and subjectivity, while Skeggs critiques discourses around mobility that are predicated upon notions of “self-responsibility” and “self-management”, as

themselves “mechanisms by which class inequality is reproduced and refigured” due to assumptions about “a particular form of agency” to which not everyone has access (2004a, p. 60). It is therefore important not to unwittingly become party to the discourse of lack that is being critiqued (see also Adams, 2007, p. 149, citing Hey, 2005) and this weighed heavily upon me in my writing, leading to great care being taken in the crafting of case studies as I chose which parts of a story to include, which to leave out, and interrogated my own representational choices.

I have chosen to present three of the four empirical chapters in this thesis as a series of case studies, in order to explore the complexities that are contained within any life and to tease out the connections between experiences of advantage and disadvantage and their effects, so that overly simplistic or superficial impressions and interpretations may be avoided. My intention has been very much to approach data generation and analysis in terms of depth rather than breadth; I quickly realised that accounts of this kind, of personal and affective experiences, concerns and motivations could only be properly presented and understood through case studies, enabling me to trace individual trajectories and draw clear points of comparison and contrast. This choice was also heavily influenced by reading Bourdieu’s *The Weight of the World* (Bourdieu et al, 1999), with its many, rich and in-depth, accounts of social suffering, and Archer’s descriptions of the reflexive trajectories of her participants as they suffer setbacks, enjoy successes, and pursue their goals and dreams (2003, 2007, 2012). I have traced themes of constraint and enablement in relation to reflexivity, emotion, recognition, and generation, across nine different narratives, through the case studies presented in chapters seven, eight and nine.

h) Conclusion

In this chapter I have given an overview of the processes of research design, data generation, analysis, and writing. I have explained issues that were encountered, and decisions that were made, at each stage, and how these have shaped the data that will be presented. Now I turn to an exploration of the data itself, beginning with a chapter looking at class identities and experiences in the symbolic landscape of the third age, before moving on to look at the narratives of particular participants in more depth in the case studies that will make up the following three chapters.

6. The Social and Symbolic Space of the Third Age: Post-Retirement Class Identities

a) Introduction

In this chapter, I will explore reflections on class and identity that emerged in the interviews, either in response to questions about class, or more organically as part of a narrative or dialogue. These reflections were both direct ‘class talk’ (Savage, 2007, Savage et al., 2010) in which the relationship between the self and social structure is consciously objectified as a class identity, and indirect class talk (not necessarily acknowledged as such), that speaks to differences in Bourdieusian concepts of lifestyle, capital, embodied habitus and the relationship between social space and physical space (Bourdieu, 1984, 1989, 1996)²².

First, I will give an overview of the analytic approach and of the sample itself, then I will explore the constitution of a ‘working-class’ identity in discussion with one particular participant. Next, I will look at the relationship between geography and symbolic space in the narratives of three participants who expressed “unease” around class “as a general analytical tool” (Payne and Grew, 2005, p. 897), before moving on to look at understandings of ‘middle-class’ identities. The chapter will finish with three participants who have experienced social mobility over the course of their lives, but who expressed a somewhat complex sense of identity in retirement. Many of the people whose lives I touch on in this analysis will be returned to as case studies in subsequent chapters.

b) An overview of conceptualisations of class across the sample

The difference between subjective and objective class identity has been discussed in the literature review (see Hyde and Jones, 2015, Formosa and Higgs, 2015, Bottero, 2004, Savage 2000, Savage et al, 2010, Devine, 2010). In this chapter I will present data that speaks to a person’s subjective sense of their class position, or their being-in-the-world, in

²² Payne and Grew argue that difficulty in articulating class in the interview does not necessarily indicate “a lack of salience” (2005, p. 892). However, when analysing these narratives, I was also mindful of their caution against assuming the opposite, that ‘spontaneous’ expressions of class always indicate ‘salience’ to the interviewee (2005, p. 903). This also relates to Bourdieu’s observation of the risk of attaching too much meaning to something which may be an ‘artefact’ of the interview, that the interviewer “[has] themselves manufactured without knowing it” (1999. p. 610).

relation to a class habitus, capital accumulation, and the occupation of a distinct position in social space. In this sense life histories have a particular application, not only in terms of the way that class can be used to “anchor” them (Savage et al, 2001, p. 883), but the ways in which life stories give us access to the lived experience of a position in social space and the development of a sense of self over the life course.

The diversity of reflections on class in this data, both explicit and implicit, illustrates the varied nature of people’s conscious understandings of it, and the importance of both personal and social history in the ways people in the third age position themselves. As Fairhurst notes, life stories can allow us to make links “between the individual and social structure and, particularly, between the individual and general socio-historical changes” (1997, p. 64).

This allows insights into the past and socially situated ‘Me’ and the emotional ‘myself’ of Archer’s personal morphogenesis, as described in chapters Two and Four, and speaks to the relationship between habitus and habitat in the lifeworlds (Atkinsons, 2016) of people in the third age. It also corresponds with the proposal outlined in Chapter Four, that dispositions in the third age can constitute an addition to Mouzelis’ extension to Bourdieu’s SDP schema (2008), as a result of both change and stasis over the life course.

There were three main groups within this sample of nineteen participants; those who claimed a specific identity with some degree of confidence, those who described themselves as, in some ways, both middle-class and working-class or in between, and those who dis-identified or were unsure. Please see Appendix 7 for an overview of whether and how each participant identified themselves in class terms and further comments that they made on the theme. In the analysis that follows I will explore constructions of, and resistance, to identification through class, in the context of a social and symbolic landscape that is still, in many ways, Bourdieusian in nature (Atkinson, 2013, 2017, Le Roux et al, 2008, Bennett et al, 2009). The analysis reflects on the construction of identities that have been shaped by experiences which are classed *and* temporal, including the effects of both generation and the life course.

c) A description of a working-class identity

In this section I will begin to explore class identity and experiences in relation to Bourdieusian notions of misrecognition, through the reflections of John, and introduce themes that will be developed over the course of the chapter.

I was put in touch with John, a 79-year-old retired truck driver living in the large suburb of Drefach, by his friend Peggy, whom I had met and chatted to at a social club in the adjacent suburb. John lives on a small social housing estate for older people and is a 'regular' at another club where he goes to meet up with old friends. Peggy sat in on part of John's interview in the living room of his flat so that he would feel more comfortable. He seemed to see my visit as a special occasion; "he dressed up for you" Peggy told me, "he normally wears joggers", and he felt compelled to apologise to me for the smallness of his home.

John, whose father had worked as a fitter and turner while his mother stayed at home with seven children, had grown up in the city and had moved to Drefach at the age of fourteen when his family was allocated a council property in the area. He left to do military service as a young man but has lived in Drefach for most of his adult life, apart from "a while" spent living in an adjacent suburb that he described as "near enough the same". He is divorced from his wife and has adult children and grandchildren. He retired twenty-three years ago at the age of fifty-six.

He spoke of his memories of growing up and as a young man in the 1940s and 50s, an impoverished childhood after the war, missing school to help his mother when she was ill, and the necessity of finding work straight away after leaving school at 15. He identified himself as working class and was the only person in the sample who did so definitively and without caveat. When I arrived at his flat he was keen to show me a picture of little boys in short trousers that he said were dressed exactly as he did in the 1940s, talking of the material deprivations that he had experienced as a child but also of the cohesive community and social world that he had lived within and enjoyed, as a child and a young man.

His readiness to self-identify as working-class brought to mind the minority of respondents (mostly male) who un-ambivalently claimed a working-class identity in Savage et al's Manchester study (2001), and the Welsh working-class focus groups of the later 'Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion' (CCSE) project who did likewise (Savage et al, 2010). However, in both instances this was felt to be a positive identity, related to working-class pride and "'down to earth' values" (2010, p. 68), but John's definition was founded in missed opportunities, marginalisation and lack of respect. In this sense it was much closer to the 'dis-identifying' women of Skeggs' study (1997), and to Charlesworth's account of working-class life in Rotherham, where he spoke to people who "[knew] that to be poor and working class is to have no status, to be disrespected for what one is" (2003, p. 125). John recalled the story of the politician who had been accused of calling a policeman in Westminster "a pleb", saying he felt that that is how he and others like him are seen, what they "are",

John: A lot of... you get these bishops and priests, and all like that; they've got to preach this way, because that's what they're paid for. But I mean, if ever something ever upset *them* or something, it'd be a different ball game like, you know?

Ellie: Yeah.

John: And I'm only a – as I put it, like – what did that fellow call them? – a phebiam was it? leviam? I forget now; that politician when he was talking about coppers on the gate, when he had his bicycle, you remember?

Ellie: Oh!

John: Yeah, Plebeian, was it?

Ellie: A pleb, that's what he said, wasn't it?

John: Pleb, yeah. plebeian, yeah; well that's all we are.

John described the experience of being working class as having been characterised, at least in his youth, by a lack of choice, saying “We were all in the same boat”. He left school at fifteen and started working immediately in order to bring in a wage to the family. Despite enjoying better material conditions in adulthood than his parents' generation, following a post-war rise in living standards (Gilleard and Higgs, 2002, 2005), he is keenly aware of class disparity and conscious of the processes of misrecognition that underscore the effects of symbolic violence, as economic capital and cultural capital, and the goods, practices, and positions associated with these, are awarded objective social value and moral worth (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984, Sayer 2005a, 2005b).

i. Economic and cultural capital and the symbolic economy

When I asked John what he meant when he described himself as ‘working class’ he spoke of the stark divide between rich and poor; for him the experience of class is found in economic inequality, which is tied to differential access to consumer goods and to “respect” and recognition (see Sayer, 2005a, 2005b, Bourdieu, 1984, Honneth, 1995a, 2003),

Ellie: Yeah. So you mentioned, right at the beginning, about... sort of... well... how... you said working class people were all in the same boat; what does that label – that sort of identity – mean to you; being working class?

John: Well, one's got money and one *hasn't* got money! That's what it is. I mean, you see, when you lived in a poor area, and you're all the same; and then, say, you go down town, and you see... go in the... look in the shop window – House of Fraser – and you see the price of what they got there, and the price where *you* go, say to Primark. So, you know, I mean; there's those who've got it, and those who *haven't* got it. And so they... you're one, and they're the other like, you know? And I'm not *blaming* those who've got it; if they've got it, and they want it, by all means! But I'm just saying that that's the difference; it's *money*! I mean you could be thick as hell; but if you've got money, you get respect, you know?

In terms of contemporary British consumption practices, this echoes Atkinson's work on "positional suffering and symbolic violence" and the classed nature of everyday life, in which one of the participants specifically refers to Primark as a place of necessity, in a world that is shaped by symbolic power (2013, p. 27). It also correlates with the widespread definition of class as represented by money, power and status intertwined, that Savage found in a re-analysis of working-class identities in the Affluent Worker Study of the 1960s (2005).

The effects of misrecognition are evident in John's own telling of his family history, refracted through the prism of the symbolic order, with 'respect' given to those who are 'educated', and a feeling that his mother had "lowered herself" to marry his father. It is worth noting here that, as Schubert points out, investment in Bourdieusian systems of misrecognition is not a mistake on the part of the individual but is in fact an "accurate" reading of the social world, to the extent that our "cognitive categories align" with the field in which we find ourselves (2012, p. 193). While John may recognise and articulate the system of misrecognition of which he is a part, there is no doubt that it still *works*, by encouraging him to afford greater value to certain objects, practices, and people,

"But it was a funny thing about that with my mother, see; now my mother's mother, she used to play the piano and everything. Now I always thought that if you played the piano, you had a certain amount of education. And she read music, so she was *fairly* educated then, put it that way, in comparison to most women. I mean... but...

but I think she... she preferred to drink. And I think she was playing in the pubs too many times, and... But anyway, but to me, I always respected her because she played the *piano* like, you know what I mean? It was... it was a... I'd think 'Hey', you know... to have a piano to learn to [play], and if their parents done it. I mean... you know, her husband came from [name of town], the Forest of Dean? And he..., T____, his name was... but... yeah, as I said, so somewhere along the line there was *somebody* educated in [my] family. Not on my father's side, I'm talking about; on my mother's side. Because they were more 'refined', I think, my mother's side. She married a... well, there you are! To me, she married my old man, like; and I think she lowered herself, love her. But... because... although, he was a fitter and turner – he had a good trade, you know – he worked at [name of company]; he'd done his apprenticeship and everything; and of course the war comes along, like everything else.”

Here we see the effects of symbolic power, through which perceptions of the self and family are refracted, and in which playing the piano “the bourgeoisie instrument par excellence” (Bourdieu 1984 p. 19) is associated with both education and respect. The changing relevance of the piano as a symbolic object is discussed by Davies and Charles (2002), who revisited Rosser and Harris’ study of 40 years ago, *The Family and Social Change: A Study of Family and Kinship in a South Wales Town* (1965). They suggest that, due to the variability of class cultures, it is unlikely that ‘the piano in the parlour’ has the same significance as it did at the time of the original study (2002, para. 6.4). However, piano lessons still form part of the “enrichment activities” of modern day middle-class children (Vincent and Ball, 2007) and the significance for John is retained in his memory and informs his sense of his own identity as it was articulated to me, through reflections on his family. These reflections are parsed through dominant systems of recognition and misrecognition and inform his current sense of self.

The importance of education came up repeatedly in John’s interview, and looking back he feels that he “lost” something before he had a chance to know what it was, since “I know for a fact that when you’ve got an education, I mean, the world’s everything for you, then”. In the next chapter we will look at the relevance of class to John’s trajectory in more detail, but now we will turn to look at the role of misrecognition and symbolic value in relation to place, space, and mobility.

d) Class and geography

Bourdieu describes a relationship between the social and symbolic landscape and the physical landscape that is spatialised through geography (1989, 1984, 1996). He specifically mentions the topography of city suburbs and argues that no physical space is neutral, and all space is imbued with a symbolic significance (1996, pp. 13 and 15, 1984, p. 102). The ways in which references to geography speak to class identity is flagged up by Payne and Grew, who, as noted in Chapter Four, suggest fourteen topics through which a person can “talk about class without ever mentioning the ‘c-word’” (2005, p. 90); they include housing, lifestyle, and local/incomer differences, albeit without directly engaging with the effects of “territorial stigmatization” as described by Wacquant (2007).

An important difference that emerged in some of the narratives was between those who described the trajectory of change in their lives as one in which they moved forward and embraced change, while others seemed to feel that the world had changed around them as they continue in geographically specific routines that they have maintained for decades, which at times created a sense of “disorientation” (Taylor, 2013, p. 280).

The effect of this disorientation will be explored in more depth in the next chapter, but here we will look at the reflections of three participants who had an ‘ambivalent’ or ‘defensive’ relationship to class identity (Savage et al, 2001, 2010) but who also spoke of the relationship between social and physical space and the symbolic significance of this. We will begin with the stigma of geographic immobility in Barbara’s narrative, move onto the links between place and symbolic value that is found in the process of ‘gentrification’, in the words of Geoff, and end the section with the geographic mobility and the spatialised narrative of Glenn.

i. Fear of immobility

I met Barbara, a 79-year-old retired auxiliary nurse who also lives in Drefach, while playing bingo in a large hall at the back of a working men’s club. The bingo group was attended almost entirely by women, and Barbara had started coming around 6 years ago but knew many of the other attendees from previous connections. A sense of contextual continuity in terms of social networks was evident when she talked of her life; as with John, there were people she had known since her youth still living nearby. I began talking to Barbara during the regular break for tea and biscuits and then later visited her at her flat for a very long

recorded interview of around four hours. She showed me pictures of two of her granddaughters of whom she was clearly proud; one is in the air force and the other went to university and was away travelling. She also told me many stories of her life, both happy and sad, and shared memories were often intensely detailed, with a sense of immediacy that suggested that the vignettes she recounted from childhood could have happened a week ago rather than 70 years ago.

Barbara has lived in the city almost all of her life bar a short time in which she lived in London as a young woman. As a child she and her siblings had been cared for by her older sister, of whom she spoke with great fondness, after her mother left and following the death of her father. At the age of fifteen she left school and began working in a factory and the fortnightly allowance from the Children's Society stopped, so she left the family home to live in a hostel. She therefore had to fend for herself from a young age.

Barbara has five adult children, whom she brought up in Drefach. She had supported the family on her wages, supplementing her shifts at the hospital with work as a cleaner, since her late husband did not contribute financially despite living in the family home. She spoke proudly of her work and fondly of the people she had cared for and still meets up with people that she worked alongside.

Barbara's narrative and the biographical self that emerged from it was deeply embedded in the local area, describing what Tim Cresswell calls "the layering of histories which sediment in place" (2013, p. 72, drawing on Lippard, 1997). She was so keen to tell me the specific biographies of the buildings and streets that she had remembered in previous incarnations, and around which she anchored her memories, to pull me inside the spatiality of her narrative, that I found myself agreeing that I knew or remembered places that I did not. She told me of people she used to work with or care for who live nearby and mentioned that one of her daughters, Vicky, who also lived in Drefach, had talked of coming over to speak with me.

However, staying still is not a value neutral position in late modernity; Yvette Taylor (2013) draws a distinction between "those who "travel" as mobile future-orientated subjects and who "stay" or are "stuck."" (p. 828), since "certain bodies "stick"", while others move in their own accumulative trajectories around them (p. 830, drawing on Ahmed, 2006). Barbara was keenly aware of the dangers of geographic immobility in a stigmatised space and told me of her regrets that Vicky and her children had stayed in Drefach.

(i) *Place, space, and stigma*

Drefach is an area that has a significant proportion of social housing and has scored highly on official markers for deprivation in recent years, signifying the spatialisation of inequality that is particularly visible in urban areas (Wacquant, 2007, Savage et al, 2015, Adams, 2007, Vaughan, L et al, 2005, Bauman, 2011), with British cities particularly segmented along lines of inequality compared with most of the "rich world" (Dorling, 2014, pp. 453-454)²³. The suburb was referred to by two participants from U3A as an undesirable place to live, and a local newspaper, which published a series of articles on the area a few years ago, spoke to a resident who had felt so stigmatised by living there that she had lied to workmates for five years. She linked this directly to a "lack of confidence" in the workplace. The same article, however, sees residents rejecting the externally imposed stigma as a misrepresentation and speaking of the "close-knit community" that "pulls together". This indicates the gap that exists between the subjective experience of place and the discourses of 'lack' that can create "an interlocking self-fulfilling prophecy in motion" (Adams, 2007, p. 142, see also McKenzie, 2012, 2015, Skeggs, 2011, Shildrick, 2018).

I chatted to Barbara in the club before arranging the interview and she told me of her regret over the fact that Vicky had got "stuck" in Drefach, and how, in doing so she had "ruined her life". She remembered her response when Vicky was seventeen, and her boyfriend had told Barbara he that he planned to marry her, which she knew would mean her staying put; "No you're not" she said, and yet she could not stop it. It is a topic that we returned to in the interview sometime later,

"I said to her 'Whatever you do, don't start going to pubs in Drefach when you're just starting to drink'. 'Don't go to Drefach pubs' I said 'because you'll be stuck in Drefach forever! You'll be stuck in a rut' and she is."

This immobility is perhaps felt to be a reflection on Barbara herself, with Martin Power et al. (2016) writing about the stigma around so called "slum mums", and the responsibility that is placed on parents to enable social mobility. Later in the interview she told me more about how she had actively tried to dissuade her daughter from staying,

²³ Dorling mentions Singapore and the USA as being similarly segmented.

Barbara: And then [Barbara's granddaughter] was on the way then, had to get married and whatever; and I said 'Oh don't stay in Drefach' I said 'because you'll end up in Drefach forever'. Her children lives in Drefach now, the three of them. But I didn't want them to stay on an estate; I wanted them to get out.

Ellie: Right. Out where; just... somewhere else?

Barbara: Well anywhere, like... in a district, like, do you know what I mean, like... like say Rhos, or Craig, somewhere like that; not on a housing estate.

Ellie: Ok, I understand, yeah.

Barbara: Because when you're on a housing estate, you're all tarred with the same brush."

Rhos and Craig in this quote are more socially mobile districts of the same city, an area in which older members of social clubs are themselves feeling the ontologically disruptive effects of community displacement, as more "mobile" bodies move in (see Taylor, 2013, see also Buffel and Philipson, 2015). Barbara made clear the way in which this hegemonic perspective frames how she views her daughter's life, by referring to the dominant social discourses of stigma and shame, which are enacted by other people, as an explanation. She is aware of the way in which, as Jensen observes, "value systems are consciously or unconsciously reproduced and circulated, attaching moral worth to specific lives and subjects through the pathologising of others" (2013, see also Sayer 2005a, 2005b, Skeggs 1997, 2004a, 2004b).

Vicky's immobility was felt by Barbara as a source of personal regret, tied to the importance placed on the role of "mother" in "producing the daughter's self", a self that is enmeshed in, and created through, "the workings of power" (Lawler, 2000, p. 24). In referencing the external source of stigma Barbara reflexively recognizes discourses over which she has no control. Yet, despite her awareness of the processes through which stigma is produced it is felt to be inescapable, and Barbara's perspective is shaped by the positioning power of categorization and classification in relation to identities and geographies, which are themselves "intimately bound to the allocation of resources and/or penalties" (Adams, 2007, p. 141). Her relationship with her daughter therefore becomes partially refracted through the attitudes of others, with fear of a stigma that originates elsewhere and which positions her as a person "without value" (Skeggs, 1997, p. 74).

Drefach seems to bear a resemblance to 'Hystryd', elsewhere in south Wales, an area that carries both stigma and a sense of community, where 'Mary' and her daughter 'Adele' live, as described by Dawn Mannay (2013, 2015). Mary wants to keep her daughter close to her, and Adele, who lives 'at home' while studying at the local university, is torn between her family and the new path that she has embarked upon. Mannay's account is itself a revisiting of Diane Barker's 'Spoiling and Keeping Close in a Small Welsh Town', exploring the strategies that were employed by some families to keep children at home instead of going to university, partly by 'spoiling' them (1972).

Yet for Barbara the situation is reversed; while Mary consciously rejects the stigma that is associated with the area that she loves, and Adele feels conflicted about taking a path that will likely remove her from the world of her home and her community, Barbara fears the effects of stigma on Vicky and her grandchildren, and had wanted the family to leave and move to the other side of the city. In this scenario the conflict belongs to Barbara; her daughter has, against her wishes, "kept close", and in the process is felt to have "spoiled" her identity in the Goffmanian sense (1963).

Barbara regrets her own lack of opportunity when young, which included not being able to go to the grammar school because her family could not afford the uniform; she had to go to the "ordinary school" instead of "the posh school"²⁴. Her sadness seeped out as she talked of it almost 70 years later, "I wanted that blazer! And that gymslip – that navy blue gymslip with a red... red and black sash on it! Oh, I wanted it; I *really wanted* that blazer!", a stark illustration of the way in which lack of economic capital inhibits people's opportunities "to live in ways they, as well as others, value" (Sayer 2005b, pp. 946-7). She "pushed" her children because she felt she had "lost out", aspiring to (short-range) mobility for them, with a focus on getting a trade. But the success of this push, in terms of both geographic and social mobility, also generated further experiences of symbolic violence for Barbara, this time through the eyes of her youngest daughter Lisa.

Lisa had, in contrast with her sister, moved far out of the area and married a man with a well-paying, high status occupation. Barbara now feels that she looks down upon her, saying simply "And Lisa... I'm an embarrassment to Lisa". While the disorientation and internal

²⁴ The tripartite system of schooling that was introduced in England and Wales in 1945 created three different types of state-funded secondary schools: 'grammar schools', 'secondary technical schools' and 'secondary modern schools'. Performance in the 11-plus exam dictated which school a child would attend. This system is seen as having "perpetuated and accentuated social class divisions" (Gillard, 2009, p. 70), while the "cultural processes of the grammar school" are described as having "sieved out" working-class children who did attend them (Spencer, 2005, p. 50, quoting Ken Jones, 2003).

divisions created by a cleft habitus have been written about from the viewpoint of those who have experienced mobility (Bourdieu, 2000, Friedman, 2016), the effects of this on the ageing parents who have been left behind, literally and figuratively, can also create ontological insecurity; in this sense it is Barbara's identity that has been 'spoiled' in the eyes of her daughter.

Despite, or perhaps partly because of, this experience of stigma and the power of the symbolic economy, expressed through regret over the life of one daughter and awareness of being seen as an 'embarrassment' by another, Barbara's understanding of class as an articulated, or articulable, identity was complex.

(ii) *'Conceptual confusion' and 'a scrounger class'*

Towards the end of the four-hour interview with Barbara I brought the conversation around to class identity, and she gave me a long and involved answer. I quote it here in full in order to illustrate the difficulty of trying to objectify the classed experience, and to reflexively articulate the significance of social structure in one's own life,

Ellie: Like we were talking about before, another person I interviewed mentioned, when I – talking about memories and stuff, about everybody being in the same boat – he said something about... when you're working-class, you're all in the same boat and you didn't have a choice, and everything like that; do you... is that something *you* relate to...

Barbara: Yeah.

Ellie: Yeah.

Barbara: Because nobody had anything. You could leave your front doors open; nobody would take anything, because there was nothing to *take!*

Ellie: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Barbara: There was nothing to take.

Ellie: Yeah, so do you... would you say that... that you would feel... I mean, if... if somebody asked you to say what your identity was, where you had like a... in terms of class or anything, is that something that you would relate to?

Barbara: Well, I'd say working-class.

Ellie: Yeah, yeah. And what does that mean to you?

Barbara: Well, I think it's just 'lower-class'.

Ellie: Right, ok. Is that, like, 'jobs' or...?

Barbara: Job... well, I suppose everything, really.

Ellie: Yeah, ok.

Barbara: Because my sister, she lives up in Ystrad; now her husband was a carpenter. Her son... I told you her son is now in charge of all the town... all the flowers and things in town?

Ellie: Yes, yeah.

Barbara: Well when someone said 'Oh, they're middle-class people up there' she said 'they're *not* middle-class people' she said 'we're all working-class; we all go to work'.

Ellie: Yeah.

Barbara: So all... there's no way you'd be working-class now, because even posh people go to work.

Ellie: Absolutely; everybody works. It's interesting, because that's why I ask; because some people say there is, and some people say there isn't, and I...

Barbara: Oh, there's no class.

Ellie: Yeah. No. And I'm interested in *how* people... because so many different people...

Barbara: There's a 'scrounging-class'

Ellie: Oh, right; what do you mean by that?

Barbara: Well, like the benefits, you know... getting the benefits.

Ellie: Yeah, yeah.

Barbara: I mean, you take it up here; I mean, there's... I'd say half of us, of the 44 flats, only a half of us pay rent.

Ellie: Right, ok, yeah. Yeah.

Barbara: I know E_____ pays rent, and A_____ has benefits. I think S_____ pays full rent; I'm not sure. Benefits next door there; benefits down there; I don't know about C_____, she just moved in. M_____ 's not on benefits, but I know J_____ is on benefits. S_____ 's not on benefits, because he was an ex-policeman, and ex-prison officer; and D_____ 's on benefits, I know she's on benefits.

Ellie: Yeah.

Barbara: J_____ 's not on the benefits, but T_____ is; F_____ and H_____ are; D_____ is; there's people next door; J_____ 's not on benefits, neither is R_____; but the 2 next door are on benefits. You know; they all know how to get the system going.

Barbara initially states a class identity quite easily, but her answer contains elements of a 'defensive' response since she ultimately rejects this identity (Savage et al., 2001). However, there also appears to be significant 'conceptual confusion' around class and its application in the world today (Payne and Grew 2005, p. 897); her attempts to parse out what class means, and its significance to her life, touched on many possible interpretations.

The process begins with a clear self-identity as 'working-class' but difficulty in defining this. She then reaches for 'lower-class' when asked to explain, a phrase that does not carry with it the "moral force" of working-class identities that Savage et al. have found is still possible, "at least for men" (2001, p. 883). Payne and Grew note the many definitions of class that exist even within sociology (2005, p. 899), and suggest that it is significant that interviewees "are able to answer *so well*" after being asked to consider a "genuinely multi-faceted concept" with very little notice, arguing that this implies that class, in some form, does impinge on their understanding of their own lives (p. 901). Barbara's definition of class at this point as "Job... well, I suppose everything, really" could therefore be said to encapsulate this multi-faceted nature. It is an understanding of class that is related to, but not reducible to, occupation, one that much of current sociology of class works within, and is congruent with Bourdieu's concept of class as related to capital and habitus, with occupation as "generally a good and economical indicator of position in social space" (1987, p. 4)

However, Barbara then changes her mind; she reflects on the possibility of class as linked to geography, but this is raised only to be rejected when talking of her sister's rejection of the idea of class, contradicting her own implicit understanding of classed geographies. This dis-identification may be due to seeing class as a 'threat' to a sense of self, which prompts people to "seek strategies to displace class" by positioning it as something outside of themselves (Savage et al. 2001, p. 882). Ultimately, she both orients her sense of an (implicitly) classed self through reference to people around her (Irwin 2015), and displaces the idea of class onto her neighbours whose rent is subsidised, invoking "the 'scrounger' narrative" that has emerged in the media and in political rhetoric over recent decades (Patrick, 2016, Shildrick, 2018).

The confusion around what class means may be particularly relevant for those in the third age. In listening to Barbara's reasoning, we can see the struggle of articulating a complex relationship between the self and the parts of social structure that can be made visible and that change over time. She reaches for discursive explanations that have been partly eroded and replaced by others. As Tyler (2013) notes, with the rise of neoliberalism, the language of class has been deliberately erased, and framed as a "revolting subject", while class itself has become "less *visible*", even within a generation (Payne and Grew, 2005, p. 905). The definition of class that is being used by Barbara primarily relates to work and notions of fiscal

responsibility, although her rejection of class because “even posh people work” is inherently contradictory, *if* class is understood to be an embodied form of symbolic value or capital (Bourdieu, 1984, see p. 187 for a reference to being ‘posh’²⁵, Skeggs, 1997, Sayer, 2005a).

Her concern with what Mannay has termed the ‘benefit person’ in reference to the delineation made by Adele in Hystryd, between those who “engage with working-class respectability” by going to work and those who do not (2013, p. 102, 2015), seemed to precede our conversation; Barbara had a mental list of which neighbours paid their own rent from their pensions and which were “scrounging”. This seemed to function as a form of “moral boundary drawing” (Sayer, 2005a, 2005b), by which a person’s own virtues are claimed in contrast with those who are deemed to be less “moral”, and which is particularly notable in groups who have anxiety about how they are perceived “from above”, working to distance themselves from those “below” (Sayer, 2005b, p. 952, see also Savage, 2015 et al, pp. 383-384)

However, the focus on personal responsibility is more than a discursive device and can be seen in the context of Barbara’s own attitude to work and self-reliance, which, as with Mannay’s ‘Adele’, was a source of pride. Barbara spoke of how proximity to economic necessity had shaped parts of her life, but of how she had worked hard to support her family and had managed to save money to buy a house (since sold, with much of the money given away to children and grandchildren). She emphasised how the weight of providing for herself and her five children had shaped her priorities,

“I’ve never had nothing for nothing, and I said when the kids were small, if I didn’t go to work, they wouldn’t eat. And I used to have no clothes; I had a little chest of drawers, with one little draw, and my whole wardrobe would fit in that little drawer. I never had nothing...And she used to give me clothes, my other sister – my youngest sister – I had nothing. I didn’t even have a pair of knickers to change. That’s why I says now... then I got everything – I had everything I wanted – I went to work; I had 5 lovely weddings, and my husband never paid a penny towards *any* of the weddings. I worked hard, and paid for the weddings.”

Therefore, discursive tools can take on a different inflection depending upon the history of the individual and the experiences that have shaped their perceptions. The “scrounger”

²⁵ This is, of course, translated from the original French by Richard Nice, but ‘posh’ is the English translation that he used for this sense of the embodiment of symbolic value and is a word that was used by other participants in the study.

narrative' can act as a form of self-protection against the positioning effects of 'class' and may have shaped or exacerbated her perception of the differences between herself and her neighbours in this regard. However, it may also have a particular resonance for Barbara considering her own experiences of hardship and enforced self-reliance over the years. What is, understandably, missing from this definition is her embodied experience of the symbolic economy and of stigmatisation, which is perhaps best understood by descriptions of class as a material reality that is felt in stigma, but often denied in fact (Skeggs, 1997, Sayer 2002, 2005a). In beginning with a world in which "you could leave your front doors open" and ending with dis-identification, complexity, and displaced stigma, her explanation parallels the changing nature of class as a lived experience, from one of "collective and solidaristic sentiments" to "individualized emotional frames" (Savage et al., 2010, p. 61).

Yet, as Payne and Grew note, it is possible to speak of class indirectly through other means (2005), and even Barbara's sister who believed that class does not exist is elsewhere spoken of in implicitly classed terms; "Because my sister, she was a... oh, she's got a *beautiful* house, she has! In Ystrad; *really* posh, she is". Barbara orients herself in an unequal world by other means and does so without recourse to a language that may be felt to be insufficient, stigmatising, or to be a "poor fit" (Irwin, 2015).

An implicit sense of class partly shapes Barbara's narrative and the sense of self that emerges from it, and, as with John, this is informed by experiences over the life course, introducing a temporal aspect that will be expanded upon in the coming sections. Now we will turn to look at a participant whose sense of self in the third age is produced through a very different position in the symbolic economy, having accrued significant capital (symbolic and otherwise) through his lifetime, and having been at the forefront of the gentrification of his own neighbourhood.

ii. Gentrification

The connection between physical space and social and symbolic space that was introduced in discussion with Barbara, emerged in the narrative of Geoff in quite a different way. Geoff is a 64-year-old retired independent financial adviser who lives in the suburb adjacent to John and Barbara, and near to the club in which I had met Barbara. In his talk of gentrification, Bourdieu's description of the "appropriation" (1996) of space by the social world could be seen as quite literal; indeed, he writes of the way in which social power literally "consumes" physical space (1996, p. 12).

Geoff had picked up a leaflet at the club but was not a regular patron. He was the only one of the participants recruited through a social club to have not been a regular visitor, the only

one to have a university degree, and one of only two not to have grown up in or near the city. Conversely, over half of the U3A participants had grown up elsewhere.

When I interviewed Geoff, he was at the beginning of what was promising to be a very comfortable and active retirement. He felt that he had been brought up in a family with a doxic belief in ‘betterment’ through education. His mother had worked in the civil service and his father had worked his way up from being an apprentice carpenter to become a project manager within the aircraft industry. Geoff felt that success at grammar school had ‘propelled’ him, ‘by default really’, onto university, and he eventually began his own business as a financial adviser. His lifeworld had been shaped both by his own actions and the influence of external forces, living far from conditions of ‘economic necessity’ (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986), and in a manner that he has maintained into retirement. He had planned his retirement carefully and felt that he and his partner were now able to afford a ‘comfortable lifestyle’,

“I’m living off capital...just at this moment. My income as a Financial Advisor was around the £150,000 a year mark. And between us, we’re probably spending £40,000 - £50,000 a year. So that’s the sort of level of income. So, a comfortable lifestyle. How I... *find* that income is a... a mystery. It’s a result of careful financial planning, and inventing as I go along, really. [Laughs] You know, we’ve got resources; it’s just how we... how do we use them.”

He saw the interview as an opportunity to ‘review’ his life so far and has many activities planned, including artistic pursuits and classes, playing classical music with a quartet, and multiple trips abroad.

Upon being asked whether he felt that social class was relevant to him, Geoff spoke of how, in his own life, his sexuality has been more important to his sense of identity than social class. He described being part of a community which he felt was more egalitarian,

“Well being gay is sort of a... a more important issue than class. Interestingly, when I came out, being gay was... it was a sort of ‘secret world’ that could cut across class barriers...So... I... I’ve never really *thought* about things in class terms... So that’s... that’s been more of an issue for me, rather than class.”

Geoff certainly dis-identifies here, and the ‘moral unease’ that has previously been discussed in relation to class talk may be an underlying issue, but again, “intellectual doubt” (Irwin, 2015) over the relevance of class appears to be key, and the explanation for this seems to be partly due to the disappearance of class as a collective identity, as previously described, and partly related to generational experiences of changing identities.

Geoff began university around the turn of the decade between the 1960s and 70s, soon after homosexuality had been decriminalised in 1967. He became very active in the campaign for gay rights and was involved in left-wing student politics during times of great change. Thus, his adult identity was shaped by the “cultural revolution” that formed part of the “generational field” of the baby-boomers, and that helped to shape their generational habitus (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, 2009). In the post-war era of Geoff’s youth, class ceased to be the main point of conflict and differentiation and was replaced by generational conflict, while identities began to be constructed along lines of sexuality, ethnicity, and other similar groupings (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, pp. 30-31). Therefore, it is perhaps not really surprising that Geoff had “never really *thought* about things in class terms”, since his generational habitus, the experiences and discourses upon which it was predicated, and his own specific experiences of these, did not predispose him to do so²⁶. His identity was partly founded in resistance to structural oppression of a different kind, and the fact that these oppressions may have endured in a quite different way, and that he was himself entangled within them, seems to sit in direct contradiction to this.

Indeed, Geoff himself had remarked on the fact that he was a “baby-boomer” before beginning the interview, just as John (who is fourteen years older than Geoff, with a very different life history) had told me that he was “working-class” before we began. They offered very different identity-claims based on very different life histories, at the intersection of class and generation, which offer very different possibilities for social recognition in the contemporary context of their third age.

Despite this lack of conscious engagement with questions of class, Geoff used implicitly classed language in his narrative. Early on he spoke of how his cousin had changed after going to Oxford University, adopting a different accent, becoming “very posh”, and bringing home bottles of unfamiliar wine at Christmas, which indicates an instinctive awareness of class, as part of an embodied habitus and as related to taste and patterns of consumption (Bourdieu, 1984, Atkinson, 2013, 2017, Le Roux et al, 2008, Bennett et al, 2009). He had

²⁶ It is important to remember here that for a perceptual or embodied way of being to form part of a generational habitus it is not necessary for it to apply to each individual across the relevant birth cohorts (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005). Geoff had a specific “level of engagement” (Jones et al. 2008, p. 35) with the generational field that shaped the habitus of the ‘baby-boomer’ generation, and which appeared to form an important part of his individual habitus.

earlier referred to the importance that his family placed on education as a route to upward mobility, and in a conclusion to our discussion on class he recognised his own position within this hierarchy, “You know, I’d say that I ended up as a professional... you know... which is better than a middle manager”.

Geoff also told me of how he and his partner, who had moved to their current house together 33 years ago, had been part of the ‘gentrification’ of the local area, as part of the general changes in the locality that seemed to be resented by some members of the club nearby,

“We’ve got *fantastic* neighbours – they’re a very interesting bunch of people – we have a professional clown...we have a professing professor; we have a justice of the peace, and a social worker; we have a heart surgeon; we’ve got a senior manager with the BBC...This is gentrified; we’ve gentrified so we’ve got a *really* nice little neighbourhood here. So we’re staying here, because we’ve got a *fantastic* house – it’s perfect for our purposes – it’s adapted over the years, we do exactly what we want; my office is becoming a studio; we’ve got great neighbours; we can walk to [local arts centre]; we’ve got a dozen really good restaurants within 5 minutes’ walk; we walk or cycle into town; it’s great!”

He characterised this rise in geo-social status by drawing a distinction between the manual or service workers that lived in the street when he moved here and the professionals (himself included) that now live here. They were said by Geoff to fill their houses with books, an expression of cultural capital made manifest in their forms of consumption,

“When we moved in, there was a little self-employed builder; a postman; an old lady who’d lived here for years; so it’s changed...And so the people who live here, they fall into 2 camps really; the... like... professional couples, who just like the space and they’ve got so many books that they need two rooms to fill them; and young families that want a nice big house to bring their children up.”

He spoke of the “private library” that a neighbouring professional couple had set up with their personal book collection, and described himself and his neighbours as “acquisitors”, who all had “libraries” in their homes, speaking to a relationship between economic capital and cultural capital that connects work, home life and practices of consumption (Bourdieu, 1984).

In the description of gentrification we can see a compound of different elements of Payne and Grew's list of implicit class references, most particularly those of differences in lifestyle and status, housing, differences between local and incomer, and differences in occupation (manual work in contrast with professional work) (2005, p. 900). "Acquisitor" is a word that may be seen to imply a judicious engagement with the world of consumption, possessing both the financial wherewithal to buy what is desired and the taste to perform 'choice' in a socially valued manner (Bourdieu, 1984), with the refined judgements that preclude "irresponsible consumerism" (Jensen, 2013). Both 'gentrifier' and 'acquisitor' may be seen to act as synonyms of 'middle-class' in this context. This focus on consumption and lifestyle again speaks to a third age identity that is shaped by a generational habitus, since for this generation these issues took precedence over questions of class and were connected with "a reluctance to accept the ascriptive social locations of the past" (Higgs and Formosa, 2015, p. 175, drawing on Gilleard and Higgs, 2005). These terms, along with 'baby-boomer', are labels that Geoff is comfortable with, and that form part of the socially situated 'Me' of which he is consciously aware. They also form part of a social identity that Archer argues to be a subset of personal identity, but which, as we can see here, is enmeshed with Bourdieusian notions of physical and social space and of cultural and economic capital. It is to Glenn, a fellow baby-boomer who expressed significant moral unease around class but has an implicit awareness of the classed significance of geography, that we will now turn.

iii. Geographic mobility

Barbara's fear of the stigma of geographic mobility can be contrasted with the semi-permanent geographic mobility that shapes the third age of Glenn. Glenn is a 70-year-old retired Consultant Project Manager and son of a government worker and housewife, who developed an incredibly successful business in the country of his birth – an economically stable Western country outside of the UK. He was by far the most socially and geographically mobile of all of the participants, having amassed significant wealth by foreseeing future opportunities, strategically moving within his home country, and exploiting developments in technology. He now owns four and half homes around the world and lives a lifestyle akin to what Higgs and Quirk terms a 'grey nomad' (2007), spending much of his retirement in travel and leisure, while also spending time and money on philanthropic pursuits.

When I met Glenn he and his wife had been living in Wales for a few years, having bought a city-centre apartment here, and he was unsure where they would choose to move when their temporary visas expired. While here, they travelled abroad regularly; Glenn felt himself to be

a 'world citizen', which is an idea that Archer directly associates with the 'autonomous reflexives' in her student sample (2012, p. 168), while Bauman points to the inequality that underlies this free movement, describing the 'perfect tourist' as a postmodern hero with a differential access to choice that is "by far the most seminal among the stratifying factors" in contemporary society (1997, p. 93).

Towards the beginning of our first interview Glenn used classed language without being prompted when discussing his family history. He described his mother as having been "from an aspiring middle-class family I suppose, lower middle-class" and his father as having been "from a similar sort of socio-economic root I suppose, he was a fairly, that was a fairly large sort of group, in [country of origin], probably just above working class". However, he said that he was using these terms for my benefit, as a way of being 'helpful to the interviewer' (Payne and Grew, 2005, p. 905),

"I hate using the word classes, but I'm just using-I know it's a very familiar term over here in the UK; in [name of home country] it's a fairly, not as much now, but certainly back in those days, it was very egalitarian side. And, most people won't have a bar of class consciousness. As an aside, the upper-classes are generally looked down upon. Which is a little bit the reverse of what it is here in my observations."

In this way he very much distances himself from classed language, from 'class consciousness', by which he seems to mean a consciousness *of* class, while also recognising that there is an objective reality of stratification that requires some acknowledgement and description, and that there exists marked gradations within this. He became concerned when I reminded him of the use of the word 'aspirational' in a second interview²⁷,

"I'd be surprised if I used the word aspirational, maybe I did but I'd have to listen to the whole thing in context, but class, and aspirational to me means that you're aspiring to, and that's not something that I, and parents, I know, would not do...Most

²⁷ It must be noted here that I was slightly mistaken in this conversation; I suggested that it was his parents whom he had described as 'aspirational middle-class' in the previous interview rather than his mother's family. Nevertheless, the distaste for class as a way of understanding the world, despite an understanding of the classed nature *of* the world, was apparent.

people, I know couldn't care less if I-working class or something like that, or lower middle. It's just, it's just nonsense."

Glenn's position on the topic of class is 'defensive' in Savage et al's sense, resisting a class identity for himself (2001), yet he also (at least consciously) rejects class as a way of seeing the world (Payne and Grew, 2005), which seems to be prompted by a particular understanding of class as inherently evaluative (as described by Sayer, 2005a, 2005b). We must therefore again consider Irwin's argument of the "poor fit" that exists for many, signifying the gap between social class categories and "the ways in which people accord meaning to, and evaluate, their related experiences of socioeconomic inequality" (2005, p. 259). Glenn's significant social mobility and the national differences that he describes are key in this regard too.

Like Geoff, Glenn became concerned about social issues at a young age, and this concern has increased over the course of his life. He very much framed his egalitarian values (in general) as a reaction against the prejudices and oppressions of his parents' generation. Thus, his disgust with class, the fear of being implicated in a social injustice, could also be associated with a generational habitus and an egalitarian identity which was formed at a young age. In fact, these general principles are clearly illustrated in the fact that after retiring he became heavily involved in philanthropic activities and plans to leave none of his wealth for his children to inherit in the future, since "it's not theirs, they haven't earned it".

Yet the language of class seemed to also have a genuine meaning for him. He identified, with some precision, the socio-economic background of his parents using classed language, and much later in his narrative he described moving his family to an "upper-middle class suburb",

"we were living on the [name of place]. I don't know what the equivalent here is, whether its [suburb of this city] or not, but the [name of place] is your upper middle-class area, people with really good jobs earning really good money, a lot of the people that lived in that suburb all their life, nice people and they were the people we mixed with."

This indicates an understanding and experience of the world, and of specific geographies, as classed, and of families as existing within social groups shaped by access to resources, as described by Bourdieu. The passage also indicates an awareness of the social ordering of

the world that necessitates description, and for which the language of class is most applicable, as something that exists at least “out there” (Savage et al., 2001).

iv. Conclusion

This section has illustrated an awareness, even among those who rejected the idea of a class label, of the relationship between social and symbolic space and physical space. It has also explored the effects of stigma, the symbolic economy, the significance of lifestyle, and the accumulation of capital. This speaks to the socially situated ‘Me’ that for Archer is a participant in the internal conversation, but which has been seen to be partly shaped below the level of conscious class identity, as part of a situated habitus. We have seen that that which shapes this identity, as a form of habituated and emotional engagement with the world, is not always recognised as such except indirectly or in contextually contingent situations such as in an interview.

I have also explored the importance of generational habitus in shaping an understanding of class in the third age, speaking to the temporal shaping of a sense of identity which will be returned to at later points in the chapter. We will now turn to look in more depth at differences in lifestyle, capital, and social and symbolic space, when looking at constructions of middle-class identities.

e) The space of middle-class identities

A significant number of participants were willing to identify themselves as middle-class. This section uses examples from some of these interviews to explore the ways in which these identities were defined or spoken of. Here we will again see an explicit, or implicit, awareness of class and identity as constituted by Bourdieusian notions of lifestyle, the accrual of capital, and positions in social space, in ways that have been touched upon when discussing John, Barbara, Geoff and Glenn.

i. Economic and cultural capital

The importance of 'lifestyle' in understanding class was named in the response of Brian, a 74-year-old retired solicitor and lecturer who lives in Ystrad, the suburb in which Barbara's "really posh" sister also lives as described in the previous section. Brian is the son of a primary school teacher and factory office worker, who gained entrance to a direct grant school as a boy²⁸.

He had gone on to have a very successful and fulfilling career as a solicitor and a lecturer, which he had "thoroughly enjoyed". He had retired at sixty-four and began doing voluntary work, first as a classroom assistant at a school for troubled teenage boys and then through involvement with the governance of the school. He also joined the U3A and became involved in both the formal groups and the "social side", and embarked upon an Open University degree, from which he graduated at the age of 70. He now wants to "make the most of the years that remain" and is thinking seriously about beginning another OU course.

When asked about class, Brian was quite comfortable talking about it in relation to his parents and their backgrounds but was more hesitant in defining his own class. He seemed to both recognise his current objective class condition and feel a little uncomfortable with it. The one thing that he was certain of was that his *lifestyle* was middle-class,

Elie: you know your life at the moment, would you, engage the idea-I mean would you characterise that in any way? or is that not something that you would?

Brian: um, in what way? I mean I'm, I've lived very much a middle-class lifestyle obviously

Elie: yes. that's what I'm asking yep

Brian: yep yeah, well obviously

Elie: yeah yeah, and that's, well, I always want to kind of understand what people mean by that because people have different definitions so in what way would you categorise-

Brian: that's why I say *lifestyle*

²⁸ Direct grant schools were selective schools that existed between 1945 and 1976 and had a mixture of fee-paying and non-fee-paying pupils.

Ellie: yeah yeah

Brian: because I'm not you know, I've always felt a mixture of, you know, middle-class and working class. So I'm not quite sure what I am, um bit of a mongrel I suppose really. But um no, but you know I mean I was lucky enough to get into the legal profession. I've led, you know quite a privileged life really, you know one of the senior professions. I mean a solicitor's not, they don't have as much respect these days as they used to at one time. But I mean you know local solicitor, local bank manager, I mean used to be pillars of society in those days. So yes, you know I haven't made a fortune or anything like, but I mean I've always been comfortably off. And yes I've been privileged in that way.

Savage et al. describe self-identifications that place someone between class categories, and the use of “mobility stories”, as “devices” through which people distance themselves from a class identity (2010). The importance of directly addressing the complexity of liminal identities, or of identities shaped by mobility, will be looked at in section f in this chapter, but here Brian seems to see class partly as a signifier of privilege and has difficulty taking on the label for himself. Nevertheless, he understands that fundamental aspects of his own life are classed; his ‘lifestyle’, which Bourdieu describes as intimately connected to class habitus, as “the practice-unifying and practice-generating principle...the internalized form of class condition and of the conditionings” (1984, p. 101). He therefore recognises that he exists in a “space of differences” (Bourdieu, 1987, p. 3).

Shared cultural practices were central to the self-definition of Jonathon, a 72-year-old retired social worker whom I also met through the U3A. Jonathan began his narrative by telling me that he had grown up “in a respectable working-class family”, with parents who worked in an office. We had long conversations about the trajectory of his life and fears for the future over the course of two interviews, including about the effects of getting older on his love of cycling, which he (as an ex-competitor) described as “so much part of my *identity*”. When asked about class directly, Jonathon fairly easily saw himself as middle-class and spoke of his “interests”, seeing his cultural pursuits as a way to classify his own identity. Here we see a clear illustration of the ways in which, as Bourdieu noted, “taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier”, although this process is, by definition, usually subconscious, with “taste” acting as a proxy for social position as subjects “distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make” (1984, p. 6).

As we can see, it is also possible to recognise and to name the specific classificatory significance of practices of consumption, but being precise about the meaning of this can be difficult, perhaps suggesting that is not often thought of in these reflexive terms,

Ellie: To come back to what we were talking about *right* at the beginning – I know we talked a bit about it at the time – you described yourself as having a ‘respectable working class’ upbringing; would you still... how would you describe, say, if you wanted to describe yourself in class terms now; is that something that you would...

Jonathon: Well, middle class I would think, yeah.

Ellie: Middle class, yeah

Jonathon: Because of my... because of my interests, basically. Not for education... I mean the only... I mean, what education have I had? 4½ O-levels to start with!

[Laughs] Then I did the Certificate in Social Work which was... you know... 2 years...

Jonathon felt that the extent of his formal education was not sufficient reason to identify as middle-class, despite having trained as a social worker (at a time when a degree was not necessary), which points to a recognition of a connection between class and education. Although he feels that he does have “a degree-level education” since he completed an Advanced Award in Social Work later in his career. He has also accumulated significant cultural capital in other ways, indeed his home appeared to be a testament to his consumption practices in this regard, with a living room full of art and books. However, Jonathon did not clarify what he meant by “interests” at the time, and I prompted a return to the topic later in the interview, after he had spoken at some length about books on art and history that he owned,

Ellie: So, you were saying about how you feel middle-class because of your interests; is this the sort of thing that you mean?

Jonathon: Yes, I suppose that’s it. And music; and I go to... several times a year, I have a week in London, and I go to opera and all sorts of things.

We then spoke of plays he had seen in London, and a multi-day opera by Wagner that “was one of the best experiences of [his] life”. Sadly, Jonathon’s wife died three years ago, and he

had begun meeting women through 'Guardian Soulmates'²⁹. He told me of the female friends that he has met and the shared interests that they enjoy, speaking to the "affinities of habitus" by which people are brought together in social space (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 151); as Sayer points out, online dating agencies are based on users creating profiles to attract potential partners with a habitus and a reflexive mode that is compatible with theirs (2009b, p. 120).

In a second interview Jonathon again used explicitly classed language unprompted, when speaking of the differential educational opportunities of "middle-class children" and "working-class children" when he was young. Geography again emerged as a space of difference, when describing his own schoolmates, "middle-class kids there from Llanfair, you know – prosperous", indicating a sensitivity to the relationship between social and symbolic space and physical space that was seen across several of the interviews³⁰.

When asked, both Brian and Jonathon recognised aspects of their current lifestyles and identities as being relevant to an objective classificatory process. In a few short quotes we can see an understanding of class as related to lifestyle, work, economic and cultural capital, consumption practices, education, and geography. Now we will go on to explore the ways in which 'middle-classness' is codified through the relationship between capital and specific behaviours, in the words of Robert.

ii. Capital management and a normative identity

In contrast with Brian and Jonathon, Robert, a 69-year-old retired pharmacist, and former joint-owner of a dispensary, seemed to have no hesitation either in describing himself as middle-class or defining what that meant to him. Like Jonathon, he brought class up at the beginning of the interview, describing his parents as "very ordinary middle-class people", and he returned to the subject later, unprompted, when reflecting on parts of his life and identity,

"we're not gamblers, we don't gamble at all, I buy a lottery card occasionally or a scratch card, but, and also the, on the investment strategy you can pick one to ten...Where one is absolutely safe, no loss of the capital...uh, no chance of it going

²⁹ Guardian Soulmates is an online dating site that is associated with the Guardian newspaper with the tagline 'Meet someone worth meeting': <https://soulmates.theguardian.com/>

³⁰ It is notable that when comparing 'class talk' from 1948 and 1990, Savage (2007) found that all the 1990 respondents referenced place in relation to class while the earlier respondents very rarely did so.

away, but you won't make big gains...Or there's ten, where you gamble absolutely everything...High risk but high profit...So we're a three...That's our lifestyle two to three...Our steady plodders, we don't drive big cars, we don't have diamonds upstairs...we're, I think we're pretty normal people, middle class people.”

Here we see again a reference to ‘lifestyle’ as part of an explanation of a relationship with the world. The account that takes up the bulk of the quote is implicitly framed by the reference to class identity. It is also an explanation that contains within it a moral discourse of self-restraint that has flourished in conditions of austerity (Jensen, 2013). There also appears to be a process of self-legitimation at work that can be contrasted with the negative associations of a working-class identity for John, and Barbara’s rejection of a classed identity, which speaks to Skeggs’ observation that “[t]he conditions of possibility for class identity are always shaped by forms of capital, types of governance and claims for legitimacy” (Skeggs, 2010, p. 339). The restraint and self-management that is here codified as being middle-class can also be contrasted with complaints that Robert made later of social housing estates that he used to visit as part of his work, which he described as being constantly attended by police and ambulances; the geographically specific residence of an ‘underclass’ (Tyler, 2013, Chapters 6 and 7, Jensen, 2013).

Despite comfortably identifying with a class category Robert also referred to the discomfort and embarrassment that is sometimes felt around class discussions, concluding the discussion with the words “That's not, mustn't talk about classes anymore but um, we worked all our lives, and we're fortunate to reap the benefits”. This remark conflates class with industriousness and (like Brian) with good fortune and articulates the way in which discussion of class has become taboo. It also reflects the paradox described by Sayer, in which the impulse to forge a link between moral behaviour and class is tempered by moral unease around class itself (2005a, p. 212). This is a contradiction of Payne and Grew’s argument that there “seems to be little ground” for Sayer’s claim that embarrassment is an “appropriate” response to “the immorality of class” (Payne and Grew, 2005, p. 904).

Middle-class identities are explicitly positioned as normative in Robert’s description of his parents as “very ordinary middle-class people”, and he and his wife as “normal people, middle-class people”. Savage et al. suggest that claims to be ‘normal’ or ‘ordinary’, even when used in conjunction with class, represent a device by which people orient themselves away from class while also unintentionally invoking it (2001). Conversely, Payne and Grew feel that this is not a distancing device but a way to signify that a person is not “snobbishly superior” (2005, p. 902). There is however a third (overlapping) possible interpretation, which

is that Robert also elides being 'normal' with being middle-class precisely because for him being middle-class *is* the norm. This speaks to the social networks within which Robert moves, the 'affinities' and shared forms of habitus that draw people together in social space, creating what Elder-Vass describes as 'norm circles' (2010, Archer and Elder-Vass, 2012). It is to this notion of shared affinities within social space that I will now turn.

iii. Affinities in social space

As noted, Formosa suggests that "in its extreme form" the U3A itself acts as a system of "social closure", with admittance depending on cultural and social capital. He also describes how the accumulated history that is found in the habitus orients people towards joining due to their "educational disposition" (2007 pp. 11-12). The possibility of the organisation having an implicitly exclusionary aspect was a concern for some in the U3A, as described by Violet, an 86-year-old retired teacher with a life-long concern with social justice. During the interview we spoke of marginalisation, of, in her words, "the poverty of people who are often left behind", which was clearly a concern for her. We also talked of the U3A and accessibility, which Violet links explicitly to class,

Violet: the people that *go*, are generally *very* motivated and want to. There are *regrets* about it; some of the regrets that have been expressed are that we don't open it widely; but it's *there* – it's *available* – it's *people* who don't respond!

Ellie: What do they mean by that?

Violet: What I mean is, maybe... erm... *very*, *very* deprived families...we don't reach...you know... or maybe young people who've been 'turned off' education; then when they get older they...they're at a loss, and, in that way, it's sad. And also, it's very 'white'...there's not a lot of racial mix, which is a pity because it's a *very*, *very* good organisation...

Ellie: Yeah, it *sounds* amazing, it really does.

Violet: It is.

Ellie: Yeah. So, do you find that... you were saying to me the other day that most people you've met there are educated; would most of them have a professional background, sort of teaching and...?

Violet: *My impression is, if you walked into our current affairs group, you would think 'middle-class'. You would. There are some... obviously, maybe some exceptions, but they're rare.*

This illustrates an implicit awareness of the effects, inclusionary and exclusionary, of a shared form of habitus that exists between those with similar trajectories (Bourdieu, 1987). It also speaks to the lifelong significance of negative experiences of education, an area of Bourdieu's work in which symbolic violence was particularly significant (Schubert, 2012, p. 182), and which will be much discussed in the following chapters.

However, as noted in the previous chapter, it is important not to over-emphasise a narrative of lack in the analysis. As Brian noted, in the local U3A the social side is just as important as the formal side, and the social clubs that I visited provided a similar service in this regard, as places for community, friendship and activities. Where the U3A has many different meet-up groups, holidays planned by members, and "bus-pass Thursdays", the social clubs have darts, skittles, bingo, older people's music nights, occasional trips away, "tinsel and turkey" Christmas events, and an informal sense of community. For example, one of the younger club members I spoke to, Jenny, a 64-year-old retired legal secretary, told me of how the darts team that she regularly played in, in local pubs and clubs, was the main focus of her social life. This of course also speaks to a shared habitus and is itself based on "elective affinities" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 241).

An important difference between the two appeared to be one of financial precarity. The steward in the club in which I met Harry and Jack told me of the pubs and clubs in the immediate area that had shut down, Jenny told me that the darts league she plays in has shrunk to less than a third of its size since she began playing 15 years ago, while the committee members I spoke to at a British Legion anticipated that they would be closing in the next few years, partly due to the rising price of alcohol and not being able to attract regular visitors from the estate nearby.

Nevertheless, the wider effects of misrecognition and the symbolic economy, both enabling and disabling, have been discussed in this chapter and will inform subsequent chapters. What Violet's words have illustrated is the felt experience of social space as founded in shared biographical experiences that both include and exclude. We will now move on to discuss the ease with which those who embody a lifetime of social, economic, cultural and symbolic capital can move through the world of possibilities, in a discussion about the "very posh" relatives of Alison.

iv. Ease of movement and changing structures

Alison is an 85-year-old retired teacher from the U3A, who described herself at the beginning of her narrative as having grown up in a middle-class environment. She grew up in a town in south Wales in the 1930s and 40s, going to private school and then grammar school, in a time and a place where class was very much divided by language. In Alison's world at the time, only those who were not middle-class (the 'constitutive other' in this context) spoke Welsh, a language that had far less symbolic value than it now enjoys and has in the past been associated with informality and low status (Price and Tamburelli, 2016). Her family was "a sort of, monoglot English spoken family" which was "by definition middle-class", and it was a difference that was "very, very, very pronounced". She emphasised the difference in social and physical as well as symbolic space, as the two groups rarely interacted,

"Welsh was not a thing that you wanted to speak; you didn't want to hear about it... They never connected with anybody who spoke Welsh, you only heard it if you went to the market. It was a very small, proportionally very small middle-class group in south Wales, it really was."

However, she was very hesitant about committing to a middle-class identity in the present day,

Ellie: so, having talked about having a middle-class upbringing, is that something you still see yourself as do you think?

Alison: well not, well I suppo-I don't know I don't think about it very much. I don't think about it at all, but I mean in my family in the thirties you did. That's the point I'm making, how much it's changed.

She appears to distance herself from questions of her own current identity, which she seemed to be on the cusp of agreeing to, through a focus on social change. Yet that change itself seems to fundamentally shape the way she sees class and speaks of class in the interview. It seemed to be easier for Alison to consciously objectify the classed enclaves of the past than of the present. This was possibly assisted by changes in the relationship

between habitus and field which, as discussed in Chapter Four, can prompt reflexive awareness, as well as the changes in the nature and visibility of class as social structure; she had experienced a “migration in time” as the world had changed around her (Westerhof, 2010).

Hesitancy around this again speaks to the “disavowal” of middle-class identities that Savage et al. describe (2010, p. 66), but the fact she ‘doesn’t think about it’ is also entirely congruent with Bourdieu’s’ description of habitus, in this case a class habitus, as unconscious being-in-the-world, a “feel for the game” (Bourdieu, 1990, 1998). Indeed, her subjective sense of sharing social spaces with those with a similar habitus, and shared histories, was made very clear when she told me (as noted in Chapter Five) that “we’re all the *same*” at the U3A.

As well as objectifying her own past classed experiences, she also quite easily objectified and articulated the social enclaves, and conditions of existence, of others. She and her sister had recently attended the 90th birthday of her cousin, and she described realising that, out of the twenty four family members present, “not one single person other than myself and my sister had ever set foot in a state school or a state hospital”. She described them as “very posh” people who had lifelong privilege and access to ample resources, and who “don’t have to knock” because “they have different expectations of life. A door is never closed, it is always open before they get there”. This description explicitly, although presumably unconsciously, echoes Bourdieu’s use of the symbolism of the “closed doors” that was mentioned in a previous chapter, and which modulate the “probabilities of access to goods, services and powers” through which people anticipate the future and which shapes their “sense of reality” (1990, p. 60). Alison consciously recognises the freedom of movement through and within the space of possibilities that is afforded only to those with a very high volume of compound capital, which allows them to move with ease.

The relationship between change and stasis was thrown in sharp relief when I asked Alison what had changed most significantly in her lifetime; “well I suppose the aspirations that are possible for women, no doubt about it. I mean anybody can do anything now, given a good background, which helps”. This seeming paradox suggests limitless possibilities, as “anyone can do anything”, which is swiftly undercut by the need for what she calls “a good background” as still important in shaping our future possibilities. The concern with family ‘background’ was emphasised in an anecdote that Alison told later in the interview, of when she had been in hospital at the same time as a new mum who was 16 years old, whose own mother was 32 and had a 19-year-old boyfriend. She told this story with a disapproval

steeped in cultural class difference and with pity for the baby, asking “what sort of background is that child going to have?”, articulating the stigma that is inherent in a classed society and implicitly classifying herself through social difference.

The changing nature of class was also very present in the reflections of David, a retired lecturer of the same age and fellow member of the U3A, who showed even more hesitation in laying claim to a class identity, but spoke enthusiastically in his preceding narrative of the way in which the class structure was overt and stifling in his younger years,

“One of my memories of the Thirties was that it was a class-ridden society. It really was so divisive – divided – for example, my father was born in [economically deprived area of the city], in 1890. But he made it in business, and he became a pillar of society, and a very strong Conservative middle ‘Oh, I made it’ middle-class man. And he was a big influence on my life; but one of the things I remain a little bit sad about was this business of class.”

David reluctantly conceded that his experience of the world is still influenced by a class perspective, something which he seemed to acknowledge with some embarrassment, “it’s still there, sometimes you notice the way someone uses a fork”. Class is therefore represented as a perceptual habitus through which the “bodily hexis” of others is accorded significance (Bourdieu, 1984)³¹, and it is through this that David self-classifies. Yet even the element of reluctance and hesitation does not make this a straightforward defensive position. He may speak of ‘class out there’ while hesitating to relate this to himself, but for him ‘out there’ is also somewhere in the past. Furthermore, his focus on the damaging nature of earlier class structures means that the oppressive nature of class that he has identified may exacerbate the hesitation he felt at acknowledging class as a part of his own ‘self’.

By taking a life course perspective we can also contextualise the unease that Alison and David both seem to feel, in discourses that existed at a much earlier time in their lives. Mike Savage has compared Mass Observation interviews from 1948 to those from 1990 and found marked differences in the way that class was spoken of in the earlier period. Although 49% of the sample readily identified with class, and others were prepared to identify “when pushed” (2007, para. 4.4), class was widely seen as “a form of ascriptive inscription” that

³¹ ‘Bodily hexis’ is described by Bourdieu as “a basic dimension of the sense of social orientation, is a practical way of experiencing and expressing one’s own sense of social value.” (1984, p. 474). Please see pp. 190-196 for a discussion of the social significance of food consumption, ‘manners’ and the body.

was “the ascribed product of their birth and upbringing”, compared with the “reflexive and individualised account(s)” of social mobility that were found in 1990 (abstract). Savage describes 1948 as a time when people could easily recognise their own classed position but were often hesitant or reluctant to take on a subjective identity, when “middle class identities were both powerful yet also inarticulate: they depended on being implicit and taken for granted. They invoked certain kinds of relational judgements” (para. 4.16). Therefore, while the changes that have occurred in the structure of class may have created a reluctance to self-identify, the discourses within which Alison and David’s own perspectives were shaped at a young age may have also created a reluctance, and shaped the ways in which class is seen, felt, and spoken of.

v. Conclusion

In this section I have illustrated a tacit awareness in participants of the relationship between habitus, different forms of capital, social affinities and the connections between these and ‘middle-class’ identities. The fact that these are sometimes difficult to reflexively recognize or to articulate may be related to ‘unease’ around the subject of class but it also underscores the difficulty of objectifying social structure as social structure, in the unconscious being-in-the-world that shapes our schemes of perception.

I have further illustrated the importance of processes of social and structural change in shaping, or impinging upon, constructions of class identity within the third age. This temporal aspect of class identities follows on from the discussion of generational habitus in the previous section of this chapter and will be followed in the next part by looking at the effects of social mobility on class identities in retirement.

f) **Class, Culture, Social Mobility and retirement: What endures?**

In this section I will look at the reflections of three participants, one U3A member and two social club members, who have been socially mobile and who have a somewhat complex sense of class identity in their third age. Here we will look at points of change and continuity; what remains in terms of class cultures over the life course, and what may (or may not) change upon entering retirement. Curtis (2016), has noted that research into the effects of social mobility on class identity is “scarce”, but through analysing data from 33 societies, has

found that mobility can lead to an identification with both class of origin and current class position. However, his analysis was restricted to people between the ages 30 and 65 on the basis that “they are more likely to be integrated into the class structure” (p. 112), an explanation that clearly uses a far narrower definition of ‘class structure’ than is used here.

i. Social mobility and new affinities

Sarah is a 67-year-old retired social worker whom I met through the U3A. Her father was a crane driver at the local steelworks who then became a fitters-mate, and her mother had worked in a sweet shop across the road from their house. She has achieved significant social mobility, surprising her family by deciding at the age of fourteen that she wanted to be a social worker. She worked in the profession for almost 40 years and was an Operational Manager at the time she retired, at the age of 60.

Sarah spoke of her identity in geographical terms and clearly felt a strong affection for the place that she had lived most of her life, saying “I’m a [name of city] girl” and “I’m a Glasfryn girl”, but her lifeworld in retirement has also very much been shaped by her life course trajectory. Her activities in retirement include yoga classes, tai chi classes that were found through U3A, Welsh classes (which has markedly risen in symbolic value since Alison’s childhood), Spanish, flamenco dancing, ski-ing twice a year, and travels abroad, as well as volunteering in a responsible role in charity.

The ways in which similarities of habitus predispose us to shared social space, or the unconscious ‘norm circles’ of which we are a part, was indicated in a brief chat about the (at the time) recent Brexit referendum that we had before beginning the interview. Sarah expressed her surprise at the result, which she had been discussing with her U3A book group, “We said, we don’t know who the hell voted to leave, because none of us did!”, in a description that illustrates the separation of class cultures and politics through social networks.

Sarah showed no outward discomfort in speaking of class as an identity marker. She explained that she “felt working class”, but that she knew herself to be middle-class, and, like Barbara, reasoned this out aloud,

Ellie: with quite a lot of my interviewees, they’ve sort of started their... telling me about their lives... and sort of said things like ‘Well, I grew up in a working-class

home' or 'I grew up in a middle-class home' or... is that something that you would relate to, or does that make any sense to you?

Sarah: Oh yeah. I mean... definitely working-class, council house; you know... sort of...

Ellie: Yeah. And do you still *feel* working-class?

Sarah: It's strange, because I'm not.

Ellie: Yeah.

Sarah: I mean, if I look at it logically, I'm not. I still *relate* to being working-class – and I still have some, but not *all* those beliefs.

Ellie: Right, ok.

Sarah: But... you know... I've had a professional job... you know... own my own house, and have done for years, so... you know... if you were looking at it...

Ellie: In a sort of abstract way, yeah

Sarah: ...logically, I'm not working-class anymore.

Ellie: But you say you still *feel* it?

Sarah: In many ways; not all ways, but in many ways, yeah.

Ellie: Yeah. Ok. In what ways?

Sarah: In what ways do I feel it? I still have a basic trust of Conservatives! [Laughs]

Ellie: Right, yeah?

Sarah: Basic *mistrust* of conservatives.

Ellie: Yes. Yeah.

Sarah: I... I suppose it's my political views that are more working-class. You know... I think Thatcher did *massive* amounts of damage...

Ellie: Yeah. Yeah.

Sarah: ...not... you know... not just to... the actual *working* places that people have, but it's a knock-on effect; it's crime, health, massive... and I... I find it very difficult to understand why she – and people like her – couldn't see that. Because it's so obvious.

Ellie: Yeah-yeah. Absolutely, yeah.

Sarah: So yeah... sort of destruction of... communities, and relating to that; it's going on today, because... you know... Port Talbot's going to go down the tubes unless they... Tata steel decides not to sell.

Ellie: Yes, of course.

Sarah: Or they get someone to buy it. But then again, we get the... I can't understand how... a lot of working-class people would... sort of... vote for Brexit; and I think 'You're cutting your nose off to spite your face; it's not going to change for you; your life's still going to be shit; it's just another load of politicians up there'.

Here, as with Barbara earlier in this chapter, we see Sarah reflecting aloud on what Payne and Grew call “the untidy complexity” of class identity (2005, p. 906), but coming to a somewhat different conclusion. Her reflections point to ways in which a continued affinity with a class identity in childhood can help to mould a sense of an adult identity, which aligns with the formative role of childhood socialisation or the “lingering influence of class origin on class identification later in life” (Curtis, 2016, p. 111). This is also associated with the influence of historically contingent events, with Sarah's identity partly created in opposition to Thatcher's Conservatism in the 1980s, speaking to the relationship between historical events and biographical events and their role in identity formation (Hockey and James, 2003 p. 96). This further illustrates how complex class identities are, and how difficult they can be to reconcile into a simple identity claim.

A sense of self that is still partially embedded in the past could also be seen in the reflections of Rob, a 76-year-old retired police sergeant and committee member of a social club. Rob had been brought up in, but no longer lives in, the suburb of Drefach, which has been much discussed earlier in the chapter (see section d part i.). He saw himself as middle-class now but was keen to point out that he “wasn't ashamed” of his working-class background. This, of course, invokes the possibility that working-class background *could* be seen, or felt, as shameful, an emotion that is described by Scheff as “the premier social emotion” and directly linked with “chronic low self-esteem” (2000, pp. 84 and 91. See also Sayer, 2005a, 2005b, Skeggs, 1997, Sennett and Cobb, 1993, for more on class and shame). He still feels that some parts of his embodied habitus are connected to his working-class upbringing, since “I still use some of my working-class feelings”, and gives an example of drinking water from stream in the park if he was walking there and he was thirsty,

“People don’t let their kids do that, now. But I’d still do it... if I was... even now, at 76, if I was thirsty I’d still do it, even though it’s about... it was things like that – that didn’t worry me!”.

As with Barbara, Sarah’s reflection on class over time resolves itself through her reflections on difference, and on distances in social space which positions her in a certain location. For Barbara it was a distance she created between herself and ‘the scroungers’, and indeed, from the idea of class as applicable to her, while for Sarah, a gap emerged between herself and her former identity as working-class, and in particular against those who voted for Brexit. Nevertheless, as with Rob, the complexity of her identity must be understood from a life course perspective, and through the narrative tools and choices that, as Frank (2010) describes, help to make sense of a life. This appears to be quite distinct from the internal conflict, or indeed “torment” that is associated with Bourdieu’s “cleft habitus”, despite containing some degree of “tensions and contradictions” (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 64, Friedman, 2016). Conversely, Sarah and Rob acknowledged changes in status over the course of a working life and into retirement in a way that is meaningful for their own orientation of self in the world. The resolution that is achieved by Sarah can be contrasted with the reflections of Harry and Jack, who I will now go on to discuss, neither of whom seemed to feel that they fit into a class category with any degree of neatness.

ii. A liminal class identity

Harry is an 80-year-old retired bingo hall manager whom I interviewed in the backroom of a political club that he had been a member of for about 40 years, coming on the same night every week for a drink with an old friend. His father was a miner who had become an insurance salesman by the time of Harry’s birth, and who had wanted Harry “to go in the coal mines” when he grew up.

Harry left school at fourteen and after working in the motor trade for some years became a manager of multiple bingo halls, attended by hundreds of people. He retired at the age of 63 and since then has taken on a lot of voluntary work, including as a school governor at a local primary school, and as vice-chairman of the local volunteer society. The club we were sitting in was in the suburb of Craig, which Barbara had referred to as being more socially desirable than Drefach, but Harry seemed to feel some ‘disorientation’ (Taylor, 2013) due to the changes to the area. He described the traditional community moving out and having been

“replaced by ethnic minorities and students”, causing an old bingo hall down the road to close down, becoming a graffiti covered relic of the past. This speaks to the tensions that are created in global cities “between a ‘hyper-mobile’ minority and those ageing in place” that have been described by Buffel and Philipson (2015, p. 232).

Despite his economic mobility, his sense of his class position seemed not to have changed, he said “I always call myself working class”. This correlates with research that indicates that the extent to which social mobility is associated with education is relevant to the enduring significance of that mobility as a cohort enters retirement and older age (Wildman et al., 2016), and of the continued relevance of ‘class cultures’ over the life course, with Jones et al. identifying the ‘lock-in’ effects of class and lifestyle in their sample of men who are middle-aged and older (2011). After his initial statement Harry reflected and then placed himself in the liminal space between two classes, “working class, middle-class”, due to having achieved a higher income as “I’ve got on since”, concluding that “I suppose I’m comfortable enough”. Despite seeing references to mobility as distancing devices in the CCSE study (Savage et al, 2010), Savage addresses these more complex identities directly in his work on the Mass Observation interviews, allowing for the effects of social mobility in “liminal’ or ‘ambivalent’ class positions’ (2007, para. 5.7), that were part of the “individualised account(s)” of the 1990 interviews (abstract). For Harry, this liminal space is meaningful to his own sense of self, speaking to points of continuity and of stasis in his biography, and it is a liminality that must be synthesised into accounts of third age identities. We will now, finally, turn to Jack, whose subjective sense of class identity has been altered by retirement itself.

iii. Post-retirement loss of status

Social class identity over the life course is a relationship between two potentially mobile points, the trajectory of the individual and the trajectory of a changing structure. In this last section I will briefly present the journey of Jack, who was the only participant who felt himself to have experienced downward mobility after retirement.

Lopes (2015) has questioned the relevance of pre-retirement occupation to class identity, speculating on social mobility after retirement, but in some respects appears to view class as a kind of hierarchy of well-being, potentially conflating cause with effect, and using a power-neutral measure for social capital that depends purely on aggregate numbers of contacts, rather than the status of those contacts. It is a measure of class which is not concerned with morality or with recognition and misrecognition, but for Jack, a 76-year-old retired Company Secretary whom I met in the same club as Harry, the loss of status brought about by

retirement from his managerial position seemed to fundamentally change his own sense of class identity.

Jack grew up on a council estate in the city and was son of a transport manager for a haulage company and a housewife. He completed his O' Levels at school, and then studied for the Chartered Institute of Secretaries on a day release course; in his working life he had 40 to 50 people working under him. He has been a member of the same club as Harry for 20 years but had also been a regular at other local clubs, since closed down, during his working life. Jack has suffered serious health problems in the last few years and, although he comes to the club very regularly, his step-daughter acts as a carer for him as well as working behind the bar at the club herself. He has a very regular routine, coming in every night for four pints of shandy, and taking part in the regular bingo and music nights with other pensioners. He also takes holidays with his step-daughter and was hoping to go on a cruise in the Caribbean this year. When Jack was asked about whether he related to ideas of class, it became clear that for him social status and class identity was tied to his previous career and had dissipated since then. He clearly valued the social status that came with a successful career, telling me more than once that his brothers had both attained a high rank in the navy, Chief Engineers "next to the captain", yet he spoke in the past tense when talking of the career status and the social mobility that he had attained,

"I used to think that I was middle-class...Well you're either posh or you're not...and I used to like to think that I was bordering on the posh, or intelligent, or intellectual, or knowledgeable...Or, man of the world."

This position echoes findings by McMullin and Cairney (2004), who suggested the importance of looking at self-esteem over the life course, and the ways in which the transition into retirement can potentially affect self-esteem at the intersections of age, class and gender. Jack's experience corresponds with the authors' speculations that middle or upper-class men in managerial positions may resent the loss of status brought about by retirement, while a working-class man may welcome the removal of systems of managerial power in his day-to-day life. However, class is framed by them as a static property of the person, rather than one that may be subject to change within the life course, with the process of retirement potentially having a significant effect on perceptions of class identity. Jack's subjective experience of class appeared to be a dynamic one, following an arc in which his increase in professional status signified a slide up the class hierarchy, while

retirement (followed by serious health problems) seemed to represent a corresponding descent.

It is worth noting that Jack was previously a home-owner, a status used by Sarah earlier in this section to illustrate class membership. Despite varying levels of working class home-ownership across the country (Thrift and Williams 2015), it is more closely related to a middle class lifestyle, with 'housing' also being one of the 14 criteria for class-related talk identified by Payne and Grew (2005). Jack now lives in a housing association flat that he rents for eighty pounds a week, a choice he made once his partner died a few years ago, and it could therefore be argued that one more visible symbol of a middle-class lifestyle has receded. Despite appearing to dismiss class as no longer relevant "I don't think about it no, I used to at one time when I was working in the office", by discussing it in relational terms, and constructing a stark, all-encompassing, divide "you're either posh or you're not", Jack is identifying himself as now "not posh". It could be argued that he is implicitly coding himself as 'working-class' on the basis that he no longer feels himself to be 'middle', but he did not express any affinity with this identity either. For Jack, the process of retirement seems to both place him outside of the class system, and to reposition him within it. The experience of professional status, of 'bordering on posh' is reflected on as a temporal and transient condition, while his geographically specific routines, what Seamon calls the 'place-ballet' of his lifeworld (2001), endures, forming the basis of the routine, embodied, and affective engagement with the world that makes up the habitus.

iv. Conclusion

Here we can see the importance of changes in the personal trajectory to third age class identities. In Sarah and Rob we have seen the competing pull of the past and present that speaks to class as both an embodied sense of a self that is formed through early experiences *and* as reflective of objective conditions and current affinities. In Harry, we have seen the effects of changes in economic capital to a class identity, with a mobility that can occur without significantly reshaping a lifeworld, and in Jack we have seen an indication that retirement itself may have a dynamic role to play in class-identity, as has been suggested by Lopes (2015).

This section has again illustrated the relationship between a subjective sense of class and objective conditions of occupation, capital, symbolic value, and shared affinities among this group of participants. The need for a life course approach that is sensitive to the varied

biographies of people in the third age, including the historical events that may have helped to constitute these biographies, is also very evident.

g) Chapter Conclusion

There are two main conclusions to be drawn from this chapter, firstly that the majority of participants in this study have an awareness of themselves as existing within a space of social differences, which help to inform, and sometimes to shape, their sense of self in the world. Secondly, that in researching class identities in the third age it is essential to consider the effects of generation and the life course, including the effects of historical discourses around class, and of social mobility. Participants in this age group and life-stage have seen significant changes in their lives, not only in their own class-related trajectory but in experiencing, and sometimes spearheading, the very changes to the social structures and experiences of class upon which current theories and classifications rest (Hyde and Jones 2015); to ignore this would be to take a paradoxically ahistorical perspective on an historically contingent phenomenon.

The data around class identity that were found in this research partly support and partly contradict Formosa's finding in his study in Malta, that older people no longer 'spontaneously and unambiguously' use classed language (2014, p. 23). There was a wide variation in the use of classed language, and a number of participants used explicitly classed language without being prompted. The data support Formosa's finding of persisting class awareness across groups in the third age, and the 'individualisation' of class identities in line with current research across age-groups (p. 20). The significance of implicitly classed language in relation to Bourdieusian concepts of lifestyle, consumption practices, social and symbolic space, and capital accumulation has been illustrated, in a way that overlaps with the suggestions of Payne and Grew and their critique of Savage et al's narrower definition of class talk and class identity (2005). This further supports Formosa's findings that a sense of being-in-the-world of the third-age is nevertheless shaped by class as formed by capital composition, capital volume and power structures, sitting in contradiction with the tendency of Gilleard and Higgs to over-emphasise agentic consumption as shaping third age experiences, at the expense of enduring classed differences in these practices (2006), as also noted by Formosa (2014, pp. 7 and 23). The social world within which the participants make sense of their own sense of self therefore largely aligns with arguments for the continued importance of accumulated capital over the life course, combined with post-retirement social networks and lifestyle, in shaping post-retirement class identities (Bottero,

2015). However, within these “individualized account(s)” (Savage, 2007), the significance of generation and diverse life trajectories to classed identities of the third age, including the potentially dynamic role of retirement, has been shown to be potentially very important.

To contextualise this in the wider aims of the study, the sense of a social identity as partly comprised of a classed and/or socially situated self in the third age has been evidenced. This speaks to the ways in which the past or socially situated ‘Me’ and the future ‘You’ of Archer’s personal morphogenesis correspond to a lifeworld and a habitus that is shaped by a trajectory over the life course, that exists in a particular position within social space. This supports the proposal for a ‘Disposition’ as a final addition to Mouzelis’ extension of Bourdieu’s Structure-Disposition-Practice schema, which follows naturally from Bourdieu’s description of habitus as “embodied history, internalized as a second nature” (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 57), while also allowing space for continued agency in the third age, as discussed by Hendricks and Hatch (2006). We will now move on to look at the trajectories of John and Barbara as case studies, and to look at their dispositions in the third age in more detail, in Chapter Seven.

7. The Making of a Habitus: the effects of class, the symbolic order, and physical abuse

a) Introduction

In this chapter I will explore the role of classed misrecognition in the relationship between reflexivity and habitus over the life course by presenting excerpts from the lives of two social club members as case studies. I will illustrate how the effects of social structure, whether unconsciously internalised or reflexively considered, can coalesce into a third age disposition that is an emergent property of a lifeworld that has been shaped over time. As discussed earlier (see Chapter Three, section c, part iv), Honneth's argument that threats to a person's "physical integrity" signify a specific form of withheld recognition (1995a) will be used to supplement Bourdieu's underemphasis of the physical components of systems of domination. The analysis that is presented in these case studies will introduce themes that will be elaborated upon in further chapters.

b) John: Economic necessity, symbolic violence and contextual continuity

In this section I will explore the trajectory of John, whom we met in the previous chapter. I will reflect further on how Bourdieusian "conditions of existence" (1977, 1984, 1990), including experiences of symbolic violence, have helped to shape his reflexive actions and his social identity. I will look at how this relates to Archer's arguments around people who prioritize contextual continuity over change, and the role of different forms of collective agency, linking this to classed identities and a habitus in the third age. In doing this I will touch on John's time in education and in work, his current sense of his own capacity for generativity, and his affective, and reflexive, responses to a changing world.

i. Setting the scene

As described in the previous chapter, I was put in touch with John by his friend and neighbour Peggy whom I met at a social club; she sat in for part of his interview so that he would feel comfortable talking to me. Peggy had told me that they regularly sit together for

hours recounting the past, creating and recreating memories, in an act that can be seen as a kind of ‘contextual continuity’ of the imagination³², and as a site of resistance against the incursions of change in their external world. On my first meeting with Peggy she spoke of how glad she and John were that they grew up when they did, at a time of greater freedom for children to roam the fields, as they “made memories” which they have carried through life in a way that she sees as having changed for modern children.

On that day, I became a participant in their co-production of memories as they recounted the intertwined histories of their lives and of the city. The friends had spent their younger years in conditions of working-class solidarity, the latter decades of the re-established contextual continuity of urban working-class communities in modernity (Archer, 2012, p. 26), which came through clearly in their descriptions of the rituals and practices of the communities of their youth. This correlates with Gilleard and Higgs’ discussion of the social conditions of “Modernity 1”, in which “Styles of life are powerfully segmented by class and gender”, and which preceded the changes that were brought about by “Modernity 2” in the 1960s (2005, in particular see p. 96).

John learned to drive trucks while stationed in Egypt during his national service, before returning to Drefach and settling into work as a driver for thirty years and for three different companies, until his retirement, which was due to the “push factor” (Jones et al., 2010) of ill-health after a stroke. He spoke of having reflexively “weighed it all up” when moving from one job to another, but also described himself as having lived “day by day” over the course of his working life, and, unlike Barbara (whose narrative will be explored further in the next section of this chapter), he had not invested in an occupational pension but lives only on a state pension. In this case study I will focus on specific memories and aspects of his life in order to tease out the roles of habitus and reflexivity, and the significance of misrecognition, in shaping his trajectory and his third-age identity.

ii. Economic necessity

When I asked John about processes of choice-making he emphasized a state of choicelessness as forming the trajectory of his working life at the outset, it is clear that he felt the course of his life to have been shaped by forces external to him, positioning his locus of control, described by O’Rand as a form of personal capital over the life course (2006), as

³² In describing contextual continuity as existing in the imagination I have extended Archer’s own use of the phrase, by which she refers to continuity in the external world (2003, 2007, 2012).

external rather than internal. As noted in the previous chapter, he saw all working-class children and young people as having been “in the same boat” when growing up. He described how he was not encouraged by his parents to plan for the future as the need to earn money was the primary concern, with an early transition from school to work that was reflected in interviews with other social club members.

John spoke of a relationship with the future that was, at the time, refracted through the needs of the present, in which economic necessity can disrupt or shape our relationship with time. This can create a “temporal immanentism” (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 183), as economic pressure in the present becomes the “dominating” force in relation to “all other decisions” (Sayer, 2005a, p. 79),

“I wouldn’t say that I didn’t have a chance, but I never even *thought* about having chances; all I wanted to do was go and earn a dollar! And that’s what my mother wanted; so it’s immaterial what I done, as long as I was working...”

The need to work and lack of access to education was a topic that we returned to again a little later in the interview,

John: I didn’t even *think* about anything else, because my mother said, you know ‘Get out and get a job’

Ellie: Yeah; you didn’t get a chance to plan?

John: No, I didn’t. No; nobody *planned* for me like, you know? And I got a job; and whatever job I got, so long as I was fetching the money in on a Friday! And of course that helped, so everyone was happy.

The prioritization of need over future-oriented opportunity in John’s early years is also reminiscent of the ‘presentism’ that Archer attributes to a form of fractured reflexivity which she terms “expressive reflexivity” (2012, p. 280). Despite insisting that class is not a shaper of reflexivity, Archer does allow that, for at least one of her participants, a focus on the present is created by material factors. She describes ‘Carole’ a mature student with a working-class background, as someone whose “life course has been directed by real and

apparent contingencies, making the future seem entirely contingent”, and who therefore responds by focusing on the now; it is made clear that Carole’s ‘presentism’ is “structurally induced” (2012, p. 289). Therefore, even under Archer’s own descriptions of reflexivity, we can see how Bourdieu’s “conditions of existence” can shape habituated reflexive responses to the world.

It seems that for John, who ‘never even *thought* of having chances’, this constraint became internalised during his childhood. His emphasis on lack of planning at a young age appeared to configure his trajectory through life, in which planning for the future did not seem to be a key concern. Although these events were occurring decades before the onset of second modernity their impact appeared to stretch throughout a lifetime and to create a sense of loss in hindsight. He feels that he is now becoming aware of a possible alternative trajectory that he had not had access to, something that was “lost” before he even had a chance to consider it,

Ellie: Is there anything that *you* would want to say, like... you know... how you view yourself; what’s most important in your sort of roles in life?

John: No, as I said, the one I always, it always comes back to education, me. I always. To me, it was, I always seem as if I’d ‘lost’ it, you know? And I... no, circumstances. As I say; if my mother had told me... whatever... it comes down to that. And so these are unforeseen things, and you accept them as they are. I mean, I know lots and lots of people worse off than me *then*, and *now*. And so I should be happy for what I’ve got. But I, as you said, if I – in afterthoughts, or, you know – what do I think? That’s what I would think; about education. But I mean, I’m happy for what I’ve got, really. And now I’m with J_____ again, I mean, things are straightening out a bit, and so I’m fortunate. But as I said...there are times when you wish, like, you know, that... sometimes/.

What else he might have done is unclear, but he feels that it could have been ‘better’ given the chance,

“But as you get older, you realise... you know... you wish you had have... you were just saying now ‘Is there something that you wish you had have...’ I wish I had have studied

more. And... I wouldn't say that I'd have been great at anything; but I probably would have done something *better* with my life."

Honneth argues that the unequal distribution of resources that he refers to as "distributional injustices" is itself a form of misrecognition, being "the institutional expression of social disrespect - or, better said, of unjustified relations of recognition" (Fraser and Honneth, 2003, p. 114). Moreover, the considerable weight that John's mother attached to his earning power speaks to a family doxa, and a habitus, that was shaped by external conditions of necessity. The affective recognition that John received within the family seemed to place importance on his ability to contribute, both in staying home from school to help his mother with chores, especially when she was pregnant, "because there was nobody else to do it", and in bringing in a wage after leaving school. This can be contrasted with the ways in which the accumulation of cultural capital, and engagement with education, was promoted through affective recognition in the families of other participants whom we will meet in Chapter Nine.

Both Peggy and John felt that there was an historically contingent aspect to this lack of planning in their youth, creating a "cohort effect" that was shaped by the time that they were living through (Blanchard et al, 1977). They said that "nobody planned for the future"; a state of affairs that seemed to be, at least partly, attributed to post-war chaos,

John: It was... it was hectic then, wasn't it Peggy, after the war?

Peggy: Yeah; you just had to get on...

Ellie: Get on with it

Peggy: on a day by day..

And yet, the straightforward structuring effect of historically contingent circumstances is immediately undermined when comparing their upbringing with families who had fewer children, and more material resources, signalling an intersection of generation and class that represents a 'socio-historical formation' (Aarseth et al., 2016, p. 162) at a certain point in time,

“Only... the people that... like... how can I say... as doing what you’re saying and planning anything, was always people with, say, one or two in the family... They’re more ‘together’ like, you know? And then they had more interest in what they do. But you get a family, say, with six or seven in it; I mean, they were only glad you could get out, get to work, and get a job, you know? And so... don’t get me wrong; it’s not a *bad* thing, what they’re doing; it’s just that... that was the thing that it *was*! Where there’s a person... a mother and father say with *two* children; who could be, say ‘pick and choose’ because they’ve got enough money anyway, to keep them, even if they *don’t* get a job. But when we left school, is... I left school say on the Friday; I might have a week off – I think I had a week off – but I started work the following week!”

John described how he continued to not think much about the future during his working life, in an everyday world that seemed to be shaped by a habituated ‘feel for the game’, but feels he has become more reflective in his retirement, perhaps partly due to changes in his own life and in the world around him,

John: I’m more... thoughtful about things now; whereas before, I mean, I’d get up in the morning, do my job; and then things just went by, day by day like, you know?

Ellie: Yeah

John: And if I... well, there’s still lots of things I couldn’t tell you anyway, but I mean... as long as I was earning money, and the house was good; we had holidays; we had a car; and to me it was... at least that was a lot more than what I ever *did* have!

This reflection has led to feelings of having missed out as described above, which may have been prompted by the increased emphasis on (and opportunities for) education in more recent years, including the greater opportunities for subsequent generations.

Having discussed the economic limitations of John’s early years, and the ways in which this appears to have shaped his path in life, I now turn to look at misrecognition in education and the constraining effects of negative experiences of the symbolic economy.

iii. Education and misrecognition

As discussed in previous chapters, the habitus is partly constituted through emotional experiences and the symbolic economy, within which education can play a crucial role while also giving access to practices and positions that are connected to the accrual of symbolic value (Bourdieu, 1984, Sayer 2005a). Classed experiences of education can be destabilising and disorientating (Sennet and Cobb, 1993, Reay, 2015, 2017, Walkerdine, 2011), and in John's account of school the symbolic violence of a classed society is expressed through physical violence in the form of a differentially applied (and historically contingent) experience of corporal punishment, to which his working-class body was very visibly rendered more vulnerable than that of his middle-class schoolmate,

“But I’ll tell you an incident. In our class, there was about 35/40, something like that – large class – and there was some people in the classroom, and their fathers owned a restaurant. Now there was always a preference when *they* went to anywhere, because their father used to donate to the church. Now this is all right, but it just... to me... the system, that... oh, you can get on with money. And this boy would get a preference... And of course, my family couldn’t afford anything, so – lots of others couldn’t either – but there was always this, because their fathers went to... given them money, and there was little things that you *knew* that the... like... I would get a bat across the ear-hole; the teacher would hit you and all, like, you know? And... but you wouldn’t do that to *him*.”

This process of classed differentiation of the students by the teacher echoes Sennett and Cobb’s famous study of the “hidden injuries” that are created by class, in which young children were aware of the different expectations of the teacher at a very young age (1993). In John’s case the ‘intense affective grip’, that, for Bourdieu, binds us to the social world (Aarseth, 2016, p. 93) is expressed very clearly through physical violence that falls under the rubric of Bourdieu’s symbolic violence, but which is argued by Honneth to carry its own significance (1995a). As previously noted, Honneth wrote extensively on the connection between recognition, social worth, self-respect, self-confidence, and ‘relation-to-self’ (Honneth, 1995a, 1995b, 2002, Fraser and Honneth, 2003), and for him, the effects of physical abuse signify a distinct form of withheld recognition.

The constraining effects that this kind of symbolic violence can have on a sense of self, and on agentic experiences in the world of work, is seen in John's account of the shame he felt when his education was found wanting in his first job after school. It is an experience that he laughed at in the telling but that carried enough emotional weight that it had stayed with him for over 60 years,

John: I was... when I left school, I worked at D_____’s first, in the office.

Ellie: Right

Peggy: Tell her... tell her about that word!

John: No! No, no! [Laughs heartily] well, I was... don’t forget, fifteen...

Ellie: Yeah

John: My education was limited. Even I... but anyway; so anyhow, I’m in the office, and I had to go and work with this certain secretary. And anyway, she was going through... she said “We’ve got to go through these things, John, and let’s start with the ‘miscellaneous’”, and I said “Sorry?” so I wrote, I put “Miss Alanis” and she said to me “Where do you think you are?!” you know; very... snooty, type of thing; and of course... naïve, and uneducated, you’d say, really; and of course I said “Oh, that’s what I thought it was” she said “No, it’s miscellaneous” as if I should have known.

Ellie: Oh! Wasn’t that snooty.

John: I mean, I’d never seen the word before! Never mind the spelling.

Ellie: No! How could you know? [Laughs]

John: But then I had some people, like, she was as probably thought what a dudhead I am, like, you know? I did, I left, anyway. And then I – where did I go then? – I went to... I went... that’s right; I was going to go driving, and then I went in the Army.

This is the ‘humiliation’ that, as previously described, can help to shape a habitus, and can damage the internal ‘I’ (Flam, 2009). In these brief snippets of John’s memories, we can

begin to understand the ways in which John's past and socially situated 'Me' was partly shaped by (non-transvalued) negative experiences of education and the symbolic economy, creating negative 'first-order emotions' that are stored internally in the entity known as 'myself' (Archer, 2004). Archer describes the way in which, as a child, we become aware of ourselves as the 'I' discovers that the 'Me' as having "'undesirable' characteristics" which have to be 'lived with' (2004, p. 264). Lack of education, for John, seems to have become an "undesirable characteristic", but one that appeared to have a visceral and lasting effect on his sense of self, the possibilities contained within him, and the spaces from which he feels excluded.

As discussed in Chapter Four, Adams (2006, 2007) cautions us to remember the importance of "post-reflexive resources" to any understanding of the relationship between reflexivity and habitus, as it is the means by which reflexive desires can be meaningfully enacted. However, he also notes the recursive effect this can have on our sense of ourselves (2007, pp. 155-161) and the diverse "psychosocial processes" that intersect with reflexivity in different ways, and through which it can be shaped and "restrained" (pp. 139-165, see in particular pp. 161-162). John explained that missing so much school prevented him from taking his eleven plus, severely limiting (albeit not determining) his later options; as noted, these external conditions had a structuring effect on his future and were bound up with the classed misrecognition that he experienced at school, which created what he (and others) perceived to be a symbolic deficit. In this section, and in the discussion of John in Chapter Six, I have illustrated the ways in which the effects of misrecognition within education, and lack of sufficient access that prevents the accrual of cultural capital, can have an effect that lasts through a lifetime. We will now go on to look at the notion of 'generativity' and how John's sense that he cannot help his grandsons appears to affect his sense of identity.

iv. Impaired generativity

John appears to feel that lack of capital impedes his ability to perform generativity, which is defined by Erikson as "primarily the concern in establishing and guiding the next generation" (1950, p. 267, cited in Slater, 2003, p. 58) and is argued to be an important component of 'successful ageing' (Kruse and Shmitt 2012). Kruse and Shmitt write of human capital as a personal property, not just of accumulated knowledge and strategies, but of taking responsibility "for oneself, for others, or for society" (p. 2), including the transmission of knowledge to younger generations and the support of their development.

He spoke sadly of his fears for the future of his grandchildren, telling me that he did not think they would 'win' in the current climate of competition,

"It's all changed, not for the good. And it seems like a waste now, that... I feel that my grandchildren now – they're coming up now – they're going to come up against all this, you know; and I don't think they're going to win. Honestly, I really don't; I feel sorry for them, because it's a... it's a no-win situation."

He seemed to feel that he had little that was useful to offer them that would further their future prospects. He insisted that education is the most important thing and that if he had the resources he would give his grandchildren the best opportunities that he could, recognizing the importance of different forms of capital as 'weapons' in the social world, as described by Bourdieu (1998, p. 12),

John: I mean, I do the lottery, hoping to be a millionaire next week – or *this* week, if you like! I mean... that's... I know for a fact there is no other way in the world that I would ever become rich. So you think to yourself 'What would I do if I *was* rich?' Well there's a *load* you could do with that. But you see, now it's not so much for *me*; it'd be for my grandchildren, or it'd be... it'd be more beneficial for them. I mean me; I can live just like I am, and I don't care.

Ellie: Yeah

John: I can have a couple of glasses of wine, and watch the television sport; but then if I had money, I would put them through school; because I think education is one of the most important things ever.

Ellie: Right. So you'd pay... pay for a school?

John: I would pay for *everything*. All their schooling; I'd make *sure* they would go, as well! Because I know for a fact that when you've got an education, I mean, the world's everything for you, then.

Ellie: Yeah. So would you pay for them to go to a... like a private school then?

John: Whatever it takes! Whatever money I had... whatever they say that they wanted to do, I would get them the best! And I would make sure they would; because I honestly believe that education is the secret of anything, because... unless of course you're lucky, like some people are; some people fall into it, others don't. But I *still* know that when you've got an education, it's good for you, you know; I really do.

John's description of his fears for his grandchildren, and for their imagined futures, suggests that he sees the possibility of their following 'successful' trajectories as already foreclosed. He is particularly aware how essential cultural capital is in a world that is becoming increasingly individualised and in which competition is key. It seems that the only way that he can imagine creating a positive future for his grandchildren is through the unlikely dream of becoming a lottery winner. Archer argues that it is not "discursive penetration" that causes educational discrimination to constrain the trajectory of a life, but the lack of resources that can exclude people from educational opportunities (1995, p. 116). Yet John's understanding of the situation does not ameliorate its effects on his sense of self in the world and on his third age identity.

The impediment that he feels to his performance of generativity, how useful he can be in helping to secure his grandchildren's futures, may also be seen as an expression of the "structural, relational and existential elements of precarity" that are described by Grenier et al, as part of a critique of successful ageing frameworks (2017, p. 13, Grenier and Phillipson, 2016, 2018), in a model of 'precarity' that synthesizes inequality and marginalisation into a theory of how individuals are differentially affected by ageing. This inhibited generativity can be contrasted with the pride many other interviewees took in telling me of the educational and occupational achievements of their children and grandchildren, with graduation photographs prominently displayed in homes which brought to mind Sennett and Cobb's 'badges of achievement' as indicators of status in society (1993), here made manifest in physical form.

v. Perspectives on change and contextual continuity in a changing neighbourhood

John's description of his life in the third age suggests a turn to, and a continuity with, the past, that appears to signify both habituated routine and a reflexive desire for Archerian 'contextual continuity' under conditions of engaged social morphogenesis. When I met John he had recently resumed a relationship with his first girlfriend from his youth, who used to live in Drefach and now lives in an adjacent suburb. He also still visits a nearby social club where he sees old friends that he has known for most of his life, which is something that brings him great joy,

“if I go down the club – still see some of the old ones – it’s... I’m drunk already when I see them, sort of thing. I mean, you just drink up there and... oh, I *do* enjoy myself, there’s no doubt about it; because we’ll talk about the old days and what-have-you. And we have some good times, like, because they’ve been in the Army as well. And... yeah, I’ve got some good friends down there; good friends.”

The spatialised routines of John’s life over many decades reflects the narratives of some of the other social club members that I spoke to who regularly visited clubs (sometimes weekly, or even nightly) that they had been members of for decades, while the world has, in many ways, changed around them. These are the affective and embodied “refrains” through which, Guattari argues, subjectivity is produced and maintained, and by which a person’s sense of “going on being” is affectively “held” by the places that they inhabit (see Walkerdine, 2011, 2013, 2015 on the using Guattari’s work to understand ‘space, place, social justice and education’). Guattari’s “going on being” here can perhaps be seen in correlation with Giddens’s “practical consciousness”, in which the ability to “go on” is “incorporated within the continuity of everyday activities” (1991, p. 36). The (embodied) unconscious or semi-conscious relationship between past present and future that defines the habitus is seen in the unreflexive routines of a life that has continued over decades, signifying the close relationship between habitus and habitat.

Yet John’s description of changes to his local area also point to a profound sense of anxiety, central to Giddens’ description of “ontological insecurity” in a fast-changing world (1991), and related to the “disembedding mechanisms” that go hand in hand with the intruding forces of globalisation (Giddens, 1991, p. 2, Adams, 2007, Bauman, 2011). He complained bitterly about the noise from cars travelling to and from the out of town shopping centre that had recently been built near the flat he had lived in for 22 years, taking me over to the window to point out the road near his house. It was at that time fairly quiet, but he assured me that it would be busy later on.

This intrusion of noise into the home, a place of “refuge” from the outside world (Hanley, 2016) is one facet of change that cannot be shut out. Guski writes about the ways in which lack of control over the source of noise is important in how it is responded to; if noise annoyance is felt to be an imposition from something that is not justified, and when it is outside of a person’s “cognitive control” (for example when the noise is less predictable or with the possibility of escalation), then it is felt to be more disruptive and troublesome (1999). The new shopping centre seems to disturb John’s experience of “somatic agency” in his own home and his neighbourhood, which is the way in which a person’s body “situates

them firmly within material and affective worlds, where economic and emotional structures mediate the satisfaction of somatic needs” (Coole, 2005 pp. 129-130). His body here acts as a mediator for forces outside of his control, with the shopping centre perhaps ‘felt’ as a tangible expression of the incursions of globalisation. The changes in John’s habitat, which include the intrusive presence of recent developments, and changes in the make-up of his neighbours and in wider society (as we will see below), and perhaps his own ageing, appears to have engendered greater reflexivity, which for Bourdieu, is (as discussed in a previous chapter) created by disruptions in the relationship between habitus and field.

John spoke of how many people in the housing estate for older people that he lives in had died or moved into care homes, with only four of his original neighbours left. Like the ‘Leblonds’, the middle-aged couple who lived on ‘Jonquil Street’ in Bourdieu’s *The Weight of the World* (1999, pp.6-22), he sees these disruptions partly in terms of ethnicity and immigration,

“Oh, I’ve thought... I think to myself... I mean, that... you take it now, when I moved up here, they were all white people. Now there’s a... Asia... no there’s Korean, I suppose; then there’s three coloureds around there; and there’s one over there... now... you know... all of a sudden!... I don’t mind them! They’re nice people! But what I’m trying to say is; I always think that there’s people I know that are trying to get flats, and they can’t *get* them! And they’ve been living here all their life! That’s what I look at it, this way. I mean... and I thinks... but as I said, ‘They’ve got to live somewhere’ and I’ll say well ‘Let them live in *your* house, then!’ Or... you know... but these people that... they *live* here, you know – all their friends here – and they give it to somebody else...I mean... I don’t know... it’s wrong, for me, really. And I know it’s going on tape, but I’m just saying; that’s how I feel...I mean, I honestly feel that it’s... can you imagine though, being on the house list for 6/7 years, and they’re building the houses; and they said they’d be ready after Christmas, and you’re... you know... wait to be moving; and then they says ‘Oh, we’ve got to give these to some... 5 families of Somalis there’. You know, you... the sails taken right off them, you know? The wind’s taken right out of their sails...They’re *shattered*; because I’ve seen it happen, that’s why; that’s what made me say why. And I thinks to myself; ‘Six years ago, when he put his name down there, what was *that* fellow doing there, 6 years ago?’ You know. They were probably happy and joyful and everything. And then they’ve come over here and they says ‘We haven’t got nowhere’ ‘Oh, here’s a house here!’... City Hall says this, like; and that’s it. And you can’t beat City Hall. So... it’s sad, I know; and there’s a lot of things that a

lot of people will disagree with me, and... but there again, as you said, my point of view, and that's it. I won't change it."

His descriptions of ethnic and racial differences, and his conflation of Britishness with whiteness, speaks to the sense of 'disorientation' that was briefly discussed in Chapter Six. Indeed, this disorientation again illustrates how deeply rooted the connection is between his habitus and habitat, routine and lifeworld. The changes that have been brought about by globalisation and increased multiculturalism seem to have "affected [his] sense of 'home'", as described by Buffel and Phillipson (2015, p. 319), who write on the complexities of "ageing in place" at the intersections of age, class and race or ethnicity. John appears to feel himself to be, at least in part, one of the "strangers in familiar settings" that are described by Gilleard and Higgs; retired people who have stayed in the same neighbourhood in which they lived their younger years as it has changed around them (2005, p. 4).

Buffel and Phillipson have argued that extant literature on the environmental aspects of ageing has not engaged with "the impact of powerful global and economic forces transforming the physical and social context of cities" (2015, p. 325), and, as we have seen, John seems to resent these changes. They are, for him, connected to an implicitly classed lack of power and control in relation to housing and identity (see Paton, 2013, Fenton, 2012, Buffel and Phillipson, 2015, Jeffery, 2018). His declaration that "you can't beat City Hall" suggests a collective feeling of misrecognition in the face of remote bureaucracy, in a fraught and changing social context, and one that is directly related to differential amounts of capital as he contrasts those with power (City Hall) to those without it.

If we are to understand John's position on change from the perspective of Archer's "commitments" and "concerns", then his investment in continuity is, as noted earlier in this section, a reflexive concern, but it is a concern that seems to be founded in a particular embodied habitus. He had lived in Drefach for most of his adult life, raised family there, had some of his family still living in the area and feared for the future of his grandchildren, therefore changes to the locality and competition over resources may be felt as more of an existential threat than if he had moved around through choice, and had large resources of capital to fall back upon.

As noted, John was brought up in conditions of 'contextual continuity' that are said to promote 'communicative reflexivity' (Archer, 2012, p. 26), and has lived through a time of considerable change. His response, which is to cling tighter to continuity, is congruent with Archer's theory of what 'makes' communicative reflexives (those whom she describes as

valuing continuity), which is a tight bond with their 'similar and familiars' and an orientation towards stasis over change. However, it also speaks to an (unreflexive) sense of insecurity, lack of control over his surroundings, and a view of home as a place of 'safety'.

In this interpretation, a reflexive commitment to continuity and resistance to change can be seen as partly a product of his life course, with past experiences of continuity shaping his dispositional approach to the world, and partly a response to feelings of precarity or misrecognition in a world in which he feels less secure, with an embodied habitus interwoven with both responses. This section has again illustrated that reflexivity and habitus are bound together in such complex ways, perhaps in particular in the third age, that it is impossible to fully unpick the relationship. Habitus has shaped a meaningful life over time, while reflexivity, which for Archer is expressed by that which we value and actively prioritize, also retains a vital role.

vi. Nationhood, politics and a disposition in the third age

John's stated concern about the changes to his neighbourhood was with competition over strained collective resources, which has been brought about by a steady drop in social housing stock since the 1980s, accompanied by a more general decrease in government investment in neighborhood services and welfare (Paton, 2013, p. 89). This can be linked to arguments that the "pact" that was created between working people and the welfare state in the post-war era has been eroded, with a "long decline" for some working class communities in terms of working lives, neighbourhoods and the ebbing away of solidarity, since the 1950s (Fenton 2012, p. 466). It is a pact that John formerly experienced in its post-war ascendancy, as his own standard of living rose in adulthood following a childhood of deprivation, and an overarching decline that forms a backdrop to his current concerns.

Savage et al. (2005) have been criticised for an over-focus on middle-class affinity with place in their work on "elective belonging" (Paton, 2013, Jeffery, 2018), with Paton proposing the notion of "elective fixity" to explain the predicament of working-class residents who want to stay in place but are not able to due to lack of resources. While John himself has a secure tenancy, his imaginative alignment, his sense of a collective identity, or what Donati and Archer would call his reflexive sense of himself as a "Collective subject" and as "a solidary 'We'" (2015 p. 122), is with those social housing tenants or prospective tenants who share a national identity, a class identity, and with a history in the local area, but no

guarantee of fixity or social provision. This can also be linked to fears for his grandsons, whose future he sees as very insecure.³³

John's perspective closely aligns with the description of the 'resentful nationalist', that sits in opposition with the 'liberal cosmopolitan', in a typology created by Steve Fenton (2012). Fenton interviewed 100 residents in and around Bristol, from a variety of age and social locations, and found two distinct 'orientations' or "dispositions" towards the concept of nationhood that correlate with Bourdieu's concepts of class trajectories and status, and which he describes as forms of habitus. It is therefore an analysis that supports an argument for a habitus in the third age that is shaped by past and present life experiences.

The 'resentful nationalist' is described as a person who is part of a class on a 'downward trajectory', with an orientation based on "social resentment and a sense of frustration at the direction of social change". Like John, those in Fenton's study who appeared to fit this orientation were older working-class people who felt a lack of control over important aspects of their own lives. They saw ordinary people as being failed by those in power and expressed feelings of being 'left out'; they also spoke of a decline in manners, expressed negative attitudes towards immigration and multi-culturalism, and resented welfare benefits being (in their view) given to undeserving "others" (pp. 466 and 479). Conversely, the "liberal cosmopolitan" group tended to be middle-class professionals who had experienced educational and career success and exercised choice over their careers and homes; they enjoyed higher social status, felt in control of their lives, and rejected racism and nationalism or "any unqualified 'attachment'" (p. 479-480).

Fenton is keen to point out that the views of the 'resentful nationalist' should not be generalized across working-class communities, nor should we overlook xenophobic nationalism across classes (p. 469). But the article supports the argument that status, education and lifestyle, and a sense of control over one's life, are key to understanding John's perspective, disposition, and his reflexive sense of 'We-ness', as emerging from life course experiences and his conditions of existence in the third age.

(i) Political affiliation

John told me emphatically that he would be voting for UKIP, which is argued to be a party that disproportionately draws its votes from older, working-class or "poorer" voters with fewer

³³ Studies on the relationship between racism class and capitalism in Britain have shown that racist and anti-immigrant discourses provide a way to "make sense" of class relations and inequality and create a "strategy for political action" (Miles, 1989, pp. 81-82).

qualifications, who feel that they have been “left behind” by social changes (Ford and Goodwin, 2014, Kellner, 2013). The interview took place around seven months before the Brexit referendum and he was also clear in his resolve to vote for “Out of Europe”. It is notable that the sense of loss and lack of control that emerged in his reflections seemed to be perfectly attuned to the oft-repeated slogan of the Brexit Leave campaign, “Take back control”, which “conjured up not only a sense of where power does and should lie, but that it could be seized by casting a ballot.” (Haughton, 2017, p. 5).

We can see that John’s sense of a collective identity, his ‘We’, is in a broader sense related to being British, working-class, and (implicitly) white. Voting in pursuance of what he subjectively believes to be the interests of these groups can therefore be described as a form of ‘Corporate Agency’, which is (as noted in Chapter Two) Archer’s term for an organized group pursuing a shared aim, and is a particular form of a collective ‘We’ (Donati and Archer, 2015, p. 108). Voting in this way is a reflexive act but it is, as we have seen, bound up with John’s affective and habitualized sense of self, and his sense of being-in-the-world, both past and current, which pre-disposed him to respond to the distinctive world-view that was put forward by UKIP and the ‘Leave’ group.

John’s attitude towards immigration and the EU, and Barbara’s complaints about the “scrounging-class” discussed in the previous chapter, may also suggest specific forms of engagement with what Atkinson terms “the media field” (Atkinson, 2016, p. 42) by reading newspapers that promote these discourses rather than others. If this were so then it would illustrate the ways in which we are all (differentially) exposed to specific “definitions of reality” through “intermeshing circuits, which mediate and co-produce categories of thought and practice” (p. 42), with a habitus that is shaped by our interactions in different fields (Atkinson, 2016) as part of an ongoing relationship between personal (and collective) biographies and discourses in the present day.

(ii) Social identity: a dual approach

As previously discussed, for Archer not everyone achieves a social identity, which she defines as a subset of personal identity that is also in a dialectical relationship with it, and which we reach by formulating and pursuing a defined set of concerns, albeit “fallibly” and with no guarantee of success (2004). However, as we have seen, this is a far too restrictive conception of social identities: a complex, and more expressly *social*, non-reflexive identity is attached to all of us, in all of its diverse associations, both positive and negative. Therefore,

both Bourdieusian notions of differentiation within social space and Archerian commitment to our subjective concerns, fundamentally shape this.

It has been made clear that John finds joy and positive feelings of identity in his life, as a father, grandfather, and lifelong friend for example, and he was proud to show me family photographs of his son, daughter-in-law, and grandsons. However, his social identity is also bound up with misrecognition and with the absence of the “social-esteem” that is needed for a sense of self-worth (Honneth, 1995a), and is partly characterized by a sense of relative powerlessness, which is an important element of Bourdieusian “class dispossession” (McNay, 2004, p. 188). When reflecting on his working life in comparison with others he describes himself as having “stayed in the hole” into which he was born, in a description that is fundamentally shaped by Bourdieu’s system of misrecognition, by which some people and lives are afforded more social value than others.

vii. Conclusion

In presenting excerpts from John’s narrative, I have addressed the significance of Bourdieusian misrecognition and its relationship with reflexivity throughout a life, and briefly touched upon the usefulness of Honneth’s work on physical abuse as a specific form of misrecognition, the impact of which carries a resonance that can crystalize the experience of symbolic violence. I have also introduced the importance of ‘affective recognition’ within a family (Honneth, 2003, p. 138-139, Atkinson, 2014b, 2016), as structured by external forces and inculcating specific priorities and commitments as part of a ‘family doxa’.

Furthermore, I have discussed the inter-related nature of habitus and reflexivity when reflecting on social change and third age dispositions and responses, suggesting a complex sense of being-in-the-world that can underpin resistance to change. I have also argued for a notion of social identity in which Archer’s processes of reflexive commitments (and the resultant Corporate Agency) and Bourdieusian processes of habitus formation and social differentiation are interwoven.

I have, throughout, illustrated the complex relationship between generational experiences, the habitus, post-reflexive resources, and reflexive commitments, that led to John’s disposition in the third age. This disposition is itself underpinned by strong social bonds and positive relationships with family and friends, but also experiences of misrecognition, resentment, and abjection, shaping reflexive priorities. The sense of self that is created by all of these experiences has clearly shaped his trajectory, current sense of identity, and, ultimately, his disposition towards the world around him. We will now turn to the reflections of Barbara to

further explore the relationship between misrecognition and reflexivity over the life course, along rather different themes.

c) Barbara: Respectability and vulnerability

In this case study I will return to the narrative of Barbara, whose disappointment at her daughter's geographic immobility and experience of class stigma were discussed in the previous chapter. I will focus on specific themes in Barbara's narrative, exploring the twin points of respectability (the way in which the symbolic economy helped to shape her sense of self and world) and physical vulnerability. The latter point relates to misrecognition of her right to "physical integrity" as a particular form of respect (Honneth, 1995a, p. 132) and as an expression of Bourdieu's structures of domination (2001, p. 34). As with John, I will also illustrate how the 'Me' of Barbara's third age has been shaped through interaction with structure over the life course, both as an external entity and through its internalised effects, and will explore the ways in which her current disposition is situated within a lifeworld that is shaped by events over time.

i. An overview of Barbara's working life

Before turning to the main themes of the case study, I will briefly reflect on the course of Barbara's working life. As described in the previous chapter, Barbara bitterly regretted not being able to go to the 'posh' grammar school as a child and in adulthood she became an auxiliary nurse at a hospital in the city and spoke with pride of the caring work that she had done. In remembering this and recounting how she looked after her patients and also raised five children on a low income, the valuable role of caring for others as a resource for self-worth, and as an alternative discourse of value for working-class women, became evident (Skeggs, 2011, see also 2004b). This indicates how a person's Archerian "concerns" are both intensely meaningful and emerge within specific structures, contexts and discourses. Although money was tight when the children were small, especially as her husband refused to contribute to the household, Barbara managed her income carefully and took on extra work cleaning in a shop and at a private house as well as working in the hospital. She described paying weekly for birthday presents for the children when they were young and eventually saving enough to buy a house, which she sold after her husband died. She retired at the age of 59 and now lives alone in her one bedroom flat.

Barbara had been offered a promotion within the hospital to become a trained 'SEN' (State-Enrolled Nurse) but had been unable to take it up as she would have had to spend time training, which would have left her with insufficient time to look after her family. This conscious decision expresses, in part, the "unique pattern of concerns" that is described by Archer as being at the centre of a reflexive engagement with the world, and of a personal identity (2007, p. 88). Indeed, she contrasted her own commitment to looking after her children with her colleagues who were less "family-minded" and therefore did not mind leaving their children for longer and taking the time to train. However, it is also expressive of a gendered effect of the 'socialised libido' of Bourdieu that often leads women to deprioritize their involvement in the field of employment (Atkinson, 2017, p. 32), particularly, of course, in Barbara's younger years.

Here, we again come up against the importance of 'post-reflexive resources', not only in terms of Barbara's access to education but in the possibility of accepting a promotion. Barbara's frustrated desire to train further can be contrasted with, for example, the choice that was open to Alison, a U3A member whom we met in Chapter Six. Alison was able to take up work as a teacher when her children were young, as part of a self-described pioneering generation of women, since she could afford to hire an au pair for a year. In this way, for Barbara, the relationship between habitus, reflexive desires and post-reflexive resources was complex, and her situation can be likened to that of the working-class mothers in 'Townsville' (Adams, 2006, 2007 discussing research by Mitchell and Green, 2002), who were reflexive in their desires for more of a life outside of the home but constrained by circumstances and resources; for Barbara this was exacerbated by her husband's refusal to contribute financially. Adams argues for the importance of understanding the "co-existence" of reflexivity, habitus, and resources, describing how discourses around mothering and identity are "interwoven" with structural inequalities, and reflexive desires for different possibilities are present but are frustrated by constraints. Adams therefore rejects hybridization theories such as Sweetman's (2003) for overlooking the reflexivity of those people who are not "fortunate" or "sociologically inclined", (2006, p. 524). However, as Adams also discusses (2007), and Charlesworth illustrates extensively (2003), these external, or structural, constraints can also shape our internal and habituated responses to the world, which we will see as we look further at Barbara's narrative.

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ii. Class and the performance of respectability

Clothing comes up repeatedly, as a source of pride, a repository of affect, and as 'materializations of memory' (Stallybrass, 1998, p. 186, see also Skeggs 2011), such as an old skirt that belonged to her late sister, that she can't wear now but "won't part with". This attachment to clothing also spoke to the performance of "respectability" which can be used by working class women to "accrue" symbolic value, in order to offset the negative value associated with their class position, and as "compensation" for their marginalization (McNay, 2004, pp. 187-188, Skeggs, 1997). Barbara fondly remembers her sister buying smart second-hand clothes for herself and their other siblings and taking them out for a treat once a fortnight when she was a child. We can see in these memories the importance of clothing as a form of symbolic value in relation to the public performance of respectability,

Barbara: he used to sell us... sell my sister the things. Cheap, only a couple of pounds, and he brought us these lovely suits one day; I always remember. It was a tweed suit with a belt. Mine was like a brown suit, and our C____ 's was a green. She bought C____ a yellow blouse to go with hers, and she bought me a cream blouse to go with mine.

Ellie: Oh, lovely; smart!

Barbara: And then once a fortnight... because we weren't at the Children's Society – the Children's Office – because we had no parents; my mother wasn't there, and my father was dead, and my sister was looking after us; she used to get an allowance once a fortnight.

Ellie: Right, I see, yeah.

Barbara: To look after us.

Ellie: Yeah, yeah.

Barbara: Like they has the dole now, but it's just only... like special occasions, special things. And once [a fortnight], when she used to get the money once a fortnight, she'd make... we'd have our suits on, me and our J____, and C____, and our P____ would have a lovely suit on, and we used to go to town. And Marks and Spencer's used to have a restaurant then... And we'd go there once [a fortnight] and we'd have something, or we'd go in the market and have something to eat, and she used to say 'I loves taking you all out, when you're all dressed up' she used to say.

Marks and Spencer came up again later in the narrative, in relation to specific, implicitly classed, consumption practices, when Barbara described planning for a visit by her son's granddaughter, a property investor who has "got a really good bit of money", and which necessitated a special trip to Marks and Spencer, because she was told that J_____ only ate organic food.³⁴

The enduring and cross-temporal framing of clothes as repositories of class and symbolic capital can be seen by tracing the importance of clothing from discourses of class and respectability in the 19th century, in which "respectability was a bed, bedding, kitchenware, but, above all, suitable clothes" (Stallybrass, 1998, p. 192), through the recollections of Barbara from her childhood in the 1940's, to Skeggs' far more recent work in which she argues that "respectability is one of the most ubiquitous signifiers of class" (1997, p. 1), with investment in clothing one of the central signifiers of this. It is also interesting to note that Barbara spent some time working in a clothes factory as a young woman, making clothing for children in the style of those worn by the then young Prince Charles and Princess Anne, which serves as both an expression of, and a metaphor for, the intimate relationship between clothing, consumption practices, and symbolic capital in these narratives³⁵.

The affective "weight" of clothing (Skeggs, 2011, p. 505, drawing on Stallybrass, 1998) seems to be felt most intensely in relation to the set of clothes that she was never allowed to wear, and that signified so much in terms of embodied social capital and opportunity; the grammar school uniform, which was a symbol of the access to cultural capital that she was denied. This created a longing that has been touched on in the previous chapter, with the details of the uniform still clear in her memory. It holds a specific symbolic significance in relation to the different "future selves" (Yowell, 2000) that it had represented, with a remembered yearning that endures into the present,

³⁴ Barbara used the phrase "she's all organic" multiple times when describing the extra effort she went to, which necessitated a special trip to Marks and Spencer's, as though her taste for organic food was the defining feature of her embodiment. She was disappointed when her efforts seemed to go unappreciated, the personal affront perhaps also mixed with resentment related to class (See Barbelet, 2004 for a discussion on class and resentment).

³⁵ We can refer back to John's discussion of class and consumption in the previous chapter, in which he referred to clothes shops ('House of Fraser' or 'Primark') to illustrate the elision between money and access to symbolic value, bringing a contemporary slant to the classificatory system of consumption practices described by Bourdieu in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984), and that correlates with more recent work by Atkinson (2013).

Barbara: And I wanted that red and black... I wanted... it was a navy blazer with red stripe. Oh, I can see that blazer now! And this boater with a band on it; and my Auntie went nuts, because she only had 2 daughters, and they both went to high school.

Ellie: Right, yeah.

Barbara: She said to my father 'J____, she shouldn't have told you, because we would have struggled and got a... we would have got a uniform from somewhere for her!'

Ellie: Ah! Yeah.

Barbara: I wanted that blazer! And that gymslip – that navy blue gymslip with a red... red and black sash on it! Oh, I wanted it; I *really wanted* that blazer!

As has also been noted, it was Barbara's sense of having "lost out" that led her to "push" her children as she had not been pushed, which speaks to the importance of the 'family doxa', founded on affective recognition and affective processes (Atkinson, 2016, Bourdieu, 2000), to social mobility, in contradistinction with Archer's framing of mobility as an inherently 'autonomous' endeavor in the descriptions of her reflexive modes (see 2007 in particular). However, Barbara's dis-satisfaction with her lot in life and desire for her children to be more mobile also supports Archer's argument for understanding how the 'I' reflects on the 'Me' as we "deliberation about subject in relation to object and vice versa" (2007, p. 3),

Barbara: I knew they'd all do well, because I pushed them all, a little bit.

Ellie: Right, ok. Yeah.

Barbara: Because I couldn't be pushed – I'd lost out – I mean, I wanted F____ to be... make sure he had a trade. B____ was going to have a trade, but he went in the Forces.

It is perhaps notable that Barbara's ambitions for her children were for short-range over long-range mobility, as her aspirations and expectations were, in a Bourdieusian fashion, also shaped by external conditions and expectations. We return once again to the symbolic economy and the inherently classed nature of clothing in her description of the first job of her son D____, who worked in a "posh" clothes shop and wore smart suits,

“And D_____ worked in the... in an outfitter’s; nice posh outfitter’s he worked, for a couple of years there. And he had to wear suits and ties, and whatever, and leather shoes – and polish them – so he could... he used to buy his shoes on the account in the shop.”

It is an association that also arises when Barbara reflects on the attitudes of her youngest daughter, who has been the most socially mobile of her children and is now said to be “embarrassed” by her mother (as discussed in Chapter Six). She spoke in some detail of the “university scarf” that Lisa had when she was at school despite the fact that she did not go onto university, which is seen to symbolize her sense of superiority from a young age. The scarf carried symbolic weight and associations of cultural capital, and was perhaps a reminder to Barbara of the grammar school uniform that she herself was never able to wear,

Barbara: Well, she’s... always... she’s always thought she was a cut above everybody else, because... because she was the baby, after 9 years, and she always thought she was...

Ellie: Yeah.

Barbara: And the boys... everybody spoilt her, you know? I mean, she was the only girl in the school with a... the boys had them... like a university scarf, it’s like ‘material’ isn’t it?

Ellie: Yeah, I know what you mean.

Barbara: It’s not knitted, is it?

Ellie: No. It’s... yeah.

Barbara: It’s like a sort of...

Ellie: Sort of ‘felty’ or something.

Barbara: Yeah, but it’s like strips of material, isn’t it? It’s like ‘sewn together’.

Ellie: Oh yeah! Like the patch... but not patchwork... I know what you mean, yeah.

Barbara: It’s like... like strips.

Ellie: Yeah, yeah.

Barbara: It's not knitted.

Ellie: No. I get you, yeah.

Barbara: It's not a knitted scarf. Well they were doing them, up the school, and she was the first girl to have one. F_____ bought it for her. The other kids had them after, but she... she'd got to have a scarf for school, and that's it. Because they was all in uniforms, then. And she was the first to have a scarf; they *all* spoilt her!

(i) Conclusion

In this part of Barbara's story I have explored the importance of discourses of respectability through the significance given to clothing in her interview. Following discussions of class and identity in the previous chapter, I have further explored the ways in which the self is partly produced through notions of worth created by the symbolic economy. We have seen how this can help to shape choices (both large and small) as the symbolic economy forms part of the habitual perceptions of a life. As noted in Chapter Two, Archer argues that symbolic violence is not always successful (2017a, p. 17); while that is not disputed here, we have seen how expressions of this violence become part of the fabric of a life, often in a literal sense in terms of the clothing that holds value.

The notion of respectability that we have discussed could be argued to have decreased application in contemporary society, however, work by Skeggs (1997) illustrates the continued relevance of these discourses, and the importance of respectability for creating and evaluating the self. For Barbara this discourse has a biographical resonance that seems to still shape her current perceptions of her life and former selves.

I have also pointed to ways in which reflexive desires can, as with John, be found in the spaces of discontentment that exist in the narrative. For Barbara, the ontological complicity that is argued for by Bourdieu was disrupted by her regret for missed opportunities, and by reflexive plans and possibilities for the future of her family, for whom she wanted a better life than she has had. The problem of excessive ontological complicity, and the effects of structural power, will be further highlighted in the next section in this case study, where we will look at instances where social structure impinged upon Barbara in the most fundamental way. Here, her need for safety and bodily autonomy were misrecognized, as assaults and violence occurred at different points in her life, and on at least one occasion the effects of this violence was exacerbated by discourses of respectability that acted against Barbara and made her even more vulnerable.

iii. Vulnerable bodies

The unhappiest parts of Barbara's narrative were the instances of gendered violence and abuse that she had suffered, which Bourdieu describes as being as part of the gendered "structures of domination" that are reproduced through symbolic violence. For Bourdieu, this domination includes physical and sexual violence (2001, p. 34)³⁶ but, as previously noted, this is given insufficient weight in Bourdieu's work, so we turn to Honneth's work on violations of the body as a specific form of withheld recognition in order to supplement this (1995a, pp. 131-133).

In this section I explore the ways in which the effects of these structures are both (reflexively) confronted and are internalised, in relation to three separate forms of gendered violence that Barbara experienced over the course of her life: molestation in the workplace, sexual assault, and domestic abuse. This gendered violence will be seen to intersect with class positioning in significant ways, and to have had an impact upon both Barbara's habitualized ways of *being* in the world and her reflexive *consideration* of herself in the world. The importance of understanding the particular significance of Honneth's concern with "physical integrity" is underlined more fully, and the capacity of this to shape a person's relationship with the world is reflected upon.

(i) *Sexual harassment in the workplace*

These incursions upon her body, horrendous violations of her "somatic agency", which is always embedded within relations of power (Coole, 2005), began when Barbara was a teenager working in a brush-making factory, a doubly precarious position within power structures of both class and gender. At the age of 15 she was regularly groped by the manager of the factory in which she worked, who forced the girls who worked there to submit to his unwanted touching; a particularly egregious experience of the sexual harassment that Bourdieu describes as "the pure affirmation of domination in its purest state" (2001, p. 21). For Barbara these assaults were both a form of affective suffering and something that was normalised to the point of routine. She described how 'that's how they used to be, see... all factories were like that, years ago',

³⁶ See also Young, (1990, pp. 61-63) on the importance of understanding the 'systematic' nature of rape (and other forms of violence and intimidation) as forms of oppression and as a 'social practice', rather than as a series of individual events.

Barbara: he wasn't very nice; he used to touch us all.

Ellie: Really?

Barbara: The one girl said 'We'll have him; he keeps coming round here, touching our bottoms' and we didn't like it.

Ellie: Yeah!

Barbara: And he'd say 'Turn round; I can touch your front'.

Bourdieu describes the "solidarity" of female factory workers in the face of such "ordeals" (1998 p. 93), which was something that Barbara certainly experienced, as collective feelings of outrage (an affective and emotional response to injustice) caused a plan to be set in motion by one of the girls. Barbara's workmate B____ arranged for an unpleasant accident to befall the manager, successfully ending his routine violations and representing the point at which unwilling habituation and bodily compliance becomes resistance,

Barbara: So this one girl, B____, she said 'I'll...' [laughs] 'B____ fixed old C____' we used to say to her..... And she said 'I'll fix him now' she said. So, we used to make brushes, and you know on the... ever seen a sweeping brush – there's like a hole in the sweeping brush?

Ellie: Oh yeah.

Barbara: They string up everything in a dozen.

Ellie: You mean at the top, like?

Barbara: You [put a string through] them see, and you'd sell them as a dozen brushes and they were all on a string.

Ellie: Right, I get you.

Barbara: And then when they sold them then, they'd undo the string, take one off and..... 'I'll have him, now' she said. 'I'll make sure when he comes here' she said 'the string's not tied on, on the pole' she said. She said... and when he went to touch her bottom, she said 'Ooh! Ooh!' and she let this... dozen brushes go; and they hit him on the head – a bump on the head! So his wife comes out, and she said 'What's

going on?' so she said... he said... oh... she said... B_____ said 'He was passing, and I hadn't quite tied up the knot on the thing'.

Ellie: Yeah, good for her!

Barbara: And the... the brushes hit him. But he never touched us after!

This resistance sits in contradistinction with the over-complicity between habitat and habitus that is implied in Bourdieu's construction of the habitus, and with which he is charged in his writing on gender (Witz, 2004, McNay 2004), which fails to account for "ambivalence, intersectionality and resistance to masculine domination" (Atkinson, 2016, p. 17).

The sense of injustice that motivated this illustrates how emotion can itself be "a source of agency" (Barbelet, 2004, p. 11), as for one of the girls, anger took precedence over fear and led to action, giving her the "shoving power" to act (Archer 2004, p. 225). Here the process of 'transvaluation' comes to the fore, with emotion as a "commentary" upon her concerns (Archer, 2007) with her own well-being. Barbara's friend parsed her fear of the manager through her concern with her safety and bodily autonomy, autonomy that was nevertheless also promoted by a competing social norm, since there would always have been a tacit understanding that what was happening was wrong even though it was widespread and tolerated. This disrupted the practices that were produced by the dominating and entitled habitus of the factory manager, which was both gendered and classed.

However, this story is notable for having been a deviation from the norm and its function in Barbara's narrative was as a tale of resistance. It was told as the day that something different happened to disrupt the normal routine and their lives were improved. This speaks to Hockey's work on narrative strategies in life course research and the argument that, in the Western mind "change is something that happens to continuity", as the former is predicated upon the latter (Edwards, 2008, p. 5). Barbara's embodied expectations of the world were being created by external conditions to which the girls had become habituated until one of their number resisted, since, as she said, "all factories were like that, years ago". In this experience, Barbara appeared to learn that as a young working-class girl she was not safe and lacked protection, which was sadly compounded by another more serious incident to which we now turn.

(ii) *Sexual assault*

A short time later, Barbara's experience of physical precarity was again made horrifically evident when she suffered a serious sexual assault. She left the family home at the age of 15 due to economic necessity, as her sister was no longer receiving child allowance from the Children's Society for her, and moved into a hostel for girls, but was locked out one night for being very slightly late. She and two of her friends returned to the hostel on the same bus as the house manager Mrs S____, just before their half past nine curfew. It had just turned half past as they walked up the path to the house but Mrs S____ got to the door before them, and although Barbara's friends managed to push in past her, when Barbara got to the door she was told that she was too late and would be locked out. Having no resources to fall back on she was forced to sleep in the nearby park, where a man who was known to her through her family happened to find her and he raped her.

Phipps (2009) writes of the dearth of literature examining the role of class in sexual violence, as women on low incomes are "disproportionately represented" among sexual assault survivors, and she argues that discourses of respectability make them less likely to be believed. Barbara went to court to give evidence, an act which itself denotes a willingness to stand against the external forces that had harmed her; she both suffered and resisted. Despite this, the man was not convicted for his crime against her, although he was sent to prison for six years "anyway", which was presumably for a separate conviction. As a result of this incident Barbara was herself sent to an 'Approved School' for girls on a 'Care and Protection Order'. Approved schools were institutions which usually housed girls who were sent there by the courts for committing a crime, or sometimes when they were considered to be outside of parental control, so this could also seem like a punishment for her. After leaving the school she went into service with a family elsewhere in the city, where she was again "locked out by a minute" and had to return to the school for a few more weeks.

Wasco (2003) observes that for working-class women sexual assault can act as a confirmation of the injustice of the world, rather than a disruption of assumptions of a just world. Barbara had experienced a series of injustices and this may have created an anticipatory and habituated emotional and cognitive response to contingent events. This can be seen in the panic she felt a short time later when she noticed that a bed was broken in the house in which she worked as a maid. Her experience of injustice by those with power over her led her to believe that she would be blamed for it and she decided to leave as soon as possible. Her internal conversation was propelled by her personal history, producing a strong emotion, which "colours reflexivity and infuses our perception of others, the world

around us and our own selves” (Burkitt, 2012, p. 258), and by her precarious position within the ‘power matrix of society’ (Flam, 2009, p. 187). This created a reaction of fear even though she had done nothing wrong,

“when I found the bed broke on this Sunday morning, I thought ‘Oh, what’s going to happen now? They’ll have me back in that place again!’ I thought to myself, you know; ‘and I’m not going *there* again!’...And I was there, and I thought ‘I can’t get the blame for this bed! Oh, I’m not getting the blame!’...I... I could lose *everything*.”

Here we see the effect of living with the fear of “what if?” as Adams describes it, since living a life with no safety net heightens the fear of something giving way (2007, p. 153). Similarly, Charlesworth has described the sense of “dread” that precarity can create and the disruption this causes to a secure and embodied “being-in-the world”, ultimately creating a “breakdown of the body’s lived intentionality” for those living in fear of losing their job (2003, pp. 76-77). For the young Barbara, with her experiences of precarity and no reason to trust in the innate justice of the world, the fear of losing *everything* was not far from the surface.

Thus, an emotional habitus that was wrought from repeated experiences of misrecognition and injustice shaped her decision-making process and she packed a small bag and caught a train to London, potentially putting herself in an even more precarious position. Taking a train to a city where she knew no-one and would need to find work and a place to live could be seen as an autonomous action signifying hope or trust in something better, but it was primarily an act borne of desperation, in which her reflexive response of fear was conditioned by previous experiences of precarity and injustice within a system of misrecognition that had not protected her.

As a young working-class girl, Barbara’s need for protection, or entitlement to bodily autonomy, had not been recognized and she had suffered a series of Honnethian bodily violations and assaults on her “physical integrity” (1995a, 1995b). As with John’s negative experience of education discussed in the previous section of this chapter, this is not an historical phenomenon; it can be clearly seen in recent years in the Rotherham grooming scandal, in which working class girls were not protected by authorities and were even, at times, blamed for their own vulnerability to sexual exploitation (Jay, 2014, p. 39). Like Barbara, many of these girls were living in state accommodation and the judge in the case described the authorities who failed to protect them, or indeed to recognize them as children in need of protection, as “at best “totally ineffectual” and at worst “wholly indifferent”” (PA Media, 2019). This is an indifference that Barbara experienced when she was maliciously

locked out of two different hostels; her narrative therefore illustrates arguments made in relation to the Rotherham case that “poor children are seen as worthless” (Moore, 2014), and as working-class girls they were the “*wrong* kind of victim” (Wood, 2020, emphasis in original).

Barbara’s fear of “losing everything”, and her lived experience of what can happen if regulations aren’t conformed to precisely seemed to remain with her. She reiterated this fear many years later to her fellow workers when she was an auxiliary nurse in a hospital. She was, at the time, working back-to-back shifts in different parts of the building but explained that she was scrupulous about her timesheets and always docked herself the time that it took to walk between shifts, which most her colleagues did not. She was very aware of the possible watchful eye of managers looking down at her from a window above. She gave a description that perfectly captures the experience of Foucault’s panopticon, the sense of control and the constant *possibility* of being watched, whether you were or not (1995), when she told me of how she refused to leave her shift ten minutes early despite being given permission to on the ward,

“So this girl L_____ said to me ‘Oh, you can go now if you want to, Barbara’; I’d finished what I was doing, about twenty-past 9. ‘Oh’ I said ‘I can’t go yet, L_____’ I said. She said ‘Of course you can, Barbara; I’m sending you!’ I said ‘Yeah, but you’ve got to sign my timesheet’. So she said ‘What do you mean?’ I said ‘Well’ I said ‘See them 2 windows up there?’ she said ‘yeah’, I said ‘Well Mrs J_____’s in one’ I said ‘and Mr T_____’s in the other one’. So she said ‘Yeah’ and I said ‘Well you don’t know that they’re not up there sitting by their desk watching you – watching over you’ I said ‘Because they’re going to say tomorrow ‘who signed Barbara’s timesheet?’ they’re going to check my timesheet tomorrow, and say ‘who signed...’ I said ‘And you’re going to be without a job’ I said ‘I won’t be without a job, because I’m only agency’. I said ‘You’re going to lose your job; all your pension; you’re going to lose everything!’”

The time difference that she spoke of may have seemed inconsequential to many but, for her, less than a minute had in the past represented the difference between safety and extreme danger, and (on the second occasion of being late back) between staying in a hostel and going back to the Approved School; Barbara had learned to expect no leniency. This fear regulated her body in space and time, as a product of social distance which is “inscribed in bodies or, more precisely, into the relation to the body, to language and to time” (Bourdieu, 1989, p.17). The prospect of being close to the edge of disaster seemed to stay

with her in this sense, shaping her embodied disposition and decisions-making in every-day ways, and the expectations of possible futures that make up a habitus.

(iii) *Domestic abuse*

Barbara returned to her home city from London after a year and it was here that she met and married her late husband and gave birth to five children. During the marriage he physically abused her, and she described marrying him as her biggest regret of her life. She told him when the children were young that she was going to leave but that did not happen and she felt trapped by circumstances³⁷,

“But when the kids were small, see, I *had* to stay because... you couldn’t go anywhere with kids; no-one would take you. I mean now, people just walks and goes; just get out, and that’s it, isn’t it? ...Not now... not them days; you’d got nowhere to go, because no-one would take you with kids. Because no-one wanted kids in their house, did they?”

As noted earlier in the section, Bourdieu has been criticized for over-emphasising the complicity and submission that is created by ‘masculine domination’ in his theoretical work, in an approach which “mire[s] gendered dispositions too deeply in bodies” (Witz, 2004, p. 221), while Walby et al. (2014) outright reject Bourdieu’s work as a means of theorizing domestic abuse in their empirical research on the issue.

Barbara was very clear how badly her husband had treated her; the physical abuse only stopped when her (then) teenage sons stood up to him, but the marriage lasted “50-odd” years until his death and she said that “he never told me he loved me once!”. However, we can also see the sedimented effects of this abuse in Barbara’s conflicted description of their relationship. She described her life with her husband as “terrible”, but said that she also misses him and her description suggests that his point of view was internalised in such a way that it could inform her own perception of the world,

Barbara: It’s... oh, it... it’s nothing to me, because I had such a *terrible* life with him...
Ellie: I know, I know.

³⁷ It is important to remember here that the first refuge did not open in Britain until 1971, which was sometime after this point in Barbara’s life.

Barbara: So... I *do* miss him... because if he said the front door was locked, and it was wide open, I'd take it that it was locked, you know what I mean?

It must therefore be noted that one of the *effects* of the relationship was that it helped to shape her sense of the world, and that even now she seems to be caught between missing her husband and hating him. In interpreting this we can tread a fine line between the ontological complicity that has been critiqued and an excess of agency, leaving room for the 'denials' that Flam describes as 'crucial' in sustaining abusive relationships and that shape the internal conversation (2009, p. 197-198). Barbara's reflections on the relationship express suffering and resistance, reflexive rejection and habituation.

(iv) Conclusion

In looking at the effects of gendered (and, in significant respects, classed) violence on Barbara as a form of misrecognition, we have seen both resistance to social structure and the sedimented, internalised effects of this structure. A young Barbara became habituated to the assaults of her manager, and even compliant, due to her powerless position and the structures within which she was positioned, in a situation in which obedience certainly does not indicate consent. When she was raped at the age of fifteen, another instance in which the lack of safeguarding of young working-class girls was made horrifically evident, she resisted by giving evidence in court. However, she appeared to learn to expect injustice, that her position was precarious, her body regarded as disposable, and that she could 'lose *everything*' through no fault of her own. In adulthood, she both regrets marrying her husband and says that she misses him, highlighting the psychological effects of abuse lived over decades. I will now look briefly at Barbara's orientation towards cultural continuity before concluding this case study and then the chapter.

iv. 'Everywhere's jumbled up'

Barbara and John both described the working-class solidarity of their youth, but Barbara also spoke of the fissures and flaws in this sense of cohesion. She described the disdain that her mother-in-law had shown for her because of their religious differences,

“Anyway, she come up and she’d say to S____, my sister-in-law, she’d say ‘Make me a cup of tea, S____’ she said ‘Don’t let *her* touch the cup’ she said ‘she’s not a Catholic”

She had also been called a ‘nigger lover’ for having befriended and lived with a workmate who was black when she lived in London as a teenager, with whom she had kept in touch in the decades since through Christmas cards. Therefore, the unquestioned racism and casual prejudice that she encountered in a more monocultural age was present in her narrative, yet when asked towards the end of the interview about the biggest change that she had seen in her lifetime, regret over an increase in multiculturalism emerged,

Barbara: Oh, I don’t know, its... it’s all this... everywhere’s jumbled up, isn’t it?

Ellie: Oh right; what do you mean ‘jumbled up’?

Barbara: Well there’s... there’s no proper single countries, is there?

Ellie: Right, yeah.

Barbara: There’s... France is all... it’s all ‘multicultural’ – everywhere.

Ellie: Right. Yeah.

Barbara: Every country’s multicultural.

Ellie: Yeah.

Barbara: It wasn’t, years ago; I can remember when my sister was in Norway – she’s dead now, and her husband’s dead – but when they first went to Norway when she first got... she was only 19 when she got married; she had... her children are grandparents now; they’re pensioners! When they first went to Norway, there wasn’t even a Chinese restaurant in Norway!

Ellie: Right. Yeah, yeah.

Barbara: They were an Aryan nation; and there was no... no... no Indian restaurants; [but] now it’s full of everything over there. It’s so multicultural now.

Ellie: Yeah.

Barbara: But there was...

Ellie: How do you feel about that?

Barbara: Oh, it’s one of them things; it’s just all the change in the world, isn’t it?

Ellie: Yeah; the world *has* changed, a lot. Yeah.

Barbara: Not much you can do about it. And that... Ellie? One voice is no good, is it, amongst many?

Ellie: Do you vote? Do you...?

Barbara: I do vote

Ellie: What do you vote?

Barbara: I can't tell you that.

Now in her third age, Barbara, like John, seemed to resent the advent of a more multicultural society. Again, this speaks to a desire for the maintenance of, and indeed a return to, greater contextual continuity, correlating with the 'resentful nationalists' of Fenton's typology (2012). We can again remember her discussion of 'scroungers' from Chapter Six, which correlates with the anger at 'undeserving' welfare recipients found by Fenton (p. 479), and the ways in which she has experienced the dark side of the (classed) symbolic economy and a lack of social status, after her educational and career success were stymied. Her resentment of multi-culturalism again indicates the 'disorientation' that was previously discussed, and a disposition that was found by Fenton to correlate strongly with educational level and career status as well as age, since the 'resentful nationalists' skewed towards an older age group than the 'liberal cosmopolitans', along a "cross-section" of ages (please also see Mann and Fenton, 2009, and see Mann 2011, p. 115 regarding sampling method). Therefore, this resentment may be partly seen as an effect of the constraints that prevented her pursuance of more education and of a different kind of career, and of her experience of both class and generation intertwined. We can therefore, again, see the resonance of reflexive concerns in the third age, and also how they seem to be related to misrecognition, differential distribution of capital and symbolic value, generation, and of a habitus born of lived experience.

v. Conclusion

In these excerpts from Barbara's story, here and in the previous chapter, we can again see how the effects of social structure are experienced as both external and as internalised in their effects. We see how past experiences of misrecognition can shape expectations for the future, how an abuser's voice may be both resisted and internalised, and the ways that social discourses around respectability can exert themselves upon our understanding of the world, providing narratives within which identities are mapped and constructed.

The importance of Honneth's bodily violations has been re-emphasized in the section on gendered violence, exploring the effects of a system that misrecognized Barbara's need for safety and autonomy, the effects of which were reflexively resisted but seemed to become sedimented in her habitus.

Ultimately, we have seen how Barbara's identity and sense of self in the world has, as with John's, been shaped through the intertwined effects of social differentiation and reflexive

concerns, as habitus works in tandem with reflexivity and constraints created by lack of resources, in the shaping of a trajectory and of a third age disposition.

d) Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter I have reflected upon the ways in which the habitus, as shaped by experiences of the symbolic economy and concomitant economic constraints, interacts with reflexivity in complex ways over the course of a life. I have also illustrated how this relationship can be usefully extended by Honneth's work on the recognition of a person's physical integrity, and have (briefly) discussed the notion of 'affective recognition' as a conduit for concerns and commitments within the family, which will be elaborated upon in Chapter Nine. Nevertheless, Archer's reflexivity has been shown to flourish in the spaces where habitus alone is an insufficient explanation, at points of desire and resistance where the reflexive 'I' of Archer's internal conversation comes to the fore.

The ongoing relationship between habitat or lifeworld, and habitus (Atkinson, 2016) has also been illustrated, as dispositions in the third age are shaped through relations with structure over time. Diverse "commitments" and "concerns" are shown to emerge as forms of reflexive engagement *and* as a product of a habitus that is shaped by past and current circumstance. We have therefore seen the way in which dispositions and identities and the 'Me' and the 'We' of the third age emerge as a consequence of past and present conditions of existence and by reflexive responses to these. This speaks to the need to attribute greater significance to the socially situated and past 'Me' of Archer's internal conversation, and the 'myself' in which 'first-order emotions' are stored, while still retaining the importance of these internal deliberations. Important elements of the narratives of both John and Barbara have been shown to support Elder-Vass' argument that "[o]ur habitus at any one time is not the unmediated product of social structures, but the result of a lifetime of critical reflection upon our experiences, including our experiences of those structures" (2007a, p 344).

It is important to remember that although many of the incidents of suffering and harassment that were recalled in this chapter occurred decades ago, the effects are ongoing and the mechanisms of misrecognition are also current. Although John spoke of an era of corporal punishment that has long since passed, educational misrecognition or the unease created by conflicted identities endures in modern day schools, as evidenced by the work of Reay (2015, 2017) and Walkerdine (2011). Discourses around female working-class respectability have also been shown to be current (see Skeggs, 1997, McNay, 2004). As has also been

noted, working-class girls can have a particular vulnerability to physical and sexual forms of misrecognition due to a doubly precarious position.

The findings of both this and the previous chapter very much support arguments for the entangled relationship between inequality on the one hand and recognition and identification processes on the other (Adams, 2007, p. 140, Sayer, 2005a, Charlesworth, 2003 Skeggs, 1997). We have also seen the mutually evolving effects of habitus, resources, and reflexivity over the course of a life. These narratives have focused on the effects of symbolic recognition and structural disadvantages and in the following chapter I will extend this in order to explore the importance of affective recognition and interpersonal relations on an individual's sense of self. I now move on to look at case studies of two participants who spoke of the effects of misrecognition across different fields, leaving them with lifelong 'low self-esteem' or confidence; an emotional habitus that has been shaped by the social world and that shapes their reflexive engagement with the world.

Affective and symbolic misrecognition, ‘relational harms’, and a negative emotional habitus

Introduction

This chapter will extend the analysis of the previous chapter by exploring misrecognition on an interpersonal as well as a structural level and by looking at the ways in which a resultant ‘emotional habitus’ (Crossley 1996, 1998, Burkitt, 2014) can act as an internalised constraint, shaping a person’s agentic engagement with the world over the course of a life. Through this, I will illustrate the ways in which Margaret Archer’s “relational harms” can be understood as forms of affective misrecognition, while allowing space for her argument that experiences of “discontinuity” can have a positive effect on the development of a person’s reflexivity (2012).

These themes will be traced in case studies with two participants: Joanie, whom I met at a social club, and Angela, who was recruited through the U3A. The narratives of Joanie and Angela have been chosen for an in-depth exploration as they told me that they had always suffered from low confidence or low self-esteem, an emotional habitus that will be shown to be directly related to their experiences in the fields of family, education, and the workplace, and to have had a constraining effect upon their agentic interactions with those around them.

Joanie: Lack of confidence and isolation

I met Joanie, a 78-year-old retired typist, at the same working men’s club as Barbara. She introduced herself to me when I was leaving after my first visit and invited me to join her and her friend when I saw her the next week; she told me that she thought I was “brave” for coming alone. On our third meeting she volunteered to be interviewed in her home, although she was a little nervous about it and asked more than once if there would be a “test” or if it would be “broadcast”, and even if I was recording her without her knowledge while we chatted in the club. Her home was a short walk from the club, the interior of which did not seem to have changed for some years, with heavy curtains and tablecloth, colour-themed rooms, patterned wallpaper, and a three-piece suite in front of an unlit fire in the front room, with a window looking out onto a quiet street.

She spoke of how she had suffered terrible loneliness in her life; she did not have children or siblings and had married late to an older man who had died around two years before I met her. She has some friends and keeps herself busy by going out for different activities and groups, such as the church or mental health support groups, but she prefers to go to the later church service on Sundays so that the rest of the day would not seem so long, stretching before her when she returns home. She described the intense loneliness that she has experienced as like going on a trip to an island with a group of people and watching them sail away while leaving her there, although she said that she was much happier these days as she has what she calls her “magic pills”, anti-depressants prescribed by the doctor. The experiences of misrecognition that went hand in hand with this sense of isolation will be the main focus of this case study.

Misrecognition in the family field

Joanie seemed to have developed an emotional habitus that was founded in early experiences of ‘relational harms’, which are negative relational experiences such as “excessive emotional dependency or domination as well as coercion, antagonism and exploitation” (Archer, 2012, p. 100) which, Archer argues, can inhibit the development of a functioning reflexivity.

Archer has been very clear in arguing that the importance of ‘relational goods’ and ‘relational evils’ to an individual’s reflexivity is not found in the directly positive and negative effects of interpersonal experiences, but in indirectly shaping the reflexive process itself, including which situations are endorsed or repudiated by people growing up in different relational contexts (2012). Here I argue for a partial re-interpretation of these goods and harms as forms of affective recognition or misrecognition that can inhibit or diminish agentic action. We will discuss the question of reflexive modes later in this section on Joanie, but it seems clear that the relational harms she experienced signified a withholding of “affective recognition”, as described by Honneth (Fraser and Honneth, 2003, p. 142), inhibiting the development of her emotional resources or capital and constraining her ability to navigate the social world successfully and agentially.

Joanie appeared to feel at odds with the world and emotionally under-siege, speaking repeatedly of the ‘spite’ she feels that she experienced in childhood, first from her aunt and then her stepmother. She felt her father was complicit in this and it led her to leave the family home and to rent a small ‘bedsitter’ as a young woman,

“But she was a very spiteful woman. She used to say such *nasty* things to me; and my father never took my side, and I got to the stage I couldn’t stand it anymore. She’d accuse me... now, there was one day when I pulled the handle off a cup, and she went hysterical. And she said ‘I know you’ve done that in the past’ she said; ‘I’ve found the handles by the side of the cups, in the cupboard, so that I wouldn’t know you’d...’ Now that wasn’t true; she used to say things – lies about me – just to get me into trouble. So eventually I... because I lived in [name of city], I may as well... I worked in [name of city], so I may as well *live* here, because then I don’t have much fare to pay. So that’s what I did; and I lived in various places off L_____ Road, because that is an area. In those days, I mean, people didn’t... they have... in those days, there wasn’t much money, so people like me could only afford a ‘bedsitter’.”

Joanie traced her ongoing, constraining struggles with low self-esteem back to these childhood experiences. She seemed to repeatedly fear rejection and therefore to anticipate it, sometimes (it seemed to me) creating a self-fulfilling prophecy,

Joanie: And one thing about me is that I’m... I am a person that... lacking in self-confidence.

Ellie: Right, ok.

Joanie: Yeah, because in the church, a lot of these women... you know, the women get together and they’re in the one clique; and I never feel part of it.

Ellie: Yeah, yeah.

Joanie: And... and I joined a couple of things, and a friend of mine goes to one of them, and I said... she says ‘You weren’t there so-and-so day’; well I said ‘I got a feeling that none of them like me.’

Ellie: Oh!

Joanie: And she said ‘Well why do you *think* that?’ ‘Well’, I said, ‘I just *do*.’ And... I don’t know... I think a lot of it is; Stepmother was always criticizing me; I mean, accusing me of pulling cup handles! And the other... she’d say *nasty* things; she said... my aunt, that... where we lived, I used to visit them. So I went up this Sunday

night, and she said to me a couple of days later; 'You only went up to your Aunt on Sunday night because it was your birthday and you wanted a present!'

Ellie: Oh!

Joanie: Oh, she was always saying spiteful things.

I saw this expectation of rejection first-hand when she asked me if the woman who came around with the sugar bowl in the tea break at bingo had seemed annoyed with her and I assured her that she had not.

These examples of Joanie's thinking perfectly express the way in which, as Burkitt explained, imagination and interpretation are "crucial" to the way we respond to the world and are themselves shaped by past experiences, thereby shaping our reflexive thoughts and actions (2012). Joanie often seemed to struggle to form lasting positive relationships and her sense of acute isolation after leaving home was very clear in her memory all these years later,

Joanie: Now I was... I've known loneliness most of my life; because when I went to live in bedsitters, it's almost like being in a cell. You know... if you had a flat in this house, you've got rooms to walk through; but this was... you know... you'd feel you're 'closing in'...

Ellie: I understand

Joanie: And I'd go for a walk, and I'd then feel better when I got back. This was usually at night-time.

She did eventually, at the age of 53, get married to "a lovely, kind-hearted man" with whom she spent 23 years, but she felt that she had had to wait a long time to marry as she had known him socially for many years at that point, and she had worried about him dying first (leaving her on her own again) throughout the marriage, as he was 17 years older than her. We will now turn to look at Joanie's experience of misrecognition in the workplace and her response to this.

Misrecognition in the workplace

Joanie felt that she had “wasted (her) time at school”, which she seemed to regret. She felt that her father had been “disappointed” that she had not done better but that she had not been given any encouragement at home, such as being given space to do her homework. She links this again to the disregard that she felt in the family home, describing her family as “very spiteful”. She trained as a typist at the age of 17 and worked for the Civil Service for the last 21 years of her working life before retiring a year early at the age of 59.

The workplace is a space in which inequalities of capital are highly visible (Sayer, 2005a, p. 175), and Joanie, who felt devalued in her job as a typist, seemed to be keenly aware of how disempowered she had been by her position in the (inherently classed) power structures of the organisation. She had had repeated issues with managers and colleagues, memories of which seemed to be embedded in her recollections with no emotional distance. Arguments from decades ago seemed to carry an undiminished emotional weight and she described the workplace culture as “nothing but spite and malice” of which she had “had a gutful” when she decided to retire. She felt that she had been penalised for falling behind on unmanageable workloads and for not doing enough emotional labour to smooth relations with the civil servants under whom she worked. She would not smile and re-assure them when they put her under avoidable pressure by giving her their work to type up at the last minute,

Joanie: So when I went to see them, they said ‘They want you out of there, because you were good when you first went, but your work has suffered quite a lot’

Ellie: Oh!

Joanie: And I firmly believe, they’d been... see, what they didn’t like; if they came in to me and said ‘I want this straight away’ I wouldn’t say ‘Oh, certainly; such a *pleasure!*’, my annoyance would show in my face; which is understandable, when you’re already trying to get work up to date, and somebody who can’t be bothered to bring their work...

Her visible annoyance sits at odds with the expected signs of cheerful compliance, since “acts of the body in emotion...are key to the work of symbolic capital” (Probyn, 2004, p. 231), as seen in the “timidity” or “sense of one’s place” that is created by social distance ‘inscribed’ in the body (Bourdieu, 1989, p.17).

As previously noted, Skeggs regrets the fact that much research on class, and in particular Bourdieu's work, overlooks the anger that oppressive or unjust circumstances can create (2004b, 2011). Indeed, Joanie's anger and resistance correlates with Archer's description of the process by which a person's emotional responses are "transvalued by their commitments" (2017e, p. 193). She did not instinctively perform the deference that was expected of her, and her refusal to exhibit signs of supplication to her (more powerful, male, middle-class) bosses signified resentment, which is a powerful social emotion produced by the "chronic asymmetries" of class systems (Barbalet, 2004, p. 68), but which can become "debilitating" when experienced by those who do not have the resources to act on it (p. 63).

This resentment may also be seen as part of an emotional habitus, as an ongoing response to external conditions. Resentment for past slights repeatedly intruded upon Joanie's narrative; the 'flip side' perhaps to her lack of confidence and expectations of rejection. Furthermore, her response could also be understood as a lack of the reflexive self-regulation that is made necessary by subordination in unequal (classed) power relations. Notwithstanding Sweetman's argument that the "reflexive management of one's emotions" that is involved in 'emotional labour' is required less of employees in working-class jobs than middle-class jobs (2003, p. 543, see also Hoschild 1983, pp. 153-156), the suppression of feelings, and particularly negative feelings, that Hoschild associates with working-class roles (p. 154, she makes a distinction here between emotional labour and emotional suppression), can certainly be seen as a reflexive act. Indeed, hiding true feelings with workplace superiors involves deliberate 'surface acting' of the type described by Hoschild (p. 33), while Adams notes that the self-regulation that is required of individuals caught up in networks of power can create a form of compulsory "self-reflexivity" (2007, pp. 75-92). According to this reading Joanie was being unreflexive in not hiding the visible signs of resentment. This illustrates how an action can be simultaneously framed as both reflexive and unreflexive, as an apparently agentic act and as an expression of a habituated response to the world, and the complexity that is revealed by attempts to interpret the relationship between these points in day-to-day relational experiences.

As observed by McNay in her writing on habitus and agency, "the process of corporeal inculcation is never straight-forward or complete" (2004, p. 181), and the fact that Joanie's response was apparently so disruptive also speaks to how common-place and taken for granted unconscious acknowledgement of symbolic power is, and how it shapes emotional responses much of the time. This represents the 'synchronic relations' that, for Elder-Vass, are essential to the existence of social structures as a matter of course (2007b); Barbalet points to the enduring stability of these unequal systems of "power and reward" (2004, p. 68), under which Barbara was also seen to suffer in the factory in which she worked.

Joanie's resistance to the norms of the power structure in which she was embedded, and the repercussions of this, further depleted her resources of emotional capital, and her unhappiness caused her to retire a year earlier than she otherwise would have done.

Joanie was, of course, able to see her interpersonal difficulties in the workplace and her experiences of disempowerment as external problems to be reflexively negotiated and acted upon. She reflexively considered her options and took action, thinking through her finances and saving up enough money to ensure that she could retire a year early. However, these experiences of misrecognition (or indeed, relational harms) formed part of the ongoing interpersonal struggles that seemed to shape her sense of self in the world. Repeated relational struggles, first in the family home, and then at work, have remained vivid in her memory, and seem to have shaped her dispositional 'mental states', which are both "condition[ed]" by experience and are "stored" in networks of neurons (Elder-Vass 2007a, p. 337, 2010).

Moreover, alongside the negative value that was created in her life by her sense of being devalued and disempowered, Joanie also missed out on the positive experiences of working in roles that are held to have greater symbolic value, and through which confidence can be accrued and self-perception enhanced. Joanie's consciousness of the lack of value that was attached to her work became evident when I asked her what makes her feel proud in her life so far and she professed herself unable to identify anything, but made specific reference to either motherhood or a professional career as potential sources of pride for others,

Ellie: And what – looking back at your life so far – makes you feel most proud; what are you proud of?

Joanie: Well I've got such low esteem; I don't think I'm proud of *anything!* Proud; I haven't got children that I can say 'He's a professor, and this one's a doctor' so I... no, I don't think of... proud...

Her response illustrates very clearly the power of the symbolic economy, and indeed, Honneth's 'achievement principal' (Fraser and Honneth, 2003, p. 142), in shaping the (inherently social) meaning that we make of our lives. Again, as in Barbara's narrative, the symbolic economy is seen to precede, or at least form a fundamental (and unconscious) part of, reflexive consideration of the relationship between self and world. The negative value that Joanie appears to feel is, as discussed in the previous chapter, associated with a social identity that is not merely a sub-set or dialectical partner of a personal identity, as argued for

by Archer (2004). It also exists unbidden, and not shaped by reflexivity, in Joanie's instinctive sense of how she is viewed by the world and thus how she views herself, which is refracted through a Bourdieusian system of misrecognition.³⁸

A Reflexive modality?

As previously noted, Archer describes 'fractured reflexives' as people whose ability to reflexively negotiate the world around them is impaired. They are "passive agents" (2003, p. 305) who struggle to find their bearings in life, to identify that which is important to them and to attempt to pursue it (pp. 298-341). The internal conversation of people whose reflexivity is fractured is described as "primarily expressive. Its effect is to intensify affect." (2012, p. 251)³⁹, and their ability to make choices and navigate the world is impaired, with a focus on "surviving" (p. 99).

Questions of self-confidence and trust in oneself have been discussed in relation to fractured reflexivity in Chapter Three and are central issues for some of the fractured reflexives in Archer's empirical samples, inhibiting their agentic capacity (2003, 2012). Thus far in the thesis it has been held that notions of "passivity" must be interrogated in relation to explicitly social processes that are under-accounted for in Archer's analysis. Indeed, Scambler emphasises the importance of "low self-worth" or self-esteem and the "impoverished sense of self" that follow early negative experiences and family problems, when developing his own concept of "vulnerable fractured reflexivity" as a form of "socially structured subjectivity" (2013).

We cannot say for certain whether parts of Joanie's past experiences fall under the category of 'fracturing', as described by Archer. All of the people in her student sample who were "rejecters" of their natal family were said to be fractured in their reflexivity (2012, p. 100), and all struggled at first to make a new life for themselves, which certainly seems to match Joanie's experiences. We also do not know the extent to which she dwells on negative ruminations, yet the immediacy and emotionality of her account of her negative experiences suggested that she was externalising an internal monologue or conversation, which correlates with the affective and debilitating internal conversations that Archer sees as typical of fracturing. This affective internal conversation has been linked, in the previous

³⁸ I suggested that Joanie's desire to be kind to people, which she had spoken of earlier in the interview, was something of which she could be proud.

³⁹ Archer states that this description does not apply to 'underdeveloped' or 'expressive' reflexives, who are, nevertheless, included in the category of fractured reflexives in her empirical work (2003, 2012).

subsection, to the repetitive and habitualised 'mental states' of the type described by Elder-Vass (2007a, 2010); the anger at mistreatment seemed to become part of her emotional constitution and the constitution of her emotional habitus, shaping the way she thought about and reacted to the world. She had also been a 'passive agent' in some key respects in her life, staying for extended periods in situations that made her unhappy, which perhaps speaks to the strong association between negative emotions, low confidence and inaction that is described by Barbalet (2004, pp. 82-102, see in particular pp. 85 and 94).

Joanie's primary aim when I met her appeared to be to escape her loneliness and engage with social groups, for which she was taking positive action such as going to church, bingo sessions (for the social aspect as she disliked bingo itself) and a mental health support group, among others. She seemed to be trying to create what Archer describes as a "we-ness" that can create emergent "relational goods" (Donati and Archer, 2015), but previous interpersonal issues seemed to have inhibited this through large tracts of her life, although she found it with her late husband. This lack speaks to Archer's description of the way in which the experience of 'relational evils' over "relational goods" can obstruct the development of lasting relationships as part of a "We" and is said to potentially lead to fractured reflexivity (Donati and Archer, 2015, p. 81). This is an important point which suggests the potentially far-reaching effects of relational harms, but it must be contextualised in an understanding of an internal habitus that is shaped by experience, and of a sense of self that is developed biographically and through relations with others, as argued for by Burkitt (2012, 2014, 2016).

Ultimately, whether or not Joanie's narrative fits elements of Archer's description of fracturing is perhaps less relevant than understanding the social basis of her internal constraints, and the way that her life and her reflexive processes have been shaped by her experiences. What Joanie's reflections have shown is the importance of understanding the durable nature of low self-confidence as a form of emotional habitus, and the direct effects of affective (and other) forms of misrecognition on the internal conversation. As Flam argues, "It is the constant experience of being invisible, silenced and/or being made to feel 'inferior', 'inadequate' or being corrected – verbally or in practice – that makes one internalise this negative, undesired, and inadequate 'you'. The outsider's 'you' that 'I' become." (2009, p. 189).

It is also possible that Joanie developed greater self-reliance due to the absence of family support and through growing up in an unwelcoming home: this would correspond with Archer's description of the "disengaged" meta-reflexive and "independent" autonomous reflexives, who were 'deprived' of interlocutors and were therefore thrown "back upon their

own mental resources” in situations of incongruity and discontinuity (2012, p. 84). However, it is clear that the ‘interpersonal cruelty’ that, under Archer’s own description is one form of relational harm (2012, p. 257), helped to shape Joanie’s ongoing internal conversation for decades, and is a significant form of misrecognition. Thus, again, Archer’s work is not to be dispensed with, and notions of fracturing, passivity, relational goods and harms, and an impaired or ineffective internal conversation are vital in understanding the subjective course of a life, but must be integrated with concepts of recognition, an emotional habitus, and recurrent ‘mental states’.

Conclusion

In this case study I have illustrated the potential for symbolic and affective misrecognition across different fields to create a negative emotional habitus, and the lifelong inhibition of reflexive and emotional responses that can result from this. Of all the participants I spoke to in this study, Joanie’s story seemed to express most clearly Burkitt’s observation of the circular and historic nature of self-identity, and of emotional experiences, as refracted through the imagination of a ‘looking-glass self’ (Burkitt, 2012, drawing on Cooley, 1983). Through this, past experiences are projected onto future events in a way that perfectly aligns with the ‘anticipatory’ nature of the habitus, and which also form a durable ‘emotional habitus’ (Crossley, 1996, 1998), as current emotional (and relational) responses are shaped by past experiences (Burkitt, 2008, 2012, 2014).

Atkinson (2016) writes of the family as “one of the most important of all fields structuring individual lifeworlds” (p. 20), and Reay describes the generation of emotional capital within the family (2000, 2004a). It would seem to be at least partly from the lack of this, and the “silencing” that she experienced when she was disbelieved or marginalized in the home, that Joanie initially suffered and was constrained. This helped to shape her disposition or emotional habitus, and created a cycle of responses and reactions, with emotions at the core of her perceptions of “self, others and [the] social world” (Burkitt, 2012, p. 458).

While the interview method required people to remember and to reflect on their past selves, Joanie’s memories of conflict and misrecognition came so easily and with such clarity, as though she were in her own mind “borne back ceaselessly into the past” (Fitzgerald, 1993, p. 115) when thinking of her negative experiences. While she had found significant happiness with her late husband, her consideration of the relationship between herself and the world around her, which is the crux of Archer’s reflexivity (2007, p. 4), seems to have been shaped by past hurts and conflicts that led to a habituated emotional response. Her struggle to

identify anything of which she is proud indicates the significant role of the symbolic economy in the construction of a social identity and the differential distribution of processes of recognition that were earlier made evident in the narratives of John and Barbara. I will now go on to explore themes of structural and affective misrecognition, and a negative emotional habitus, in the narrative of Angela.

Angela: Further explorations of a negative emotional habitus

Angela is a 71-year-old member of the U3A who left school at fifteen, worked in a variety of retail and clerical jobs, and raised two children with her late husband before retiring at the age of 65. The family moved to the area in which the study is based some decades ago, due to her husband's repeated redundancies in the printing business. Angela joined the U3A after his death and at the suggestion of her sister-in-law. She had initially expected it to be "just for educated people" but now feels that it is not and really enjoys her involvement with the organisation.

I met with Angela twice, the first time for an initial chat at her home that turned into a lengthy monologue as she told me about her life, followed by a second visit in which we did a recorded interview. She spoke at length about her, sometimes difficult, relationships with family members, her life-long lack of confidence, her relationship with her late husband, and the way in which changes in her life have increased her confidence and contentment in the present day.

Perceptions of the role of 'fate'

Angela spoke of her life as though in many ways it had happened *to* her rather than *by* her, emphasizing the role of fate and instances of choicelessness, as though most of the crucial decisions were simply outside of her control; partly it would seem through the interlinked effects of gendered and generational constraints and expectations when young, and an emotional habitus of (like Joanie) under-confidence. Agentic decision-making processes did not seem to have been a significant part of Angela's life, or indeed encouraged, when she was young. She was not encouraged to plan for the future as a child, and when her mother got her a job in a shoe shop when she left school at 15 she was just happy to be working. She contrasted this with the way in which modern schoolchildren are encouraged by schools to think about their future.

Similarly, she has no memory of her husband asking her to marry him and thinks that maybe it was just “sort of expected” that they get married when she was 21 because they had been together for a couple of years. She said that she was “quite happy to go and get the ring” or at least that she “didn’t feel *uncomfortable* about it”. A lack of belief in her own “mastery” and “efficacy”, which are argued to be central components of agency (Hitlin and Johnson, 2015, see also Carver, 1998), emerged quite early in the interview when I prompted Angela to speak about her early life with her husband, which was a topic that she had begun talking of as I was ‘setting up’ for the interview,

“... I always think it’s funny how things... I think things are mapped out for you, to a certain extent; because it’s not just ‘hit and miss’ that you meet somebody. I mean *partly* it is, I suppose, if you meet them through other friends; but I still sometimes think that life’s mapped out to a certain extent for you. I mean a lot of coincidences... and I think ‘Oh, if that hadn’t happened, you know, where would I be?’ And I think... you know... I just think sometimes it’s meant to be. I don’t know why.”

Later in the interview similar themes emerged when I asked Angela to reflect on the biggest changes that had occurred in her lifetime (a question that participants seemed to interpret very differently),

“Erm... I don’t know if there’s anything really stands out; just sort of very... run of the mill, sort of... as it comes; it went on, and then there was nothing really I could say that changed my life much; I mean, mundane jobs and everything, so... just ordinary jobs; there was nothing there that stuck out, in my head. I suppose even... not even marriage, really; because it was sort of... you know... it went on, and we got engaged and got married. It wasn’t anything like a... I was never madly in love with my husband, you know; I don’t know if he ever was with me. I don’t know; he never said it, so... you know. But... I don’t know... I don’t think... I think... completely just going along with the flow. When I look back, I just think ‘Well, that’s the way it *was*’ you know; never thought of it as particularly any reason *why* it was that, except for that Fate takes you one way or another – I agree with that.”

A belief in fate is a quality that Archer explicitly connects with the ‘communicative reflexives’, which was a group that also tended, in Archer’s own empirical work, towards under-confidence and the need for reassurance (as discussed in Chapter Three). This suggests

that a belief in fate may partly be a product of a constrained or impaired sense of agency. In the following sections I will look in depth at Angela's emotional habitus, her sense of her own agentic capacity through her life, and the relationship between these and various forms of misrecognition.

Education and misrecognition

Angela's under-confidence, like Joanie's, began in childhood, with an experience of education that undermined rather than enhanced her ability to flourish. The transition to grammar school for many children of this era who did not grow up in homes with a history of educational attainment or cultural capital was "one of insecurity, uncertainty and confusion" (Reay, 2017. p. p. 35-37, see also Jackson and Marsden, 1966), and for Angela this seems to have been the case. The fact that the school was quite a distance from her home and the journey made her feel ill perhaps compounded a sense of dis-embedded otherness,

"It was the grammar school, and like I say it was just a long way to go, and I used to be bus sick and I used to have to get off halfway home and walk the rest of the way cos I felt so ill. So I don't think schooling did me any good, and it didn't give me any confidence, and I think I wasn't a confident child, and I still, still have that doubt sometimes in myself, you know I didn't, I'm much more confident than I was, but I still feel a bit inferior to other people sometimes..."

Like John, her starkest memory in school is of corporal punishment, and her description of being punished for playing a game in the hallway stands out clearly in her memory, seeming to represent all that was damaging and unjust in her school experience,

"But I was playing with a friend just with a rolled-up glove, and I could throw soft in, just in the hallway, you know a small one between classes, and we were sent down to this Miss J____, for doing that, I mean it was nothing (sounding a little upset) you know. And she gave us the strap, and that's the only time I've ever had the strap and it was painful, across the hand."

The effects of this punishment, which still has the power to upset Angela so many years later, underline Honneth's argument that physical abuse "represents a type of disrespect that does lasting damage to one's basic confidence" (1995a, p. 132). Angela's experience also echoes Jackson and Marsden's description of the treatment of working-class children in grammar schools in the 1960s. They wrote of the punishments that were reported by children who did not seem to fit into the grammar school way and who remained "natural", and the "haze" that seemed to descend upon them in this new and confusing environment (1966, p. 128).

Despite having passed the 11-plus Angela left without qualifications. She was written-off academically as her mother was told that she would not succeed if she continued past the age of 15, although she later returned to education by studying part-time for GCSE's. The enduring nature of these experiences, acting as non-familial 'relational harms', served to inhibit her sense of her own agency, as embedded in social relations (McNay, 2004, Burkitt, 2016). For Angela, as for Merleau-Ponty, this sense of inferiority seemed to become an 'abode' (see Crossley, 1998, p. 67),

"And I think that's why I really never had any confidence in myself, when I was younger, which... you know... my sister was really outgoing, and I wish I could have been a bit like that. But I mean, you know, my childhood was ok, it's just... *everything* was ok really, but I just wish I could have been a stronger person and, you know, say my piece. I always think of it afterwards; I think 'Why didn't I say that to them?'"

This lack of confidence, and experiences of misrecognition, were also significant in Angela's description of parts of her working life as we will see in the next section.

Misrecognition in the workplace

Work was not a field in which Angela seemed to have found much fulfilment, although her descriptions of some of her earlier workplaces, a wholesale market and a dairy, sounded convivial and friendly. However, she also said that she had never "felt comfortable" in or "enjoyed" any of her jobs.

She began working as an accounts clerk towards the end of her working life, which involved calling people on the telephone to generate business, but she found her workload too high and the pressure was exacerbated by advances in technology,

Angela: we had to do all these calls to get money in, and you had to do so many in a day, and... like they do with these calls; and if you didn't... then you'd have a meeting with the Manager every month, and then he'd tell you that you weren't doing it good enough, and... and you weren't allowed to put your phone on... you know... calls couldn't... you couldn't stop calls coming through, you *had* to have it open all the time, but you haven't got... but I wasn't a typist, and I found it very hard to type up everything from the one *before*, before I could take another one. So I found that a bit hard.

Ellie: So was that... that was sort of computerised and everything, was it?

Angela: Yes, yeah, that's right; and you had to... and they could tell how many calls you'd done in a day, and it felt like Big Brother was watching you, sort of thing, all the time. You weren't allowed to talk – you didn't have *time* to talk! – and by the end of the day... and then as I say you'd have this same manager saying 'You're not doing enough' and then, you know, I was thinking 'I'm 60 now; I don't particularly want all this pressure' but with [Angela's husband] always being made redundant, I had no *choice* but to work, because there wasn't enough money coming in. So I find that now... it's... I don't know how they cope, these days; by the end of the day they've got to do so many things, and...

Ellie: Yeah.

Angela: Part of it... they took me off it... was to people who had moved away, and they couldn't find them; and you had to try and find where they lived...

Ellie: Oh, I see.

Angela: Which was a *bit* easier; but then again the paperwork was so high, you still had loads to do. You never had a time where you could just...it was a big office, and if people could see you weren't doing anything, you know, you were in trouble. It's a shame, really, but... so I've always felt that; I'm not sure if it's because I feel I'm not confident in doing the jobs; but I always find it... if it was just the pressure, you know. I can't say there's been *one* job that I've felt comfortable and enjoyed. I really do envy anybody who says nowadays 'You know, I love my job' you know 'and I really enjoy

doing it'. And I don't know what else I would have done, or what I *could* have done. Because, you know, not having any... well in fact, I went back, when I was – we were in [name of county] – I went back and took some O-levels...

The modern call-centre, which is “defined by high levels of surveillance and regulation” (Adams, 2007, p. 82), and employs a high proportion of women and part-time and non-unionized workers, has been described as the “archetypal organisation” of Foucault’s work on the panopticon (Ferne and Metcalfe, 1998, cited in Adams, 2007, p. 82). Angela felt disempowered and trapped by her role in this system and had even less control over her own time and activities than Joanie and Barbara had in their workplaces. The “temporal rhythms” which Bourdieu describes as one of the differentiating conditions between different occupations (1984, p. 104) are here inscribed even more closely onto the body by virtue of technological advances. Angela’s struggles, and the potential for technology to exacerbate existing power relations, echo Joanie’s complaints about the effect of technology on her work, which seemed to make the disparity between herself and the men for whom she typed even more visible. She complained that once they knew how easy it was for her to change things with her new word processor, they told her that they “don’t bother to get it right first time”.

Again, for Angela, it was not merely the workload that was an issue but the power structures within which this occurred, which again led to negative interpersonal situations that were upsetting for her,

“when I was working at the last job, there was a supervisor, and she really had a *go* at me, and I’m thinking... that’s why I get this inferiority complex, because I’m thinking ‘What have I done? I don’t argue, I don’t shout, I don’t get stroppy, so why does she not like me?’ So that’s what worries me more... I remember a couple of women said, when I was working, they said ‘Why the hell... why does she talk to you like that?’ and you know... and others there, you know, like my sister would have really answered back.”

Here Angela directly links her ongoing feelings of inferiority to her treatment by others and describes the silencing effect that this has had upon her.

Misrecognition within marriage and a newfound freedom

Angela's description of her marriage suggested that her husband had a tendency towards dominating behaviour that seems likely to have constrained Angela's development of a confident and agentic self within an everyday relational context. She mentioned how, early in their relationship, he had been jealous of her friendship with one of her female friends and insisted that she stop seeing her, and of how he fell out with family members in ways that affected them both. She gave examples of the dynamics of her marriage when contrasting it to a new relationship she has developed, in which she has become more assertive, although her new partner had tried to over-assert his own will at the start,

Ellie: Yeah, you were saying that you feel like you've got control of that now, because for while he was treating you a bit like a wife, wasn't he? ⁴⁰

Angela: Yes, he was, yes. It was 'Do this; don't do that; got to do this' but... and I didn't want that; I'd had enough of that while I was married! [Laughs] doing it for somebody else; that's why I wanted it to be more independent; but you *do* need that company, as well, I think.

Her husband died around 18 months before I met her and she seemed to be experiencing a new sense of agency, which speaks to the suppression that she had previously felt, and which has enhanced her relationship with the possibilities of her own future,

Angela: Yeah, I just couldn't move from here because, you know, I've got it how I want it, and in fact I was decorating the other week, so as long as I can do all that, I think it keeps your mind going, and your body going. So I'm quite happy and contented at the moment.

Ellie: That's lovely! And you were saying the other day that, is it right? that you feel 'in control' for the first time in your life?

⁴⁰ Here I am re-introducing a topic that we had spoken of in our previous (unrecorded) conversation, reminding Angela of what she had said before so that she could confirm or elaborate on these points.

Angela: Mm, I do! I mean, you know, I mean I've got nobody to argue with I suppose – well, I have, because I've got 2 daughters – but they'd put me right if I was doing something wrong, I suppose. But no, I think it's just... I don't think I would have wanted to be single *all* my life, because you don't get the experiences, do you? And having children makes you... meet people, and things like that. I don't think I could have been single on my own all my life; but I feel now is *my* time to, as I- My daughter's very good, she says 'It's your time, Mum, to do what *you* want to do now' and while I'm capable of doing it, I want to *do* it!

This new freedom is also felt in physical ways, through what Coole (2005) calls her “corporeal syntax” in her experience of “somatic agency”, as the affective registers of her life in the home have changed,

Ellie: You were saying that you, like, now, you like kind of having control of your own space, and being able to, like, you were saying about the bathroom and the garden⁴¹; and being in the quiet. You said that your husband used to have the TV on a lot, and that sort of thing.

Angela: Oh, gosh! He had the telly on in the morning; first thing in the morning till the last thing at night – it used to drive me mad! And the thing is, both my girls could read, and be... you know... ignorant to anybody – they were away in their books – and this is the one thing I can't do. And I... if the television was on, my mind just drifts to... and that's why I have to read in bed, when it's nice and quiet; or reading down here – I'm on my own – but I like to read in bed.

Her habitus, her sense of self in the world, has been changed by changes in her habitat, allowing her greater control over her everyday life. The removal of an implicit misrecognition of her wants and needs has therefore helped to increase her feelings of agentic possibility,

“since my husband died I've been doing a lot of things, and I have more confidence. I don't know if that *comes* from the moving around more, and having to adjust, but

⁴¹ The reference to the garden and the bathroom in this quote refers to Angela's insistence on decorating the bathroom and doing the garden herself, which seemed to be partly an assertion of independence and control of her space.

yeah, I can't say I like my life *better* than when I was married, but it's just there's not so much pressure, and I've got more time for myself."

Inevitably there were contradictions and ambiguities in her reflections over the course of two lengthy conversations. At other moments she spoke of having "a good relationship" with her husband and making joint decisions, but it is clear that she felt that her needs and wants were deprioritised in key ways and that she now has more freedom. She reflected on the ways in which gendered behaviour within the marriage was shaped by contemporary norms, as part of society's 'gender contract' (Nielsen 2017),

"I notice these days that there's more men who have the babies with them. I mean... you know... whereas *my* husband would be... would have been embarrassed to have to do all that; change nappies. But I think that's changed for the good, and men do... you know... do have more to do with their children, I think, that way."

Later in the interview she reflected on the progress that has been made in terms of gender equality, when we were discussing the different expectations for women when she was young,

"There wasn't that equality like there is now!...*Definitely* wasn't that. I mean, it was expected I think, more, that. But no, it's a shame really, because I suppose they've got more chances now; and I think it *is* getting... do you think it's getting a lot better now, equality wise?"

In this way we can see a habitus that emerged at the intersection of gender and generation, as described by Aarseth et al. (2016), which shaped her marriage in ways that were restrictive, and which constrained the greater possibility of self-directed agency that may be found in equality.

As noted, Angela had been negotiating her agency in her new relationship within which she has had to (and felt able to) assert control, a repositioning which spoke to both her own increase in confidence through the life-course and ongoing changes in the 'gender contract', that is maintained and modified in the private as well as the public sphere, through both

conscious and unconscious processes (Nielsen, 2017). She had at one point split up with her new partner and then reunited in a way that was not entirely her choice; circumstances led them to spending time with each other and she had thought “we’re back together now then I suppose”, or words to that effect, suggesting that she had felt unable to actively speak up and make a choice. However, she said that she is happy to be with him now, living separately and generally meeting up once a week, and feels herself to have become more assertive in this relationship.

An increase in confidence

Angela described some other key experiences over the course of her life that seemed to have increased her confidence and her sense of her own agentic capacity. For example, she felt that dealing with the challenges that were brought about by the multiple moves that the family had to make due to her husband’s redundancies had increased her confidence,

“I think it does build up a bit, and make you a bit more stronger, when you’ve got to keep on the spot and you’ve got to find schools for the girls; you’ve got to box everything up; you’ve got to say goodbye to family, you know, so I...”

She reflected on this again later in the interview, saying “if I hadn’t moved so many times, I might not be as strong as I am now”, suggesting an increased sense of agentic capacity through confronting new challenges.

The enabling effect of such discontinuities, which for Archer is significant in creating autonomous reflexives, is directly linked (by her) with an increase in confidence, since “the ability to cope successfully by oneself in unfamiliar situations yields a sense of satisfaction which enhances self-confidence” (2007, p. 194). Although, under Archer’s typology, this is not theorized in terms of differences in agentic capacity, the autonomous reflexives are also described as the most independent and self-directed (2012). This indicates an unresolved ‘tension’ in Archer’s work between “types” of reflexivity and “*amount*” of reflexivity (which is held to be now more necessary than in the past), as observed by Atkinson (2014a, pp. 123-124). This tension cannot be resolved without addressing the question of constrained or impaired agency, beyond that which is considered “fractured”.

In Angela's narrative we can see how contingent life events can enable a partial transmutation of a negative emotional habitus and therefore a greater sense of agentic possibility. This can again be seen when Angela spoke of how coping with the illnesses of both herself and her husband made her stronger, since facing and surviving difficult experiences can lead to an enhanced sense of confidence in the future, which can make the prospect of further difficult experiences easier to confront (Carver, 1998, pp. 251-252, citing Affleck, Tennen, and Rowe, 1991 and McMillen et al., 1995). These are again examples of the development and maintenance of habituated 'mental states' and of an emotional habitus that is entangled with a sense of agency in the world.

Angela also returned to education to study part-time, passing GCSE exams in her thirties after having been effectively 'written off' at school. She felt that her confidence had increased as she had got older, which enabled her to return to studying; she enjoyed learning this time around and also gained the symbolic recognition that can be found in educational success. One of her teachers also invited her to assist him as a volunteer in another class, which led to her supporting adults with learning disabilities once a week for a period of time.

More recently she has met friends through the U3A and other classes, which has given her opportunities for affective recognition from new people in her life,

Angela: I've met some good friends since then, as well; I've got lots of good friends from U3A – they're brilliant – and the class I've been going to for the writers' class, in [name of town]. And yeah, so I mean, I think I could say I was quite contented, actually! [Laughs].

Ellie: Good! That's really good.

Angela: For the first time; and I can hold my own to a certain step, with an argument."⁴²

Again, this illustrates the overlap with Archer's suggestion that 'relational goods' can be 'healing' for "fractured reflexives", but here they are understood as a form of recognition with positive effects on her sense of self, enhancing an already functioning agency through an improved 'relation-to self' (Honneth, 1995a). As noted, this has all contributed to a more

⁴² "since then" here refers to the death of Angela's husband.

positive emotional habitus, with Angela making a direct link between this increased confidence and the ability to take agentic action,

“I think I... now, I go with it, I think ‘That’s what I’m going to do’ and I feel, *because* I’ve got the confidence now, I think ‘No, that’s...’ whereas before I’d think ‘Oh, I don’t know if I can do that’ but now, I feel as though... but I’ve got... you know, I *do* it.”

Therefore, we can see also how, like all forms of habitus, an emotional habitus can be both enduring and malleable. Elements of Angela’s lifelong under-confidence can be seen in her description of how she “still feel[s] a bit inferior to other people sometimes”. It can also be seen in a latent expectation of having her behaviour corrected by others. At one point she refers to the fact that her husband is no longer around to “argue with” (although from her repeated references to struggling to stand up for herself in arguments, it may be safe to assume that the “arguing” was not necessarily a two-way affair), but, she said, her two daughters would “put me right if I was doing something wrong, I suppose”.

A negative emotional habitus has constrained Angela’s ability to assert herself agentially in the world, since, as Barbalet notes, “emotion is directly implicated in the actors’ transformation of their circumstances, as well as the circumstances’ transformation of the actors’ disposition to act” (2004, p. 27), and confidence is both a prerequisite of action and a “positive encouragement” towards it, in contrast with the low moods such as anxiety and dejection which inhibit it (pp. 85-86),

“When I’m talking about all this, now, I am quite proud of myself that I’ve got through it; when I always thought I was hopeless at lots of things, and you know, my daughter tells me off now: ‘Stop *saying* you can’t do it, or you’re not good at it!’ she said ‘You *are* good at it! Don’t *feel* that way!’ But it’s... that has held me back a lot, I think; I always thought I’ve not been good enough; or I’ve *gone* for something, and it hasn’t worked out, I think ‘Well there you are, see’.”

Conclusion

In presenting excerpts from Angela's narrative, I have explored the effects of structural and affective misrecognition in creating a negative emotional habitus and constraining reflexive or agentic possibilities over the life course. While Joanie experienced misrecognition in her natal family and in the workplace over a number of years, but had a loving marriage, Angela had a difficult experience of school, struggles in the workplace, and issues within her marriage and in family relations as an adult. I have also touched on events that enhanced Angela's sense of her own agentic capacity; these include the enabling possibilities of experiences of "contextual discontinuity", the development of new skills, the accrual of symbolic value and recognition, and the "self-perpetuating" effects of taking positive agentic action that can itself become habitual (Carver, 1998, p. 245) and that can help to shape our "mental states", from which agentic action emerges (Elder-Vass, 2007a, 2010). I have illustrated the ways in which an emotional habitus can be both durable and responsive to contingent events, speaking to the durability of Crossely's emotional habitus (1996, 1998) and to the contextually contingent adaptiveness that is suggested by Burkitt (2014, 2016).

Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter I have illustrated the significance of interpersonal relationships, and of an emotional habitus that can endure over the course of a life, and which has here been shown to emerge as a direct consequence of misrecognition across different fields, both in terms of classed hierarchies and interpersonal relationships. We have seen how, for both Joanie and Angela, their past and socially situated 'Me' and the 'myself' that stores first-order emotion, appeared to become suffused with a negative sense of self which shaped their subsequent interactions but was not deterministic. I have also illustrated the overlap that exists between Archer's relational goods and harms and Honneth's affective misrecognition, which is argued by him to be a key element in our 'relation-to-self' (1995a). This very much speaks to Murphy's argument that a structural understanding of the habitus must be supplemented by the role of specifically interpersonal relations with the people around us, and their recognition, in shaping who we are and can become (2014).

I have also, again, referenced Honneth's work on physical abuse as a form of withheld recognition, and one that can compound experiences of social injustice. I have noted a link to the importance placed by Elder-Vass on 'mental states' in his work on a 'reconciliation'

between reflexivity and habitus (2007a, 2010), representing tracts of stasis as external experiences become embedded in our neural networks, and have suggested a clear link between this and the 'emotional habitus' under discussion.

I have also discussed the way in which these 'mental states' and a person's sense of their own agentic capacity can be refashioned in other ways, such as by facing difficult or changing circumstances, representing the 'discontinuities' of Archer. In this way, Archer's work on the potentially enabling experience of discontinuity, in strengthening the internal voice, has been discussed and integrated into an understanding of the relationship between emotional habitus and agency.

This relationship has been underlined by reference to the 'self-perpetuating' nature of our orientations towards the world, as discussed in Carver's work on resilience. This work correlates with arguments around both the endurance of, and changes within, the emotional habitus, since "both mastery and failure can have a self-perpetuating and even self-intensifying character." (1998, p. 260). Yet even here the importance of affective recognition from others to whom we are close, as a resource and a positive foundation, is highlighted, since,

"perception of support and acceptance from significant others (as an external resource) can be seen as providing a person with a solid base of security from which to move and to which to return" (1998, p. 261).

These are all themes that will be returned to in the final empirical chapter, to which we now turn, as I look at positive experiences of internalised enablements, reflexivity and social mobility, in the narratives of four further participants.

8. Social Mobility and Reflexivity: internalised enablements to an upwards trajectory

a) Introduction

This chapter explores the lives of four participants who have been socially mobile, three of whom I met through the U3A and one recruited through leaflets left in a social club. It is a corollary to Archer's empirical work in *Making Our Way Through the World: Human Reflexivity and Social Mobility* (2007), in which processes of mobility and immobility and the reflexive concerns of participants of a range of ages and backgrounds is explored. In Archer's study social mobility and immobility is framed through the lens of the choices made by the reflexive actor, emphasising the externality of constraints and enablements to the pursuit of their 'modus vivendi' or 'life project'.

In this chapter I look at the roles of affective and symbolic recognition and generational habitus, as enablements to social mobility and to reflexive action, and as existing alongside, and within, Archer's reflexive modes. Therefore, I will also explore the elements of these trajectories that coincide with the description of 'meta-reflexive' or 'autonomous reflexive' modes. This dual approach sits in contradistinction with the framing of mobility as only, or primarily, the reflexive act of an individual and helps us to understand processes of social mobility that were largely missing from Bourdieu's work. It also allows us to delve further into the relationship between recognition and generational habitus on the one hand, and the fostering of reflexive concerns and the amplification of the internal voice on the other. Through these stories we will see the ongoing relationship between habitat and habitus as they are shaped and reshaped over the course of a life.

b) Violet: the field of the family, 'aspiration', mobility, and reflexivity

Violet is an 86-year-old retired teacher and member of the U3A. She was the first person to respond to an advert that I put in the newsletter of the local group and we arranged to meet for an interview in her comfortable home in a village just outside of the city. She still lives in the house in which she raised her children and has lived there alone since her late husband moved into a nursing home to be cared for after developing dementia.

What struck me most when I interviewed Violet was her resilience and positive outlook. She told me of the activities she was involved in, including keeping up to date with new technology by learning how to use her iPad with one of the U3A groups and volunteering at a nursing home where she helped dementia sufferers to access their memories through music from their youth. In her activities, and apparent continued good health, she appeared to typify the previously discussed paradigm of 'successful ageing' into her mid-80s.

In the case study that follows I explore the extent to which Violet's social mobility and reflexive engagement with the world were partly shaped by the 'doxa' of her natal family field, which, as previously discussed, is imparted through affective recognition. I will also look at the ways in which the "'horizons' of perception" and "horizons of experiences" that formed her habitus (Atkinson, 2016, pp. 13 and 34) were extended and shaped by the mutual recognition between herself and her husband and the positive bond that they shared. I will touch on the way that her narrative speaks to Archer's portrait of the 'meta-reflexive' (2012, 2007) and finish by looking at her lifeworld and habitus in the third age.

i. Family doxa and the intergenerational transmission of 'embodied' cultural capital and aspiration through affective recognition

As described in Chapter Two, affective recognition is key to Bourdieusian reproduction within the family, as a sphere in which children typically seek recognition from their parents (Atkinson, 2014b, 2016, Bourdieu, 2000). Therefore, this section speaks to two main elements of Bourdieu's analysis; the transmission of cultural capital within the family, which is then "sanction[ed]" by the educational system (1986, p. 244), and the significance of the doxic or "taken for granted" perceptions that underpins the habitus (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 18, 1977, 1990); both of these help to shape future possibilities, aspirations and concerns.

Violet grew up in London during the second world war, in an "impoverished" Jewish family who were unable to attend the local synagogue as they could not afford the fees. This distanced them from their richer and more observant neighbours and economic inequality and religion seemed to overlap in her memories, made visible in the bodily practices of the women who would walk past their house on the Sabbath,

Ellie: Did you have a sense of yourselves as being part of any particular social class, when you grew up... when you... as you grew up?

Violet: No, my... I think we were just... well we *knew* that there were... what we called... the very religious ones – we had some *lovely* neighbours, but they were *very*, very religious. And they were so religious, that on the... on the Sabbath, they would walk past our house, and the ladies would have their hands held like that – no bag – you don't carry *anything* on the Sabbath – and we used to hide behind the curtains, and watch till they went by, before *we'd* go out, because when *we* went out, we had a bag because *we* were going to put books from the library in them! [Laughs]

Ellie: Yes!

Violet: We used to borrow five books at a time, so we always used to say, 'Watch out' you know, 'They're coming!'

Ellie: Yeah, wait for them to go, first.

Violet: But it was all in good fun, you know. But... no, the... the neighbourhood was very friendly. But... I think there *must* have been people at various stages of struggle, but nobody as badly off... I noticed that *our* house was always looking shabby, and that was because we never had it decorated, whereas people were going in for new developments, you know, and things.

As can be seen to the reference to their 'shabby' house, Violet's experience of this economic disparity seems to have been parsed through the materiality of housing and geography, the everyday ways by which difference is *felt*. The reference to borrowing many library books signifies Bourdieu's distinction between cultural capital and economic capital; he describes how 'class habitus' and 'intragenerational mobility' (mobility across the life course) is connected to both the total amount of capital and the distribution between different forms (1984, p. 437-438).

Like the families who were described by Jackson and Marsden as the 'sunken middle-class', and whose children made up over a third off the minority of 'working -class' pupils in their sample who successfully completed grammar school (1966), the previous generation of Violet's family had been well-off business owners before her parents fell on harder times. The ways in which her mother still identified with her previous class position within the overtly stratified world of Violet's childhood during the 1930s and 40s is illustrated by her refusal to work as a cook when she and the children were evacuated to the countryside during the blitz. She declared to local people that she should not be expected to work in such a job since "my father owned a cinema", before un-evacuating the family back to London in outrage.

For Violet, the regular trips to the library were complemented by the absorption of cultural capital at home, and she had fond memories of this that involved the whole family,

Violet: the *good* things about my childhood were that both my parents *loved* reading, and they told us stories, and my mother would quote poetry to us. If we complained, she'd say, 'Sharper than a serpent's tooth!' you know [laughs]...And my father, he was *wonderful* at telling us stories, until we *begged* him, 'Take us to the library! Let us read the book!' So, we all used to go out on a weekend, and get books. So, we grew up; I would say it was a *happy* – if impoverished – childhood.

Ellie: Yeah, yeah.

Violet: So... what can I say? It was... we were... we were all aware of the need of education – for education – but not everybody was able to get it, then. It was a struggle.

The transmission of 'aspiration' within the family, despite their economic hardship, was seen as part of an embodied experience of Jewish life, indicating a process of habitus formation that speaks directly to Walkerdine's description of the ways in which the intergenerational transmission of classed behaviour is itself "embodied" within family and community (2015, p. 167),

Violet: First of all, we are of Jewish background – the family – and, as you know – you've probably heard about this – that the Jewish population, generally, was aspirational.

Ellie: Right, ok.

Violet: They all believed in education – that was a *must*. Now, my parents were very, very hard up – they were *very* poor.

This relationship between cultural capital, economic disadvantage, a close religious community, 'aspiration', and orientation towards education, is echoed in the work of Baker and Brown on the social mobility of Welsh people aged between 49 and 72 (2008). Their participants had grown up with both economic hardship and cultural capital in rural north Wales and had strong ties to the non-conformist chapel community. Although they were the

first in their family to go to university, they felt that their cultural experiences and the expectations of their families and their community oriented them towards higher education as a natural progression and a part of their habitus. Baker and Brown describe the specific relationship between cultural capital, community and future expectations (including among those who had not much formal education themselves) as “more than ‘aspiration’”, and as an “embedded and remembered” orientation towards education; they “tentatively” suggested the idea of an “aspirational habitus” (p. 58). Recalling Walkerdine’s (2011, 2015) critique of discourses of ‘aspiration’ as signalling another form of ‘lack’ to be found in working-class households, as discussed in Chapter Five, ‘aspiration’ can here be understood as an embodied being in the world and a belief in one’s own capacity to engage positively with the educational system.

ii. Extending ‘horizons of perception’ and a reflexive engagement with the world

Violet’s schooling had been badly interrupted by her mothers’ chronic illness, which had caused her to be sent away to convalescent homes to be looked after while her mother recovered. Therefore, at the age of eleven Violet was lagging behind academically and was not ready to sit a scholarship exam for the grammar school and there was some ambiguity about whether she would continue with her education past the age at which she could leave school. However, her brother, who was already a student at Oxford University, wrote to their mother urging her not to allow Violet to “leave school and be a machinist” and to instead pursue a fuller education. Through this he confirmed and extended the familial orientation towards aspiration and the accrual of cultural capital, illustrating the way in which schemes of perception can filter back through the extension of family members into different fields as part of an ongoing shaping and reshaping of the family doxa (Atkinson, 2016, p. 76). Violet’s mother intervened in the school’s decision (“she went to the head teacher and explained her position”) and Violet was allowed to continue to the grammar school and later trained as a teacher. In this intervention her mother, despite the family’s current strained circumstances, modelled the kind of behaviour found in Reay’s “assertive” middle-class parents, who felt confident in engaging with the school system and making demands on it on behalf of their children (2017).

Violet seemed to also inherit a dispositional openness to possibility from her family, a willingness to engage with and to embrace the world. She describes how, despite living close to economic necessity, she learned to ‘live life to the full’ when she was growing up. But it is her husband she credited with extending her imagination, helping her to understand

the plight of those for whom mobility was not an option and who were indefinitely constrained by social structure; whom she referred to as the people “left behind”,

Violet: Well, I’m... I’ll tell you what... my background was *so* different, really, because I didn’t – although we had all this *wonderful* stimulus, and I *did* know about... you know... ‘living life to the full’ – but I was made aware of a much *wider* world – meeting my husband, because he talked to me... the first book we discussed was the book about the... the Dust Bowl – *Grapes of Wrath* – and how it *moved* him, and I wanted to read it immediately, you know?

Ellie: Yeah.

Violet: And that set me off. But what I learnt from him was the deprivation and the poverty of people who are often left... you know... they’re left behind. And... it was something we both felt very strongly about. So, I read a lot more, and we... we had a conversation – I always say this – we had a conversation which started, and *never ended*. The only time it ended was when he got Alzheimer’s. And even *then* – even when he’d lost the words, and couldn’t speak – and I would go over to him and whisper, maybe a Yiddish word – which is a ‘mixture’, you know...

Ellie: Yeah

Violet: ...he would smile – he’d remember. But all I remember about my husband was, he opened up life in such a way that I was aware that ‘this is only one *aspect*’ you know, and that there’s a number of other things in the world, to consider!
[Laughs]

This shared and ongoing conversation positions Violet’s husband as her ‘interlocutor’, with whom she shared her innermost thoughts. This is a role that Archer sees as particularly relevant to ‘communicative reflexives’ (2007, 2012), for example in the relationship between ‘Joan’ and her husband in *Making Our Way Through the World* (2007, see pp. 104-113 in particular). Archer linked Joan’s relationship with her husband directly to the maintenance of contextual continuity, despite his also allowing her an avenue for greater agency and freedom away from her oppressive home-life, signifying a false binary between relationships that represent elements of continuity and those that offer development or change.

Violet’s marriage sits in sharp contrast with the description of Angela’s relationship with her husband in the last chapter, which, rather than expanding her engagement with the world,

seemed to diminish her confidence and her sense of control in key ways. Violet's husband, through mutual affective recognition, helped to extend her 'horizons of perception' and she developed a deep concern with economic inequality and poverty, the seeds of which seemed to have been planted in a childhood awareness of educational inequality. These concerns were expressed in the nature of her work, and her training as a teacher led to work with "very, very deprived children", to take an academic diploma in Education and Child Development, and work in a clinic for children with emotional difficulties. She also told me of how she had worked hard to raise money for a playbus that offered facilities to children who were not being given stimulation at home; a project which she described as her "big obsession".

Similarly, she encouraged her husband, who worked for the Civil Service, to apply for a promotion when he felt that he would not get one since he had not accrued enough symbolic capital in specific ways; "he said 'I *don't* think they'll promote me, because I *haven't* been to Public School, and I *haven't* been to Oxbridge". Her affective recognition helped him to overcome his reluctance and he was successful. He was working in the institution when it was opening up somewhat to people of different backgrounds, although it still remains deeply elitist and oriented towards "a privileged few" (see Sutton Trust, 2019, specifically p. 2). Thus, together they enjoyed economic and social mobility,

"I said, 'But you're *bright!* and so... then, we met somebody whose son had just taken what they called an 'open exam': ...and *he* had no particular background. So, I said 'Well if *that* man could do it, *you* should!' So, he enquired, and at that time the Civil Service did open up a way in, for people who were *not* Oxbridge background. So, he took a course and he *loved* it."

Archer allows for the increase in self-confidence that can be created by a positive relationship in precisely this way (2012, p. 135), but she does not parse it through the role of recognition, nor theorise this as an increased agentic capacity or as part of an emotional habitus that can be shaped, and reshaped, in response to mutual recognition.

A concern with social inequality, as part of Violet's habituated perception of the world, continues to the present day. As noted in Chapter Six, she spoke of her worry that the homogeneity of U3A groups (in terms of both class and race) may make it inaccessible or unwelcoming to different sections of the community. This outlook indicates an evaluative and critical approach to the social order, which is described as a key element of Archer's 'meta-

reflexive' mode; this group is described as "critics of market and state" who "problematize" the social order rather than internalizing it (2012, pp. 206-207). This is seen to emerge from their "relational experiences" in their natal families, but through reflexive distancing rather than a shared outlook. Contextual incongruity is said to be created by parents who transmit "mixed messages" to their children while also offering stability, and by children who distance themselves from their parents' way of life early, actively seeking something different (pp. 208-209).

Violet did not speak directly of her parents' relationship but her reflections on family life suggested a joint love of literature and learning, although there may also have been ideological tensions that Violet did not refer to. Moments of Violet's childhood suggest there may have been exposure to a different form of 'contextual incongruity' such as in the differences between their richer neighbours and their own "shabby house" and the time that she spent away from her family in convalescent homes when her mother was ill (an experience that may have helped to engender a certain critical detachment by removing her from the family home and depriving her of her usual interlocutors). However, Violet's concern with inequality and deprivation is directly linked (by her) to shared values and perspectives on the world and to a collective imagination that was shared with her 'similars and familiars'. This leads us to consider Sayer's suggestion of "communicative meta-reflexives" as an alternative category of reflexive mode (2009a, p. 6), which would also potentially allow space for the doxic influence of the family. Ultimately, it is clear that this approach became dispositional and habituated in Violet's ways of seeing and ways of being, and continued into her retirement, to which I will now turn.

iii. Violet's third age lifeworld and disposition

(i) *Social and political outlook*

Violet has maintained the critical and evaluative outlook on the social world that is associated with meta-reflexivity; she is, as noted, very concerned with inequality and different forms of marginalisation and social exclusion. This speaks to how her social identity has been partly shaped by her concerns in the world (as described by Archer) but it can also be linked to dispositions within a wider social context; her socio-political outlook can be contrasted with that of John in Chapter Seven, with a habitus that correlates with Fenton's 'liberal cosmopolitan' (2012). As also noted, this was found, in Fenton's study, to be aligned with a higher social status, a middle-class lifestyle, a professional career, higher levels of

education, a more positive view of the participant's position in society, and a sense of control over one's own life. These attributes directly correlate with Violet's (inherently classed) experiences over the course of her adult life and into retirement, helping to shape her third age disposition and sense of herself ('Me') in the social space of the third age.

(ii) *An increase in confidence*

In Chapter Eight we looked at the shaping and effects of Joanie and Angela's emotional habitus over time; they saw their lives as characterized in many respects by an overarching sense of low self-esteem or confidence. Like Angela, Violet feels that she has gained more confidence and a greater sense of "self-efficacy"; a description of agency that relates to confidence in one's own performance and the expectation of success in taking action (Bandura, 1992, cited in Hitlin and Johnson, 2015, p. 2). However, unlike Angela, she did not seem to have struggled with feelings of inferiority or with circumstances that inhibited her agency in the same way. Violet has received positive 'relational goods' from her family and in her long marriage, and symbolic value and personal satisfaction in her work. She nevertheless feels that maturity has brought with it an increased sense of autonomy, and, like Angela, she made a direct link between confidence and her agentic capacity, directly connecting independent and autonomous decision-making (the very foundations of Archer's 'autonomous reflexive') to a positive emotional habitus,

Ellie: So, how would you... if you had sort of... because I'm interested in how people sort of see their own identity...

Violet: Yes...

Ellie: ...which I think is quite a sort of 'fuzzy' idea, anyway; how would you sort of describe yourself, if you wanted to... think... talk about the things that were most important to your sense of identity?

Violet: The most important thing is, I think – I *like* to feel – that I'm a person who is autonomous; able to make decisions, and judge right and wrong, and I've got *far* more confidence in maturity than I *ever* had as a youngster.

Ellie: Yeah, you said that earlier, yeah.

Violet: I *really* feel that, *very* much. And I also... I think you've got to have a love of communicating with people and talking to people. If you don't have those assets, you do *lose* a lot.

Again, this points to the ways in which the emotional habitus can be somewhat shifting and contingent over the life course and in relation to life course processes, or stages (please see Elder, 1998 on development and the life course, and Slater, 2003 on development over "stages" of the life-cycle). Violet specifically spoke of her "love of communicating with people", indicating repeated experiences of positive interpersonal interactions, which must include the conversation she had with her husband that "never ended" and which brought her so much joy. It also speaks to the suggestion by Macmullin and Cairney, in work on the intersections of age, class, gender and self-esteem, that women with higher SES may experience a growing sense of confidence in ageing that eluded others. This suggestion was based on informal conversations with women from a range of backgrounds, in which women with lower SES tended to see ageing as a threat to their youthful looks and "socially constructed norms of beauty and youth", while women with higher SES tended to have developed higher self-esteem and confidence later in life, feeling, in many ways, "empowered with increasing age" (2004, p. 81). Although the quantitative results of their survey showed an overall downward trajectory for self-esteem in relation to age across the spectrum of gender and class, a significant positive relationship was found between education and self-esteem; it was suggested that further (qualitative) research, including life-history work, should be carried out to look more deeply at questions of self-esteem over the life course.

Violet's explanation of her own development over time, from childhood onwards, very clearly illustrates Mouzelis argument of the importance of 'interactions', with 'institutional structures' and 'figurational structures' bridging the gap between 'Dispositions' on the one hand and 'Practices' on the other, in his extension of Bourdieu's SDP schema (2008). The ways in which these practices, and their effects, have themselves become dispositional supports my proposal for a further addition to this schema, of a disposition in the third age as (partly) a result of these processes over the life course.

iv. Conclusion

In this case study I have illustrated the role of family socialization, described as a struggle for affective recognition in the field of the family (Atkinson, 2014b, 2016), and the intergenerational transmission of embodied cultural capital, which is also a form of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1984) through this. This includes the ways in which an investment in, or a positive relationship with, education can itself become part of an individual's habitus, shaping reflexive choices. This sits in contradistinction with Archer's description of 'similar and familiars' as (if anything) inhibiting mobility, as described in Chapter Two. Here we see that the imagination of a 'better' possible future can be collective, interdependent, and shaped by those around us, rather than an atomised or independent endeavour.

In the last work in the reflexivity trilogy Archer describes the ways that "a couple can extend one another's horizons and create new opportunities for themselves and their family by exploiting the synergy between their respective concerns and career projects" (2012 p. 242), however, this is not properly synthesized into the formulation of reflexive modes and the relation between these and social mobility. In a later work she focuses specifically on the 'We', which can help to extend the perspective of the future 'You' through generating "relational goods" (Donati and Archer, 2015). A focus on relationality in this way is significant; however, this "We" is positioned as overly external to a person's fundamental sense of self; it is seen as helping to shape an identity, but also "to derive from subjects' reflexive orientations towards the emergent relational 'goods' and 'evils' they themselves generate" (2015, abstract). These relations are not integrated into a concept of the affinities of a (structured) habitus that bring people together, nor into an understanding of the fundamental relationship between processes of recognition and agential capacity, which is here understood as "a socially mediated capacity to act" (Ahearn, 2013).

I have also returned to the idea of the emotional habitus as subject to some mutation over the life course, and the importance of understanding the political and social elements of a disposition in the third age that is connected to life course events, including interactions over time, possession of different forms of capital, and a sense of agentic control. The next section will turn to the emotional habitus, affective recognition, and deliberative social mobility in the narrative of Sarah.

c) Sarah: a positive emotional habitus and a ‘rebellious self-seeing-self’

Now we turn to Sarah, a 67-year-old retired social services manager and member of the U3A who has experienced significant social mobility in her life, to explore how a positive and confident emotional habitus, supported by the affective recognition of parents, can enable a person to reflexively refashion key elements of their lifeworld and lead to a distinct disposition and habitus in the third age.

I will look at ways in which Sarah’s concerns and trajectory coincide with Archer’s meta-reflexive mode, but also the importance of the affective recognition that she received in the field of the family, and which facilitated her overt resistance to external constraints. This will be followed by a look at Sarah’s life in retirement, which has been shaped by her life course experiences in important ways. In contrast with the narrative of Violet, where recognition contained within it the seeds of capital transmission and social mobility, affective recognition is shown to be simply a resource in itself, a source of affective capital and a “positive relation-to-self” (Honneth, 1995a), rather than also the bearer of a family doxa. This analysis of Sarah’s story illustrates the obverse of the narratives of Joanie and Angela, as for her, ‘relational goods’ will be shown to have a positive effect on her agency and social identity.

i. Ambition, resistance, and parental support

In this section I will look at how Sarah’s mobility was facilitated by her own reflexive desires and actions but also by a positive emotional habitus and the affective recognition of her parents.

Sarah is the daughter of a crane driver at the local steel works who became a ‘fitters-mate’ due to developing vertigo, and a mother who worked as a shop assistant. She decided at the age of fourteen that she had an ambition to become a social worker, an idea which she attributed to having seen a fictional social worker in a medical drama on the television and to the family needing support due to parental illness. Like the meta-reflexives in Archer’s student sample, she developed a “critical detachment” from the lives of her parents and found her “vocation” while still at school (Archer, 2012, p.102). She independently sought reading material on her chosen career in order to pursue her ‘modus vivendi’,

Sarah: But... it was... a decision at that time, that 'That looks interesting; I'd like to do that'.

Ellie: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Sarah: Then it was... you... I don't know if you still can... used to get these books when I was about sort of 14, 15; that sort of... oh, 'Jenny becomes a Speech Therapist' or... so I actually found one by an author, so I read up on that.

Having formulated a project, Sarah met with resistance in the school system; subjugating discourses of class were projected onto her. The school careers officer, the person whose role it was to guide her plans for the future, tried to constrain her ambitions. This was a form of misrecognition that was explicitly related to social class,

"I was told by a careers officer that, because I was at the secondary modern school, and lived in a council house, there was no way I could be a social worker."

This active attempt to diminish her confidence and to limit the scope of her future 'You' illustrates how stigmatising discourses around class, place and symbolic value were deeply embedded in the habitus of a person who had power over her, in an educational system that "separates the holders of inherited cultural capital from those who lack it" and that "tends to maintain preexisting social difference" (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 20). It also speaks to Walkerdine's findings on the differences between working-class and middle-class girls in terms of the support that are given by schools, with differential expectations of their academic success (2011).

However, Sarah was not deterred but instead responded with anger and determination. This is again expressive of Flam's "rebellious self-seeing-self", who, rather than experiencing oppressive discourses around class, gender, sexuality and ethnicity as destabilising to the 'feeling 'I'', is able to develop a secure and self-directed internal monologue, creating the necessary context for action. The 'I' of Sarah's internal conversation made itself heard and she recounted her thoughts by quoting her own inner voice, "So that definitely made me think 'I'm going to be a social worker!'".

This self-propelling anger seemed to stay with her; and upon qualifying as a social worker she expressed her vindication,

Sarah: Being told that I couldn't be one; that really put my back up. Actually, when I qualified I drove round past the Careers Office in town, going [gesticulates]

Ellie: [Laughs heartily]

Sarah: Not that I'm bitter, you understand! [Laughs]

Ellie: It needs to be done! [Laughs]

Sarah: Up yours!!

This was a celebration of the successful assertion of her Personal Emergent Properties (PEP) in response to external Structural Emergent Properties (SEP) and Cultural Emergent Properties (CEP) that she had "confronted" in the successful pursuance of her "project" (Archer, 2007).

Her pursuit of her dream, despite setbacks such as resistance in school and not initially getting the grades that she needed, points to a resilience and determination to pursue her own path. Her joy in driving past the office where she had been told that she could not do this expresses "[t]he symbolic transgression of a social frontier", which "has a liberatory effect in its own right because it enacts the unthinkable" as described by Bourdieu (2000, p. 236), yet for this to make sense we must allow for the forces of structure and agency to be, at least temporarily, in opposition due the actions of an individual.

However, the recognition offered by her parents played an important role; Sarah appears to have been 'shielded' from the negative effects of classed discourses by those close to her, a protective mechanism which was previously discussed, and which, Flam argues can strengthen the inner 'I', mitigating its absorption of negative and oppressive discourses (2009, pp. 191-2, see also Burkitt 2014, pp. 117-118).

Her parents were surprised by her decision to pursue a career that was so different to their own familiar lifeworlds, but they supported it and legitimized her ability to imagine a different future, giving her affective resources with which to challenge her constraints,

Sarah: My parents were actually very supportive of it because they thought 'If that's what you want to do, go for it; we'll support you all the way.

.....

Ellie: And do you think you... were your parents quite surprised when you said you wanted to be a social worker at such a young age?

Sarah: I don't think they really took it in; and it was only as... I think they got annoyed as well, when I was told I couldn't be a social worker. So they thought 'If she wants to do it – she'll do it!' [Laughs]

The direct parental support was voiced after she had formulated a 'project' and was therefore already orienting herself towards a different future, but it suggests ongoing affective recognition that correlates with her strong internal 'I'. She also "talked to", and may have received encouragement from, social workers whom she met while working in hospital administration after failing her 'A' levels.

As noted, Sarah was inspired to become a social worker by the representation that she saw on television, a common means by which women who have been socially mobile were able to envisage a different future (Walkerdine 2011, p. 258). This speaks to Atkinson's description of the "meetings of schemes of perception" that occur via the "media field" (2016, p. 42) as a variety of images enter the lifeworld, but this does not fully explain why Sarah was attracted to the idea of being a social worker in the first place.

As also noted, Archer describes the way in which meta-reflexives in her student sample enjoyed stability in their early home life but had developed a detachment from it at a young age due to "contextual incongruity", having received 'mixed messages' in the home (2012, pp. 100-102 and 210). Although Sarah did not discuss her early home life at any length, it is possible that certain disruptive occurrences may have created conditions of incongruity and a more questioning mind, namely her mother being very ill when she was young and the family requiring a lot of support. Or, as Atkinson (2016) may argue, this experience introduced the young Sarah to the importance of social care and the difficulties that are faced by many families, as her lifeworld intersected with a particular field at a crucial time, producing effects which then became sedimented into her ways of being, seeing and caring about the world.

However this decision is parsed, it was a reflexive act to imaginatively project herself into the role of a social worker, yet her agentic determination was, as described, heavily supported by her parent's affective recognition, which acted not only as a resource but as a specific recognition of her agentic capacity to fashion a different life for herself, in opposition with the forces that would seek to diminish her. Sarah's reflections suggest a natal context in which a confident emotional habitus was nurtured, and a strong inner voice was encouraged to

thrive. Her parents also gave her some practical support since she spent some time working as a social worker while living with them and had to take calls out of hours, sometimes in the middle of the night. Despite some annoyance her parents tolerated this and a second phone line was installed upstairs to facilitate it.

This again disrupts the framing of 'similar and familiar' as orientated towards stasis, with a delimiting effect on the imaginative possibilities shared by their children if they dream of something outside of direct family experience (2007, p. 272). Despite allowing for the fact that parents can modulate the effects of classed discourses on their children, as noted in Chapter Two (2004, p. 265), Archer's analysis of reflexive journeys and description of her modalities has the unfortunate effect of framing working class families or communities as, if anything, a hindrance to the pursuit of social mobility, which is framed as endeavor which is independent rather than interdependent (2007, 2012).

Archer writes of the way in which meta-reflexives experience stability and security in the family home as a 'relational good' and as their parents' 'relational gift to their children' (2012, pp.209-210). For the communicative reflexives, these relational goods have been described as "internal goods", that is, "love, reliance, caring and trust" which orient them towards family and continuity (pp. 98-100), but these are not seen as significant to the path taken by the meta-reflexives, who wished to pursue a different trajectory; the focus for this group is on their reflexive disengagement. However, these goods can act as forms of affective recognition and can facilitate not only reproduction of family circumstances but also social mobility and the ability to imagine a different future.

This section has illustrated how Sarah's experience coincides with Archer's description of meta-reflexives, and also how a positive and confident emotional habitus enables resistance and mobility. It has looked at the role of affective recognition and ways that 'similar and familiar' in the field of the family can be supportive in the absence of overtly 'aspirational' elements, with affective recognition potentially acting as a ballast against the vicissitudes of the world. Now I turn to the choices made by Sarah in her third age, as part of a lifeworld that has been refashioned over time.

ii. Retirement

(i) Concerns and commitments

Sarah retired at the age of 60, after a career of almost 40 years during which her commitment towards improving society seemed to remain her primary motivation. She left because she was frustrated that paperwork was getting in the way of helping people and felt that she could no longer express her values through her job. The “constant bombardment of legislation” was obstructing the work that she cared about, as teams that were established specifically for direct engagement were getting caught up in administrative tasks. While her commitment to social justice may have initially been realised in her chosen ‘modus vivendi’, she ultimately felt a sense of dissonance between her commitments and profession, as the latter became obstructive to the former, so she chose to retire and now pursues her commitment to social justice in a voluntary capacity.

It is clear that the ability to effect positive change and to help people is very important to Sarah’s sense of self; when asked about her proudest moment in life she spoke of the time that she had stepped in to work with an aggressive young man with whom no-one on her team could engage and helped him to completely turn his life around. As noted, her commitment to her value-concerns, what Archer sees as the core of ‘meta-reflexivity’ continues into her retirement. She now spends a significant time volunteering for social causes, finding in retirement a space in which the long-term inclination of the meta-reflexive can find expression in a third-age investment in generativity. She currently volunteers in an important role for a prisoner welfare organisation and in a foodbank.

Her ‘commitment’ to her ‘concerns’ has been a primary guiding force in the shaping of her life and the creation of her social identity, and her choice of voluntary roles indicate not just her ongoing concern for social justice but a new way of expressing her old work identity. Sarah’s perception of the world, like Violet’s, correlates with Fenton’s ‘liberal cosmopolitan’ and she seems to share her lifeworld or social ‘habitat’ with others of a similar disposition; this is underlined by the shock that the people in her book group felt at the results of the EU referendum because “we don’t know who the hell voted to leave”, as discussed in Chapter Six.

(ii) Social class

This identity is also classed, as we have seen throughout the empirical chapters. Sarah's lifeworld, and thus her habitus in the third age, seems to have been in many ways shaped by her mobility. The status that she acquired during her working life is carried into her volunteering roles, which includes a prominent role in a national charity. This echoes the findings of Jones et al. on the orientation of retired senior managers towards activities that "confirmed their previous social status" (2010, p. 115) She was also, like them, "embracing new choices and new challenges" (p. 115) and has a full calendar of activities that are related to reflexive work on the self (Giddens, 1991). These also require economic and/or cultural capital, for example, yoga, Welsh and Spanish lessons, extensive travel and ski-ing twice a year.

Ski-ing is a sport that Bourdieu specified as being closed to those who had been socially mobile due to requirements of "family tradition and early training, or the obligatory manner (of dress and behaviour), and socializing technique", making it therefore "among the surest indicators of bourgeois pedigree" (1984, p. 217). Sarah's fondness for ski-ing in this context speaks to both the significant mutability of an (embodied) class habitus and the changing nature of significant parts of her lifeworld.

Her activities in the third age can be contextualized in the 'uneven' nature of post-retirement consumption practices and lifestyles in "'high', 'late' or 'second modernity'" (Jones et al, 2008, pp. 114 and 5, see also Formosa, 2007, 2014, Walker and Foster, 2006, Higgs and Formosa, 2015 and the discussion in Chapter Six of this thesis).

Therefore, we can see that Sarah's inclination towards improving people's lives remains into the third age, as both a dispositional approach to the world around her and a reflexive response to her concerns. The classed mobility that she achieved over the course of her life also endures in her reshaped lifeworld, as her life in retirement reflects her work trajectory. This illustrates the way in which a habitus can be reshaped through the accumulative effect of reflexive actions, as well as more general descriptions of the mutual shaping of the lifeworld and habitus over time (Atkinson, 2016).

iii. Conclusion

In reflecting on Sarah's experiences, I have illustrated the relationship between reflexive ambition, affective capital generated within the family field, a confident emotional habitus,

and social mobility. In doing so I have shown how important the recognition of Archer's 'similars and familiars' can be to reflexive action and social mobility, even in instances where they do not have relevant experiences to impart. However, I have also given one of the clearest illustrations yet of the "irreducible" nature of "Personal Emergent Properties" in Sarah's decision to become a social worker and her sense of anger, followed by determination and then vindication, after being told that she could not. I have also shown how her commitment to her concerns guided her reflexive action and formed an important part of her social identity. Finally, I have shown the (classed) reshaping of the lifeworld into retirement, as a new relationship between habitus and habitat has emerged and her position in social space has altered. I will now go on to look at these themes in the narrative of Geoff, a retired financial adviser whom we first met in Chapter Six.

d) Geoff: intergenerational upward mobility and political activism

In this case study I will explore the ways in which the reflexive and agentic actions of Geoff, a 64-year-old retired independent financial adviser, were fostered by a family doxa that promoted economic mobility, the accrual of symbolic value in education and work, a generational habitus that had the capacity to extend agentic possibilities, and by the affective recognition of his peers. I will also look at how some early experiences of the "independence" that Archer associates with the home life of autonomous reflexives (2012, p. 100) may have played a part in promoting a reflexive and self-oriented approach to the world. All of these experiences appear to have contributed to a positive emotional habitus which, as we will see, seems to support and function within a particular form of reflexivity. As with other case studies in the chapter I will complete the section by discussing Geoff's current lifeworld and disposition, with references to his position in the social and symbolic landscape of the third age that was described in Chapter Six.

i. Education and a family doxa

'Self-betterment' was what Geoff called the family doxa of aspirational behaviour in his childhood, which facilitated his own mobility as part of an ongoing process across three generations. Despite explicitly dis-identifying in class terms Geoff also (in response to a direct question) described the forward propulsion of a career trajectory that exceeded that of his parents, who had themselves exceeded their parents. The son of an apprentice

carpenter who had modelled upward mobility in his own life by working his way up to become “a big project manager in the aircraft industry” and a mother who worked in the civil service. Geoff said that he felt there had been clear progression within an objective hierarchy, both intergenerationally and in his own trajectory,

Geoff: Yeah. So... over 3 generations there, there's the pattern of using education to progress in life.

Ellie: Yeah. Yeah.

Geoff: You know, I'd say that I ended up as a professional... you know... which is better than a middle manager.

Geoff described how his upbringing engendered both a sense of independence and an orientation towards 'betterment' education,

Geoff: And we used to walk down through the fields to school. And then we used to go roaming over the moors at the back of the house, with our friends. So it... I was... my upbringing; I was brought up to be, in a sense, quite self-sufficient and independent. And my father worked his way up from being a carpenter – apprentice carpenter – to being a big project manager within the aircraft industry; so he'd sort of been 'upwardly mobile'.

Ellie: Yeah. So how did your... did your parents, when you were younger, did they have sort of idea of what they wanted... or thought you would do in life, or...?

Geoff: Erm... we all learned to play a musical instrument, because my mother was musical; she played the piano. My father had progressed through self-study, and apprenticeship night school – that sort of route – so we were... there's a very... within the family, there was... education was held up as being very important... And also as a way of... doing... I don't know... was the 'way forward'...

Ellie: Yeah, yeah, I understand, yeah.

Geoff: ...would probably have been the sort of phrase used. That's how you 'bettered yourself'. So this was... this was the idea of the upwardly mobile; so grammar schools... you know... it was all Eleven Plus, so you were tested to get into a

grammar school, but it was all academic. So once you got into it, the whole drive was academic, and was towards university. *Or... you know... if you... A, B and C; if you were in the A's – if you were clever – that was your destiny, if you like.*

Geoff seems to see an ethos of 'betterment' and positive experience of education as primary catalysts for his own further mobility. The confidence he gained in grammar school sits in contrast with, for example, the debilitating experience described by Angela in the previous chapter. It was for Geoff a very positive experience; he gained recognition from teachers in accordance with the 'achievement principle', which is a culturally contingent "standard of social hierarchy" (Honneth, 2003, p. 143), accrued cultural capital, and felt that he was set on a direct course to university. This self-enhancing emotional and relational experience helped to shape a confident and agentic 'social self' with a positive foundation of "self-feeling" (Burkitt, 2012), and paved the way for his own personal morphogenesis.

Geoff's family doxa promoted expectations of a positive future but the expectation of self-sufficiency and independence may have also contributed to the 'self-reliance' that Archer sees as the essential attribute of 'autonomous reflexives' (2007, p. 194). This is a mode of reflexivity which Geoff appears to manifest in other ways, as a strategizing forward-planner who was drawn to self-employment. Archer also writes of how an 'absence' of relational goods creates an environment that is conducive to autonomous reflexivity, with parents who are oriented towards their own lives rather than inward to relations with each other and to the family (2012, p. 167). However, his father's absence when he was attending night school signified the familial ethos, of self-betterment put into practice, which correlates with Archer's further observation that this parental self-orientation was 'often but not invariably' a preoccupation with their own careers (2012, p. 167). It appears that, while the child's emerging reflexivity may partly be a result of familial asynchronicity (as Archer argues), what else the parents may be occupied with is also significant. For Geoff at least; his father's concern with his career formed a part of his own socialization towards career goals and appeared to form a crucial part of the family doxa. However, the freedom that he was given, and the expectation that he would exercise his own agency, is relevant also.

He seemed to have had a significant amount of generalized life expectation (GLE) from a young age; an attribute which correlates positively with life course outcomes. It has been found to be higher in children of higher socioeconomic status but to exist across the spectrum (Johnson and Hitlin, 2017); 'future-oriented beliefs' are an important component of this (see also Yowell, 2000, on 'future-orientation' and 'possible selves'). As previously discussed, expectations of the future are crucial to understanding habitus and agentic

capacities, with future oriented belief, including perceptions of one's own life-chances and capacities, a central component of agency through the life course (Hitlin and Johnson 2015, p. 2). Barbalet makes the link between confidence, agency, and engagement with the future very clear, declaring that "It is precisely the time perspective integral to confidence which makes it the affective basis of action and agency" (2004, p. 88). It presents the mirror image of those whose proximity to economic necessity or biographical experiences can create a focus on the present or a lack of trust in the future, as previously discussed (see Bourdieu, 1984, Sayer, 2005a, Skeggs, 2011). There are clear points of overlap between future-orientation and elements of the Archer's 'autonomous' mode, although they are not reducible to one another.

This promotion, within a family, of a reflexive engagement with the world is echoed in the ways in which other participants discussed their own children. 75-year-old James, a retired solicitor and lecturer and a U3A member spoke of how important it had been for him to give his children "choices", as well as of "pushing education",

Ellie: And, when your children were growing up did you have any particular ambition or sort of idea how, where they would go or career wise or?

James: No

Ellie: No

James: No, my concern was always to provide them with as many opportunities and, as many choices really was the thing, I wanted them to have as much choice

Ellie: That's interesting yeah

James: As they call it, and I think that they would probably say to you, well certainly have said to you when they were younger my youngest daughter in particular, that you know I was very, I used to push education very hard and you know want them to do well and get on. Now they're parents themselves I think they're rather more sympathetic to that

Ellie: Yeah they understand where that came from

James: [overlapping] position than they were at the time [laughs]

Ellie: Yeah

James: But yes I wanted them to do well, I wanted them to go to university and have that experience

Ellie: Yeah

James: But also as I say have as many

Ellie: Yeah choices

James: Choices but I mean you know they've made their own choices they've gone their own way although it's quite interesting that two of them went into primary school teaching

This speaks to research on middle-class parent's "enrichment activities", the concerted effort to manage class reproduction in the increasingly uncertain future of late modernity (Vincent and Ball 2007). Vincent and Ball make clear that for some parents this process of "concerted cultivation" is framed as a series of opportunities for the child to find their "natural" talents, but it also involves the development of the choice-making abilities of the children by "fostering autonomy" (p. 1068).

The emphasis that James places on 'choice' and Vincent and Ball place on the cultivation of autonomy are significant and point to attempts to inculcate a 'reflexive habitus' (Sweetman, 2003) within the micro-field of the family. The idea that reflexivity can itself be a habitus is rejected by Archer as "concept-stretching" (2012, pp. 69-70), however, these instances, and indeed the self-sufficient independence coupled with the doxa of self-betterment and the cultural capital that Geoff inherited, suggest that some forms of reflexivity (expressed as a self-oriented, self-propelling and mobile engagement with the world) are both more reflexive and that they function as a disposition. This is a point that will be returned to in the conclusion of this case study and in the following section on Glenn.

This section has again illustrated the importance of family doxa in regard to aspiration and the accrual of cultural capital and has suggested ways in which this, and early experiences of independence, can promote positive reflexive action and intersect with Archer's reflexive modes. It has also shown how enabling and confidence-enriching positive experiences of education can be and has made a direct comparison with the suffering of others such as Angela, for whom school was not a happy place. The next section will discuss Geoff's experiences in university, how this created new sources of recognition for him, the relevance

of a particular generational habitus, and the processes of social change to which he has contributed.

ii. Sexuality, resistance and generation

Geoff was at the forefront of activism for gay rights as a young man in the 1970s, has lived with his partner for 35 years, and has remained active in pushing forward gay rights over the course of his adult life. In this section I will look at how Geoff's sexuality led to reflexive resistance to social structures and how that resistance was itself fostered and enabled by the affective recognition of his peers and a particular generational habitus. We will also return to themes that we looked at in Sarah's case study, of the emotional value of 'shielding' and the importance of the amplified internal voice in resisting structural oppression.

Geoff told of how, as a gay man, he grew up during a time when the oppressive weight of social structure, in terms of punitive laws, was still in place, but when the positive feedback loop of structural elaboration, described by Archer as a fundamental element of morphogenetic change (2012) was coming into effect; homosexuality was decriminalised when he was on the cusp of adulthood. His reflections on this expressed most clearly Flam's "rebellious self-seeing-self" which manages to thrive and flourish despite growing up surrounded by discourses of degradation and shame,

"I grew up gay, but only really came out at university; which was, at the time, shortly after being homosexual had been decriminalised...When I was born, it was... you know... you got thrown into prison. By the time I'd gone to university, it had been decriminalised, but only just; so I was a member of the Gay Liberation Front; campaigned for homosexual equality; would... sort of different sides of things. The Gay Liberation Front was quite anarchistic... 'Out and proud', you know; we were tramping the streets; making a lot of noise; campaigning for homosexual equality was working very much behind the scenes with politicians...to get the changes in law, and... I mean, it's been interesting that through my life, it... the... the way things have changed. So I've lived my life as an openly gay person, and never really encountered any problems; although... you... you learn how to judge things, and people – or circumstances – so I don't go shouting about it, but I let enough information slip, so that people can understand."

Geoff's apparent shame-resistance, like Sarah's refusal to accept that she could not be a social worker, supports Archer's argument that symbolic violence is not always successful and speaks to Elder-Vass' insistence of the gap between social structure and the *effects* of structure (2007a, 2010). However, the fact that so many gay men did and do experience shame and internalised homophobia, even today, indicates the causal efficacy of emotion in transmitting the effects of social structure and therefore shaping dispositions (see Allen and Oleson, 1999, on shame and internalised homophobia and Rowen and Malcolm, 2003, on internalised homophobia and identity).

In his validating experiences with a friendship group at university Geoff found what Archer calls a 'We-ness' that helped him to develop his social identity (Archer, 2015). For Archer, this 'We-ness' can encompass many forms of associations and different kinds of relational goods; what Geoff found specifically were affective recognition and alternative discourses, which seem to have functioned as sources of legitimation for the oppressed internal voice (Flam, 2009). The movement to a new geographical and social space, a new field, seemed to enhance his shame-resistance and facilitated his coming out to his parents, which he did on a visit home,

"Fond memories of the Gay Liberation Front. So this was around the time that legal campaign – to legalise homosexuality – had been successful; but that was just... you know... that was *all*. That was all. So all this thing about 'equality and diversity' – which we talk about *endlessly* nowadays...came out of that sort of activity. So the Gay Liberation Front was about creating a space in which gay people could be themselves; that's what it was about."

Geoff's involvement with the Gay Liberation Front represents another form of Archer's Corporate Agency, which (as discussed in relation to John in Chapter Seven) is a particular form of a 'We' that represents an interest group. This was a group that promoted social morphogenesis over morphostasis, in direct opposition to groups that wished to maintain the status quo, thereby creating new structural and cultural conditions at the completion of the morphogenetic cycle (2012, pp. 53-54).

Geoff's youth coincided with a particular period of structural elaboration, with potential change 'concentrated' in the youthful cohorts who were old enough to take part in social change but not committed to mature responsibilities (Ryder, 1965, p. 848), and it is to the importance of 'generational habitus' that we will now turn.

(i) *Generational habitus and continued resistance*

It is notable that Geoff felt that flourishing in grammar school meant that he was “destined” for university, since his generation was one of the first to benefit from the “well-funded” expansion of higher education in the 1960s, in contrast with the drops in public funding in the 1980s and 1990s (Mayhew et al., 2004, p. 66, see also Perkin, 1972). This was a structural and generationally contingent enablement that had not been open to previous generations, nor open in the same way to subsequent generations, but that helped to shape the expectations and possibilities of his own future as part of the “‘golden age’ of postwar capitalism” (Jones et al, 2008, p. 3). It also led to involvement in important aspects of the generational field that emerged in the “overlapping birth cohorts” of the post-war period, and which shaped their generational habitus (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, pp. 69-71).

Hovering over the morphogenetic cycle described in the previous passage is again the spectre of habitus as a lived and shared experience. When asked about being proud of contributing to social change, Geoff makes clear that shared bodily practices, lifestyles and a shared disposition were primary concerns of himself and his friends at the time. While important, the overarching contribution to ongoing social change was not a primary and conscious motivator in their everyday life. The unconscious or semi-conscious and embodied nature of this politicized self, which helped to shape the possibilities of his future self, is expressed in the phrase “it was just how you *do* things”,

Ellie: Yeah. So you must have seen, like you’re saying, a huge amount of social change in your lifetime, and the way... sort of... visibility, and...

Geoff: Yeah-yeah; absolutely.

Ellie: Yeah.

Geoff: Yeah.

Ellie: Does that make you feel quite proud, that you were part of the... sort of... early life, of that?

Geoff: Oh yeah, definitely! Yeah. Yeah. I mean we didn’t think about it in those terms, you know; [it was] like being a hippy, but we didn’t think of ourselves as hippies; we just got on with it.

Ellie: Yeah, other people called you hippies! [Laughs]

Geoff: Absolutely, yeah.

Ellie: Yeah.

Geoff: The fact that we'd go out in... you know... platform shoes with 6-inch heels, and fur... fur coats, and...

Ellie: That sounds... great fun! [Laughs]

Geoff: Yeah. And... you know... we were just... dope-heads. It was... you know... it was good fun; and we didn't really think about it as being... you know... something; it was just how you *do* things.

This speaks to the “generational divide” that had emerged, in which the norms of the parental generation were rejected (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, p. 75) and to the importance that Bourdieu attaches to ‘lifestyle’ differences (1989, p. 20) and to the ‘affinities of habitus’ which, as previously discussed, underlie social relations. This was a politicized lifestyle that was born in a specific place and time, and in a specific social field that Geoff had gained access to by moving into higher education, as part of the “new “post-1968 generation” that was radicalised to fight for new social and civil rights and was also liberated from pre-existing norms” (Jones et al., 2008, p. 3); from his perspective “it was just what we did, those days”,

Geoff: But it was done quite flamboyantly, and as I said, the political foundation was... was through anarchy. I mean, there was a lot of left-wing politics at the time, you know; I had friends at university who were Maoists; Trotskyites; belonged to... you know... the sort of world that Corbyn still lives in.

Ellie: Yeah, yeah.

Geoff: And we've moved on – most of us; most of us have made a very good living, doing whatever we do, nowadays. But... we've become journalists, or... you know... that sort of stuff. So it was a fun way of doing all that; and I think we did it out of a sense of fun as much as out of a sense of being politically ‘right on’.

Ellie: Yeah, yeah.

Geoff: It's just what we did, those days.

Geoff's role in creating and maintaining "emancipatory counter discourses" that do the work of shielding for others (Flam, 2009, p. 194) continues into his retirement, in his own undertaking of positive generativity. He is currently part of a charitable organisation that supports the production of gay fiction, creating avenues for newcomers in the Arts world. Legal constraints have become less and less relevant during his lifetime, but cultural heteronormativity is still present and effective within an ideational or symbolic power structure that reproduces homophobia. Thus, in his work, Geoff supports the creation of narratives that other gay people can identify with, corresponding with a shielding mechanism, which can be performed by "significant others" who can be real or fictional (Flam, 2009, p. 191).

His continued ease in being the vehicle of structural elaboration is indicated by his willingness to challenge discrimination in the workplace in the early part of his career. This resistance seemed to have become a habituated response to discrimination, suggesting a "rebellious self-seeing-self" that both demands, and expects, recognition, and whose horizons of perception have been reshaped by his prior enabling experiences,

Geoff: when I was in [name of company], they had, at the time, the largest direct insurance sales force in the UK; four or five thousand people; and they used to have a sort of... run competitions and things, so the best sales people would get invited to conferences and things of this sort. And so I qualified as 'Kestrel' one year, for which I was invited up to London for a weekend; staying in a big hotel, big dinner-dance and all the rest of it. And so I'd put P_____ down as my partner.

Ellie: Yeah.

Geoff: And then... I had a secretary at the time; she came to me, and she said 'Oh' she said 'It's really difficult' she said 'It's about P_____'.

Ellie: Oh.

Geoff: She said 'We've had a note, to say that he can't go to this weekend'.

Ellie: Gosh! Yeah.

Geoff: So I said 'Well, you know; they make a big thing about being open and diverse, and all the rest of it; they're a very progressive company; 'How does this come about?' So I talked to my manager, and he did a bit of 'digging', and what came back was that... 'husband and wife' were allowed, ok?

Ellie: Right, yeah.

Geoff: 'Husband and partner' were allowed; so a few husbands and mistresses; well, it was that sort of industry – people were always getting divorced – and a lady could take another lady companion, because a lady couldn't go into a bar by herself...

Ellie: Right, ok [laughs]

Geoff: [Laughs heartily]

Ellie: Ok!

Geoff: So that was the thinking. So there was no provision for a...

Ellie: There was no... you fell outside of the...

Geoff: A male couple, yeah; we fell outside. So we put up a protest, and – good for them – it went up to Board level, and the Board said 'Well, this is discriminatory.'

Ellie: Yeah.

Geoff: 'We can't have this.' So they just scrapped all those restrictions, and so we both went.

Ellie: Oh, that's good!

Geoff: So... but that was one of the very few battles I ever had.

Therefore, we can see the ways in which an orientation towards pride and progress that was fashioned through experiences of generational habitus, mutual affective recognition, and formative childhood experiences that were described in the previous section (all of which seemed to amplify his internal voice), shaped his approach to the relationship between his sexuality and society, and imparted a lasting confidence in his ability to challenge authority and to reshape social structure.

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iii. Emotional habitus and an amplified 'I'

Geoff's pride and self-confidence underpin a broader reflexivity *about* emotions, which is quite distinct to the "emotional reflexivity" by which emotion shapes reflexivity and our perceptions of ourselves and others (Burkitt, 2012). As noted in Chapter Three, Elizabeth

Holmes uses the term to, in part, describe the capacity to be reflexive about emotions, and calls for further work into “how and why some people are better able to feel their way in a rapidly changing world” (2010, p. 148).

Geoff refused to allow himself any regrets and spoke repeatedly about the importance of maintaining a positive outlook in response to life’s contingencies, which he explicitly related to his temporal orientation into the future and away from the past,

Geoff: Yeah, I suppose – more generally – it’s that... you know... I survived...

Ellie: Yeah

Geoff: ...without any great mishaps along the way. I mean, all sorts of things have *happened*, but just having the ability to adapt and be positive about things.

Ellie: Yeah. To keep going, isn’t it. Do you have any – looking back – any regrets?

Geoff: Yeah; I’m sure I’ve got some regrets somewhere, yeah. I don’t know *what*...

Ellie: Ok.

Geoff: Erm... [long pause] yeah. I think... you know... I’m a bit with Edith Piaf on this; ‘Je ne regret rien’ [laughs heartily] Erm... the... there are things I would... you know... if I had my time again, there are things I’d do differently; but then that would create a different life; so by and large, I’m sort of reasonably happy with the decisions that I’ve made and the way they’ve gone. But again, it’s about the ability to adapt to circumstances. And then when you... in a... if you take that sort of *approach* to things.....it’s not *about* having regrets; because regrets take you back to things that you *didn’t* do – or you *did*, but wish you hadn’t done – which is backward-looking. And the problem with that is; it’s... it’s a question of focus, isn’t it, and direction? So which way are you looking; are you looking backwards, or are you looking forwards? Erm... you know... you [laughs wryly] if you stay positive... it’s this... it’s this thing about... yeah. So no, I can’t say that I’ve got any real regrets about things

His refusal to feel regret can be contrasted with Joanie’s inability to point to anything of which she is proud, while his ability to distance himself from his emotions and choose how to respond sits in contrast with how embattled by negative emotion she seems to be. Illouz draws on Bourdieu’s analysis of “upper-class aesthetic formalism” to describe how access to this kind of emotional reflexivity is differentially experienced, since

‘the ability to distance oneself from one’s immediate emotional experience is the prerogative of those who have readily available a range of emotional options, who are not overwhelmed by emotional necessity and intensity, and can therefore approach their own self and emotions with the same detached mode that comes from accumulated emotional competence” (1997, p. 56, see also Reay, 2004a).

Geoff, who felt emotionally secure, with options at his disposal, spoke of how vital it was to negotiate the gap between an external contingency and a subjective response to it, doing this for both himself and for clients who had experienced redundancy. He gave an example of one of his clients who had been made redundant and whom he had encouraged to see the positive side of things, helping him to adapt his response,

Geoff: So he was as happy as Larry. So he turned that *awful* bit of news...

Ellie: Yeah, into a positive.

Geoff: ...into a real positive. And ok, he’s spending too much, but... he knows that... you know... his money will run out. But yeah, so it... I’ve seen lots of situations like that, where it’s that external trigger...

Ellie: Yeah

Geoff: ...and then how you respond to it...

Ellie: Interesting.

Geoff: ...is *absolutely* critical.

Recognizing the gap between the external trigger and the internal response in this way denotes a well-developed internal reflexive process that correlates again with Archer’s description of ‘autonomous’ reflexivity, which is “selective, evaluative and elective about the world in which a subject finds himself” (2007, p. 193) and is expressed in “lone internal conversations” that signify a greater detachment from a person’s environment than is seen in ‘communicative reflexives’ (p. 194). This again suggests that there are not only different types, but different *degrees* of reflexivity, or the mental ability of people “*to consider themselves in relation to their (social) contexts and vice versa*” (2007, p. 4, emphasis in original).

As noted, Geoff’s ‘amplified ‘I’ may well have been partly a product of his independence and freedom in childhood and early experiences of self-orientation, which Archer associates with

the development of 'autonomousness', but it was also created by his family doxa, generational habitus, the recognition of his peers, and positive experiences of the educational system. He undoubtedly possesses cultural and economic capital that can act as a ballast against negative emotions, affording him symbolic value through processes of Bourdieusian misrecognition. A positive emotional habitus can be shaped by repeated positive experiences as economic value is placed upon his individual capacities, which then further enhanced his future expectations. This can be seen in the way that his ongoing trust in the future informed immense success in work,

Geoff: These things come together; it's... you know, it's quite simple really. I've... my business was *built* on this model. You think of something that you want, and then the world comes together...

Ellie: Right.

Geoff: ...to provide it.

This can be contrasted with the fear of a young Barbara that she might "lose everything" if accused of a mistake that she didn't make, due to her own previous lived experiences, or her carefulness in observing the temporal rules of the hospital many years later.

Geoff trusts in the future, partly, we can imagine, for he has reason to trust. He told me of the ease with which he has been able to generate money in his career,

Geoff: It's dead simple. That's why I could generate... that's why, in the business, it was very easy for me to generate money at short notice.

Ellie: Yeah. Yeah.

Geoff: So if I did a... I don't know... like an expensive holiday, I'd think 'Oh God, I've spent so much money on that!' and then...

Ellie: Yeah, yeah.

Geoff: ...a couple of months later, the money to pay for it would have arrived.

This illustrates the way in which the reality of the economic structures in which he was doing business, and the ease with which he was able to make money, helped to sustain his trust in the future. As Trommsdorff describes, future-orientation is both a cause and an effect of 'situational conditions' (1983 p. 385), and Geoff's trust and his self-belief have, over the course of his life, been sustained and self-perpetuating as part of a confident emotional habitus.

iv. Retirement

When I met Geoff he had retired only a few weeks earlier, and was approaching retirement in the same manner as he had approached his career; he had volunteered to be interviewed as a way of 'reviewing' his life as he consciously made the transition into retirement (one which he had been planning for some years). Like Sarah, he had a full roster of activities planned, including cultural activities such as painting and music that he had not had time for when working, and big trips abroad. Again, like Sarah, he had reshaped his own lifeworld in a manner that he has maintained into retirement; he lives far from proximity to economic necessity and enjoys living in a 'gentrified' part of the city, with the positivity and self-esteem that can be engendered by the symbolic, cultural and economic capital, and the good health, that he carries into retirement.

If we return to the theme of personal morphogenesis that was introduced in Chapter Two of the thesis, in recounting a life in which he looked to the future positively and with hope, the substance of Geoff's internal conversation appears to be focused heavily on the possibilities of a future 'You', but it is again, and always, a 'You' that has been shaped by the past and socially situated 'Me', and informed by the 'myself' where first-order emotions are stored, to an extent that is not accounted for by Archer.

He also carried into retirement the mutual affective recognition between himself and his civil partner, which he sees as an important source of motivation in his career,

Ellie: is there anything else that you feel has been sort of important throughout... your... the way you kind of... the way you've... you've lived your life?

Geoff: Yeah; being in a stable relationship has been a very important part of that. Both P_____ and I – and my parents – have very strong, stable relationships. And so we've... we've been together since... 1980...Is that right? That's 35 years, isn't it? That's right. Yeah. So that's a lifetime, really isn't it?...Thirty-five years; it's a long

time. So that's been a *really* – I've probably not talked about it very much – but it's been a very important part of my life; because... all this chopping and changing with jobs and stuff; part of the *reason* – the *motivation* for it – is to... you know... to make *sure* that we... we can continue to enjoy a... our time together, and maintain a good strong relationship; so that's been a... a key motivation thing...I mean early on, particularly when we set up the partnership... well, early on, in fact, when I was in financial services; financially, it was a struggle...But... and you know, there were difficult... difficult *periods*, particularly when we were building the partnership. But... you know... that relationship provides a motivation for... seeing *through* those problems...And... you know... maintaining a positive approach to things.

This description of his parents' marriage correlates with Archer's description of parental stability as an important element in the upbringing of meta-reflexives, which can itself be seen as a subordinate mode for Geoff that is found in his critical approach to elements of the social world and his involvement in activism. It also correlates with her description of reflexive processes of socialization in which a young person selectively chooses which elements of their natal family they want to recreate and which they will reject; in a recognition of relational goods as relational goods (2012, p. 102). This long-term partnership then has the capacity to create further relational goods, that can be consciously and reflexively maintained, and which can lead to further positive action (please see Donati and Archer, 2015 in particular). However, as with Violet, Geoff's relationship also provides mutual recognition, which is here argued to have a recursive effect at a deeper level, helping to shape the non-reflexive store of positive emotions that can be found in the 'myself' of the internal conversation and the confident emotional habitus that makes positive agentic action more likely.

v. Conclusion

In this analysis we have seen how Geoff has both shaped and been shaped by his lifeworld, over the course of his life so far. He has perhaps more visibly shaped his world than been shaped by it, in comparison with some of the participants whom we met earlier in the empirical chapters, but has benefitted from social, structural, and generational enablements that they have not.

When writing about Barbara in Chapter Seven, Sweetman's "reflexive habitus" (2003) was critiqued for overlooking the very real reflexive desires and processes of all people regardless of their position in social space, however, data in this section has suggested the development of a particular type of habitus that is flexible and attuned to reflexive possibilities in the world. It appeared to be shaped and sustained by multiple elements including family doxa, independence and freedom in childhood, and generationally contingent opportunities, corresponding with the "reflexive habitus" that Gilleard and Higgs describe as belonging to the Baby-boomer generation (2005, p. 150), co-shaping his perspective and sense of possibilities.

The extent to which Geoff appeared to be an 'autonomous reflexive' seemed to be supported and sustained by all of these elements, suggesting a reflexive orientation as an emergent property of lived experience that is not reducible to any of its constituent parts. His approach to the world also has the quality of a self-sustaining disposition, with an habitual sense of "mastery" and "efficacy" (Hitlin and Johnson, 2015), and ample access to symbolic capital and to the 'post-reflexive resources' of Adams (2006, 2007), that helps to sustain this. I will now turn to the narrative of Glenn as a final case study before concluding this chapter and turning to a Discussion and Conclusion chapter to complete the thesis.

e) Glenn: reflexivity, future-orientation and generational habitus

For the last part of this chapter I will present a case study of the most socially and geographically mobile participant in the study, in order to further underline the causal efficacy of Archer's reflexivity as an emergent and irreducible personal property and a catalyst for social mobility (Archer, 2007, 2012.), and to further illustrate the ways in which the agency of those who appear to be some of the most reflexive in their actions is also facilitated, or shaped by, internalised enablements which become sedimented as forms of habitus. The arc of Glenn's self-propelled trajectory is significant, and like Geoff, he benefitted from a confident emotional habitus and an enabling generational habitus at a time of "the universal valuing of the autonomous working-class teen" (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, p. 74), but his childhood also correlates in some key respects with Archer's description of the 'making' of an autonomous reflexive.

I met Glenn, a 70-year-old U3a member, when he emailed me in response to a recruitment advert in the monthly newsletter of the local U3A branch. We met three times over the course of a couple months, once in a café for a pre-interview conversation, and twice in his

apartment in an affluent block in the city centre for two taped interviews. Glenn has amassed a significant amount of wealth over his working life and is currently spending his retirement in both travel and philanthropy, using his money to help those in other parts of the world experiencing global inequality and poverty.

During the two interviews I had with Glenn he spoke of the ways in which he has been very strategic and future-oriented in his decision-making, having spent his career taking informed risks and building his own very successful business. He had moved several times in his home country, and is now, in his retirement, living a life akin to a 'grey nomad' (Higgs and Quirk, 2007), as he and his wife travel around the world.

He described how he embraced economic planning and strategizing from a young age, saving up for "five or six years" from the age of ten in order to buy his first record player. He created his wealth in adulthood through seeing the future potential in new forms of building development, forming his own company, and dedicating himself to his goals of business success through forward-planning with calculated risks; he appeared to exemplify Archer's autonomous mode.

i. Working life

Glenn was planning for the future early in his working life, working long hours and taking on multiple jobs in order to "accumulate money" that would act as a catalyst for future prosperity. This was not due to financial hardship that created a proximity to necessity, as was discussed in Chapter Seven in relation to John's need to "earn a dollar" after he left school (Glenn's parents were able to lend him the money for his first car while he was still at school), but as part of a planned future of increasing wealth,

"When we got married, a year or so before I was married, apart from working in the public service I was on a milk run, I'd get up at, 2 or 3 times a week, at 3 o'clock in the morning to deliver milk. I also, basically on always Saturday and always Sunday and most lunchtimes, I was working as a driving instructor. So I was working stupid hours, all to accumulate money. And [Glenn's wife] was, y'know, she was working down the newspaper shop, and even when my father-in-law, who was a plumber, if he had the need of a labourer during the week, I would take a sickie from work, and then I'd go and work for him, so I'd get, anyway I could earn money I did...It was

worth it because probably about six months or so before we got married we bought a block of land, and we bought it cash, and then with the help of a government loan I, they had a good funding scheme, in those days, again it was to help attract people to D____. So with the government loan we built our, our first house.”

Within a year the first house was finished, and they were building a second house on a block of land that he had previously bought with a friend, with the help of another loan, and were on a clear upwards trajectory,

“So here I am, the first year of marriage, we’ve got one house built, we’re building a second house down the way, I’ve got a loan to repay the government, very, very small repayments, not much to talk about, and I had this other government, had this other loan through a solicitor to repay. So, y’know, we struggled, but I knew I could do it, and again that set us up ultimately and financially, and that, that was really our springboard I suppose, to a future, for want of a better word, wealth.”

Unlike some participants from social clubs who spoke of the disruption that they had experienced in their communities due to external forces; Glenn has been the agent of his own discontinuity and the discontinuity of others. As the owner of a successful business overseeing building developments Glenn has, like Geoff, been an active agent in morphogenetic change, helping to usher in the widespread development of shopping-centres which facilitated global consumerism. Changes of this type contributed to the disruption of traditional and intensely localised shopping cultures, of small localities and communities, which was described by some social club members with regret; an intrusion of the global into the local.

His description of making the decision to focus his business on shopping centres illustrates the adaptive, future-oriented rationalism that is said to typify autonomous reflexives,

Glenn: I ended up getting this job managing the development of a shopping centre in J____ about a hundred K south of [name of city], and that’s where it started at that time, I then thought, I looked around and I thought ‘there’s no other consultants really in [name of home country], independent consultants doing the sort of work that I’m doing on shopping centres’, they’re doing it on office buildings and industrial buildings

but no-one was doing shopping centres. S_____ was doing it but it was internal, and Westfield's, you know Westfield's of course?

Ellie: Yep

Glenn: Westfield's were doing, which is an [name of country] company, Westfield's were doing it but that's internal as well, and I thought 'externally there's no-one doing it'. So I, I set out to concentrate on shopping centres. Shopping centres at that stage were about twenty or thirty years ahead of the UK and were only two or three years behind the US. We were the second country in the world to take on the concept of malls, so...and that happened in the late fifties, so they were getting to the stage where they needed to be recycled, extended. Refurbished and all that, so all of a sudden these shopping centres, owners who traditionally would be banks or financial institutions wanted to upgrade, as soon as..and this is round about the time when Westfield's really started to take off in [name of country]. And all these other these institutions think 'hang on, Westfield's are doing that and our shopping centre's really crap and we're in their catchments area, if we don't do something we're going to lose more sales, the value of our assets going to go further down. So they therefore wanted to do things and I would spend a lot of time marketing to these people and I would market on the back of this one job that I had in J_____

Like Geoff, his tendency was towards taking control of his working life, a common trait of the autonomous reflexive (Archer, 2012, p. 166), and one of his most successful ventures was as manager of his own company where his two employees needed very little hands-on management but he had the independence and control of his own work that he desired.

His strategizing future-orientation is also illustrated by the plans he made to move forward in business and life. In the 1990s he recognized the ways in which technology could enable him to disrupt the localized connection between work and geography, space and place, and live at a significant distance from the project that he was managing. Unlike Angela, for whom technological developments made work more onerous and restrictive, Glenn was in a position to take advantage of developments and therefore they brought him greater freedom. He and his wife moved several times within their own country, before and after having a family, planning moves and business ventures by, in one instance, doing sums on the back of a beer mat. He appeared to have embraced change over the course of his life as a positive force over which he could assert control.

Glenn's narrative is marked by a consistent sense of commitment to future possibilities and embracement of change, which correlate very closely with the positive and future-oriented emotional habitus that was described in Geoff's case study in section d of this chapter, and (again) with the habitual "sense of mastery" described by Carver (1998). This embracement of change and possibility continues into a (healthy and wealthy) retirement; the image of 'successful ageing', as he and his wife split their time between four and half properties (one shared) with an open-ended sense of "excitement" about the future.

ii. Childhood and youth

Unlike Geoff, Glenn experienced a significant amount of geographical discontinuity in childhood, as well as parental 'relational absences', and so his formative years coincide more visibly with Archer's description of the 'making' of an autonomous reflexive (2007, 2012), and he seemed to carry that discontinuity into adulthood. While there are points of comparison between the two narratives there are also clear points of contrast; Glenn seems to embody one of 'Archer's people' perhaps more visibly than any other participant⁴³, while also having been (it is argued) shaped and influenced by forms of habitus and recognition.

Like 'Liz' an 'autonomous' reflexive in Archer's study who described the development of her own self-reliance in childhood, Glenn was an only child (2007, p. 197). When he was around five he suffered with health problems and, following the advice of a doctor, the family moved to live near the coast for six months; during this time he did not go to school and was "pretty much totally isolated". Later, his father got a job some distance away and was away for the working week and busy "working his bum off", fixing up the house at the weekend. This seems to perfectly accord with Archer's description of an autonomous reflexive's childhood, for whom "disruptive family dynamics had induced an early independence", with a disproportionate frequency of "divorced parents, 'rocky relationships' and parents effectively living apart" (2012, p. 100),

"It was a hard time for mum, and mum used to try and confide in me, certain sorts of things I suppose you know I'm at the age ten or something, then dad transferred down there, so we then had months mum and I by ourselves"

⁴³ Here I am paraphrasing Archer's description of today's young people as "no longer Bourdieu's people because they no longer live in Bourdieu's world" (as cited in Chapter Four, part c).

The degree of responsibility that seemed to be expected of Glenn at a young age also seems to correlate with Archer's description of the ways in which autonomous subjects in the student sample had "recognized the need to take responsibility for themselves and to avoid becoming responsible for the family situation or a particular parent" (p. 100).

When Glenn was around fifteen the family moved again for his father's new job, to a place where he "had to start from scratch" socially as he knew no-one. This experience of contextual discontinuity forced him to be socially adaptive as he needed to make friends in the new school. This adaptiveness was also necessary in his domestic life too, as the family lived in a hostel for a year before moving into their own home, an environment in which he appeared to flourish socially,

"We lived in a hostel for the first year, I had my own room, but it was basically just a small hotel room, and shared bathroom facilities with everyone else there and that, but that was good, because I got to meet a lot of other people, I'd learned, I'd mixed a lot more with more adults than what I had before."

Glenn obviously had the confidence that was necessary to thrive in this environment, and Archer writes of the way in which positive experiences of discontinuity, which require subjects to already have "sufficient self-confidence", can engender autonomous reflexivity, with the internal and external worlds mutually re-enforcing each other in a positive trajectory (2007, p. 194). Yet she does not position this as itself part of an emotional habitus, nor is this pursued further as part of an ongoing unconscious and non-deliberative relationship with the social world, in which the 'social self' that is described by Burkitt (2012) is constructed and maintained through positive interactions. We can compare the confidence with which Glenn met the new social situation and which it invoked in him with the disorientation invoked in Angela by her distressing experience of grammar school and the negative relational experiences of Joanie. Moreover, like Geoff, Glenn had a father whose absences from the family were for his work, modelling the kind of career-investment and (to an extent) future-orientation that Glenn very visibly developed.

Furthermore, while Glenn positions his own novelty-embracing risk-taking in direct opposition to the 'security' of his parents (as will be discussed in the following subsection), the embodied transmission of a family doxa may have also shaped Glenn's 'horizons of perception' in specific ways. For example, the way in which he began his new life by buying

a plot of land and helping to build his own house echoes his father's hard work during his childhood on their own family home, while his desire for a career in managing building design runs close to his father's frustrated ambition to have been an architect. Archer herself noted that despite the autonomous reflexives in her student sample experiencing an early sense of independence within their family, their careers "fell within the same spectrum" as those of their parents (2012, p. 209).

Nevertheless, it can be argued that Glenn's primary experiences of discontinuity in moving to a completely new town across the other side of the continent, his successes in adapting to the hostel and the new environment, and his positive experiences of interacting with various others, helped to create, or at least to encourage, a habituated way of being in the world, a modality, disposition or habitus, that was prepared for change and responded positively to it. This can reasonably be described as something like the 'reflexive habitus' that was discussed in section d in relation to family doxa, childhood freedoms and generational experiences; a concept that (as noted) Archer objected to on the basis that it stretches the concept of habitus too thinly.

iii. Generational habitus

Glenn's embracement of novelty from his youth onwards may be seen as both a facet of a certain type of reflexivity and also an expression of the generational habitus that characterized the post-war baby-boom generation that embraced social and structural change. As one of the first generations of teenagers Glenn vividly remembers his own teenage rebellion and the disruption he experienced in his relationship with his parents,

"as I started to get older I probably played up a bit, I was just being a typical teenager, the whole world was against me, I hated my parents, I wished they were dead and [laughs] you know all this sort of horrible stuff in, in hindsight, but quite typical at the time."

He also remembers enjoying the recently established 'youth culture' (Gilleard and Higgs, p. 74) of his teenage years in the early 1960s, drinking milkshakes in milk bars while listening to the jukebox with friends. The aforementioned 'generational divide' (p. 75) that emerged from this is made visible in Glenn's conscious and deliberate (albeit qualified) rejection of his

parent's concern with 'security', a rejection that is said to characterize the generational shift of the late 1960s, with an emerging generation who were more concerned with "personal liberty and self-expression" (Jones et al., 2008, p. 31, Gilleard, 2004, drawing on Inglehart, 1997),

"my parents were mortified when I left the public service, because 'what about security? Security' I said 'I'm fine' D_____ is a growing place, I, wasn't overly confident in myself, but I had thought about this logically, if I could get a job with a large building company, if that doesn't work out, two things can happen, one, I can go back to public service, or two, I can probably get another job somewhere, so I thought 'I want to take the risk'."

It is notable that the loan that enabled Glenn and his wife to build their first house also seemed to be contingent on the era in which he was coming of age; he described how there existed "a good funding scheme, in those days" to help attract people into the area to live.

However, Glenn's relationship with the idea of 'security' seemed to be ambiguous, and while his embracement of comparative risk over the continuity that his parents' represented, signified both an autonomous striking out and the expression of a generational habitus, he also recognised the need for financial security in his own life. The term emerged again in our second follow-up interview, in which he spoke of how a financially secure retirement allows for a different relationship with the future, one of carefree disengagement and "excitement", after a lifetime of planning.

If the performance of successful ageing requires both embodied (health) and financial resources (Laws, 1997, Katz, 2013, Lamb, 2013), Glenn currently has both, and appears to value the ability to disengage from future-planning that a lifetime of strategizing has brought him, while also rejecting the importance of the notion of 'security' as representative of any particular value to him, as can be seen in comparing the two passages below. In the first passage he speaks of the enormous freedom in retirement that financial security brings him,

Glenn: we tend not to look to the future very much but that doesn't mean that we're not excited about the future... We don't plan as much now, and because, one of the reasons we don't plan as much now as we, we are probably... what's the word... spontaneous about things and we know that there are more adventures in front of us

and we wouldn't have a clue what they are, and we don't really care, we're sort of excited about the probability of other adventures, in not knowing what they're going to be. I mean for instance, I'm not saying it would happen, but you never know, it's the sort of thing..we might decide to go and live in another country for 12 months, or 6 months or whatever. We may not do that but that's the sort of thing. We might wake up in 12 months time and think, we've had enough of this, why don't we just go to Italy...Live for 6 months. So, yes, that's an exciting thing; nothing, not making decisions but knowing that things will happen and just fall into place.

Ellie: Do you think that's partly because you've got a stable situation? because in the past you've made lots of strategic decisions haven't you, to get to where you want to and now you're in a sort of stable position where you can do things and you don't have to plan. Do you think that's part of it?

Glenn: yes, I would agree. In other words, financial security

We can see again how, as with Geoff, financial wherewithal, current good health, and an internal locus of control, support an easy relationship with the future and an innate trust in the possibilities contained therein. However, an ambivalence around the term security later emerges, as he rejects its importance and is at pains to clarify his earlier response,

Ellie: Yeah, yeah, and why do you think that, this may sound like an odd question but people differ in what they're sort of aiming for, why do you think security was particularly important to you?

Glenn: Security's probably, no securities probably a totally wrong word, its it was assets building I suppose, wealth building rather than security...no that's really the wrong word, I mean I was never big on security, my parents were and I was very aware of that, no I remember when I left the public service very early in my working life, my parents were horrified that I was going out to private enterprise. I never saw it as a big deal, so security is totally and utterly the wrong word in terms of financial security. Other than having some wealth built behind me that if something happened to me, that my family was taken care of. But in terms of security in work and all that sort of thing, it pretty much was never an issue, it never really crossed my mind, because as I got older I had more confidence in my ability, so any thoughts that I did have towards security if in fact I had some latent ones just disappeared, so no, so

security, security's the wrong word, I'm sorry if I gave you that impression, there's more, there was more the construction of a financial base.

It seems that what he rejected was the principle of financial security, as a constraining mechanism that would preclude his independent entrepreneurship, while also pursuing wealth and valuing the sense of security that this could bring. It was clear that he saw a deep division between himself and his parents in this regard, which corresponds with both the independence of the autonomous reflexive as described by Archer and the more flexible generational habitus, or the 'reflexive habitus', of the baby-boomer generation, denoting an orientation to the "new cultural possibilities" of a changing world (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, p. 150).

Another key way in which the generational divide emerges in Glenn's narrative was in his rejection of the prejudices of his parents' generation, which he said "disgusted" him when he was young. He described tensions between different communities along lines of ethnicity and religion and told of how his first girlfriend had been forced by her parents to break up with him because she was Catholic and he was not. The generational difference is made very clear in his explanation,

"Oh god, and it was driven by our parents' generation, it wasn't driven by us, our generation...It was really driven by our parents' generations. I, I wouldn't say it was a hatred, but it was, it was, it was a separation...It was really a separation."

This orientation towards equality and diversity again formed a part of a generational habitus, as the 'youth culture' in the 1950's promoted integration over division and led to the 'cultural revolution' of the 1960s (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, p. 87). It signified a distaste with prejudice and an appreciation of multi-culturalism which Glenn has carried through his life, and which he also feels was developed in the 'educational field' of school (Atkinson, 2016, pp. 41 and 110), where two teachers helped to plant seeds of concern about political issues and broaden his understanding of the world.

Therefore, we can again see that Glenn's generational habitus exists and existed alongside and within his reflexive approach to the world, facilitating his traits of autonomous reflexivity and becoming sedimented into an over-arching disposition; a habitual way of being and seeing that is markedly different to that of his parents.

iv. Recognition

As noted, Glenn had positive experiences of new social environments as a teenager, enjoying meeting new people in the hostel in which they lived for a time and making good friends and integrating well at a new school. These were positive experiences of recognition for him and likely helped to shape his willingness to move to new communities as an adult, where he seemed to relish meeting new people and getting involved in community life.

Furthermore, his narrative of the autonomous and independent self was somewhat offset, and indeed facilitated, by the fact that he met and married his wife when young and she has been his constant companion through building his business, including working in it in a supportive capacity in the early days. They built their future together from early in their marriage, literally at times in that they helped to build their first house by hand to supplement the work of the contractors that they had hired, in order to save money. Glenn said that he has “pretty much never made any major decision at all without discussing it in great detail with [his wife]”, which suggests the ways in which even those who seem to closely fit Archer’s ‘autonomous’ mode can also function as ‘communicative reflexives’ within a mutually supportive long-term partnership. However, this also corresponds with Archer’s caveat that ‘autonomous’ subjects sometimes engage in communicative reflexivity for reasons that include consideration for those who will be affected by the decision, rather than because they require it to complete their own thought processes and to commit to a course of action.

It must also be noted that I have not, in these discussions of the ‘autonomousness’ of Geoff and Glenn, explored the role of a gendered habitus as an original and formative enablement; a way of viewing and acting in the world that rests on “a formidable collective labour of diffuse and continuous socialization”, creating an embodied habitus according to “the dominant principle of division” (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 23). Feminist theorists such as Lois McNay have emphasized the continued role of a pre-reflexive gendered habitus, in contrast with the “strategic and self-conscious self-monitoring” reflexivity of Beck and Giddens (Adkins, 2003, p. 29, describing arguments of McNay, 1999), reframing reflexivity as not “a generalized, universal capacity of subjects” but rather a capacity that is said “to arise unevenly from subjects’ embeddedness within differing sets of power relations” (Adkins, 2003, p. 30).

A specific link between gender, recognition and self-efficacy in the socialization of boys from a young age is made very clear by West and Zimmerman, who describe the ways in which “little boys appropriate the gender ideal of “efficaciousness,” that is, being able to affect the

physical and social environment through the exercise of physical strength or appropriate skills". They contrast this with little girls, who "learn to value "appearance," that is, managing themselves as ornamental objects" (1987, p. 141). Clearly this describes tendencies rather than determinants of behaviour, and the data I have generated, and the analysis of it, has focused far more on class than gender. However, this sense of "efficaciousness", which is argued to be a resource that is disproportionately distributed, forms a foundation of agentic action and correlates with the belief in one's own "efficacy" that is widely argued to be a central component of agency (see Hitlin and Johnson, 2015).

This is not to occlude or erase the importance of Glenn's distinctive reflexive approach to the world around him, and it has been suggested here that Archer's explanation of childhood experiences of self-reliance and enforced independence are important. But the sketch of Glenn's life that has been given suggests the interaction of multiple elements, acting in concert with each other in a specific relationship, in order to create his intertwined reflexivity and habitus (and a *reflexive habitus*) as emergent properties of a range of constituent parts.

v. Retirement

The economic capital that Glenn has accrued through his life and the confident emotional habitus that seemed to both propel his successes in work and accumulate as a consequence of this success (Glenn remarked on his increase in confidence as he gained more experience and success) has helped to shape his lifeworld and identity into retirement.

His instrumental decision-making processes and his engagement with structural elaboration and morphogenetic change, continue into the present. He is currently focusing, in his third age, on the performance of a kind of generativity, a concern with social justice that was originally, in his youth, a reaction to the prejudice of his parents' generation.

He is in the process of giving away much of his fortune in philanthropic endeavours, making positive changes to the living conditions of residents in a country in the global south through a foundation to create the necessary basic infrastructure in rural areas. This speaks to a previously subordinated tendency to Archer's 'meta-reflexivity' that finds expression in retirement, while also perhaps being a manifestation of a generational habitus that is concerned with a 'post-materialist' (Jones et al., 2008, p. 31, drawing on Inglehart, 1997) challenge to established norms and with social justice. It must be noted that an active concern with social justice and diversity appeared to be ongoing during his working life, and he and his wife had a history of giving to charity pre-retirement. The fact that his concern

with inequality and suffering is so great that he has decided to give a significant amount of money to his chosen cause, and leave none to his children, speaks to Archer's argument, which has been reiterated throughout these empirical chapters, of the importance of diverse concerns and commitments in the world. This example points to the limits of Bourdieu's notion of capital accumulation and conversion as the primary aim of the social field, as noted in Chapter Four.

The tendency to self-orientation and control that characterized his career again came to the fore as he ultimately took charge of his own philanthropic work, moving from contributor in one project to setting up his own organisation and persuading others to donate (management of the project is now being passed on to others to encourage fresh ideas). This self-directed control again reflects Geoff's position in the organisation for gay fiction which he supports, and Sarah's important role in her charity, and also again signifies a confident emotional habitus that seemed to have both enabled and been further developed by their career trajectories, and the cultural capital that they have accrued.

As with other participants in this chapter, Glenn's lifeworld in retirement is markedly different in important ways to the lifeworld of his childhood and youth, with significant economic and symbolic capital and huge freedom of movement. Glenn now has the financial wherewithal to, in his third age, maintain only a loose plan for the future. When I met him, he and his wife were coming towards the end of a visa to stay in the country and were enjoying regular travel to other countries in Europe. As noted, he considers himself a "world citizen"; a concept that denotes a dispositional openness to other cultures and distaste for nationalism that is associated with a sense of control over one's destiny, greater choice, and possession of higher capital and status (Fenton, 2012).

His lifestyle was also markedly different from other participants in ways that pointed clearly to the disparity in consumption patterns and lifestyles within older age. The contrast was made clear at one point when I found myself rushing from his smart apartment in the city centre to play bingo with local women (some of whom were the same age as Glenn) in the hall of a working men's club in one of the suburbs of the city, where store-cupboard essentials were raffled off during the tea-break. Conversely, the everyday and habitually classed nature of taste and classification processes that make up the lifeworld was indicated by Glenn, when he suggested that for our first meeting we go to a café of my choice, "other than Starbucks, McDonald's et al."

As I moved between these milieus to which their own inhabitants are somewhat 'pre-adapted' (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 61), it seemed somewhat unlikely that they would enter each

other's social space for any duration, despite the relative proximity of their geographic space, except for on these pages.

vi. Conclusion

In exploring Glenn's trajectory, we can see again how reflexive confrontations with external structural constraints and enablements led to a process of personal morphogenesis in which agentic actions and the reflections of an internal 'I' were key. Glenn's experiences of discontinuity and self-reliance in childhood appeared to correlate closely with Archer's theory of the development of an autonomous reflexive. It seems likely that his experiences of moving around, his relative isolation as a young child, and parental absences and separations, helped to shape Glenn's early dispositional approach to the world as a "rejecter" who struck out on his own path. However, we have also seen how this, the most visibly agentic of all trajectories in the study, was itself shaped and enabled by a specific emotional habitus, a generational habitus, and a family doxa. The roles of positive relational experiences, affective recognition within marriage and of gendered socialization have also been discussed.

Ultimately to the extent that Glenn is an "autonomous reflexive", with elements of "meta-reflexivity" we can see the usefulness of describing this as a disposition, which Archer agrees is plausible but emphasizes that modalities cannot be seen to lead to action "pre-reflexively" nor to work as a habitus (2012, pp. 84-85). However we can see that this type of orientation towards the world can form part of a person's habitus, and we can again see how this is facilitated by other forms of habitus such as emotional habitus and generational habitus, but also, again, how vital it is to recognize the resonance of reflexivity as an emergent property of a life, with causal efficacy in the world.

f) Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored the way in which themes which have been previously introduced, of the effects of social, affective and symbolic recognition, and of emotional and generational habitus, can facilitate social mobility and agentic action and help to foster specific concerns. I have illustrated how these can function alongside and within descriptions of reflexive modalities, in helping to shape a trajectory and a reflexive disposition. I have also illustrated the irreducibility of reflexivity as an emergent property of a range of life course

experiences, and the ways in which particular circumstances in early life can help to shape reflexive responses in accordance with Archer's theories of the 'making' of reflexive modes.

The extent to which our concerns and commitments are derived from relations with family and friends speaks to work that highlights this as a fault-line in Archer's claims for the reflexive individual. As previously noted, Atkinson argues that what has been found in Archer's student study is in fact classed reproduction of cultural capital and the "formation of perceptions of the possible and desirable, in the specific structural context of the family as a mediation of structures of class, gender, and so on" (Atkinson, 2014a, p. 126). Sections of this chapter support the argument that a person's sense of their future possibilities is often shaped by their family. However, this can also occur very indirectly, with affective recognition as a resource and enablement for an ambition that has been independently chosen, as with Sarah. Furthermore, ambition can significantly exceed what the family believe is possible, as with Glenn. This undoubtedly signals the "subversive heterodoxy" that can enter into the family field (Atkinson, 2016, p. 102) and, as indicated, correlated with an emerging generational habitus, but it nevertheless also involved and led to greater reflexivity (2016). Importantly, a role has also been found for Archer's 'enforced independence', and experiences of discontinuity, as factors that can potentially enhance the reflexive and agentic capacities of the internal 'I'.

These case studies have underlined the fact that the work of both Archer and Bourdieu offer essential theoretical tools for understanding narratives of people currently in the third age. I have again shown how the process of personal morphogenesis in the ongoing conversation between 'I' 'Me and the future 'You', can lead to change, and how this process is interwoven with affective and symbolic recognition and generational habitus, as well as other, more material, constraints and enablements. This process shapes the 'Me' that is taken into retirement, and which is said by Archer to "accumulate[] over the life-course", with the evolution of 'I', 'Me' and 'You' as they move along what she calls the "life-line" of a person, (2015, p. 101-102), but with a greater emphasis on the stratified elements of the 'Me' and a dispositional component that has been shaped through the relationship between lifeworld and habitus described by Atkinson (2016).

1. Discussion and Conclusion

a) Introduction

I began this research with an admiration for the clarity of Archer's theoretical work coupled with a commitment to complement, complicate and contest this work, as one of a group of scholars who argue for the continued salience of habitus alongside reflexivity, in an approach that allows for "more of the social" as Archer describes it, to get "under the agential skin." (2010, p. 274, see also Sayer, 2005a, 2009a, 2009b, 2010, Elder-Vass 2007a, 2010, Sweetman 2003, Adams 2006, 2007, Fleetwood 2008, Mutch 2004, Akram, 2013, Akram and Hogan, 2015, Caetano, 2015a, 2015b, 2017, Flam, 2009, Vogler, 2016, Farrugia, 2013).

After identifying gaps in the extant literature it became clear that an in-depth empirical exploration of the relationship between reflexivity and habitus over the life course, in a purposive sample of people in the third age, would prove to be a useful contribution to the field of study. It also became apparent that this would enhance our understanding of the diverse nature of third age experiences. In this final chapter I have chosen to present the findings under chapter headings and then as overarching 'general findings' rather than as direct responses to the research questions (which I have restated below). This is because these questions collectively informed and shaped the analysis, from which emerged the arguments that are developed throughout the empirical chapters,

I therefore present a series of chapter specific findings, then a number of general findings before noting limitations to the study and possible policy implications, and finish with suggestions for areas of further research followed by concluding remarks.

b) Research questions

1. What roles do recognition, emotional habitus, and generational habitus play in the relationship between Archers work on reflexivity and Bourdieu's habitus over the life course?
2. How does this relate to the 'personal morphogenesis' of Archer, and the role of the (past and socially situated) 'Me'?
3. What significance does this have for questions of social class and identity in the third age?

c) Chapter Findings

i. Chapter six: The Social and Symbolic Space of the Third Age: Post-Retirement Class Identities

(i) *Finding 1:*

This chapter used Payne and Grew's notion of class identity as both explicit and implicit in people's accounts of their lives (2005), and the work of Skeggs (1997) and Savage et al. (2001, 2010) on dis-identification, to argue that social class as an identity and a lived experience helps to shape the landscape of the third age in contemporary Britain. This is consistent with Bourdieusian arguments that identity is created through processes of social and symbolic differences in social space and the differential distribution of capital through which dispositions are shaped.

(ii) *Finding 2:*

It is also argued that a historical and biographical life course approach is necessary to understand the nature of class identity in this age group, and that this can be best elicited through narrative interviews. This can illuminate the roles of personal and social change in expressions of post-retirement class identity, as contrasts between past and present can help to shape current perceptions while identities created through social mobility may, for some, vary in the extent to which they are maintained into retirement.

ii. Chapter seven: The making of a habitus: the effects of class, the symbolic order, and physical abuse

(i) *Finding 1:*

This chapter looked at how experiences of humiliation and disrespect that signal the withdrawal of social recognition in childhood and beyond can help to shape a habitus, a lifeworld, and a sense of self across the life course and into the third age. Furthermore, it was shown that our understanding of the impact of Bourdieu's symbolic violence can be usefully enhanced by attending to the bodily violations that Honneth argue to be a specific

form of withheld recognition and a fundamental breach of our 'relation-to-self', as part of his broader work on the importance of recognition.

(ii) *Finding 2:*

A second finding correlates with Honneth's argument that experiences of misrecognition can provoke a concomitant 'struggle' for recognition (1995a). It has been seen that although diverse forms of misrecognition can create compliance they can also lead to resistance, which speaks to Archer's critique of the excess of ontological complicity that may be found in Bourdieu's work on the habitus. Participants offered insights into the constraints that they have faced, which were recognised as having impinged upon their lives in fundamental ways, provoking acts of resistance or preventing the future possible selves that might have otherwise emerged. This indicates the mutually 'irreducible' nature of structure, culture and agency that is described by Archer (2012, p. 49). However, the narratives also spoke to forms of habitus that were shaped by these experiences and by the sedimentation of their effects.

(iii) *Finding 3*

The chapter also illustrated the ways in which reflexive choices or concerns in older age are bound up with life course experiences and with the differential distribution of social identities and resources, and are underpinned by different forms of habitus. Archerian notions of Corporate Agency and reflexive commitments to a collective 'We' are seen to inter-relate with position in social space, an embodied habitus, and a differential sense of "mastery" over one's life. This further illustrates the interwoven and dialectical nature of our identity as emerging from both social difference and from our reflexive concerns and commitments.

iii. Chapter eight: Affective and symbolic misrecognition, 'relational harms', and a negative emotional habitus

(i) *Finding 1:*

This chapter has illustrated how experiences of misrecognition across different fields can create or contribute to an emotional habitus, in which a sense of self, and current and future actions and reactions, are shaped by past negative or positive experiences. This has been shown, as argued by Crossley, to endure over the course of a life, while also containing the

potential for adaptation in response to positive social experiences that is described by Burkitt.

(ii) Finding 2:

It has also been shown that Archer's 'relational goods' and 'relational harms' can be partly re-interpreted as 'affective recognition'; the love and affection of family and friends that Honneth argues to be essential for self-confidence and our internal 'relation-to-self'. It was shown that unfair treatment and lack of love and affection can help to shape our agentic capacities and underlying habits, and that early experiences of these can have long-lasting effects over the course of a life.

iv. Chapter nine: Social Mobility and Reflexivity: internalised enablements to an upwards trajectory

(i) Finding 1:

In this chapter it has been shown that, contrary to Archer's description of social and economic mobility as inherently reflexive and independent, the development of reflexive commitments, and mobility itself, is bound up with relations with others and with processes of affective recognition. This recognition has been shown to act as both a resource in itself and as a vehicle for the reproduction of cultural capital. The role of the 'family doxa' that was briefly discussed in relation to John's childhood in Chapter Seven, by which reproduction occurs through a struggle for affective recognition in the family (Atkinson, 2014b, 2016, Bourdieu, 2000), was elaborated upon here. It has also been shown that a family unit can not only engender mobility or reflexive behaviour but can also possess attributes of certain modalities; a family unit can re-enforce 'meta-reflexivity' or 'autonomous reflexivity' through its socialisation processes.

(ii) Finding 2:

However, it has also been shown that there is an experiential relevance to Archer's description of reflexive modes, in relation to some of the processes that can facilitate social mobility and in orientations towards specific concerns. It has been suggested that there is a legitimacy to Archer's argument that a more detached or evaluative inner voice can emerge from experiences of discontinuity or isolation, but also that this must be theorized as (where

applicable) a form of enhanced agentic capacity, and integrated with other forms of enablement. Therefore, I have again shown that it is necessary to understand structure and agency as overlapping, mutually constitutive, but also, at certain times and in certain aspects, as separate and opposing forces.

(iii) *Finding 3*

Nevertheless, a positive emotional habitus and positive experiences of recognition were seen to underpin even the most apparently reflexive and autonomous trajectories. Moreover, the agentic capacities of some participants were seen to be extended and amplified by the generational habitus and generationally contingent experiences of the post-war cohorts. The notion of a 'reflexive habitus' (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, Sweetman, 2003) has been suggested as having an empirical application to the analysis

(iv) *Finding 4:*

Finally, this chapter has explored the reshaped third age lifeworlds of people who have been socially or economically mobile, accumulating and converting cultural and symbolic as well as economic capital. It is a reshaping that has been created by many factors, including familial doxa or support, generationally contingent resources and internalised enablements, and the emergent property of reflexivity. Nevertheless, what has been illustrated is that these reflexive commitments and reshaped lifeworlds are fundamental to the diverse nature of retirement, within a classed and stratified social and symbolic landscape in which concerns and identities draw people towards, and are produced by, shared positions and mutual affinities in social space

d) General Findings

i. Integration of theoretical perspectives

The first overall finding of this thesis is that it is essential to integrate the mutually constitutive but analytically irreducible concepts of habitus and reflexivity, in order to understand the causal nature of internalised constraints and enablements as they interact with reflexivity over the course of a life.

This framework has been applied to a life course approach and to third age identities, with a specific focus on the processes of recognition, emotion and generation that can help to

shape the habitus. My analysis has shown that life course research with people currently in the third age can exemplify the ways in which social structure, which Archer sees as external and as 'activated' only by an imagined 'project' (Archer, 2007, p. 12), can be internalised in the form of its effects, as theorized by Elder-Vass (2007a, 2010). Moreover, it has been shown that these effects can modulate the responses of the internal 'I', and its future and agentic possibilities in a way that is not properly accounted for in Archer's theories. This avoids both the excess of 'ontological complicity' with which Bourdieu has been charged and the Archerian tendency to over-emphasise the consciously reflexive or agentic elements of a life.

By taking a life course approach to the generation, analysis and presentation of data I have illustrated empirically, and in detail, the deep complexity of a relationship between reflexivity and habitus that together, and through their mutual interpenetration, have a "dialectical impact upon the constitution of subjectivity" (Adams, 2006, p. 511), as a dynamic process over time. By bringing the combined effects of the internal conversation and the habitus to the fore, in order to 'steer a middle course' (Sayer, 2010, p. 89) between them, I have been able to, as Sayer suggested,

"acknowledge the embodied capacities, susceptibilities, needs and concerns, both innate and acquired, that make us beings capable of flourishing or suffering, and hence evaluative beings, and to incorporate these fundamental facts into our theory of the formation and transformation of habitus. The dispositions of the habitus are related not merely to the dominant social context but also to embodied, sensuous experiences of flourishing and suffering therein" (2009b, p. 121).".

My contribution in this thesis has been to apply this argument, empirically and in-depth, over the life course and into the third age, with theoretical implications that will be further outlined below.

ii. Personal morphogenesis and the internal conversation

The second central finding is that Archer's concept of personal morphogenesis helps to account for reflexive decisions that both emerge from and contribute to the development of an identity, and that help to shape the course of a life over time. Data suggest that Archer's internal conversation, by which a person consciously orients themselves in the world, with an evaluative 'I' that changes over time and that interacts with and reflects on the past and socially situated 'Me' and the future 'You' (2015, p. 102) is essential to understanding

people's different responses to the world, to contingent experiences, and to their own suffering and potential flourishing.

However, it has been shown that, as argued in theoretical work by Flam (2009), this internal 'I' is more non-reflexively modulated by the social world than is accounted for by Archer. Analysis of the data suggests that the internal 'I' is amplified through symbolic value, affective recognition, and generationally contingent experiences, which help to enhance our sense of self, and that it can be diminished and shaped by the absence of these. It is therefore argued that the internal conversation must also allow a more significant role for the past and socially situated 'Me' and the 'myself' that stores non-transvalued emotions on past concerns, and that these are shaped by experiences of recognition and misrecognition and emotional and generational habitus.

(i) *Third-age identities, concerns and commitments*

This finding has implications for the construction and experience of identity in the third age as both a process of social differentiation and as an expression of a person's concerns and commitments, existing in a complex relationship over time.

The 'Me' of the third age has been shown to be informed and partially shaped by a class identity, signifying a non-reflexive portion of reflexive action and an important element of a social identity, which may have endured over the life course or partially changed due to social mobility. This supports Archer's notion of the 'Me' as socially situated and as related to our 'Primary Agency', and as accruing further associations and adapting in light of changes over a life course. However, it also supports the need to understand identity, including in the third age, in terms of Bourdieusian processes of differentiation and distribution in social space. This again indicates an amplification of the 'Me' beyond the role that Archer assigns to it.

Yet, the different concerns and commitments described by Archer are central to understanding the subjective, conscious and diverse motivations of people, allowing us to understand the differences as well as the similarities in the concerns of those in the same objective structural position (Archer, 2007, p. 11). We have seen that these include concerns for partners, children and grandchildren, family and friends, for health, for personal ambition and family security, for political representation or social equality, for disadvantaged children and young people, and for the effects of poverty and deprivation (in this country or on the other side of the world). They may emerge from personal, familial, or collective forms of habitus, and from events in a person's history that become sedimented in their disposition,

but they are by no means reducible to any or all of these factors, and a more precise theoretical tool is also needed to understand these subjective responses to circumstances. Nevertheless, we have also seen that reflexive choices in relation to ongoing concerns are consistently made within the boundaries of a habitus, and that they also have the capacity to promote change and to recursively help to shape the habitus and identity.

In this way, the findings speak to the need to understand 'lifestyle' in the third age as both social structured over the course of a life and as not foreclosing agentic decision-making (Hendricks and Hatch, 2006), with a habitus that is (still) open to adaptation, but within a particular remit. This lack of foreclosure is in fact an integral part of the habitus, which "changes constantly in response to new experiences", although "such change is never radical because it works on the basis of the premises established in the earlier state." (Aarseth et al., 2016, p. 50).

iii. Recognition, emotional habitus and generational habitus

The third finding is that Honneth's work on recognition can be used alongside Bourdieu's system of misrecognition to promote a new and nuanced form of accommodation between reflexivity and habitus, in conjunction with Crossley's concept of 'emotional habitus' (1996, 1998), and Gilleard and Higg's 'generational habitus' (2005, 2009).

(i) Recognition

The analysis that has been presented has illustrated the ways in which Bourdieu's system of misrecognition, as partly constitutive of the habitus, can function as a constraint and an enablement to reflexive action through shaping self-perceptions. It has also been seen that the symbolic economy intrudes upon our understanding of the world to a greater degree than that acknowledged by Archer, including in the construction of an (inherently biographical) identity in the third age.

These experiences of social recognition and misrecognition, that influence us at the level of 'first-order-emotions', support arguments that have previously been outlined, for an amplification of the part of the stratified self known as 'myself' and the past and socially situated 'Me' of Archer's internal conversation (as discussed earlier in this section). The importance of social relations and interactions that Archer has underacknowledged in her understanding of the reflexive individual (2003, 2007, 2012) has been discussed elsewhere

(Dépelteau, 2008, King, 2010, Flam, 2009, Burkitt, 2012, 2016, Caetano, 2015a); I have explored this empirically and extended it through the work of Honneth. Furthermore, I have shown how Honneth's concept of affective recognition overlaps with Archer's relational goods and harms and have suggested that Archer's 'relational absences' and experiences of discontinuity and contextual incongruity can have a separate significance in encouraging greater development of the internal 'I'. Archer's argument that symbolic violence is not always successful has also been borne out, but with a reflexive resistance that is often supported or enabled by other forms of recognition, most notably 'affective recognition'.

Honneth's concept of "the violation of the body" (a physical expression of disrespect and withheld recognition) has also been shown to be useful, emphasising the physical component of Bourdieu's symbolic violence and obviating the excessive separation between the natural, practical, and social realms that is described by Archer. The embodied nature of social suffering and its effects on a person's sense of being-in-the-world have been clearly illustrated, and, as outlined in Chapter Two, this finding speaks to a 'turn to the body' across sociology, which recognizes the body as inherently socially and structurally situated in a complex and mutually constitutive relationship (Gilleard and Higgs, 2013, 2015).

These findings ultimately support Archer's observation that the primary objective in the social realm is the search for self-worth, and that people have different (reflexive) concerns or motivations, but with the proviso that the effects of social recognition have a primary significance to actions, choices and orientations, and that recognition and the effects of reflexive actions, in conjunction, help to shape the habitus.

Recognition, and in particular affective recognition, has been shown to be a resource that enhances an emotional habitus, enables or facilitates reflexive and agentic action, and acts as a conduit of family doxa and cultural capital, promoting social mobility and shaping reflexive orientations.

(ii) Emotions, emotional habitus and transvaluation

The empirical chapters have also shown the significance of an emotional habitus in enabling, constraining, or shaping, reflexivity and agentic action, in a manner that can endure over the course of a life. This speaks to the durable and transposable emotional habitus of Crossley (1996, 1998) and to the "emotional habits" or dispositions described by Burkitt (2014). It also correlates with the findings of Mills (2016) that an emotional habitus is central to Archerian reflexivity, as discussed in Chapter Three. However, as noted, Mills focused only on the

direct experiences of doctoral students in relation to reflexive mode and emotion as they worked to complete their studies, rather than looking at the interplay between lived experience, emotional habitus, and reflexivity over the course of a life. By taking a life course approach this study has explored the relationship between the emotional habitus and reflexivity over time, mapping the creation of an emotional habitus and its relationship with contingent life events, social structure, classed and affective recognition, and generation.

This finding again strongly supports arguments for an amplified role for 'myself' and for 'Me' in the internal conversation, as partly shaped by non-transvalued emotional experiences of recognition, misrecognition and the symbolic economy. First-order emotions are not always transvalued, and divergent experiences of the world create different 'stores' of emotions as the raw materials for our understanding of the relationship between self and world, while the transvalued emotions can themselves become stored as habitual responses.

However, this research has also found that the process of transvaluation has a key role to play in emotional responses, propelling participants away from suffering where possible, and towards that which they value. This process has become evident at the most fundamental level when we have seen people recognizing and objectifying their own experiences of misrecognition. In these instances, emotions are parsed through concerns for the self and/or the collective 'We' of which they are a part, in a process which can then shape reflexive decision-making. In a much broader sense, concern for social justice or equality has been seen to prompt compassion and empathy for those in distant places or with distant lives, which can again prompt action. Conversely, first-order emotional experiences of hurt at disrespect or of empathy for the suffering of others can create concerns, indicating the mutual shaping of emotion and cognition that Archer describes in the creation of these commitments. As has been seen throughout this thesis, it is not argued that emotional habitus ought to replace Archer's theoretical work on emotions but that it ought to be used to extend it, and that these two approaches can be happily integrated together by making specific modifications to Archer's theory of the internal conversation.

Archer insists that her modes are not "reducible" to psychological attributes but concedes that there may be a role for "personal psychology" and for "a closer specification of what makes for self-confidence", in the make-up of an autonomous reflexive (2007, pp. 194-195). It is argued here that while Archer's contextual continuities, discontinuities, incongruities and configurations of relational goods and absences appear to play a role in shaping our reflexive orientations towards the world (including that which we value), these 'psychological' underpinnings, including the social and structural experiences that can engender and maintain self-confidence, are also of primary importance. The habitual nature of these

psychological dispositions again speaks to Elder-Vass' argument of the neural pathways in which habits of thought (forms of habitus) are embedded (2007a, 2010).

(iii) Generational habitus

The participants whose case studies have been discussed here span a wide range of ages, with the eldest (Violet) born in 1928, and the youngest (Geoff) born in 1951, and generation has emerged as an important element in the trajectories of participants, in shaping social contexts and the internal habitus.

The contexts of Barbara and John's youth reflect Archer's description of the 'contextual continuity' of urban working-class communities under modernity, and the changes that they have seen speak to the ways in which this continuity is receding in conditions of late modernity. I have illustrated how this threat is experienced at the micro-level but have also illustrated the important role of habitus in understanding the effects of this and the desire for continuity, and how this further relates to experiences of misrecognition. This move from the contextual continuity of Modernity 1 to the increased diversity, opportunity and social change of Modernity 2 (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005, see also Gilleard, 2004) has been seen in the contrast between the diverse life trajectories that I have explored in the case studies, with lifeworlds shaped by very different cultural and structural contexts.

It has also been seen that the generational habitus of the baby-boomers, as described by Gilleard and Higgs, can have an enabling and amplifying effect on the 'I' of the internal conversation, supported also by generationally contingent material enablements such as increased access to higher education or grants. This finding, of a generationally contingent extension of agential possibilities, supports the argument for a 'reflexive habitus' that is described by Gilleard and Higgs as characteristic of the baby-boomer generation (2005, p. 50).

It is notable that Archer herself suggested that there is some generational component to her reflexive modes. The vast majority of her student sample were born and grew up in the 1980s and 1990s, and their early lives were shaped by a "synergy" between structural and cultural morphogenesis (2012, p. 9), leading to the claim that meta-reflexivity is beginning to predominate, "at least amongst educated young people" (p. i). She also makes a specific reference to the post-war cohorts in discussing the ways in which time periods or "epochs" are supportive of different forms of reflexivity, describing the era in which the baby boomers grew up as "probably the last in which the social order saw autonomous reflexivity in

undoubted ascendancy, communicative reflexivity quietly losing ground, and meta-reflexivity a minority practice.” (2007, p. 324). However, these observations are not synthesized with the idea of a generational habitus, nor with the deep divisions between baby-boomers and their own parents and the possibility of a ‘reflexive habitus’ that emerged within a specific generational field.

iv. Emergentism and the life course

The fourth finding is that reflections on life trajectories from the perspective of the third age can substantiate theoretical work on the emergentist nature of both reflexivity and habitus, as properties that are produced by a specific set of relations but are not reducible to any part of that set of relations. As noted in Chapter Four, this follows Elder-Vass’ definition of emergence (2010) and is informed by, and supports, his argument for an emergentist reconciliation between habitus and reflexivity working in conjunction over the course of a life (2007a, 2010, see also Lau, 2004 and Pickel, 2005 for more on the habitus as an emergent property).

Emergentism is at the heart of Archer’s argument for the importance of reflexivity, in which Personal Emergent Properties (PEPs) interact with structural and cultural emergent properties (2003, 2007, 2012). As previously described, there appears to be some slippage in Archer’s theoretical work between ‘narrative dualism’, in which structure and agency are presented as only analytically separate, and ontological dualism which frames them as ontologically separate entities. Nevertheless, reflexive capacities of individuals have been shown to be emergent properties of a person’s (ongoing) relationship with the world. Furthermore, as argued by Elder-Vass, emergentist theory is entirely compatible with Bourdieu’s description of structure, provided that we interpret his remarks on the internalisation of structure as an internalisation of the *effects* of structure (2007a, 2010). The analysis that has been presented supports this reconciliation, and the definition of habitus as an emergent property, illustrating and emphasizing the ways in which habitus is “a practical sense emergent from experience” (Lau, 2004, p. 380).

v. Dispositions in the third age

The above analysis supports the argument that was made in Chapter Four for an extension of Mouzelis’ restructuring of Bourdieu’s ‘Structure-Disposition-Practice’ schema to include Dispositions in the third age (2008). These dispositions are the product of both change and stasis over the life course, with a habitus that has been created through the life of a

Bourdieuian 'empirical individual' moving between fields (Atkinson, 2016, pp. 16-17), as the 'lifeworld' and habitus are mutually shaped and reshaped through movement along a 'now line'.

To re-iterate the argument that was put forward in Chapter Four; the case is not being made for an 'age habitus' but for individual dispositions or *habiti* that are the emergent result of accumulative experiences, including the effects of social structure, and social relations and interactions over the life course. These *habiti* also form part of collectivities that include, but are not limited to, classed and generational identities and lifestyles in the third age. They are not the generationally contingent habitus of the third age that emerged with the ageing of the baby-boomers, as described by Gilleard and Higgs (2009), but they can coincide with this. This argument is also entirely congruent with Archer's argument that the interaction (and movement) between the 'Me', 'You', 'I', and 'We' represents a "a ceaseless circling of the square" (2015, p. 113) along the 'life-line' (p. 101). It signifies an extension of this, in which the 'Me' is amplified and the unreflexive and dispositional elements of the 'stratified self' are fully acknowledged, with a habitus that has been shaped over time and partly through the internalised and sedimented effects of social structures.

vi. Identity, precarity, and divisions within the third age

This thesis has given depth to the 'consideration' of the relationship between self and world that is at the foundation of Archer's reflexivity. By tracing the theoretical debates that were introduced at the beginning of the thesis through the lives of my participants, who gave generously of their time and their life experiences, I have shown how important these concepts are in illuminating the processes of identity formation through the life course and into older age.

They help us to understand, for example, how anger at experiences of misrecognition, and disorientation caused by a reduction in contextual continuity, can help to shape frustrations and politicized resentments in older age. Similarly, a nuanced understanding of agency and reflexivity helps to account for the effects of good and bad relations, and events and experiences, on a person's sense of self into retirement and beyond. The effects of generation and class as emergent properties that together help to shape third age identities were also interwoven.

Class is, as noted in Chapter Four, "a critical factor" in the experience of old age (Walker and Foster, 2006, p. 44) and the empirical chapters have addressed issues of age, class, and identity in relation to Bourdieu's work on habitus, culture and lifestyle, through an in-depth analysis of qualitative data. This included an extended discussion of the continued relevance

of class to identity in older age and of the role of stigma. It has therefore contributed to, and extended, previous work on class and post-retirement identity by Hyde and Jones (2015), Bottero (2015), Higgs and Formosa (2015), Lopes (2015) and Formosa (2007, 2014). In a wider sense the research speaks to debates within gerontology around “successful ageing” that have been touched upon in chapters four, seven and nine in the thesis. Grenier and Phillipson in particular have integrated the concept of “precarity” into studies of ageing, arguing that inequalities and disadvantages in older age should be understood as forms of precarity and set against the assumptions of approaches that emphasize “success” in ageing. The importance of conditions that promote flourishing and diminish suffering are seen as an ethical backdrop to this (Grenier et al, 2017, Grenier and Phillipson, 2018).

The analysis in this thesis has pointed to examples of participants ageing “successfully” in which health, comparative wealth, and accumulated status and cultural capital are accompanied by positive self-feeling and an enhanced sense of agency. The ‘precarity’ that participants like John appeared to feel was related to situated identities, of the fit between self and world, and of the differential distributions of recognition and control. Moreover, social clubs, as noted, are themselves facing conditions of financial precarity, which potentially threatens important social networks and therefore the well-being of particular groups. These issues emphasise the need for a broad and varied understanding of precarity in relation to ageing, as described in recent work by Grenier et al. (2019), and for further research around the effects of globalisation and economic change on the experience of ageing in contemporary urban spaces, as argued for by Buffel and Philipson (2015).

e) Limitations to the research

There is a concern that is common to all life history research of this kind, namely the challenges of attributing causality to events that can be approached only indirectly, refracted through the memory and self-perception of participants, and dependent upon the contextually contingent process of interviewing. These concerns, which include the co-constructed nature of interviews and debates around the usefulness of the narrative approach in helping us to access the actions and reactions of past selves, have been discussed when reflecting on methodological choices in Chapter Five. It was argued that key parts of the relationship between social effects and individual actions can be understood in retrospect and via the self-explanation of participants, with a depth and resonance that is not obviated by the constructed (and co-constructed) nature of the narrative.

The tension that exists between the role of the past in the shaping of a life, exemplified in Bourdieu's description of habitus as "embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history" (1990, p. 56), and our present-day memories, may be usefully understood with reference to the distinction Bergson makes between 'duree' and 'imagination' (Santos, 2001, pp. 169-170). The former, representing "continuity in habits and forms" relates to the shaping of a self over time, and the latter refers to the memory that exists as a representation, or a 'souvenir'. However, these two entities are of course intertwined' (p. 169), and our sense of a past self that exists through memory is intimately bound up with our current identity. As Arthur Frank observes, our "narrative selves" are constructed through and within the shared (and differentially distributed) resources of pre-existing narratives, and can be both a mediated and a mediating force in the trajectory of a life (2010, pp. 3-16). The accounts that have been presented here, the elements of celebration and justification, pride and regret, have been profoundly shaped by the symbolic economy, wherein some lives are afforded more value than others. Therefore, the wider cultural processes that shape the reflections are often directly related to the data that is of interest to the study; the 'telling' cannot be fully disentangled from what is told, and itself forms part of the subject of analysis.

However, the data that have been generated, and the analysis that has been presented, are inevitably fallible, and the interpretations and representations offered here can only ever be an abstraction of the concrete experiences of lives lived from the inside. Nevertheless, the findings have been arrived at with intellectual rigour, and with the intention that this contribution will be theoretically and empirically useful and have some relevance to the formulation of policy and provision.

a) Policy implications

Tentative suggestions for the development and application of policy in respect of ageing can be made on the basis of these findings. The thesis has illustrated the fact that people in the third age live not only as their current selves but are also an historic self, a person with a history, and has underlined the relationship between life course experiences, dispositions and reflexive concerns, and the diverse and stratified nature of the post-retirement social landscape.

The importance of autobiography and memory is used in work with dementia sufferers and people who have experienced trauma, for example by "Re-Live", a theatre group based in south Wales (O'Connor and Diamond, 2017). However, the issues raised by the case studies of the lifelong relationship between negative social experiences (including trauma),

self-confidence and self-esteem, past and present selves, and the diverse nature of the third age ought to be integrated across the board into policy that focuses on wellbeing. I have made suggestions on four broad areas of concern below.

i. Third age identities as emergent properties of a life course

The first suggestion that can be made is that policy interventions must be designed in ways that account for the emergent nature of third age identities which result from accumulative experiences over the life course. This thesis has shown the importance of considering this in relation to interpersonal experiences that may enhance or diminish a positive sense of self, difference related to class (including the differential accumulation of cultural and symbolic capital), and to generation, which can be seen as a further point of cleavage within the third age.

ii. Social mobility

The analysis across the empirical chapters supports Walkerdine's critique of educational policy that focuses on 'aspiration' as a form of 'lack' in working-class households (2011, 2015). My analysis largely supports Walkerdine's observation that educational attainment is an embodied form of history which is transmitted intergenerationally and it illustrates the effects of this over the life course. It has shown the ways in which different experiences of intergenerational transmission, and of access to education when young, can shape identities into older age. This must be considered in relation to policy initiatives around education, social mobility and interventions in the third age.

iii. Community cohesion

The issue of social cohesion emerged in the second empirical chapter in this thesis and was related to fears of change and of competition over resources. It also appeared to be linked to experiences of both class and generation, for participants who were born and brought up in the conditions of Modernity 1 (Gilleard and Higgs, 2005), and speaks to the relationship between inequality, wider social cohesion, and health (Wilkinson, 1996, Blaxter, 2000).

In the analysis the issue of cohesion and disorientation in a changing neighborhood was linked to a perception of being part of a group that is devalued and is not listened to by the

local council. The findings therefore support the implementation of recent Local Government Association guidance on “building cohesive communities” (2019). This guidance notes that the EU referendum was expressive of deep divisions and discusses the contested issues of education and housing as “crucial” to cohesion (pp. 6-7). It promotes transparency in decision-making around the allocation of resources, including “myth-busting” inaccurate perceptions around social housing allocations for migrants or new residents, in order to address residents’ fears and resentments (pp. 27-28). This includes effective communication with those who may be most “disaffected”, which may involve creative approaches such as communication through peers, opportunities for open discussion of concerns, and bringing different sections of the community together in a dialogue. The part of my analysis that touched on these issues indicates that these approaches are needed and must be adopted by councils, in particular where divisions of this kind become apparent.

iv. Social networks

A report by the Centre for Ageing Better highlights the importance of relationships in later life, describing them as “what matter most to all of us in the end” (2019, p. 33). Data gathered during the thesis has pointed to the importance of both U3A and social clubs as spaces for maintaining and expanding social networks and alleviating isolation. However, as noted previously, many social clubs seem to be in a precarious position; some have closed, are closing, or must change and adapt to stay open. This can be compared with the U3A, which is oriented towards retired people who have accrued greater cultural capital over the course of their lives and which appears not to be facing the same kind of precarity. An awareness of the roles that can be played by very different civic organisations or “community hubs” (LGA, 2019, p. 46), the role that class can play in who benefits from them, and the different challenges that they may face, must be integrated into policy that seeks to address the threat of social isolation in older age.

b) Suggestions for further research

These findings have implications for further research in the areas of the life course, identity, the relationship between reflexivity and habitus, and the stratification of the third age.

This could include further research into how social class and the accumulation of cultural or economic capital shapes engagement with civic organisations, such as U3A and social clubs in retirement, and the effects of the current precarity that is faced by the latter. This is an

issue that became apparent during my fieldwork but not one that I have written about in depth, and I feel that further research is needed on this.

In terms of the theoretical arguments that have underpinned the analysis, of the relationship between emotion, recognition, generation, habitus, reflexivity, and agency; this thesis has argued for a relationship between these points but not, of course, for any of these parts to be reducible to one another. Further research could usefully look more at points of dissonance, or of weaker connections, in the relationships that have been explored. For example, of the moments in which reflexive or agentic action can be seen to precede increases in confidence, or the determination that may be strengthened by adversity as well as by the support of others. I have pointed to this in the discussion of 'enforced independence', the effects of discontinuity that can lead to increased confidence, and in the sections on resistance and anger, but I believe that this topic would benefit from further investigation in the context of life course experiences and third age identities.

c) Concluding remarks

To conclude, the overarching finding of this thesis is that it is necessary to fully integrate the concepts of reflexivity and habitus, in a dialectical relationship over time, in order to illuminate the past trajectories and current identities of people in the third age. Furthermore, that Honneth's work on diverse forms of recognition, Crossley's and Burkitt's work on emotion and the emotional habitus, and Gilleard and Higg's work on generational habitus can enhance and extend this accommodation, which can also contribute to an understanding of processes of social mobility. This approach maintains the importance of the internal conversation but with specific amendments,

I have shown that recognition in relation to the symbolic order, affective relations and physical integrity, emotional and generational habitus, and Archer's relational configurations and discontinuities, all appear to have a causal effect on our agentic capacities, that can be both separate and mutually constitutive. Furthermore, that Archer's theoretical work on the internal conversation, personal morphogenesis, and the diverse nature of motivations and concerns, is necessary to understand the shape of a trajectory and an identity, but that these must be integrated with notions of habitus, recognition, generation, and the enduring effects of class and other forms of social stratification. It requires therefore that amendments be made to the roles of the internal entities known as 'Me' and 'myself'.

Reflexivity and habitus have been shown to exist in a relationship that is complex and recursive. They are also emergent properties generated by multiple influences and events that exist in a particular relationship with each other over time. This creates a disposition or

habitus in the third age that is partly a product of life course events but that is not foreclosed or immutable.

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Appendices

These questions were used only as general prompts for information that may or may not come up naturally in the narrative but that I wished to ask about if not, rather than as a more formal interview schedule. I have given some examples questions below (not necessarily in the order that they were raised), but the phrasing was adapted as appropriate. Often topics were covered in the preceding narrative without prompting, and they were also usually supplemented with other questions that were specific to the different narratives.

1. How long have you been coming to the club (where applicable)?
2. Do you own your own home? Car?
3. Questions regarding income
4. Did your parents own home? Work? Did they have an idea for what you were going to do when older?
5. Do you tend to mull things over/have conversation in own head?
6. Do you tend to talk decisions through with people?
7. Processes of decision-making (sometimes cite specific choice they have mentioned, such as moving from one job to another).
8. Holidays?
9. Voting?

10. How/why did you decide to retire?
11. What is being retired like?
12. What makes you most proud?
13. What do you regret?
14. Religion?
15. Guiding principle for life?/ What is most meaningful in your life?
16. Sense of time? – do you think a lot about the past or the future?
17. Feel a connection to previous self?
18. What has changed most over the course of your life?
19. Class identity: if the participant has already mentioned it then I would refer back to this and ask them what this means to them/how they understand it/if they feel that it is still applicable to them. If not, then (over the course of the interviews) I developed an approach whereby I would refer to it having been discussed in previous narratives and ask if that is something that they relate to.

Appendix 4: Letter of permission from the ethics board.



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6th November 2014

Our ref: SREC/1306

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Dear Elenyd

Your project entitled "*Reflexivity and Identity in the Third Age*" has now been approved by the School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of Cardiff University and you can now commence the project.

If you make any substantial changes with ethical implications to the project as it progresses you need to inform the SREC about the nature of these changes. Such changes could be: 1) changes in the type of participants recruited (e.g. inclusion of a group of potentially vulnerable participants), 2) changes to questionnaires, interview guides etc. (e.g. including new questions on sensitive issues), 3) changes to the way data are handled (e.g. sharing of non-anonymised data with other researchers).

In addition, if anything occurs in your project from which you think the SREC might usefully learn, then please do share this information with us.

All ongoing projects will be monitored every 12 months and it is a condition of continued approval that you complete the monitoring form.

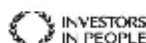
Please inform the SREC when the project has ended.

Please use the SREC's project reference number above in any future correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Professor Adam Hedgecoe
Chair of School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

cc: E Renton
Supervisors: I R Jones & J Latimer



Registered Charity No. 1136855
Clasen Gofrestrwydlyd 7110 1136855

Appendix 5: Information sheet

Life Stories study – Information Sheet

This interview is part of a study exploring people's life stories, how they think about their choices, and their sense of their own identity. It is part of research undertaken for a PhD in Social Science at Cardiff University. The contents of the interview are completely confidential. Information and quotes may be used in a thesis, conference presentations, and in journal articles; in all of these instances the identity of the participants will be anonymised.

If you would like to stop the interview at any time, to withdraw from the study, or to not answer a question, then you are free to do so without feeling that you need to give a reason.

Further information on the study can be requested from the researcher:

Elenyd Whitfield

PhD student

Department of Social Sciences

Cardiff University

1-3 Museum Place,

Cardiff,

CF10 3BD

If you have concerns concerning the conduct of the study, then please contact the Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee:

Professor Adam Hedgecoe,

Director, Cardiff Centre for the Ethical & Social Aspects of Genomics and Epigenetics

(Cesagene),

School of Social Sciences

Cardiff University

Glamorgan Building

Cardiff

CF10 3WT Tel: 44+ (0)29 2087

Appendix 6: Consent form

Agreement to participate in a research interview

- I declare that I have read the information sheet and I understand the nature of the study
- I understand that my participation in the study will be confidential and anonymous
- I understand that I am able to refuse to answer any specific questions, take a break or withdraw from the study at any point
- I understand that the information that I provide will be used as part of a PhD thesis (stored in Cardiff University's library), may be used in conference presentations, and may be published in the form of a research journal or book.

I hereby give full consent to participate in the research project and I give my permission for the results of the study to be published.

Please tick the box ☐ and sign and date below if you are happy to participate in the research project and you agree with the terms outlined above.

Name of participant:

Gender:

Age:

Previous job role:

Signature:

Date:

Name of researcher: Elenyd Whitfield

Appendix 7: An overview of interview responses to the topic of class

Participants recruited through social clubs				
Name	Age at time of interview	Occupation prior to retirement	Class identity as defined by the participant	Further comments
Female participants ordered by age				
Jenny	64	Legal secretary (previously small-business owner, of a café, and before that, briefly, a club).	Did not answer directly.	When asked about class identity Jenny spoke of her family background, specifically father's career as a 'bookie'.
Joanie	78	Typist	Dis-identified.	When asked, Joanie attempted to relate the concept of class to her own life but decided that although she has "a good income" she was doubtful that she would be middle-class "even so". Decided that "I'm <i>me</i> !". Said that class is not something that she thinks of - she finds it easier to talk to some people than others, but "it's not because I'm <i>snobbish</i> though". Spoke of disliking "snobs" who had experienced social mobility by having "been lucky enough in later life" and who look down on others.
Barbara	79	Auxiliary nurse	Originally identified as working class, then, on reflection, dis-identified	Barbara did not speak in explicit class terms until prompted. She then spoke of class in relation to the neighbourhood solidarity in childhood, then identified as 'working-class' then as 'lower-class'. Barbara then decided that there was no such thing as class, but also that there was 'a scrounger class'.
Male participants ordered by age				

Geoff	64	Independent Financial Advisor	Dis-identified.	Geoff rejected class labels. He felt that being gay was more important in his self-perception. He saw himself as having been part of an egalitarian cross-class community. However, he also spoke of gentrification and of upward mobility
Gareth	74	Committee member of the General Medical Council, prior to this he was a Personnel Director for a company.	Middle-class	When asked, Gareth talked of growing up in a middle-class home, “suppose[s]” that he comes from a middle-class background since “it’s certainly not working-class”. He said that he doesn’t have the “peg” and had never thought about it.
Jack	76	Company Secretary	Used to feel middle-class when he was working but does not any longer.	When asked about class Jack saw his identity as associated with his previous working life, as a Company Secretary managing “40-50 people” - “I used to think I was middle-class”. Does not feel it is relevant to his current life. Clearly valued social status, saw class as related to being ‘posh’, and being middle-class as possessing social status and admirable personal attributes.
Rob	76	‘Accredited Police Station Representative’ on behalf of a firm of solicitors for five years. Prior to this he was a Police Sergeant.	Middle-class	When asked, Rob said that he is ‘not ashamed’ to say he was working-class, and that he ‘still has working-class feelings’, but that he is middle-class. He also said that he dislikes people “who think they’re better than they are...Because half of them are as thick as hell; they <i>think</i> they got something, and they haven’t, they’ve got nothing.”

John	79	Truck driver	Vehemently working class	John referred to himself as working-class unprompted. He related class to a lack of choice in own life trajectory, and to lack of money and respect.
Harry	79	Manager of bingo halls	working class/ middle-class	When asked, Harry stated that he always calls himself working-class but has “got on since”. Settled on a liminal identity.

Participants recruited through University of the Third Age				
Female participants ordered by age				
Name	Age at time of interview	Occupation prior to retirement	Class identity as defined by the participant	Further comments
Sarah	67	Social worker: Department Manager at time of retirement.	Middle-class	When asked, Sarah said that she “still felt working-class” but knew herself to be middle-class now. She cited home-ownership and a ‘professional career’ as examples of this.

Angela	70	Accounts clerk (telephoning customers/potential customers).	Feels that she is in between working-class and middle-class.	When prompted on the subject Angela said that she had always thought of herself as working-class. When asked to explain, she reflected on what the different classes could mean and was unsure exactly where she would fit. Reflected on father's work and what that might mean. Feels she is "still on that same rung really", and "I still think I'm an ordinary sort of person...run of the mill". Placed herself somewhere between "lower-class" and "middle-class", with much hesitation.
Alison	85	Teacher	Very ambivalent.	Alison described (unprompted) growing up in 'middle-class' home, in a very "middle-class" social network. Focused on the social structural changes that she has witnessed. Spoke in classed terms about the past and about "very posh" people in the present but was not comfortable with seeing herself as having a current class identity.
Violet	86	Teacher	Middle-class	Violet mentioned class unprompted; was concerned at possible exclusionary nature of U3A as a middle-class space
Jessica	91	Line manager with British Telecom.	Middle-class	When asked (in an e-mail exchange), Jessica said that she would consider herself middle-class: "Yes I think I would call myself middle class now It

				is a feeling almost. I love where I am living. I have been able to enjoy my retirement and have things like very nice". Mentioned going on cruise holidays in relation to this.
Male participants ordered by age				
Robert	69	Pharmacist, in a self-owned pharmacy.	Middle-class	Robert referred to having a middle-class identity without being asked, and of his parents having been "very ordinary middle-class people", but also acknowledged class as a taboo subject, saying "mustn't speak about class".
Brian	74	Solicitor and lecturer.	Middle-class	When asked, Brian stated that he felt both middle-class and working class but has "lived very much a middle-class lifestyle".
Jonathon	72	Social worker	Middle-class	Jonathon described growing up in "a respectable working-class family" unprompted, and saw this as related to his parent's occupations. Associates being middle-class now with cultural interests.
Glenn	70	Consultant Project Manager.	Dis-identified.	Glenn used class terms in his narrative unprompted (but stated that it was for the benefit of the interview). He also consciously rejected class – "it's just nonsense".

David	85	Lecturer	Very hesitant, eventually answered in a way that implicitly classified him.	David began his narrative by speaking of the significant class-related structural change that has occurred during his lifetime (unprompted). When the question of current class identity was pursued, he reluctantly conceded that “it’s still there”, for example, in noticing “the way someone uses a fork”.
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