

**The Cultural
Representation of
Older People:
Ageism and the National
Health Service**

**PhD Thesis
2015
Sociology**

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Acknowledgements

The supervisory team of Doctor Luke Sloan and Professor Adam Hedgecoe provided a perfect blend of criticism and motivation, for which I owe a deep debt of gratitude. Before them, however, was Doctor Win Tadd, without whom my interest in the topic, and my self-belief, would be so much the lesser. I also wish to thank my family, Kadesha and my peers across different backgrounds for their moral support, well wishing and listening.

Abstract

The care of older people in the hospital setting has been the subject of increasing scrutiny from policymakers, researchers, philosophers and age campaigners over the last twenty years. However, in spite of continued attention in organisational training, dignity campaigns and government policy, reports of undignified care continue to surface through notable incidents such as the Mid Staffordshire Public Inquiry. This study examined the role that the cultural representation of older people may have on the attitudes of National Health Service (NHS) staff towards them, hypothesising that this influence can be as meaningful as that gathered in the work or social settings. The research adopted a mixed methods approach incorporating a national survey of NHS staff cultural consumption habits, multi-modal discourse analysis of cultural texts typically consumed by that population, and semi-structured interviews with NHS staff. The findings show that older people are generally underrepresented from large swathes of culture, and when represented there is a tendency towards either negative or positive stereotypes. Market trends and operational processes within the cultural industries help to explain the variation of representation on offer, with audience segmentation being a key factor in cases where older people were absent or negatively stereotyped. These representations were found to inform the interviewees' perceptions of the older population, although this was also mediated by experiences gathered on the job, in training or through social engagement. While efforts are ongoing to foster intergenerational understanding in NHS organisational culture and local communities, the unique position of the cultural industries makes similar interventions in this field more challenging.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This study builds upon a range of academic research and public interest into the dignified care of older people in the United Kingdom. The first major push for improvement in this area came through Martin Bright's 1997 series of articles for *The Observer* and an associated Dignity On The Ward campaign (Bright, 2001). This served as a call to arms to many relatives, carers and older people who also spoke of their own negative experiences within the healthcare setting. In response to this, the government commissioned an independent report from the Health Advisory Service (HAS) entitled *Not Because They Are Old* (HAS, 1998). This highlighted a severe lack of dignity and general poor quality of care on acute wards. Subsequent reports from *Help The Aged* (1999) and the *Standing Nursing and Midwifery Advisory Committee* (2001) evidenced recurring problems in both how care was provided and how patients felt they were treated. Since this initial work was carried out, nearly 20 years ago, numerous policy drives, dignity campaigns, training initiatives and corporate policy directives have been implemented to address the issue. However, the recent work of Tadd et al (2011a; 2011b), Hillman et al (2013) and Calnan et al (2013) has helped to highlight the ongoing deficiencies within the healthcare sector, most clearly evidenced by the *Mid Staffordshire Inquiry into the abuse and neglect of older people within that particular NHS Trust* (The Mid Staffordshire Foundation Trust Public Inquiry, 2013). The emergent picture, then, is of persistent infringements to the dignified care of older people in the hospital setting, set against almost two decades of effort to reverse the issue. Generally, this effort has explored the behaviours and practices of healthcare practitioners, as well as occupational and organisational factors that may influence them, such as corporate culture and staff training. This study expands this focus to incorporate long-established research strands such as dignity theory, organisational sociology and health research alongside theories on the cultural representation of marginalised groups. In doing so, it addresses what some have perceived as an underlying institutional and cultural ageism (see Edgar, 2004; Oliver, 2010; and Tadd et al, 2011a; 2011b).

This introductory chapter will establish some of the broad societal trends underpinning concerns in the area, including ideas of the ageing population and the health characteristics of older people. This will lead into an overview of the thesis, outlining the chapters to follow while adding greater depth to the theories and ideas that the study touches upon.

Population Ageing

Dignity, both in terms of its concept and application, has developed rapidly over the last fifteen years or so. Having initially emerged as a topic of interest at a philosophical level, it now reaches into the academic fields of nursing, social science, social policy, medicine and bioethics among many others. Academic interest has been particularly notable with regard to the dignified care of older people, in part as a result of awareness of sharp demographic shifts to the population. In the Key Issues for the New Parliament 2010 (Mellows-Facer, 2010) that set the parliamentary priorities for the newly elected Liberal Democrat and Conservative coalition government, the ageing population were highlighted as among the most pressing problems:

“10 million people in the UK are over 65 years old. The latest projections are for 5.5 million more elderly people in 20 years time and the number will have nearly doubled to around 19 million by 2050” (Cracknell, 2010; 44)

The complexity of the ageing population is further heightened by more specific increases in the number of ‘very old’ people with those aged over 80 years expected to double by 2030 and reach 8 million by 2050 (ibid). When these statistics are compared to equivalent figures at the inception of the NHS, the scale of the challenges facing the health service become more apparent. In 1948, 48 percent of people died before the age of 65 with that figure having fallen to 16 percent as of 2011 (Tadd et al, 2011a; 24). The impact of this on the NHS is of particular concern given that older people are the heaviest users of the health service (DH, 2008) meaning that the ‘average spending for retired households is nearly double that for non-retired households’ (ibid). Stemming from these governmental concerns over ageing has been a surge in academic research conducted on the topic. One of the

most noteworthy areas within this has been the potential impact on patient dignity that may arise from the additional pressure of the ageing population. Their status as a rapidly expanding and vulnerable group now places them at the precipice of a struggling healthcare system. As Tadd et al (2011a) have noted, the presentation of statistics on the ageing population often also use ageist language or perceive the demographic shift as problematic. Cracknell (2010) makes associations with public spending that imply older people will become a serious economic burden. This point is more straightforwardly made through references to the 'silver-tsunami' of older people (Davies, 2010), the demographic 'time-bomb' (Faith, 2010) and of the baby boomers bankrupting the UK (Vallely, 2010). Each of these reports place the impact of older people on the health services central to their accounts. This touches on issues regarding the representation of older people that will be returned to throughout the study. Nevertheless, it is worth making the point here that growth in ageing is rarely celebrated (Tadd, 2000). Generally, as shown in the work of Stratton and Tadd (2005), fear of ageing predominates both in terms of potential impact on public services, as well as at a wider, social level.

Health Characteristics of Older People

As will be discussed throughout the study, the cultural representation of older people is commonly associated with images of senescence, dependence and ill health (see Featherstone and Wernick, 1995). In order to understand how accurately these representations reflect the actual health characteristics of older people it is important to establish what these are. This section will use the health surveys for England and Wales as a means to access this information.

Health Survey for England 2012 and Welsh Health Survey 2012

The most recent Health Survey for England was carried out in 2012 and offered a wide array of statistics relating to the general health of the population. The details of these measures for those aged 65 years old or over are presented in the table below:

	Age Group		
	65-74 (%)	75-85 (%)	85+ (%)
MEN			
Mobility			
No problems with walking about	74	61	53
Some problems walking about	26	39	47
Confined to bed	0	0	0
Self-care			
No problems with self-care	90	90	85
Some problems with washing / dressing	10	10	15
Unable to wash or dress self	1	0	0
Usual activities			
No problems with performing usual activities	79	75	64
Some problems performing usual activities	18	23	32
Unable to perform usual activities	3	3	4
Pain / Discomfort			
No pain or discomfort	58	47	43
Moderate pain or discomfort	36	48	53
Extreme pain or discomfort	6	5	4
Anxiety / Depression			
Not anxious or depressed	85	81	86
Moderately anxious or depressed	13	17	12
Extremely anxious or depressed	1	1	1
WOMEN			
Mobility			
No problems with walking about	70	53	31
Some problems walking about	30	47	69
Confined to bed	0	0	0
Self-care			
No problems with self-care	93	88	69
Some problems with washing / dressing	6	11	30
Unable to wash or dress self	0	1	1
Usual activities			
No problems with performing usual activities	76	63	46
Some problems performing usual activities	22	32	46
Unable to perform usual activities	2	5	8
Pain / Discomfort			
No pain or discomfort	47	35	38
Moderate pain or discomfort	46	55	53
Extreme pain or discomfort	7	10	9
Anxiety / Depression			
Not anxious or depressed	78	73	72
Moderately anxious or depressed	20	26	26
Extremely anxious or depressed	2	1	2

TABLE 1: EQ-5D DIMENSIONS, BY AGE AND SEX - AGED 65 YEARS AND OVER ONLY

The overriding picture of older people that this generates is far removed from the commonly evoked image of widespread dependence and ill health. The majority of men and women show no mobility issues until reaching over

85 years of age, cite no problems with self-care and remain capable of performing their usual activities (HSCIC, 2013). Large proportions of those 65 years or over also reported no pain or discomfort, with on average only five per cent of each age group expressing extreme pain or discomfort (ibid). An equivalent health survey to that carried out in England was conducted throughout Wales during 2012. The Welsh Health Survey 2012 (Welsh Government, 2013) surveyed 15,687 adults enquiring as to health status, illnesses and other conditions. The emergent picture in Wales again contradicted the stereotypical association between poor health and old age with 61 percent of those aged 65 years or over saying their general health status was excellent, very good or good (ibid; 39).

Nevertheless, it is widely acknowledged that a decline in function is much more common when the 'fourth age' is entered (Stahelin, 2005). For those entering this phase it is common to encounter age-related conditions likely to be long-term or chronic. As Oliver (2010) has stated, the conditions are often multiple and can result in functional, sensory or cognitive impairment; increased dependence, frailty and disability; need for specialist equipment or housing; reliance on social, family or institutional care; and using a variety of services. He also notes that 80 percent of the medicines bill and 70 percent of the health budget is spent on older people (ibid). Again, this demonstrates the relevance of older people at an economic and policy level, as well as the reason for concerns over the ageing population and its impact on public health services.

Study Overview

The previous sections have introduced some of the key factors and concerns associated with this study: the demographic trends of the ageing population; the health characteristics of this group; and the NHS landscape providing the care for older people. With these underlying issues established, this section will show how the thesis will draw from these so as to offer new insights into the persistent dignity problem found in the care of older people.

This process will begin in Chapter 2 where further consideration will be given to the concept of dignity and the dignified care of older people. Taking its cue from the initially philosophical emphasis embodied by the likes of Nordenfelt (2004; 2009), this will broaden out to explore the practical application of dignity in the healthcare setting. After highlighting ongoing policy drives, organisational emphasis and training developments, the chapter will then begin to explore the role that both institutional and cultural ageism may have on the persistence of the dignity problem. Chapter 3 will further develop the theme of cultural ageism and place this within the context of cultural representation. Here, arguments will be introduced relating to the influence of cultural representation on audience attitudes and, in relation to older people, ageism. The specific role of the cultural industries in the production of cultural texts will be introduced in regard to the production of cultural texts and the meaning-making processes associated with this.

The methodology of the study will be the focus of Chapter 4, introducing the mixed methods approach that was deployed, as well as the epistemological and ontological orientation of the project. Three sequential research strands will be introduced; a quantitative survey of NHS staff, discourse analysis of cultural texts, and qualitative semi-structured interviews. Issues relating to study design, data collection and data analysis for each distinct research stage will be outlined at this stage. Other methodological considerations such as ethical approval and NHS R&D approval for the study will also be discussed.

Chapter 5 will outline the results of the quantitative survey of NHS staff. Based on the requirements of the study these are mainly descriptive in nature, outlining the demographic make-up of the sample and the cultural texts that were consumed by them. The sequential flow of the methodology will be returned to here, with the texts selected from the survey response being shown to feed into the discourse analysis.

The three chapters following this each deal with the thematic findings gathered from the discourse analysis and semi-structured interviews with NHS staff. The first of these, Chapter 6, serves as an introduction to the wider findings that follow. This incorporates discussion of the discursive context behind the cultural texts under analysis, as well as the demographic details and cultural consumption habits of the staff that were interviewed. The chapter will also introduce one of the overriding findings emerging from the study, the broad absence of older people in large swathes of popular culture. With these foundations laid, Chapter 7 will explore how older people were culturally represented and perceived by staff positively, exploring themes of active ageing, comedic representations, and portrayals of family matriarchs or patriarchs, among others. The counterpoint to this will follow in Chapter 8 where negative stereotypes of older people will be drawn from the discourse analysis and interview data. This will demonstrate the persistent representations of vulnerability and physical decline, as well as long-established older character tropes such as the busybody, prude or 'dirty old man'.

Chapter 9 builds on the thematic findings to discuss variation in the representation of older people between cultural texts. In doing so, key ideas relating to the cultural industries will be introduced, such as market segmentation. This will be shown to limit the representation of older people within certain cultural products, particularly those associated with youth or celebrity culture. Beyond this, variation in the quality of representation will also be talked through, suggesting a new binary of 'tokenistic' and 'deeper' representations of older people as an aid to future analysis. The role that cultural representations play in the perceptions of older people held by NHS staff will also be considered, alongside other sites of attitude generation such as work and the family. The final chapter, Chapter 10, concludes the thesis by reiterating the research questions introduced in the methodology chapter. Each of these will be discussed in turn, demonstrating the extent that the research has addressed them. Following this, the contributions of this study

to the field will be reflected upon, as well as potential avenues for future research emerging from the findings.

Chapter 2: Older People Dignity and Healthcare

Introduction

This study builds upon a wide range of academic research into the dignified care of older people in the United Kingdom. While this issue has been prevalent over the last twenty years and has resulted in numerous policy drives, dignity campaigns, training initiatives and corporate policy directives, there still appear to be persistent issues with regard to how older people are treated in the hospital setting. The recent work of Tadd et al (2011a; 2011b; 2012), Hillman et al (2013) and Calnan et al (2013) helped to illustrate many of the deficiencies within the care system and specifically looked at 'health care practitioners' behaviours and practices in relation to dignified care' as well as 'the occupational, organizational and cultural factors that impact on care' (Tadd et al, 2012). However, while these recent studies have examined cultural factors, these have generally been restricted to those operating at an organisational level through documents such as the NHS Constitution (DH, 2009a), institutional values and patient commitments. This study broadens this focus to encompass the theoretical strands associated with the care of older people in the hospital setting, such as health research, dignity theory and organisational sociology, and also how this intertwines with theories on the cultural representation of marginalised groups. A full discussion of these cultural factors can be found in Chapter 3. At this stage, however, it is first important to outline the NHS landscape under investigation, as well as to discuss the concept and application of dignity. Beyond this, the role that ageist attitudes may have on the delivery of poor quality care will also be assessed. On this basis, the remainder of the chapter will be split into the following three sections:

- The NHS Landscape
- Dignity: Concept and Application
- Ageism and the Persistent Dignity Problem

The NHS Landscape

Prior to commencing a discussion on the philosophical and practical aspects of dignified care, it is first necessary to provide some context on the care setting itself. This study takes hospital wards as its primary focus, meaning an understanding of the NHS landscape is a prerequisite to assessing how dignity can come to be compromised in such settings. This section will look to outline some key institutional features of the NHS in both England and Wales, highlighting much of the organisational effort to embed dignity within its work culture.

NHS Landscape: England

The NHS in England has the Constitution (DH, 2009) governing its values, commitments and the rights that patients, public and staff can expect. The document also outlines the roles and responsibilities required from public, patients and staff to enable fair and effective operation of services. These include principles such as the NHS providing a comprehensive service, irrespective of age, gender and other demographic status, as well as putting the 'patients at the heart of everything it does' (DH, 2009). Alongside these seven principles, NHS England also has six underlying values that should 'underpin everything it does' (ibid). These consist of 'working together for patients', 'respect and dignity', 'commitment to quality of care', 'compassion', 'improving lives' and 'everyone counts' (ibid). In terms of service provision, the NHS deals with over one million patients every 36 hours (NHS Choices, 2014a). The average daily number of beds open overnight was measured as 135,530 in December 2013 (NHS England, 2013). NHS England forms the largest part of the system with the population covered being around 53 million. In order to provide these services, the organisation employs 1.35m people (ibid).

The structure of the NHS in England has undergone numerous changes since its inception with the most recent changes coming in force during April 2013 (NHS Choices, 2014b) as a result of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 (DH, 2012). In the old system there were a 'wide range of NHS health trusts managing NHS hospital care in England, including community care and

mental health services' (ibid). However, the new system expects all NHS Trusts to transfer to foundation status by the end of 2014. Further changes to pre-existent structures have also been made in terms of the Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs). Following the Health and Social Care Act 2012 these have now been superseded by the newly formed Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) (NHS Choices, 2014b). With such fundamental shifts taking place, the Health and Social Care Act 2012 has come to be regarded as the 'biggest upheaval of the NHS in its 63 year history' (Delamothe and Godlee, 2011; 237). In this sense, the landscape of the NHS England is characterised by the maintenance of its governing principles as shown in the NHS Constitution, while simultaneously seeing far-reaching changes to how its services are delivered. The potential impact of these changes on the dignity of patients, and particularly older people, is yet to be comprehensively examined.

NHS Landscape: Wales

While NHS Wales does not follow the same Constitution as NHS England, it still abides to a set of core values, as outlined below:

- Putting quality and safety above all else: providing high value evidence based care for our patients at all times
 - Integrating improvement into everyday working and eliminating harm, variation and waste
 - Focusing on prevention, health improvement and inequality as key to sustainable development, wellness and wellbeing for future generations of the people of Wales
 - Working in true partnerships with partners and organisations and with our staff
 - Investing in our staff through training and development, enabling them to influence decisions and providing them with the tools, systems and environment to work safely and effectively
- (NHS Wales, 2014)

The Welsh Government (2014a) states that nearly 3 million people live in Wales and use the services of the NHS. Each year, NHS Wales performs over 700,000 first outpatient appointments, 600,000 inpatient and day-cases and more than 1 million people are seen in Accident & Emergency departments (Welsh Government, 2014b). In terms of bed numbers, as of 2013 the services provided 11,495 beds with an occupancy rate of 86.3 per cent (Welsh Government, 2014a). These services employ more than 70,000 staff and are split between seven health boards and three NHS Trusts:

Health Boards	NHS Trusts
Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board Aneurin Bevan University Health Board Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Cardiff & Vale University Health Board Cwm Taf University Health Board Hywel Dda University Health Board Powys Teaching Health Board	Public Health Wales Velindre NHS Trust Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust

TABLE 2: WELSH HEALTH BOARDS AND NHS TRUSTS

Recent legislation such as the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (Welsh Government, 2014c), the National Health Service Finance (Wales) Act 2014 (Welsh Government, 2014d) and the Health and Social Care Act 2012 (DH, 2012) made some amendments to the existing operations of NHS Wales. Broadly, though, their directives and responsibilities are still covered by the National Health Services Act (Wales) 2006 (Welsh Government, 2006).

Dignity: Concept and Application

The literature addressing dignity, both in terms of its concept and application, has expanded rapidly over the last fifteen years. This section will explore these aspects through an initial focus on the philosophical context around dignity and dignified care, before more fully examining recent academic research into practical applications of dignity in the healthcare setting.

The Concept of Dignity

The philosophical concept of dignity is rooted in the work of Kant whose moral theorising regarded human beings as having 'intrinsic worth' based on their capacity to make rational decisions and guide their own conduct (Rachels, 1995; 114). Rachels states that a key facet of this comes with Kant's assertion that one should 'act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means' (Kant, quoted in Rachels, 1995; 114). When unpicking this, Rachels argues that Kant's intention is to highlight that the manipulation of other human beings, even for positive ends, is morally unacceptable and an infringement of their dignity (1995; 117). On this basis, the suggested implication is that 'we have a strict duty of beneficence toward other persons' that involves promoting their welfare, respecting their rights and avoiding their harm (ibid). This philosophical assumption still underpins much of the current work within the field of dignity theory. Numerous overviews of the concept of dignity have been published in the last ten years offering detailed coverage of historic and recent developments in the field (see Jacelon et al, 2004; Jacobson, 2007; Anderberg et al, 2007; Griffin-Heslin, 2005; Coventry, 2006; Fenton and Mitchell, 2002; Gallagher et al, 2008; Bridges et al, 2009). That said, the specific dignity demands of certain social groups and settings have resulted in the requirement for a more nuanced contemporary view of what the concept entails.

Of particular importance to this project are the characteristics of dignity commonly associated with the healthcare setting, and specifically relating to older people. One notable contributor in this area is Nordenfelt (2002; 2004) who developed a widely referenced typology of dignity incorporating the following four categories:

- The dignity of merit – this is associated with social status and an individual's economic position.
- The dignity of moral stature – this emphasises the importance of an individual's autonomy and integrity.

- The dignity of identity – this relates to an individual’s self-respect and perception.
- Universal human dignity – the inalienable value of human beings.

In relation to older people, many of the reported problems are associated with the dignity of identity, defined by Nordenfelt as what ‘we attach to ourselves as integrated and autonomous persons, persons with a history and persons with a future’ (2004; 75). One important distinction to be made is between the universal human dignity enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and the other, more variable types of dignity. While universal human dignity is morally intractable and applicable equally to all humans, the dignity of identity can be ‘easily shattered’ by the actions of others (ibid). Edgar (2004) has built upon this to look specifically at the dignity of identity as it applies in the healthcare setting. While acknowledging the correlation between poor quality care and illness or disability, he asserts that this should be regarded as ripe for improvement rather than as an inevitable relationship. Interventions at an organisational level and with regard to staff training are suggested as tangible avenues to positively influence the care of vulnerable or dependent patients (2003; 120).

Pellegrino (2005) offers a similar division in his own theorising on dignity. Much like Nordenfelt’s notion of universal human dignity, Pellegrino’s concept of inherent dignity relates to an absolute and essential element of being human (ibid). However, this operates in contrast to imputed dignity that is characterised by degrees of interpretation, arbitrariness and variability. While commending the moral reasoning behind inherent dignity, Pellegrino importantly asserts that positive dignity interventions are more successful when tackling imputed dignity. Those imputed with little dignity are more vulnerable than other groups given that they can be ‘deprived of their lives when they are a burden, used for experimental purposes or discriminated against when they compete for justice’ (Pellegrino, 2005; 479). The majority of these infringements on an individual’s imputed dignity come through the direct action or inaction of others, again offering scope for interventions through education or training. Another theoretical perspective

worth evaluating is that of Kottow (2004) who argued that issues of vulnerability and integrity be integrated alongside broader notions of dignity. This is of particular note to the care of older people where perceptions of vulnerability and compromises to individual identity are commonplace. However, Kottow is keen to state that age, disability and illness do not necessarily result in a lack of dignity. Rather, this makes the behaviour of healthcare practitioners all the more important in delivering dignified care. With a strong moral argument, Kottow argues that illness and immobility should be treated with 'tolerance, patience and when not removable, with resignation' (2004; 285).

Pulling together these various understandings of dignity, Milton (2008) has reiterated the manner that dignity in the healthcare setting can be both enhanced and diminished by those providing care:

'Certain actions may affirm a sense of dignity, while other chosen actions may cause a lack of self-esteem or shatter self-respect. These notions place importance on the healthcare practitioner's expert thought and actions as paramount to ensure that human dignity remains intact for persons who are considered dependent or vulnerable in various healthcare settings' (2008; 208)

While the theoretical approaches outlined previously are looking to establish a network of rights for those requiring care, Milton (2008) and Rowson (2007) argue that this can prompt misunderstandings. One of the key issues emerging from the literature is the difficulty of measuring dignity in practice. In spite of the debate surrounding the issue, dignity still remains an elusive and ambiguous concept for which hard-and-fast rules appear inappropriate, particularly in the healthcare setting (Griffin-Heslin, 2005). The next subsection will explore some of the research that has attempted to tackle this problem.

Empirical Dignity Research

As well as the philosophical theorising offered previously, empirical research into the dignified care of older people has also grown rapidly over the last ten

years. This has largely been characterised by a marrying of the concept's philosophical foundations with practical recommendations on what dignity entails for older patients in the healthcare setting. Much of this work emerged following the focus group study of Bayer et al (2005) in which older people identified undignified care as a major area of concern. The analysis emerging from this saw that dignity had been criticised as an esoteric concept that was hard to define and apply in practical environments, but one that remained particularly problematic for older people. In a follow-up paper, Calnan et al (2006) noted that 'most participants could give examples of how they or someone close to them had been the recipient of undignified care' (2006; 365). The Dignity and Older Europeans study, in spite of focussing on life more broadly than that experienced in healthcare institutions, continually offered responses related to the care setting such as a lack of privacy, issues around bodily integrity, shame and humiliation (Tadd et al, 2005a). Respondents offered specific instances where dignity could be compromised including using the toilet, washing, dressing, and ensuring curtains were drawn (ibid). Tadd and Bayer (2006), along with Calnan et al (2005), also point toward further areas identified by patients as being problematic. These include failing to respect patient autonomy, the gender of the caregiver, the use of first names or casual ways of addressing patients, and the patient feeling that they were a burden to the caregiver. A further study by Hoy et al (2007) examining care providers' understanding of older people's dignity found similar issues emerging with autonomy, identity and worthiness being returned as the three primary themes that can influence a person's feeling of dignity.

This initial raft of academic research helped to promote dignity as an issue at both a governmental and organisational level, prompting various campaigns to affect change. However, the continued interest in the topic revealed ongoing reports of undignified care. One exploratory study emerging from this was Matiti and Trorey's (2008) set of interviews with older hospital patients on what dignity meant to them. The project emerged in response to a perceived lack of clarity in organisational campaigns which saw each

patients' medical notes have the phrase 'maintain dignity at all times' but little further instruction as to how this could be achieved (ibid; 2716). The study identified some of the key concerns that older people had in relation to dignity as: privacy – particularly when using the toilet, confidentiality, communication, respect and the forms of address being used (ibid). Subsequent studies have generated similar lists of dignity-based infringements with the likes of Whitehead and Wheeler (2008), Baillie (2007; 2009) and Jonasson et al (2010) all overlapping closely.

More recently, Tadd et al's (2011a) ethnographic study of acute NHS Trusts further helped to reiterate similar issues using observation on hospital wards as a method of data collection. The study identified a comprehensive list of potential compromises to the dignity of older people, as well as guidance as to what good quality care would entail, gathered directly from the hospital setting. One of the key themes emerging from this, encapsulating and expanding upon many of the dignity issues already outlined, was the value of seeing the person (ibid). Taking the interactions between staff and patients as its focus, it emphasised the need for greater education on the specific requirements of quality care for older people. These included:

“Respectful communication; respecting privacy; promoting autonomy and a sense of control; addressing basic human needs such as nutrition, elimination and personal hygiene needs in a respectful and sensitive manner; promoting inclusivity and a sense of participation by providing adequate information to aid decision-making; promoting a sense of identity; focusing on the individual and recognising human rights” (Tadd et al, 2011a)

The comprehensive set of recommendations was drawn from both interview and observational data and demonstrated the persistence of issues identified over ten years previously. Other key themes emerging from the study related to the interests of patients being de-prioritised relative to the interests of the healthcare organisation. The emphasis on the organisational factors such as administration and target monitoring was shown to undermine the dignity of older people by problematising their presence in the hospital (Tadd et al,

2011a). Indeed, the hospital environment itself was widely perceived as being unfit for older people in spite of them comprising the healthcare sector's most prominent users (ibid). The importance of these aspects was starkly reiterated by the findings of the recent Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Inquiry, highlighting familiar failings at both an organisational and interpersonal level. These included:

- A culture focused on doing the system's business – not that of the patients;
- An institutional culture which ascribed more weight to positive information about the service than to information capable of implying cause for concern;
- Standards and methods of measuring compliance which did not focus on the effect of a service on patients;
- Too great a degree of tolerance of poor standards and of risk to patients;
- A failure of communication between the many agencies to share their knowledge of concerns;
- Assumptions that monitoring, performance management or intervention was the responsibility of someone else;
- A failure to tackle challenges to the building up of a positive culture, in nursing in particular but also within the medical profession;
- A failure to appreciate until recently the risk of disruptive loss of corporate memory and focus resulting from repeated, multi-level reorganisation

(The Mid Staffordshire Foundation Trust Public Inquiry, 2013; 4)

The findings of the Public Inquiry mirrored research findings from the likes of Tadd et al (2011a) and Jacobson et al (2010) where wider neoliberal health reforms such as the rationalisation of services, economic efficiency and performance targets all inadvertently compromise quality of care. Beyond this though, as Edgar (2003) and Oliver (2010) argue, there is

growing research evidence suggesting that institutional and social ageism may also be a contributory factor.

Ageism and the Persistent Dignity Problem

As has been established, numerous organisational and governmental dignity initiatives have failed to address the persistence of the issue. In tandem with this, convincing explanations for undignified care have been noted in relation to the physical healthcare environment and neoliberal health reforms. However, the aspect of dignity offering the most practical routes for intervention have been in relation to personal interactions between staff and patients. This is evidenced by the ongoing emphasis on dignity training, most recently highlighted by Tadd et al's (2011a) Dignity in Practice study. This resulted in the production of a research-driven training DVD based on observational field notes being freely disseminated across all NHS Trusts in England (Cardiff University, 2015). Such novel interventions at the organisational level are welcome additions to the portfolio of material available to staff. Nevertheless, the history of ineffective training measures coupled with ongoing reports of undignified care suggests that other avenues may be fruitfully explored.

One area of particular interest to this project is the potential role that ageist attitudes within the healthcare setting may play (see Reed et al, 2006; Oliver, 2010, 2013; Tadd et al, 2011a; 2011b). As Oliver (2013) has noted, the NHS Constitution legally protects against age discrimination ensuring a 'comprehensive service to all, irrespective of age'. While this constitutional intervention is intended to guide the behaviours of staff, as Oliver notes there has been little research into the impact it has had (ibid). Alongside this, the ongoing research output has continually demonstrated the specific impact of ageism in terms of the quality of care being provided to older people. Tadd et al (2011a) have shown the ongoing use of ageist language by healthcare staff with terms such as 'acopia', 'frequent fliers' and 'bed-blockers' being empirically observed on wards. This has been corroborated by previous focus group studies into healthcare staff perceptions of ageism in which older people were found to be more likely to be excluded, shouted at or patronised

(Billings, 2003). Indeed, numerous projects have shown health and social care managers to acknowledge the endemic nature of ageism in the services they provide (see Tadd et al, 2011a; Roberts et al, 2002). Mirroring the wider dignity problem, ageism is therefore seemingly acknowledged at an organisational level. However, the efforts made to intervene within the sector have been continually shown as ineffective. One potential explanation for this comes with Levy's (2001) notion of a more concealed, implicit ageism operating across society. Levy defines this as the 'thoughts, feelings, and behaviours toward elderly people that exist and operate without conscious awareness or control' (ibid). The major argument underpinning this is that when a society has generated negative age stereotypes, the attitudes and behaviours of social agents also tends towards negative, implicit ageism (ibid; Perdue and Gurtman, 1990). The Centre for Policy on Ageing's 2009 report on age discrimination highlighted the importance of the notion of societal ageism in the healthcare setting, making the argument that 'professionals are part of a society that constantly demonstrates ageist attitudes...professionals would therefore be subject to ageist messages and discourses' (Centre for Policy on Ageing, 2009; 14). This followed on from the assertion within Age UK's 'The Challenge of Dignity in Care' report where tackling the wider culture of ageism was regarded as a prerequisite to dignified care:

"Ageism in society as a whole, a culture that undervalues, fears or despises old age, a culture where old age is a subject for ridicule rather than celebration – these are all factors that need to be addressed before we can become fully optimistic that dignity will be omnipresent in the care context" (Help the Aged, 2007)

This study intersects with the dignified care problem at this systemic, cultural level. Much of the applied dignity research has centred on organisational culture, with the NHS Constitution and staff dignity training being primary examples. Legislative measures have also been highlighted by Oliver (2013) as a key dimension in creating a 'revolution' in care for older people. While these interventions require ongoing effort, the persistence of

both ageism and dignity related issues in the healthcare sector also demand other avenues of inquiry. Attitudes towards ageing and older people are gathered from a variety of sources, aligning with broader processes of socialisation. In this sense, sociological institutions such as the family, schools, peer groups, work organisations and mass media all offer some degree of influence over those who engage with them (White; 1977). While many of these dimensions of socialisation have been researched and interventions applied, both in terms of healthcare and in wider society, the influence of mass media on healthcare staff has been subject of relatively little academic interest. The next chapter will discuss the potential influence of cultural and media representations of older people as a means of explaining ageist attitudes.

Chapter 3: Cultural Representation and Ageing

Introduction

The previous chapter highlighted the research and policy landscape regarding the dignity of older people in the healthcare setting. The emergent picture is one of ongoing policy interventions, training and organisational emphasis struggling to positively impact on the care of older people. In spite of much research into the work setting seeking to improve the situation (e.g, Tadd et al, 2011a; Davies, 2000a; 2000b), problems are continually reported in the media (Kolirin; 2014; Knapton, 2015; Lockley, 2015) and corroborated by research studies (Lewis & West, 2014; Souza et al, 2014). This project's overriding hypothesis is that factors external to the organisation can influence the attitudes and behaviours exhibited by staff within it. Considerable research has been carried out demonstrating the positive influence of social contact with older people on attitudes towards them. This has largely suggested that both family relationships (see Harwood, 2005; Tam et al; 2006) and broader friendship networks (see Hale, 1998; Bousfield, 2010; Kenworthy et al; 2015) can result in greater appreciation and awareness of older people. This study acknowledges both this and the work setting as influences on the attitudes, perceptions and behaviours of NHS staff. However, the primary area of investigation here centres on the cultural representation of older people as an alternative, pervasive influence.

This chapter will be split into three major sections:

- Cultural Representation, Audiences and the Cultural Industries
- The Representation of Minority Groups
- The Representation of Older People

Firstly, the history of cultural representation within cultural studies will be explored. In order to capably understand this, issues relating to audience studies and the complexity of the cultural industries form a key element. The second major discussion will look into the manner in which popular cultural representations have been suggested to influence perceptions of

marginalised social groups, including disabled and ethnic minorities, as well as through gender and class bases. Finally, the literature relating to specific representations of older people in culture will be examined and critically analysed.

Cultural Representations, Audiences and the Cultural Industries

Before coming to understand theories of cultural representation, it is first necessary to clarify what this study defines as 'culture'. The variant definitions of the term over time has led Apte to declare that after a 'century of effort', it was still not possible to have a universally agreed concept (Apte, 1994; 2001). Largely this is due to the breadth of academic investigation undertaken in fields such as anthropology, sociology, communication studies and philosophy. Our starting definition will borrow from Spencer-Oatey (2008) who sees culture in the following way:

"Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations of the 'meaning' of other people's behaviour" (Spencer-Oatey, 2008; 3)

In further unpicking this, we will borrow from Hall (1997) who has provided an overview of some of these definitions over time and classifies the traditional study of culture as covering several strands. The first of these saw culture as embodying the "best that has been thought and said' in a society", concerning itself with the classic artefacts and ideas generated from literature, music, painting and philosophy (ibid; 2). In the 1950s the dominance of this position came into increasing question. The likes of Richard Hoggart (1963) made strong cases for culture to include the forms of popular music, art, leisure-time and entertainment of 'ordinary people'. Indeed, the distinction between 'high' and 'mass' culture became a key aspect of cultural studies until relatively recently. Aside from this, the field of anthropology has tended to see culture as referring to 'whatever is distinctive about the 'way of life' of a people, community, nation or social

group', while social science has generally focussed on the 'shared values' that such culture encourages (Hall, 1997; 2).

While an understanding of the history of cultural studies informs the definition of culture applied within this project, it is with what Hall terms the 'cultural turn' that it most closely aligns. The key distinction here was to shift culture from being primarily concerned with artefacts or products, and instead to define it as a process or set of practices, or the production and exchange of meanings (Hall, 1997; 2). As Hall further outlines, the importance of this meaning making process is at the root of how we experience a shared culture:

"To belong to a culture is to belong to roughly the same conceptual and linguistic universe, to know how concepts and ideas translate into different languages, and how language can be interpreted to refer to or reference the world" (ibid; 22)

In essence, the critical shift associated with the cultural turn was to place the emphasis on the participants within a culture and how they understand the world around them. The assertion is that objects in their own right rarely ever have a single, uniform meaning. Drawing on the structuralism of Saussure (1916) and philosophy of Wittgenstein (1953), it is argued that meaning instead is context-specific and dependent on all cultural parties uniformly understanding the network of signification underlying it. Wittgenstein (ibid) referred to this as a 'language-game' and provided the example of a builder and their assistant to clarify. He states that mutual understanding of the language of 'blocks, pillars, slabs and beams' is required in order that both parties can successfully work together. Without shared contextual knowledge of which object relates to which word, the assistant would not be able to capably partake. The specific 'language-game' associated with Wittgenstein's example, it is argued, can be seen operating more generally within a shared culture.

It should be noted here that 'language' is not restricted to the written or verbal form. Instead, the term encompasses any meaningful form of

expression that others within a shared culture can understand. This includes visual codes such as images, body language, facial expression and interpretations of art. As Hall outlines, many daily practices consist of different but effective meaning making 'languages':

"The writing system or the spoken system of a particular language are both obviously 'languages'. But so are visual images, whether produced by hand, mechanical, electronic, digital or some other means, when they are used to express meaning" (Hall, 1997; 18)

Under Hall's conceptualisation of language here, each of these different modes of expression become of equal validity. This is not based on the importance of the act of expression in and of itself, but rather the function it performs in generating a shared meaning for other cultural participants. That within a culture these meanings can often be mutually understood suggests that there is a shared representational system being drawn upon. These systems of representation are said by Hall to be twofold. First of all, there is language itself that helps us to express our concepts or ideas between one another. A shared understanding of language will ensure that a message's meaning can be conveyed in broadly similar ways between cultural participants. Secondly, there is the shared conceptual map that orientates us to broadly similar interpretations. This is built upon innumerate concepts and ideas being organised and arranged in specific ways within our minds to make sense of the world around us. For Hall (1997) the complex interplay between these representational systems is entrenched in almost every daily practice or activity. Our successful understanding of museums, galleries, photography, television, literature, art and each other is dependent on these systems working in conjunction with each other. Only when the clusters of concepts and ideas held in our minds are expressible through the language that represents them, can we be fully communicative cultural participants.

It should be reiterated here that the meaning generated from the systems of representation is not fixed. Some approaches to representation regard meaning as being inherent to an object or idea or event, adopting a reflective

approach in which language is simply representing an already existent truth. As a counterpoint, other approaches see the intent of the meaning producer as being central. In such theories of representation words mean only what the author intends. Hall (1997) sees both of these approaches as problematic given that both fail to recognise the 'public, social character of language' and how neither objects nor the users of language are capable of fixing meaning – 'things don't mean: we construct meaning, using representational systems' (1997; 25). This constructionist approach places cultural participants as central to how meaning is generated; both in terms of how we express ourselves and in terms of how we interpret others.

For this study, the manner in which meaning is produced, exchanged and interpreted is a key concern. This project seeks to examine the extent to which the meanings generated by mass popular cultural forms such as television, radio, magazines, newspapers and Internet news can help to explain latent attitudes and behaviours held by and towards particular social groups, in this case NHS staff towards older people. At this stage, it should be noted that the study does not seek to explore the issues of ideology and power often associated with this transfer of meaning. The likes of Fairclough (1995), Foucault (1972) and Machin and Myer (2012) among others have convincingly linked meaning making to political and ideological motivations, or the desire to maintain the status quo. The variants of critical discourse analysis espoused by these thinkers generally draw from notions of Gramscian hegemony to show the implicitly ideological nature of discourse production and meaning making. This is not restricted to direct political discourse but, according to Fairclough, is also existent in local institutions such as the family, schools, neighbourhoods, workplaces and courts of law (1995; 78). This emphasis on the politicised roots of all discourse is not without merit and, as shall be seen in subsequent sections, research in this area has started to address issues of stereotyping and discrimination of social groups. Nevertheless, the complexity associated with delivering cultural products to audiences should not be underestimated. As the following sections will show, the manner in which audiences receive, interpret and

understand cultural products is not uniform and subject to numerous factors. Likewise, the intentions and motivations of popular cultural creators become more problematic to identify when considering the number of processes required to transfer an idea to a cultural product.

Audience Reception and Meaning Making

Theories and research into audiences have a long history within cultural studies. Much of this has emerged from investigations into the effect of mass media onto public attitudes and beliefs. Croteau and Hoynes (1997) have outlined the history of audience studies to show that considerable shifts have taken place in how an audience is perceived to receive and interpret messages. One of the earliest theories in this area was the hypodermic needle model that suggested media effects have a 'direct and powerful influence on the public' (ibid; 206). This theory held particular prominence around the 1930s and was given additional credence through examples of government propaganda during the world wars, as well as cultural events such as Orson Welles' *War Of The Worlds* that seemed to manipulate the public (ibid; 207). Similarly, the likes of Kornhauser (1959) and Reisman (1953) have also suggested high levels of media influence in their variations of mass society theory. Conflating trends of increasing isolation with increases in television and other mass media, the argument in such theories was that audiences existent in an increasingly depersonalised society were more susceptible to media influence.

For hypodermic needle and mass society theorists, the audiences are conceived as being passive recipients of information. However, the previous discussion on how participants of culture interpret meaning should suggest that audiences act in a much more complex manner. Indeed, with a burgeoning field of empirical research emerging throughout the 1950s and 1960s (e.g. Lazarsfeld et al, 1948), theories began to develop more nuances to audience activity. The first of these emergent theories was the minimal effects model that argued media messages were more effective in reconfirming existing beliefs rather than directly changing them (Croteau & Hoynes, 1997; 208). In essence, this implied a move from regarding

audiences as passively accepting messages to seeing them instead as ignoring or resisting certain messages, while accepting others. This led to further theorising in the late 1960s that came to see the media as having a variant effect in the direct imparting of meaning, but capable of setting the public agenda. This is exemplified by Cohen (1963) who has argued the mass media 'may not be successful in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about' (1963; 13). The link between public opinion and media coverage was corroborated in research of the time. For instance, Funkhouser (1973) carried out a study of media coverage in three top US magazines comparing levels of reportage to measures of public opinion and noted significant correlation. Iyengar and Kinder (1987) conducted research that seemingly confirmed this causal relationship. They showed their participants ostensibly the same news broadcasts aside from some having additional stories edited in about either the environment, inflation or national defence. It was uncovered that those participants exposed to a broadcast highlighting a particular issue were more likely to perceive that issue as important (ibid).

The agenda-setting dimension of media remains firmly established in cultural studies to this day. That said, the precise way in which it operates has been contested and complicated over time. In a study conducted by Brosius and Kepplinger (1990) it was found that while agenda-setting effects were observed, there were also numerous instances where public opinion preceded media coverage or where no link was established at all. Similarly, Graber's (1980) study of a media campaign raising awareness of environmental pollution found that people retained very few facts from the information presented but were unexpectedly more likely to hold big business responsible for the problem. The growing awareness that media and cultural effects often operated in a complex and unintended fashion indicated that greater understanding was required of how audiences interpret the information they are provided.

To this end, numerous studies examining the agency and activities of audiences were carried out throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Graber (1988)

interviewed participants about public issues while simultaneously monitoring media coverage. She found that respondents were using information gathered from the media but that this was complemented by pre-existent knowledge taken from other sources (ibid). Likewise, Gamson's (1992) focus-group study saw participants constructing meaning through a combination of media information, popular wisdom and experiential knowledge. He came to argue that culture was a resource that could be drawn upon, but that this formed part of a broader toolkit that enables people to make sense of the world (ibid).

While many studies chose to focus on the effect of media news to assess audience response, considerable research effort was also ongoing into other forms of popular culture as well. The likes of Morley (1992), Ang (1991; 1996), Fiske (1991) and McRobbie (2000) offered varying interpretations of audience activity in relation to television, clothing, magazines, music and other cultural forms. Fiske, in particular, sought to outline the agency and power of cultural audiences by demonstrating their ability to appropriate cultural products and use them in unintended ways. This was applied to products such as jeans, television, music concerts and magazines among others (Fiske, 1991). For Fiske, each cultural text has a range of potential meanings that audience members can select from, appropriate or entirely reject (ibid). Similar ideas were offered by Morley's (1992) typology of positions that a television audience member may occupy in response to a show. These, he argued, could fall into one of three readings: alignment with the dominant and intended reading; a negotiation of the intended reading in which some aspects were taken up but others were not; or a complete rejection of the preferred reading and an alternative interpretation (Morley, 1992; 89). This emphasis on audience agency and appropriation helped to address the balance in the study of cultural effects, shedding greater theoretical light onto the complex processes underlying consumption and meaning generation.

That said numerous critics saw this as an overly simplistic conception of audience reception and activity. While concurring with Fiske's view that

cultural texts are filled with potential meanings that audiences actively select or reject, Ang (1991; 1996) saw this happening much more ambivalently. Her work regarding viewer responses to the soap opera *Dallas* came to identify a 'situational dependency' that saw the practices of audiences as being influenced by factors and situations beyond an individual's role as an audience member:

"Actual audiences consist of an infinite and ever expanding myriad of dispersed practices and experiences that can never be, and should not be, contained in any one total system of knowledge" (Ang, 1991; 155)

Here, Ang is establishing that the different understandings audience generate do not simply reflect different consumptive needs, uses or readings. Instead, she emphasises how difference can emerge in response to other stimuli, or that 'particular social subjects are structurally positioned in relation to each other' (1996; 50). To develop a system of knowledge reflecting the complexity of how social structures, status and relationships inform the meanings derived by an audience, she argues, borders on the impossible. Her contribution was to initiate a shift from the more romanticised view of active audiences exemplified by Fiske to question instead 'how people live within an increasingly media-saturated culture in which they have to be active' (ibid; 13).

This postmodern turn in audience and reception studies has come to dominate the contemporary perception of how audiences derive meaning from cultural texts. The simplified model of passive audiences accepting media messages has been rejected, but the alternate position of celebrating audiences' semiotic activity has also come to be complicated. The emergent picture embraces the complexity and diversity of the social actors lying beneath the term 'audience', while also acknowledging the role of the media in providing representations of the social world to the public. The next section will examine how the media and cultural industries produce cultural texts, with the aim of showing that the activities behind this process are also complex and multi-layered.

The Cultural Industries and Cultural Production

With the growth of a more nuanced and balanced view of how audiences receive and interpret cultural messages established, it was noted by Corner (1991) that 'even the preliminary theorization of [media power] has become awkward' (1991; 267). Ang's (1991; 1996) contribution to the field was to complicate how audiences were perceived and, as a consequence, come to see the cultural industries as consisting of similar complexity. Many of the studies outlined above sought to understand audiences through analyses that took consistent and clear messages from the media as their foundation. Within this, came an implicit assertion that cultural products were created with an embedded preferred reading or set of meanings contained within them and, importantly, that these were put in place through the intentions of cultural producers. The work of Hesmondhalgh (2007) and other modern cultural theorists has necessarily complicated this position.

The historic account of cultural creation, rooted in romanticism, saw texts as having authors from whom their meaning was directly derived. This became increasingly muddled over time with the advent of mass production and emphasis shifting to the meaning making of audiences, as well as changes in how culture was being produced. With regard to the latter, the likes of Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) were notable in initially highlighting, and lamenting, a growing entanglement between culture and Capitalist commodification. By the 1950s this relationship was becoming increasingly obvious with investment from global corporations in television, film and music. How these changes were perceived varied significantly over time. Writing in the 1940s, Adorno and Horkheimer (ibid) were extremely pessimistic about the entwining of Capitalism and culture, and for the substantive loss of cultural meaning associated with it. While strands of this perspective still exist today, a more ambivalent approach was initiated by the likes of Mieke (1987; 1989) and Hesmondhalgh (2007) who acknowledged increased commodification but also saw the potential for 'exciting new directions and innovations' as a result of this (2007; 17). They also highlighted how the cultural industries were still very much a site of struggle

in which capitalist modes of production were clearly playing a part but also where the emergent texts can often 'orientate their audiences towards ways of thinking that do not coincide with the interests of capitalism' (ibid; 4).

The struggle, Hesmondhalgh argues, is also evidenced in the fact that many cultural products fail to succeed as predicted (ibid; 19), aligning with the issues of unpredictable audience reception outlined in the previous section. Wolf (1999) offers a specific example of this in stating that of 30,000 albums released in the USA in 1998, fewer than two percent sold more than 50,000 copies (1999; 89). In keeping with his own 'complex, ambivalent and contested' perspective, however, Hesmondhalgh shows that this unpredictability is economically managed through segmentation of audiences, the offset of misses with other hits across a repertoire of texts and often across a range of intertwined contributory companies (2007; 19). The overriding picture is of complex organisational networks all contributing to the path a text takes before reaching its completion. Here we can see parallels with the work of Becker (1982) who sought to complicate the romanticism held for the creation of art. For both Hesmondhalgh and Becker, the role of the artist, or 'symbol creator', remains of vast significance but needs to be considered as part of a much bigger machine (ibid; 4). Following Williams (1981), Hesmondhalgh (2007) characterises the technological and organisational developments of the industry as processes of professionalisation. With this came a diverse set of practices both within and between different types of creative industry. For instance, many of the activities associated with the broadcasting industry differed significantly from those of the publishing industry. Beyond this, the number of people responsible for cultural creation had expanded noticeably from the romantic notion of a single author. Ryan (1992) suggested that the primary shift had been from one or two individuals producing cultural texts to a 'project team' taking collective responsibility (1992; 124-34). Elaborating on this, Hesmondhalgh offered a typology of the roles comprising a 'project team' as including primary creative personnel, technical workers, creative managers, marketing personnel, owners, executives and unskilled or semi-skilled labour

(2007; 64-5). The division of labour among these roles varies from organisation to organisation, with overlaps evident particularly in smaller businesses. Broadly speaking, however, a close analysis of the cultural industries clearly demonstrates growth in the number of tasks involved in the varying fields of cultural production. In turn, this opens up questions as to how we can adequately study the meanings that cultural producers generate in such texts.

As mentioned previously, the study of cultural meaning has been approached from a variety of perspectives. Critical political economy and radical media sociology writers have been keen to show links between power, profit and the commercialisation of culture and, inherently, within the ideological meanings it generates (see Schiller, 1989; McChesney, 1993; Bourdieu, 1996; Gitlin, 1997). In terms of methodology, this aligns with the critical discourse analysis approaches to media texts associated with Fairclough (1989) and Wodak (1996) that also sought to bring to light power relations embedded in cultural representations. However, Hesmondhalgh helps to undermine the power flows associated with cultural meaning by outlining the organisational complexity involved since the 1960s. In doing so, he argues that Hall's definition of culture, outlined previously, allows for a more grounded understanding of the politics of texts (2007; 41). If issues of profit and power become difficult to trace through the multi-layered machinations of the cultural industries, this does not mean that all political meaning is abstracted. Indeed, Hesmondhalgh states that one of the key contributions of cultural studies has been to extend interest beyond the economic and directly political to issues of recognition and identity politics, showing that certain texts, 'while seemingly innocent, serve (further) to exclude and marginalise the relatively powerless' (ibid; 42). This will be examined further in the next section where specific issues regarding the cultural representations of minority and marginalised groups will be established.

The Representation of Marginalised Groups

The previous discussion has highlighted the ambivalence and complexity of both the manner in which culture is produced through the cultural

industries, and as to how it is consumed by audiences. A key dimension in this has been the perception of cultural texts as carrying political or ideological meanings in line with broader societal power relations. As Machin and Myer (2012) state, this has led to research into how cultural texts 'persuade people to think about events in a particular way, sometimes to seek to manipulate them while at the same time concealing their communicative intentions' (2012; 1). We have already shown that the attribution of intent to cultural production has become increasingly convoluted given the diversity of roles involved in text creation. Nevertheless, the overview of audience reception studies also suggested that cultural texts can and do influence public opinion, albeit through complex consumptive practices.

One area where this has been of particular focus is in the representation of marginalised groups. Woodward et al (1997) have highlighted how the representational systems introduced by Hall (1997) are often used to provide a sense of belonging to members of a shared culture. Their particular concern is with culture's capability to 'maintain identity within and difference between groups' (Hall, 1997; 3). An example of this process is provided in Du Gay et al's (1996) study of the Sony Walkman where it is suggested that the advertising and cultural presentation of the product 'produces meanings about the sorts of people who would use such an artefact, that is the identities associated with it' (Woodward et al, 1997; 2). Touching on issues of subcultures, consumption and audience segmentation, Woodward et al outline how similar patterns can be found with regard to national, sexual and maternal identities, as well as with regard to illness and failing health (ibid; 3). We will return to some of these points in subsequent sections, particularly with regard to illness and old age. However, this section will explore trends in current research around the representation of marginalised groups as a means to show the often-ambivalent identity politics that it provokes. Two case studies will be specifically explored; representations of mental health and representations of disabled people.

Mental Illness Representations

The cultural representations of mental illness have been of sustained academic interest over the last 30 years. Much of the work in the field has adopted a similar stance to that of Woodward et al (1997) in seeing such representations as marking out difference between ‘madness’ and ‘normality’, or ‘us’ and ‘them’ (see Gillman, 1982). This point has been corroborated by Cross (2010) who primarily examined popular press reporting of mental illness as being associated with danger, violence and the unknown. Cross helps to demonstrate this through the example of UK media responses to a 2006 report from the National Patient Safety Agency (Appleby et al, 2006). The report outlined that nine percent of all homicides in England and Wales had been perpetrated by mental health patients (ibid). While this is a significant figure, the scale and nature of the media response is shown to overstate the associated level of danger. Headlines such as ‘Every week someone is murdered by a mental patient’ (Slack, 2006; 5) and ‘Mentally ill murder 400’ (Winnett and Watt, 2006; 1), while statistically valid, offer emphatically fearful representations. This is underlined by some of the stigmatising language deployed within articles as well, with terminology such as ‘schizo’, ‘crazy’, ‘nutter’ and ‘loony’ forming a prominent part of the discourse (Cross, 2010; 11). Aside from linguistic reportage of mental illness, Kromm (2002) has highlighted how this representation has manifested itself visually over time, primarily in European classical art. He argues that a historically prevalent icon of madness has been dishevelment, images of torn clothing and unruly hair. Cross (2010) reconfirms this theme in his analysis of a Panorama programme ‘Whose Mind is it Anyway?’

“We see a man playing pool, followed by a close-up of his face at the moment the narrator says that Community Supervision Orders would only be imposed on those regarded as a threat to ‘others’. His facial expression and dishevelled appearance is key to his identification as a threat to others” (2010; 140)

Cross’ approach is notable for a number of reasons. Firstly, at a methodological level, his adoption of a multi-modal discourse analysis

enables insight into how multiple types of communication all contribute to the final message of a cultural text, in this instance narration and visual image. As will be discussed in the following chapter on methodology, this is partially why a similar approach has been adopted for my own research. Beyond this, Cross is also keen to point out that representations of mental illness can be correlated with shifts in public opinion about sufferers. Much of his research was carried out amidst political efforts to integrate mental health patients into the community. This context made the period under study particularly prevalent with articles and texts that depicted mental illness as dangerous. Cross links this prevalence to a government-funded study taken during the same period that indicated a noticeable hardening of attitude among respondents towards the issue (2010; 21).

It should be noted that Cross' approach does not reduce the issue to one of 'media effects' theory outlined earlier in the chapter. Indeed, he criticises Philo et al's (1996) argument that negative stereotyping of psychiatric patients directly influences social fear as being overly simplistic (Cross, 2010; 22) embracing the complexity associated with more recent approaches to audience studies. Nevertheless, Cross' analysis is suggestive of a broader, pervasive influence operating through reiteration of cultural memory. Following Foucault (2001), he traces the genealogy of mental illness representations to suggest that long-held familiar depictions are reiterated as part of a 'continuity of representation' (Cross, 2010; 148). For Cross, this continuity has been maintained over centuries, but tends to come to increased prominence at points where there is a political and social context fostering it (ibid). These issues will be discussed further when we consider representations of ageing and, indeed, throughout the study.

Disabled Representations

When outlining their arguments regarding identity, Woodward et al (1997) are keen to stress that illness and the non-healthy body are cultural markers commonly used to imply difference. This is of particular relevance to representations of disabled people who, to many critics, are primarily identified through reference to their impairment. Mitchell and Snyder (2001)

have placed this in a broader 'fascination with spectacles of difference' across European cultures (2001; 210). This has manifested itself with disabled people forming a source of entertainment and amusement in royal courts and freak shows at various points in history (Barnes & Mercer, 2003; 91). In the modern age, however, representations of disabled people have been shown to change, even if often still imbued with negative connotations. The academic study of such representations began to emerge in the 1980s with the likes of Zola (1985), Gartner and Joe (1987) and Klobas (1988) all indicating negative cultural stereotyping in their analysis of a variety of cultural texts. Perhaps the most encompassing analyses came through Barnes' contribution to the field throughout the 1990s. He identified how representations of disabled people could be characterised through ten commonly recurring stereotypes:

"The disabled person as pitiable and pathetic, as an object of curiosity or violence, as sinister or evil, as the super cripple, as atmosphere, as laughable, as her/his own worst enemy, as a burden, as non-sexual, and as being unable to participate in daily life" (Barnes, 1991)

This typology was generally corroborated by much of the discourse analysis work being carried out in the field. The likes of Cumberbatch and Negrine (1992) and Ross (1997) found that television programmes, in particular, were likely to adhere to a narrative of 'personal tragedy'. Within this, where disabled people were present in cultural texts, the most common representations linked them to medical treatments or achievements made in spite of their disability. In both instances, the impairment becomes the central narrative with other areas of lived experience overlooked. In turn, as Barnes and Mercer (2003) note, the emotions often provoked in the audience are pity, fear or admiration (2003; 94). Similar representations have been shown to be prevalent in other cultural forms as well, with cinema and newspapers being subject of significant academic interest. Norden's (1994) history of disability in film concluded with the summary that it had been a 'history of distortion' in which stereotyped representations abounded (1994; 314). The British Film Institute helped to show how the stereotypes outlined

by Barnes (1992) above could be applied to a plethora of modern films (Rieser, 2003). For instance, the 'pitiable' stereotype could be found in Tiny Tim from *A Christmas Carol* or David Merrick in *The Elephant Man* (ibid). Likewise, the 'sinister or evil' representation could be found in the pirate captain of *Hook* or Mr Glass from *Unbreakable* (ibid). Within newspapers, the likes of Smith and Jordan (1991) and Barnes and Mercer (2003) have both suggested similar thematic simplicity with coverage being dominated by health, fund-raising, charity and personal tragedy stories.

Recent studies of newspaper coverage have demonstrated significant continuity with the representations of disabled people outlined above. That said, some of the more interesting accounts have shown how the representations can vary based on social, economic and political contexts. For instance, Garthwaite's (2012) study of disability discourse following the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition suggested that there had been an increase in emphasis on benefits fraud with the use of terms such as 'culture of worklessness', 'dependency', 'unwilling' and 'workshy' coming to increasing prominence (2012; 370). Similarly, Briant et al (2013) also noted a considerable shift in how disabled people were portrayed in samples of UK newspapers taken between 2004/05 and 2010/11. Linking this to wider discursive trends around the age of austerity and financial crisis, they posited that disabled people had become a new 'folk devil' with an increased emphasis on disability benefits and fraud, as well as an increase in 'pejorative language' (2013; 874). The 2010/11 sample of newspapers saw terms such as 'scrounger', 'handout', 'workshy' and 'cheats' become much more prevalent than in previous years, contributing to a displacement of more sympathetic, if still stereotypical, accounts (ibid; 881). Importantly, Briant et al (2013) go on to establish a relationship between the representations provided by the newspapers with the associations that are made by audiences, supplementing their discourse analysis with seven focus groups conducted between June and August 2011. These were found to thematically correlate with issues emerging from analysis of newspaper coverage, particularly with regard to benefits fraud. When asked to describe a typical

headline on disability they would find in the newspapers, the focus groups responded most commonly by emphasising this theme over any other:

“I’d say stories like ‘Fiddler on the Roof’, you know the story about the Slater who was claiming incapacity benefit. (Focus Group 1)

I think it’s all benefits. There was one that’s just done a marathon and he was claiming that he could barely even walk and that’s dishonest. (Focus Group 3)” (Briant et al, 2013; 881)

When relating this back to the work on audience studies discussed previously, Briant et al reconfirm that the media can influence its recipient audiences. They also help to identify how certain economic and political contexts can trigger shifts in how marginalised groups are portrayed. However, their assertion that responsibility for the representations of disability lies with the Coalition government oversimplifies the complex processes involved in both generating the cultural texts under analysis, as well as the context-specificity of their interpretation by audiences. Indeed, in concluding, they note that the focus groups also demonstrated considerable ‘sympathy and support for disabled people’ (Briant et al, 2013; 885) aligning with the more complex understandings of audience behaviour in which meaning can be received but reinterpreted as part of a wider representational system. This system can involve associations drawn from other areas of social life such as family, education or work settings. Crucially for this project, however, Briant et al’s findings suggest that pre-existent or historical cultural representations can be retained and reiterated by audiences alongside more recent themes from media coverage. In turn, this is suggestive of the potential for representations to become ingrained in cultural memory over time, aligning with Cross’ ‘continuity of representation’ discussed previously.

Both of the case studies examined in this section suggest that culture has a strong influence on how certain social groups are perceived. Representations of mental illness and disabled people tend to mark members of those social groups out as different to what is considered ‘normal’ - in these instances

mentally healthy or able-bodied people. It is worthwhile noting a few points at this stage. Firstly, any analyses of the effect or intent of these representations should take into account the ambivalence and complexity of how meanings are both produced and consumed, as discussed earlier. Secondly, it should be noted that this process is not restricted to these groups. A great deal of research has been conducted into the marginalisation of women, ethnic minorities, LGBT groups, as well as wider subcultures. However, these case studies are useful in introducing many of the issues emergent in the representations of older people. Similar discursive trends of 'otherness', often based on issues of health and debilitation, will be illustrated in the next section.

The Representation of Older People

The previous section helped to show how the cultural representation of marginalised groups is characterised by the marking out of difference. Both mental illness and disability have been represented with regard to how their physical and social characteristics separate them from what is considered 'normal'. Featherstone and Wernick (1995) have suggested similar processes operate with regard to older people, placing them as a social group likely to suffer from the 'imposition of negative stereotypes' (1995; 4). As with the case studies of the previous section, Featherstone and Wernick have shown how these negative stereotypes have morphed and developed based on historical contexts. Together with Katz (1995) and Hareven (1995) from the same edited collection, they illustrate a shift around the nineteenth century in old age representations from those emphasising the attainment of a long life, to those showing 'symptoms of senescence' (Featherstone and Wernick, 1995; 7). Beyond this, processes of capitalist industrialisation are argued to have given greater prominence to representations of youth, undermining the status and value previously attributed to life experience (ibid). Ewen's (1976) study of inter-war American advertising was one of the earliest to identify this trend stating that:

"As the culture devalued age as an ideal, much of the population was affected. While the first quarter of the century had seen a greater percentage of people

living beyond the age of sixty-five, the percentage in that age group that found itself gainfully employed decreased” (Ewen, 1976; 143)

The idealisation of youth exemplified, to Ewen, by the growth of advertising was key in marking out how older people were different to the ‘normal’ population, a lot of this centring on the decline of the body and the segregation from work society. An associated and recurrent old age stereotype focuses on a regression to second childhood. Once more, Hockey and James (1995) are keen to note the importance of this in marking older people out as different, arguing such representations revert to stereotypes of dependency that complicate their status as a functioning adult. This ‘mask of ageing’ has also been noted by the likes of Goffman (1968) and Featherstone and Hepworth (1991; 1994) where the body is incapable of representing the inner self. Again, the similarities to the representations of other marginalised groups are resonant here, particularly in relation to the case study of disabled people outlined previously. Following on from this, numerous writers have noted how there was uniqueness in the specific representations of gender across the broader category of older people. For instance, Sontag (1978) has highlighted the ‘double standard of ageing’ where women are compounded by both ageism and sexism, with impositions of an adolescent standard and an emphasis on bodily presentation compromised by age. As Hearn (1995) notes, similar emergent issues circulate around the masculine identity with the ideals of physical strength and sexual virility represented as in decline. While the specificities of these representations clearly operate along gender lines, both are encompassed by broader themes of empowerment and physicality, either in appearance or strength.

This discussion has highlighted the many similarities between the representation of older people and the representations of other marginalised social groups. Discourses of difference set these groups apart from whatever is perceived to be ‘normal’ within a shared culture. Nevertheless, Featherstone and Wernick (1995) are keen to stress that old age also offers themes of representation that separate it from other groups. While the social oppositions implicit within, for instance, gender or race are biologically fixed

and permanent, the binary division of youth and old age is more complicated. Both operate as transitional statuses within a process that will be ultimately experienced universally. As Featherstone and Wernick state 'with aging all we need to do is stick around, time will do the rest' (1995; 8) demonstrating that, provided they live long enough, everyone will experience a shift from being young to being old. In turn, this complicates the 'othering' process generally associated with marginalised groups given that it comes with an awareness of one's own inevitable progression towards the 'other' status. It has also been noted that social, historical and political context can provoke variation in how older people have been portrayed. In their discussion of modern trends for representations of positive ageing, Featherstone and Hepworth (1995) outline the argument for a social constructionist understanding of this:

"Whilst the biological processes of ageing, old age and death cannot in the last resort be avoided, the meanings which we give to these processes and the evaluations we make of people as they grow physically older are social constructions which reflect the beliefs and values found in a specific culture at a particular period in history" (Featherstone and Hepworth, 1995; 31)

Tying together the emergence of representations of positive ageing in the 1990s with wider concurrent demographic shifts towards an ageing population, Featherstone and Hepworth once more demonstrate the interrelationship between context and portrayal of social groups (ibid). They also help to show that while positive images of active ageing offer balance to other representational fixations of illness and decay, they also portray older age as 'an extended plateau of active middle age typified in the imagery of...youthfulness and active consumer lifestyles' (ibid; 46). Continuing their argument, the authors suggest that a binary divide between 'positive' and 'negative' representations does not adequately conceptualise the processes of meaning making associated with audiences and how they receive such information. This point shall be returned to in later sections. For now, though, it is worth examining what representations of older people are

prevalent in the current social context of the ageing population outlined in Chapter 2.

Contemporary Representations of Ageing

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the demographic shifts associated with the growth in the ageing population did not go unnoticed by the media in the UK. Coverage of the topic was shown to incorporate ageist terminology and a broader concern for the economic future of the country. This included references to the 'silver-tsunami' of older people (Davies, 2010), the demographic 'time-bomb' (Faith, 2010) and of the baby boomers bankrupting the UK (Vallely, 2010). Yet while there was a trend for this style of journalism in association to this particular issue, other studies have demonstrated a more diverse, if still limited, set of representations at play. For instance, both Nusbaum and Coupland (2004) and Featherstone and Hepworth (1995) have suggested a positive stereotype of ageing is associated with the 'golden years' of retirement, albeit operating within a wider idealisation of youth. Broadly speaking, though, study of the cultural representation of older people has found the predominance of negative stereotypes such as frailty (Murphy 2004; Martin, Williams and O'Neill, 2009), as a burden to society (Martin, Williams and O'Neill, 2009) or as cognitively impaired (Miller et al, 1999). An even more noticeable trend was the invisibility of older people outlined by Robinson and Skill (1995) who stated there was a wider absence of ageing within popular media discourse. This has been further corroborated by Murphy (2004) who noted a particular underrepresentation of older women amidst a disproportionate emphasis on youth more generally in national Irish newspapers.

A further recent study conducted by Fealy et al (2012) examined representations of older people in two Irish newspapers. The research took place over a one-month period, October to November 2008, and followed the announcement of proposed legislation aiming to reduce welfare provision (2012; 89). While situating itself in Ireland, its coverage of broader UK trends associated with the ageing population as a financial burden makes it a pertinent case study to examine. Fealy et al's analysis took in 227 individual

news items and looked for 'recurring linguistic devices, such as metaphor and rhetoric' (ibid; 90). This approach helped to develop a typology of older people identities:

"Five distinct identity types were available either directly or by implication in the texts that constructed older people variously as 'victims'; 'frail, infirm and vulnerable'; 'radicalised citizens'; 'deserving old' and 'undeserving old'" (ibid; 91)

The authors are keen to note the interrelationships between these categories suggesting, for instance, that the status of victims often also gave rise to representations of frailty or vulnerability. Beyond this, they align with much of the work carried out on marginalised groups by invoking representations of 'otherness' (see Hugman, 1999). They argue this process is assisted by discursive mechanisms such as 'referencing language', 'assumed homogeneity' and reference to the 'working population' that mark them as different (Fealy et al; 96). Interestingly, while Fealy et al recognise familiar ageing identities within this, particularly with regard to frailty, vulnerability and dependency, they note the emergence of a new ageing dichotomy, that of the 'deserving-undeserving old' (2012; 98). Once more this is reflective of how identities can shift based on social and political context. However, while Fealy et al's critical discourse approach emphasises the political implications of these representations, the primary revelation of their work is its demonstration of the complexity and interrelationship of different strands of the media discourse, how certain representations continually reoccur, while new ones emerge. Overall, this is suggestive of a wider ambivalence in the representations of older people in a contemporary context, blurring the sympathetic and deserving with the unsympathetic and undeserving.

Conclusion

Many of the themes identified in this chapter will prove salient throughout the study, concerned as it is with the construction of ageing identities by the cultural industries. It should be reiterated at this stage that any study examining the production and consumption of cultural texts needs to

acknowledge the complexity associated with both stages of this meaning making process, as well as an awareness of broader variables of attitude formation such as the family, schools and peers. While Fealy et al's (2012) work, outlined above, offers few insights into how such representations are received by their audiences, they are helpful in highlighting the complex, interwoven nature of current representations of older people. Additionally, they identify thematic identity formations unique to them during the contemporary political context of the ageing population. However, an arguably limited facet of the research in this field has been an overriding focus on textual newspaper discourse as opposed to that contained in wider cultural forms. Featherstone and Hepwick (1995) formed a cohesive approach to the study of images of ageing, encapsulating analysis of television, film and magazines, alongside the more commonly studied area of printed news. However, work of this nature has seen a decline in recent years meaning that potentially informative elements of the broader cultural discourse on older people may be overlooked. Chapter 2 outlined how current academic, media and political interest into seemingly ingrained issues of healthcare provision for older people is potentially indicative of a tension in how they are perceived and, more widely, of an embedded societal ageism. In this chapter, we have sought to explore theoretical frameworks that illuminate how such attitudes can, albeit through complex, ambivalent and contested cultural interplays, be influenced. These two distinct areas of research are the foundations on which this study is grounded.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter describes the study's methodological approach: its purpose; research design; study sites; participants; data collection methods; data analysis; and the challenges of carrying out the research. The chapter first introduces the study's aims, approach and objectives, as well as the research questions underpinning it. Following this, further sections explain the nuances associated with each of the methodological stages of the project. Finally, the study's ethical considerations will be outlined including the processes of NHS R&D approval in both England and Wales. It is important to note that pseudonyms have been used throughout this and the remaining chapters to ensure anonymity and protect confidentiality.

Study Aims and Objectives

The study set out to explore five key questions:

- 1) Which television shows, radio shows, printed and online press are commonly consumed by NHS staff?
- 2) How are older people represented in television shows, radio shows and the printed and online popular press commonly consumed by NHS staff?
- 3) Does the cultural representation of older people have any bearing on the attitudes of NHS staff?
- 4) What social and cultural factors help to explain the delivery of quality care or lack of dignified care in the healthcare sector?
- 5) Is it possible to accommodate messages from the popular discourse around older people into more effective means of dignity training and/or campaigns?

The aim of these research questions was to achieve a heightened knowledge of the cultural texts that health and social care staff consume, a fuller understanding of the discourse of older people contained within these texts, as well as how this may affect the delivery of dignified care in the NHS and the social care sector.

Study Approach

Before outlining the mixed methodological stages of the study, it is first important to establish some of the philosophical assumptions underpinning the project. Following Greene and Caracelli (1997) this study takes a pragmatic, critical realist perspective in which multiple philosophical paradigms can be incorporated into a study's design, particularly when a mixture of methods is being deployed. Purist approaches emphasise the specific knowledge claims associated with particular forms of inquiry and the epistemological challenges involved in integrating these together. However, the likes of Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) and Greene and Caracelli (1997) have highlighted the benefits of incorporating a range of competing worldviews based on the demands of the research problem. In terms of this study, a key a priori philosophical assumption is that there is a 'real world' in which repeated, empirical examples of older people receiving poor quality care have been reported. This aligns the study with the post-positivist and realist traditions associated with Kuhn (1970) and Bhaskar (1975). However, the study also integrates social constructivist principles with the underlying hypothesis being that the attitudes and perceptions of healthcare staff are socially constructed, with popular cultural representation being a variable in this process.

As Greene and Caracelli (1997) argue, the relationship between the paradigm of inquiry and the methods used in a study require careful consideration (1997; 11). Based on the epistemological and ontological assumptions already highlighted, this project sought to directly address each of the research questions with flexibility in the techniques deployed to do so. The research design incorporated three distinct methodological steps, the first being a quantitative survey of NHS staff addressing the question 'which television shows, radio shows and printed and online press are commonly consumed by NHS staff?' This research strand is classically defined as developmental by writers such as Greene et al (1989) in that the responses inform the decisions made for the next methodological step of discourse analysis. This second, qualitative strand was directly concerned with the

question 'how are older people represented in television shows, radio shows and the printed and online popular press commonly consumed by NHS staff?' Clearly, the knowledge claims generated between these two methodological steps would traditionally be regarded as incommensurable, taking their roots in competing paradigms. However, following Greene et al (1989), this technique was pragmatically adopted to expand the breadth and range of inquiry, as well as it being the most appropriate tool to unpick the research question. The final methodological step, qualitative semi-structured interviews with NHS staff was selected based on Greene et al's (1989) notions of triangulation and complementarity. The emergent findings from the discourse analysis could be corroborated, enhanced and clarified through a flexible interview schedule that explored perceptions of older people, the meanings gathered from cultural representations and the importance of other sites of social influence, such as work and the family. In addressing these topics, the semi-structured interviews could open debate on two further research questions; 'does the cultural representation of older people have any bearing on the attitudes of NHS staff?' and 'what social and cultural factors help to explain the delivery of quality care or lack of dignified care in the healthcare sector?'

With these broad features of the study design established it is possible to progress into more detailed accounts of each methodological step. As has been made clear, the research strands are sequential in their nature with each part of the design informing the details of the next. On that basis, the following sections will explore in turn the surveying of NHS staff, the discourse analysis of cultural texts, and the semi-structured interviews with healthcare staff. These sections will outline the specific aspects of design, sampling, piloting, data collection and data analysis within each of the distinct research strands.

Quantitative Survey of Healthcare Staff

Survey Design and Sampling Decisions

As mentioned previously, the survey stage of the methodology was in place to address the research question of ‘which television shows, radio shows and printed and online press are commonly consumed by NHS staff?’ An initial step in doing this is to define the NHS staff population being studied. Across England and Wales, the NHS employs approximately 1.3 million people with around 700,000 of these operating in a direct, healthcare capacity. With the emphasis of the project being on the provision of care to older people, the latter figure of 700,000 was chosen so as to best represent the relevant population. Following Dillman et al’s (2009) guidance for calculating sample sizes, based on a 95 percent confidence level, a 3 percent margin of error and a conservative split variance of 50/50, a probability sample of 1,067 respondents would be required to study the desired population with generalisable precision. However, previous research has highlighted that surveying healthcare staff has often proffered poor response rates with time pressures and busyness being cited as factors (e.g. Tadd et al, 2011c; Winstanley & Whittington, 2004). In order to mitigate this, the number of surveys printed for dissemination to staff was 4,000 with this figure allowing for potentially poor response rates of around 25 percent. The intention would be to issue these to all acute NHS Trusts in England and all of the health boards in Wales, with the awareness that some of these organisations may not approve the study.

Alongside sampling decisions, other steps to ensure adequate response rates were taken with regard to survey design. As the likes of Palmer (1999), Hoffman (2004) and Ware (2004) have noted, visual information is processed over a number of stages. For the purposes of this survey, the intention was to make the design uncluttered, professional and standardised. The survey was created in Adobe InDesign incorporating neutral colours and images, adequate spacing, standardised formatting and the bolding or underlining of key instructions for respondents. This was carried out to the suggested guidelines of Dillman et al (2009) that include:

- Establishing consistency in the visual presentation of questions and using alignment and vertical spacing to help respondents organise the information on the page.
- Using colour and contrast to help respondents recognise the components of the questions and the navigational path through the questionnaire.
- Consistently identifying the beginning of each question and/or section.
- Using darker and/or lighter print for the question and lighter and/or smaller print for answer choices and spaces.
- Using spacing to help subgrouping within a question.
- Visually standardising all answer spaces or response options.
- Using visual design properties to emphasise elements that are important to the respondent and to de-emphasise those that are not.
- Using design properties with consistency and regularity.
- Making sure the words and visual elements that make up the question send consistent messages.
- Integrating special instructions into the question where they will be used rather than including them as freestanding entities.
- Organising each question in a way that minimises the need to reread portions in order to comprehend the response task.
- Choosing line spacing, font and text size to ensure the legibility of the text.

(Dillman et al, 2009; 97-104)

With regard to the content of the survey, several crucial design decisions were made prior to piloting. The primary purpose of the survey was to identify the cultural texts commonly consumed by NHS staff. As such, one

section was dedicated to questions on this topic; deriving some of its format and wording from the widely circulated National Readership Survey (e.g. National Readership Survey, 2015c). Alongside this, the survey also intended to collect demographic data from the respondent on age, gender, ethnicity and occupational group meaning a further section was included for this. For these purposes, question format and content was based on the NHS Staff Survey, aimed at the same population, so as to allow comparison (NHS Staff Survey, 2015). With this broad structure in place, the decision was then made to include both open and close-ended questions. As Dillman et al (2009) state, the use of open-ended questions is appropriate when 'surveyors ask respondents to provide a list of items such as grocery stores they frequent, favourite brands of clothing, or businesses' (2009; 108). For the purposes of this survey, the open-ended questions were used primarily to give respondents opportunity to list cultural texts, as in questions such as 'Which three television shows do you watch most often?' or 'Which three magazines do you currently purchase, either regularly or occasionally?' though numerical open-ended questions were also used to request respondents' ages. The closed-ended questions were deployed for those instances where all 'reasonable possible answers' could be included without compromising the ease or aesthetic of the design and making categorisation of the data much more simple (Dillman et al, 2009; 120). For example, questions such as 'In an average day, how many hours do you spend on the Internet?' offered the potential for close-ended responses such as 'Never go on the Internet', 'Less than 1 hour', 'About 1 hour', 'About 2 hours', 'About 3 hours', 'About 4 hours', 'About 5 hours or more' and 'Don't know'. In each of these instances, consideration was given to the visual design of the response spaces, as well as the question wording and associated instructions to ensure respondents provided the correct level of detail (ibid). Further information on the survey questions is included in Chapter 5, but it should be noted here that the survey also included an invitation for the respondent to volunteer for the third stage of research design, the qualitative semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A for a copy of the survey).

Piloting

Prior to issuing questionnaires to NHS staff, the content and layout were tested and refined through pilots involving students within Cardiff University. This was carried out over the course of two iterations with three University schools: the School of Nursing and Midwifery, the School of Medicine and the School of Social Sciences. These schools were specifically selected to best mirror the characteristics of the population under investigation, particularly with regard to the inclusion of medical and nursing students. The School of Social Sciences was incorporated as a further pilot to test the overall approach of the survey with those familiar with these research methods. As well as trialling the question wording and structure, comment sections were added to provide respondents the opportunity to suggest changes to layout and content.

First Pilot: School of Nursing and Midwifery and School of Medicine

In total, 40 paper versions of the survey were issued out to contacts within Cardiff University School of Nursing and Midwifery and the School of Medicine. This provided only 13 responses, which was less than expected due to the School of Nursing & Midwifery not being able to disseminate the survey prior to a Christmas vacation and the commencement of clinical placements for their students. The analysis of these responses led to a series of changes to the questionnaire. The primary issue to be resolved related to respondent fatigue that saw some surveys returned incomplete (La Bruna and Rathod, 2005). This was mainly encountered in the latter half of the survey during questions on the respondents' media consumption habits, with the first block of questions on biographical information being uniformly completed. This fatigue was partly attributed to the relative complexity of the questions on cultural consumption as compared to biographical information such as age and gender. It was decided that the effect of respondent fatigue could be mitigated by placing the 'about what you watch, read and listen to' sequentially ahead of the 'about you' section. While this placed the demographic information at jeopardy of being left out, it was felt that having completed the more challenging section respondents would be more likely to

fill out the rest of the survey. In addition, as Dillman (2000) notes, leaving personal questions until later stages of surveys helps to enable the building of trust in the respondent.

The pilot also highlighted issues associated with questions on radio listening. Initially, it was felt that open-ended questions would operate in a similar fashion for radio as it would for television, requesting that respondents name the programmes and stations that they 'listen to most often' and those which they 'set aside time to listen to'. However, the pilot results showed broad variability in the type of responses being provided with many unable to specify particular shows and instead citing stations or wavelength frequencies. With this in mind, it was decided to restrict the radio questions to an open-ended list question requesting the three radio stations that are listened to most frequently, alongside a close-ended question identifying the time slots that the respondent was most likely to listen to the radio. Aside from this, three pilot survey respondents also mentioned the potential to include questions on podcasts, which were included within the Internet section ahead of the second round of piloting.

Second Pilot: School of Social Sciences

Given that some significant changes were introduced to the survey design following the first pilot, it was decided that a second pilot would be beneficial to ensure these changes improved respondent understanding and response rates. For these purposes, a second pilot was arranged with undergraduate students within Cardiff University's Social Sciences department resulting in 15 responses. The major change introduced following the first pilot appeared to improve the survey experience for the users; swapping the 'About You' and 'About What You Watch, Read and Listen To' question blocks appeared to decrease the number of respondents dropping out. Of the 15 responses, only one was returned as partially incomplete demonstrating a much-reduced rate of respondent fatigue from the first pilot. Further to this, the revised section on radio listenership produced much clearer responses based

on the shift to a close-ended question requesting the windows of time that respondents are most likely to listen.

However, some of the other amendments to the questionnaire offered less successful results. The introduction of questions on podcasting suggested that there were a minimal number of respondents familiar with this particular form of cultural consumption with only one response offered from the returned surveys. Given the emphasis on respondent fatigue, the decision was made to remove this question from the survey and streamline the process of response for the user. In addition, the decision was taken to remove questions on Internet video channels contained in sites such as YouTube. While this is considered an important means of cultural consumption in the digital age, the number of respondents who seemed to misunderstand the question suggested that removing it from the survey would, once more, make it simpler for users to navigate. The responses provided failed to offer the required level of granularity to identify cultural texts for the discourse analysis with a significant number of respondents either not answering or providing responses too vague for analysis, e.g. YouTube rather than the specific channels to which respondents subscribe.

Each of these changes were discussed at length with the study's supervisory team, alongside suggestions for minor changes to the question wording and presentation associated with television, printed press, radio and the Internet. Following these discussions and the subsequent amendments, the survey was ready to be issued.

Data Collection

The survey was in the field between July and October 2013 for the English Trusts and between November and December 2013 for Welsh health boards. The targeted sample incorporated the breadth of the ward staff community ranging from consultants to nurses to healthcare assistants to ancillary staff, provided they encountered older people on a day-to-day working basis. The inclusion criteria were as follows:

- Members of NHS staff working with older people on a day-to-day basis

- Aged 18 or over

Similarly, the exclusion criteria were as follows:

- Not members of NHS staff or social care staff
- Not working with older people on a day-to-day basis
- Non-English speakers

Following the process of NHS R&D approval outlined later in the chapter, the number of English NHS Trusts in the sample was reduced to 111 with all seven of the Welsh health boards granting approval. The reduction in the number of English Trusts meant that the total number of surveys issued was 3,438 as opposed to the planned 4,000 across all of the NHS Trusts and health boards. Once approval was in place, the paper surveys were designed and printed professionally, each being given a unique four-digit identification number so as to accurately track which NHS Trust the responses were from. Once numbered, the surveys were packaged up alongside cover letters and freepost envelopes. These were split into bundles of 20, 30 and 40 though bespoke packages were also provided so as to offer Trusts a practical number of surveys for their staffing levels. In each Trust a local contact was identified who would receive the package of surveys and distribute them to staff working on wards encountering older people. From this point onwards, the staff members themselves would be able to populate the survey and return it in the post to Cardiff University.

Data Analysis

Before commencing analysis, each survey's number was logged in an Excel sheet to collate recruitment figures. Following this, the full data set was input into a manually created SPSS 20 template with the survey's variables allocated and numerical codes established to reflect the close-ended responses. As the research question under exploration was 'which television shows, radio shows and printed and online press are commonly consumed by health and social care staff?' the data of primary interest were the cultural texts outlined for each of these cultural forms. These open-ended responses

were entered manually into SPSS as string variables (Field, 2007; 71), standardising the format and wordings of cultural texts where required. The data was primarily analysed for descriptive statistics such as assessing the volume of responses attributed to an individual cultural text, and exploring any significant relationships found by interrogating these against demographic labels such as age, gender, occupation and ethnicity. These results will be outlined in Chapter 5.

Discourse Analysis of Cultural Texts

Research Design and Sampling Decisions

With the prerequisite methodological stage of the survey completed and the results inputted into SPSS and analysed, it was possible to begin the discourse analysis. Through this, the research question of ‘how are older people represented in television shows, radio shows and the printed and online popular press commonly consumed by NHS staff?’ would be addressed. Based on the requirement to study a range of cultural forms, a multimodal discursive-semiotic approach was adopted. By combining aspects of discourse analysis, as espoused by the likes of Cook (1992; 1994) in regard to literature, as well as the broader remit of semiotics in which moving images, music and audio are more easily incorporated, the various cultural texts involved in the study could be analysed under a uniform framework. Cook (1994) has helped to broaden the more restrictive definitions of discourse that saw it as relating only to verbal communication so as to include media texts such as the printed press, television adverts, radio or any other form of persuasive communication. However, the incorporation of semiotics, as outlined by the likes of Fiske (1982), Woollacott et al (1982) and Peirce (cited in Colapietro and Olshewsky, 1996), grants the study greater scope to deal with the challenges of analysing a variety of mixed communicational forms. To further assist this process, templates were developed to assist the analysis of each different cultural form. The value of taking field notes during a wide-ranging discourse analysis has previously

been highlighted by the likes of Royce and Bowcher (2007) but this was broadened to include purpose-built templates with fields for analytical elements specifically associated with the form. As such, aspects like incidental music, sound effects, mise-en-scene, set design, dress, body language, editing, filming style and colour grading were all included in relation to television. Radio, on the other hand, required less emphasis on visual elements and far more consideration of aural communication. The portfolio of developed templates is included for reference in Appendix B.

The final sample of television, radio, and printed and online press was primarily selected based on the volume of responses received for individual cultural texts. As mentioned previously, the survey was generally designed to incorporate free-text responses on questions such as ‘which three television shows do you watch most often?’ and ‘which three television shows are you most likely to set aside time to watch?’ The survey results chapter will explain the survey questions and sampling decisions in more depth. At this stage, though, it is worth mentioning that alongside the number of responses a text received, some texts were chosen because they demonstrated sample-specific interests. For instance, the television show *24 Hours In A&E* was more highly returned by the project’s sample than would be expected by the broader societal viewing figures. The show regularly attracts audiences of around 2 to 3 million while shows like *X-Factor* or *Strictly Come Dancing* that offered similar levels of response in the survey, achieve much larger audiences (Kanter, 2013). As such, this was selected as one of the TV shows to be analysed, alongside the most commonly responded shows of *Coronation Street* and *BBC News*. The full sample of cultural texts is outlined in the table below:

Cultural Form	Texts to be Studied
Television	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coronation Street (10 episodes) - 24 Hours in A&E (5 episodes) - BBC News at 10 (11 episodes)
Radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BBC Radio 1 Breakfast Show (5 episodes) - BBC Radio 2 Breakfast Show (5 episodes)
Newspapers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daily Mail (5 editions) - The Sun (5 editions) - The Guardian (5 editions)
Magazines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heat (4 editions) - OK (4 editions) - Take A Break (4 editions)
Internet News	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BBC News Online (50 stories over five days) - Sky News Online (32 stories over five days) - Mail Online (50 stories over five days)

TABLE 3: SAMPLE OF CULTURAL TEXTS FOR DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The final discourse analysis sample comprised 13 hours of watching television, 30 hours of listening to the radio, 15 different newspaper editions, 12 different magazine editions and over 130 Internet news articles. Flexibility was factored into this should the designed sample not be felt to have reached theoretical saturation, though this was not eventually required (Starks and Trinidad, 2007).

Data Collection

The discourse analysis was carried out sequentially between February and May 2014. The process was initiated with the television texts of the sample before progressing onto radio, magazines, newspapers and Internet news texts in that order. The television and radio texts were available either during live television or as catch-up on demand shows for a period after being aired. Each newspaper title was purchased every working day for one week with the set of weekly magazines being bought over the course of four weeks. The Internet news texts were collated from the relevant website on a daily basis over five days, taking the most popular stories as listed. These cultural texts were all collated into a sample logbook for ease of reference before being analysed with the assistance of the discourse analysis templates mentioned in the previous section.

Data Analysis

The discourse analysis was founded on a close and critical engagement with the cultural texts of the sample, carried out over a number of analytical stages. The first of these was an initial reading of each cultural text to identify any representations of older people. These were then logged as individual representations within the relevant cultural form's templates, enabling a much more detailed examination of each representation. In practical terms, this incorporated multiple viewings, listens and readings of a cultural text to ensure that each mode of communication was considered for its contribution to the overall discourse of a text. This aligns with the work of Woollacott et al in relation to discursive-semiotic studies where he states that the emphasis is on 'the system of rule governing the 'discourse' involved in media texts, stressing the role of semiotic context in shaping meaning' (1982; 93-94). Following the discourse analysis of all cultural forms, the comprehensive field notes taken on each representation of older people were uploaded to N-Vivo 8 for coding.

The coding of the field note data was carried out with the explicit aim of identifying the surface and underlying meanings behind representations of older people. Following the likes of Guest (2012) and Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006), a thematic analysis was adopted to uncover patterns within the data set as a whole. This process also incorporated aspects of grounded theory espoused by writers such as Charmaz (2006) and Braun and Clarke (2006) in that the coding identified themes emerging from within the data, rather than imposing a pre-established analytical framework. The thematic findings from the discourse analysis are further outlined in Chapters 7 and 8.

Semi-Structured Interviews with NHS Staff

Interview Design and Sampling Decisions

As outlined in the study approach, the qualitative interviews were in place to interrogate the research questions ‘does the cultural representation of older people have any bearing on the attitudes of NHS staff?’ and ‘what social and cultural factors help to explain the delivery of quality care or lack of dignified care in the healthcare sector?’ Following the discourse analysis, a set of themes relating to the representations of older people had been developed. The interviews would further explore these emergent themes, talking through interviewee’s engagement with certain cultural texts, as well as their attitudes and perceptions towards older people. On this basis, the flexibility commonly attributed to the semi-structured interview was felt to be the most appropriate, allowing for detailed exploration of responses through follow-up questions (see Bryman, 2008; Flick, 2014). Interviewees were purposively invited to take part in the study using the contact details voluntarily provided when they completed the initial survey. Survey information also informed aspects of the interview schedule, with questions relating to a respondent’s cultural consumption featuring heavily. The survey was distributed to geographically disparate areas across England and Wales, proffering an equally geographically disparate interview sample. Face-to-face interviews remain the dominant form for the semi-structured interview to take with a key advantage over its rivals being its access to social cues such as body language (Opdenakker, 2006). However, for the purposes of this study, telephone interviews offered numerous logistical benefits. As Shuy (2002) notes, telephone interviews result in reduced costs, faster data collection and the ability to access a wide geography of people. Beyond this, as Cachia and Millward (2011) argue, the telephone interview can offer methodological strength as well as convenience. Firstly, they suggest that semi-structured interviews and telephone conversations are a natural fit for one another given that both are loosely controlled by the ‘caller’ or the ‘interviewer’ and subject to the same degree of conversational flexibility (ibid). Secondly, they make the case that many respondents consider the telephone interview to be

'less demanding' than the face-to-face equivalent, meaning that response rates can often be higher (ibid). As has been mentioned previously, staff busyness within the NHS was always felt to be a risk to recruitment figures so the use of telephone interviews was also hoped to alleviate this.

Prior to any interviews being carried out, an interview schedule was designed to cover the thematic areas highlighted in the discourse analysis, as well as other non-cultural influences on attitudes to older people. This led to three distinct sections within the schedule:

1. **Work Related.** This section explored the interviewee's role within the NHS and what that entails, their level of exposure to older people in the work setting, as well as what they felt comprised good and poor quality care. This section was in place to uncover work-related attitudes towards older people, as well as to help establish some rapport with the respondent.
2. **Social Related.** Numerous links have been made between exposure to older people at a social level and the attitudes held towards them (e.g. Haight et al, 1994; Roy; 1996; Lothian & Philp, 2001). This section of the interview talked through the relationships that interviewees had with older people when growing up and whether social relations with older people were existent in their adult lives. As well as offering an alternative means of exploring attitudes towards older people, this helped to stratify the various influences that could affect such attitudes. In doing so, it helped to address the research question 'what social and cultural factors help to explain the delivery of quality care or lack of dignified care in the healthcare sector?'
3. **Culture Related.** The final section of the interview schedule talked through the interviewee's responses to the surveys, exploring consumption habits and perception of older people as found in culture. This was the clearest opportunity to interrogate the representations of older people suggested by the discourse analysis against the attitudes held by NHS staff. As such, the schedule here was

kept particularly loose, discussing the survey results of each individual interviewee. This was achieved by working through each cultural form in turn, with follow-up questions paying specific attention to cultural texts overlapping with those in the discourse analysis. This helped illuminate ideas around the research question 'does the cultural representation of older people have any bearing on the attitudes of NHS staff?'

The resultant schedule (included as Appendix C) was drafted to avoid leading questions that would influence responses in particular ways. Given that the cultural section was looking to explore the prevalence of certain already-identified discursive themes in the views of staff, it was felt important that these should emerge first from the interviewee. Therefore the schedule asked questions such as 'How do you think older people are portrayed in the show?' with follow-ups exploring what representations these entailed.

Piloting

With the interview schedule developed, it was piloted on a convenience sample of two healthcare workers. The initial intent was to advertise for medical student pilot interviewees in Cardiff University's School of Medicine. However, logistical barriers within the department saw this process encounter significant delays. Largely this was attributable to a change in the administration team and the requirement for staff training. On this basis, healthcare workers already known to the researcher were approached and appointments made for telephone interviews. These calls were conducted in a private room on speakerphone with a Dictaphone recording responses.

The interview schedule was initially designed to last between 15 and 30 minutes. However, the pilots showed that to adequately cover the topics under discussion this would need extension. The cultural section of the interview, in particular, required significant levels of follow-up questions in order to gather the anticipated richness of data. This meant that the guidelines issued out to potential interviewees eventually stated the interview length as being between 40 and 60 minutes. Piloting also helped in

encouraging a more fluid approach to the cultural section of the interview. The initial schedule was structured around each cultural form being taken in turn with questions running in the order of television, radio, newspapers, magazines and the Internet. Again, though, the pilots identified that this was too rigid an approach, resulting in stilted conversation when respondents did not engage with certain cultural forms. For the second pilot the schedule was redrafted so that the cultural texts overlapping with the discourse analysis were discussed first and a more exploratory approach adopted in relation to other texts. This helped to establish the influence of other cultural texts aside from those contained in the discourse analysis, as well as helping to establish initial rapport by talking through familiar, open-ended topics (Carr and Worth, 2001). The second pilot was deemed successful and incorporated enough flexibility in the schedule to cater to each interviewee's specific survey responses. Both pilots were audio-recorded successfully allowing denaturalised transcription. This denaturalised approach would be maintained for the project interviews based on the study's interest being on the informational content rather than the nuances of vocal delivery (MacLean et al, 2004).

Data Collection

The semi-structured interviews were carried out over the telephone with each of the calls being audio-recorded for transcription purposes. Sample recruitment was purposive, driven by those who had volunteered for inclusion as part of the initial surveys. Only those who provided their contact details were eligible for selection, with this being further reduced due to exclusions such as respondents being on international work placements and being no longer contactable. With this taken into account, 250 potential interviewees were available for interview. Initially, these were stratified based on the levels of cultural engagement the survey suggested, as well as alignment with those texts selected for the discourse analysis. The aim was to interview a range of respondents based on gender, age and job role, as well as to explore the extent that discursive themes would emerge throughout the interviews. The 250 contacts were split into batches of 50 and e-mailed over

five different occasions with arrangements made with those who responded for a telephone interview. Prior to the interview, consent was taken over the phone, in addition to a populated consent form being received from the interviewee through e-mail or physical post in advance of this. Once consent was assured, the interviews took place, generally lasting between 35 minutes and an hour.

Data Analysis

Once complete, the interviews were each transcribed with a denaturalised approach, using the same system as the pilots. The resultant transcripts were uploaded into the same N-Vivo 8 project used to code the discourse analysis field notes, though stored in a separate data source folder. With the data logged, a similar thematic analysis was adopted as conducted for the discourse analysis. As previously, this was selected so as to uncover broad patterns with the interview data (Guest, 2012; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006) but also to triangulate and corroborate the codes and themes established through the discourse analysis. A selection of transcripts were independently analysed by the researcher and the supervisory team after codes had been applied. The outcome of this initial coding was discussed in supervisory meetings to ensure it was justifiable and logical, before the initial coding framework was agreed. The coding of the data then took several iterations, guided by the principles of grounded theory and reflexivity (Charmaz, 2006). In practical terms this meant that the thematic analysis of later interviews offered new ideas, themes and codes that were, on reflection, equally as applicable to earlier transcripts. These transcripts were revisited and re-coded to reflect new avenues of thought until it was agreed with the supervisory team that theoretical saturation had been achieved.

Ethical Considerations

The basic ethical principles in social research, as outlined by Diener and Crandall (1978) encompass the following issues:

1. if there is harm to participants;
2. if there is a lack of informed consent;
3. if participants' privacy is invaded;
4. if participants' are deceived.

This study took these broad concerns as its main ethical emphasis with all participants being provided an information sheet explaining the research and any potential implications. This explained that the interviews would be audio-recorded for transcription purposes, that participants will have to provide written consent, that interviewees will be informed that they can withdraw from the interview at any time without explanation and anonymity will be maintained through the use of pseudonyms for the respondents and research locations. A further ethical risk associated specifically with this study was the potential for staff to disclose illegal behaviour or poor practice within the interview. The potential harm arising from this would be the requirement of the researcher to report such malpractice to the authorities, potentially resulting in loss of employment. To mitigate any harm to participants associated with this, interviewees were specifically informed of this issue when being talked through the consent form.

NHS R&D Approval

While all social science studies utilise the core principles outlined above to guide ethical decisions, it is a requirement that research carried out in the NHS be processed through the National Research Ethics Service (NRES). Studies such as this are relatively low-risk with patients' healthcare not being impacted, the research only involving NHS staff, and participants not being dependent upon the researchers.

Any project commencing within an NHS setting requires both ethical approval and NHS R&D approval from each of the study sites. After taking advice from the supervisory team, as well as the National Institute for Social Care and Health Research (NISCHR), it was decided that the study did not require full NHS REC approval. With no NHS patients involved and only NHS staff taking the survey and being interviewed, the NHS R&D approval process was sufficient. This meant that ethical approval was instead sought from the sponsor organisation, Cardiff University. To obtain this, the research protocol was submitted to the School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (SREC) in December 2012. This was approved in January 2013, enabling the study to commence the NHS approval process.

From this point onwards, the approval processes for England and Wales began to deviate based on each country's respective NHS Research Governance systems so, for the purposes of this discussion, it will be helpful to split this into two distinct sections: the first covering approval for the Welsh health boards; the second describing the equivalent system for the English NHS Trusts.

Welsh NHS R&D Approval

With the study being hosted by a Welsh higher education institution, Cardiff University, it was decided that the study would be submitted initially to the NISCHR, 'the Welsh Government body that develops, in consultation with partners, strategy and policy for research in the NHS and social care in Wales' (NISCHR, 2013). To do this, the study protocol and any additional information were uploaded onto the Integrated Research Application System (IRAS) and submitted to the NISCHR Permissions Co-ordinating Unit (NISCHR PCU) in February 2013.

Following the study's validation, an individual site-specific information (SSI) form was generated for each of the health boards based in Wales. The SSI form is a requirement for any NHS R&D approval and within Wales it is stated that one form should be created for each study site (NHS Research and Development Forum, 2007). Each of the respective research and

development teams were contacted, with a specific local contact arranged in each of the health boards. This was appended to the SSI forms that were then submitted, alongside all relevant documentation. The centralisation of the R&D approval process in Wales, as well as there being only seven health boards across the country, meant that the initial stages of the process ran very smoothly. The SSI forms were received by each of the health boards and taken to their respective approval committees, in line with the established process. However, in spite of NISCHR emphasising the standardisation of the new system, once the applications progressed to each individual health board's committee, there was considerable variability in response.

Three of the seven health boards granted approval with almost immediate effect, offering no objections to the study. Following some clarification on the details of the study, two more offered their approval as well. However, the final two health boards requested that further action be taken before approval could be provided. For example, one health board stated that minor changes be made to the Patient Information Sheet, such as amending the phrase 'the study will help us to benefit older adults in long-term care facilities and the staff working with them' to 'the study may help us to benefit older adults in long-term care facilities and the staff working with them'. While this and other changes were not exhaustive, they did suggest that there was a level of inconsistency in the review process between the health boards in Wales. These local variations have been noted by a number of academics experiencing NHS R&D approval. Fudge et al (2010) noted delays in the approval process for a national survey entitled 'Stroke Survivor Needs' and attributed these to certain centres requesting changes to local documentation or requesting additional information to the standardised submissions. Likewise, Carlowe (2010) has highlighted the frustration felt by many academics towards the inconsistencies and inefficiencies of NHS R&D departments.

The largest variation between the health boards, however, was in respect to applying for a research passport. In particular, one health board stated that completion of the research passport application was a precursor to any

approval being processed. However, this interpretation of the guidelines was not mirrored by all of the other health boards. Each of the other health boards approved the research to commence with conditional approval based on a letter of access being arranged should the researcher be required to visit a study site.

English NHS R&D Approval

Once the study was issued to NISCHR PCU it was identified as a study requiring approval from organisations in England, as well as Wales, and was passed to the English research governing body, the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). Upon entry into the NIHR Coordinated System for gaining NHS Permission (CSP), and adoption to the NIHR portfolio, it was decided that the project would utilise Western Comprehensive Local Research Network (CLRN) as the lead CLRN. This meant that advice could be sought from their team on issues of process and managing the Trust responses. The NIHR CSP system has been introduced to 'standardise(s) and streamline(s) the process of gaining NHS Permission for commercial and non-commercial clinical research studies in England' (NIHR, 2013). One of the benefits of the streamlined system is its ability to apply for R&D approval to multiple English Trust sites through the submission of a generic site-specific information (SSI) form. This was agreed with Western CLRN as the best means for the study to progress, with a populated SSI being sent out to other participating CLRNs for dissemination.

Once the generic SSI was issued to the other CLRNs across England, Trusts began to make contact with SSI submission confirmations, enquiries and questions on the project. Between the months of March 2013 and June 2013, 784 e-mails were received relating specifically to the ethical approval process in England. So as to gain approval from as many Trusts as possible, each of these queries were responded to individually, often under the advice of Western CLRN or the supervisory team. They largely consisted of the following:

- **Requests for documentation on research passports / letters of access for the interview stage.** After seeking advice on the correct process from Western CLRN, a stock response to this query was written and utilised on each occasion it was raised. The content of this was to suggest conditional approval be granted to carry out the survey as, until this was issued and analysed, it would be unclear which Trusts would be used for the semi-structured interviews. This was by far the most common query received from each of the Trusts.
- **Requests for name of local collaborator / local contact.** The generic SSI form expedited the approval process for England but also meant that a standard part of the individual SSI form submission, the identification of a local collaborator, was not carried out. The result of this was numerous questions being raised by R&D teams as to how the questionnaires would be disseminated or who would take responsibility for this within the Trust. It was always known that a local contact would be required so as to ensure questionnaires would reach staff and thus increase the response rate. As such, this request helped to speed up the access to the Trusts. Those who granted approval but did not offer any form of local contact were later called to establish a member of staff to assist. Commonly this would be a research nurse or a member of the R&D team.
- **Community Services Trusts.** A significant number of community services Trust (7) discovered the study on the NIHR portfolio and made contact enquiring as to whether they would be applicable for involvement. Unfortunately, due to the scale of the project and emphasis on acute Trusts this was not feasible. However, it did show willingness from this area of the sector to be involved in potential future projects.
- **General enquiries on project details.** The largest remainder of correspondence was around specific aspects of the study. The SSI submission was left deliberately broad on the basis that different Trusts' organisations operated in slightly different manners. Because of this,

enquiries were received on topics such as which wards would be most appropriate for dissemination of the questionnaires, the range of staff who would be eligible to take part, and whether the recruited staff would be eligible for uploading onto the portfolio as individual Trust accruals. These enquiries helped to fine-tune elements of implementing the mail shot with, for example, an agreement being reached that each survey would be individually tagged with a four-digit identification number so that Trust responses could be monitored.

As mentioned previously, the resolution of these queries and issues resulted in a final number of 111 English Trusts granting the study approval. More detail on the participants and the study sites involved in the study will be provided in Chapter 6.

Chapter 5: NHS Staff Survey Results

Introduction

Carried out between July and December 2013, the NHS media consumption survey was eventually issued to 79 English NHS Trusts and six Welsh health boards. This was reduced from those initially giving ethical approval due to attrition and difficulty in making contact with a Trust or health board representative. In total, 3,438 surveys were issued with 2,778 being directed to the 79 English Trusts and 660 at the six Welsh health boards. For the English Trusts, this resulted in 1,333 surveys being returned from 69 sites, a national response rate of 48.0 percent. The six Welsh health boards offered a further 191 surveys, forming a response rate of 28.9 percent. In total, then, there were 1,524 respondents and an overall survey response rate of 44.3 percent. This volume of return was higher than expected based on issues encountered in previous studies surveying healthcare staff (see Tadd et al, 2011c; Winstanley & Whittington, 2004). As outlined in the methodology chapter, several interventions were made to the length, physical presentation, and distribution channels of the survey in order to mitigate previously reported issues of time pressure and busyness. The overriding purpose of the questionnaire was to unpick the research question: 'Which television shows, radio shows and printed and online press are commonly consumed by health and social care staff?' On this basis, the survey predominantly focussed on the cultural texts consumed by staff and the frequency with which this was done, as well as broader demographic information including age, sex, occupation and ethnicity. This chapter will outline the results of the survey in more detail through two major sections: one relating to the demographic make up of the sample surveyed; and another highlighting the cultural consumption of staff.

Demographic Information

With the aim of reducing response fatigue, the demographic data was restricted to four questions covering the respondents' age, sex, occupation

and ethnicity. The responses to these will be explored in turn through each of the subsections below.

Respondent Age

The chart below splits the total sample into six major age ranges aligning with those deployed in the national NHS Staff Survey (2015): 16-to-20; 21-to-30; 31-to-40; 41-to-50; 51-to-65; and 66 or over. The equivalent NHS Staff Survey figures are provided as a reference point to the wider NHS workforce:

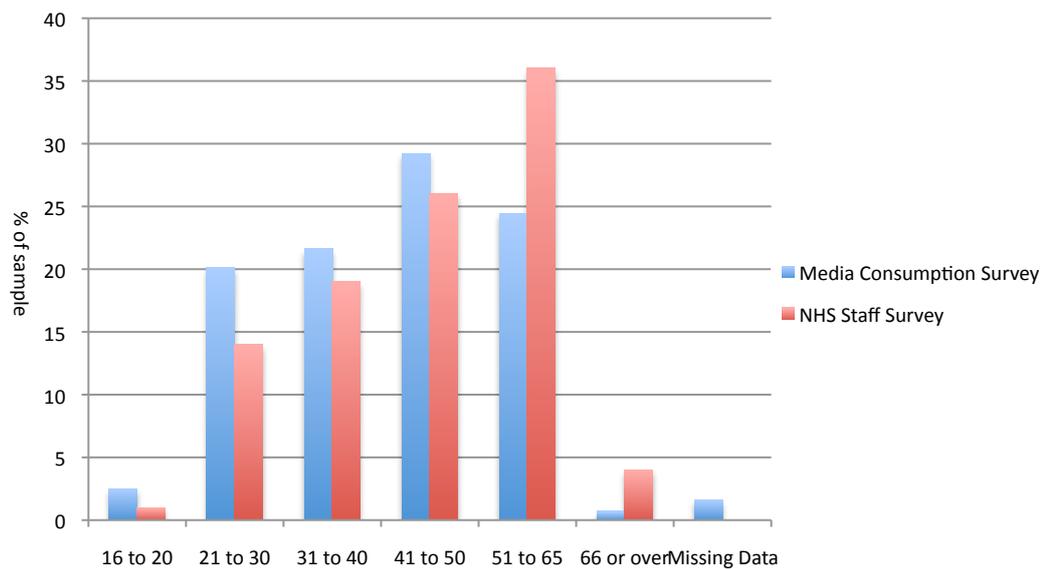


FIGURE 1: MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND NHS STAFF SURVEY RESPONSES BY AGE

The media consumption survey respondents were concentrated most heavily in the 41 to 50-age range with 445 (29.2 percent) of the overall sample. This was followed by those aged between 51 and 65 who accounted for 372 (24.4 percent), and then those aged 31 to 40 who formed 329 (21.6 percent) of the sample. The 21 to 30-age range offered a further 306 (20.1 percent) of the sample with the 16 to 20 category providing 38 responses (2.5 percent). Twenty-four responses (1.6 percent) were classified as missing data with a further 10 (0.7 percent) coming from respondents aged 66 or over.

When compared to the NHS Staff Survey, most recently implemented for 2014, similar age-based patterns are evident. While there was a shift towards the 51 to 65-age category, broadly speaking the NHS workforce measured in the Staff Survey aligned with that carried out for this study. The majority of

respondents for that survey, 36 percent, were aged between 51 and 65 with a further 26 percent aged between 41 and 50. Those aged between 31 and 40 comprised 19 percent of the sample and 14 percent was attributed to those aged between 21 and 30. The remaining respondents were split between those aged 16 to 20, 1 percent, and those aged 66 or over, 4 percent (NHS Staff Survey, 2015).

Respondent Sex

The NHS Staff Survey stated that 20 percent of the sampled workforce in 2014 was male and that the remaining 80 percent were female (NHS Staff Survey, 2015). The chart below compares these figures to those returned from this study's media consumption survey:

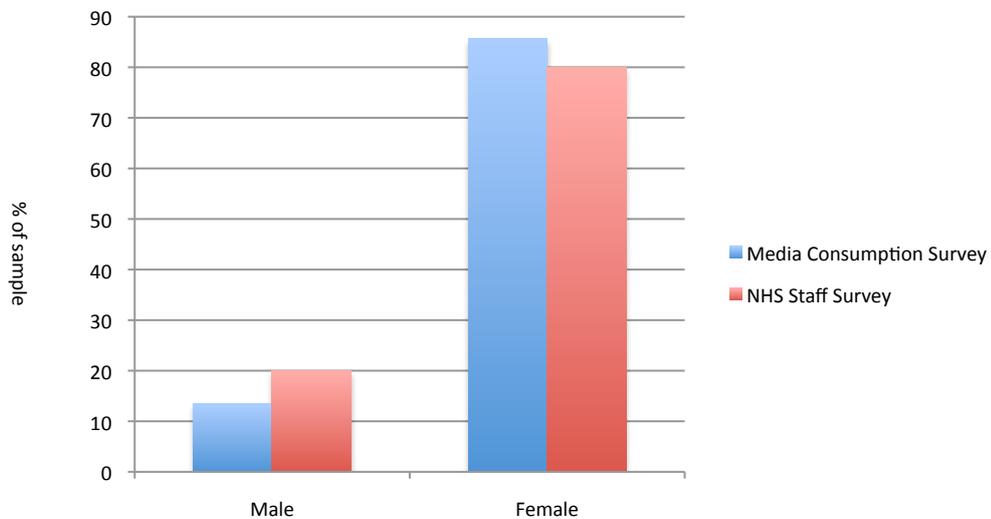


FIGURE 2: MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND NHS STAFF SURVEY RESPONSES BY SEX

The media consumption survey offered a slightly higher percentage presence of female staff than the NHS Staff Survey, with 85.6 percent (1,305), attributable to the disproportionately higher numbers of nurses and midwives responding (see Figure 3). Male staff accounted for 13.5 percent (205) of those surveyed. Small numbers of respondents stated either that they would prefer not to say, 0.5 percent (8), or left the question unanswered altogether, 0.4 percent (6). While there were some minor variations between the two surveys, most notably with the inclusion of the 'prefer not to say'

option in this study’s questionnaire, the overall trend for stronger female presence was maintained across both.

Respondent Occupation

The figure below charts the comparative percentage presence of NHS occupational groups for the media consumption survey and the NHS Staff Survey (2015):

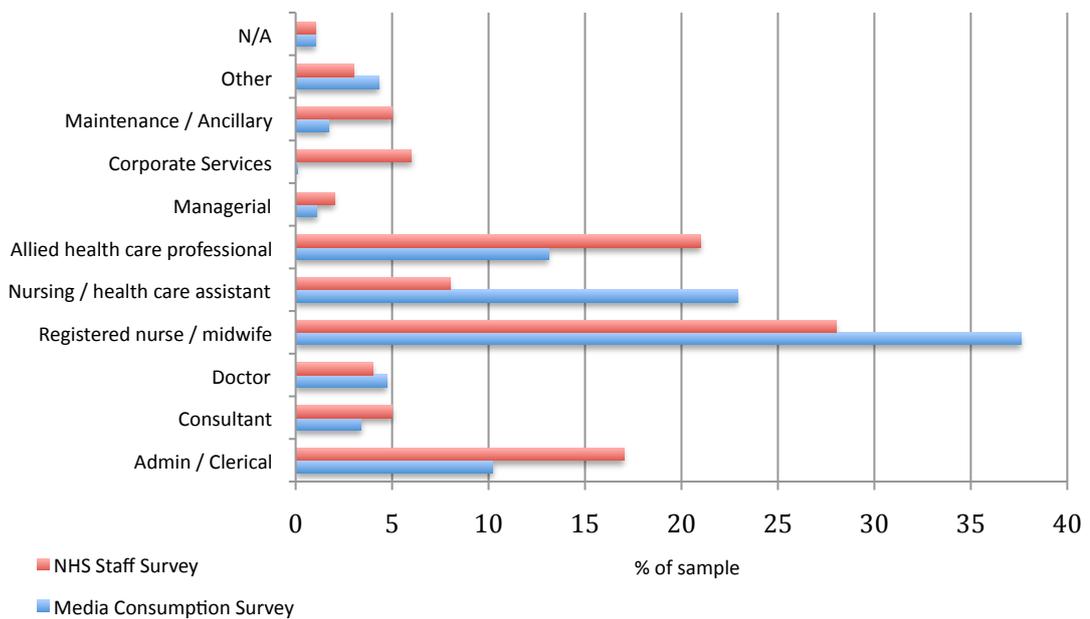


FIGURE 3: MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND NHS STAFF SURVEY RESPONSES BY OCCUPATION

The largest occupational group in both surveys was the ‘registered nurse / midwife’ category. For the media consumption survey this equated to 37.6 percent (573) of the sample while the NHS Staff Survey offered 28 percent (NHS Staff Survey, 2015). The ‘consultant’ and ‘doctor’ groups were roughly comparable across both surveys with the media consumption survey showing 3.4 percent (52) as consultants with 4.7 percent (71) stating they were doctors. The NHS Staff Survey showed 5 percent of the sampled workforce reported their occupation as a consultant while 4 percent were doctors (ibid). Comparisons between the two surveys for the other occupational groups showed them to deviate in terms of their respective weightings. For instance, the second largest portion of the sample for the

media consumption survey came with the 'nursing / healthcare assistant' grouping of 22.9 percent (349). However, for the NHS Staff Survey this same group accounted for only 8 percent of the sampled population (ibid). A similar pattern was evident in the 'allied healthcare professionals' with 21 percent of the NHS Staff Survey sample as compared to 13.1 percent (199) of the media consumption survey (ibid). This can be attributed to the methods of survey dissemination operating between the two with the media consumption survey generally being issued to ward-based healthcare staff, as well as emphasising interaction with older people. The NHS Staff Survey is issued to a much broader sample of the workforce, incorporating a greater presence of maintenance, admin, managerial, specialist and corporate staff. As such, the responses from the 'corporate services' totalled 0.1 percent (1) of the media consumption survey sample as compared to 6 percent of the NHS Staff Survey (ibid). Likewise, the 'admin and clerical' portion of the workforce was 17 percent for the NHS Staff Survey compared to 10.2 percent (155) of the media consumption survey (ibid). The 'managerial' and 'maintenance / ancillary' groups also saw fewer responses from the media consumption survey with 1.1 percent (17) of management staff compared to 2 percent from the NHS Staff Survey (ibid). For maintenance staff the equivalent figures were 5 percent for the NHS Staff Survey and 1.7 percent (26) for the media consumption survey (ibid). The remainder of each of the surveys' samples were categorised as 'other' with 4.3 percent (66) in the media consumption survey and 3 percent in the NHS Staff Survey (ibid).

Respondent Ethnicity

The final demographic question in the media consumption survey related to the respondents' ethnicity. As with the other questions, the NHS Staff Survey (2015) categories were mirrored for the media consumption survey so as to allow comparison between the two samples. The table below shows the percentages associated with each ethnicity grouping for both surveys:

Ethnicity	Media Consumption (No.)	Media Consumption (%)	NHS Staff Survey (%)
White – British	1,282	84.1	79.2
White – Irish	21	1.4	1.5
White – Other	20	1.3	4.3
Mixed – White / Black Caribbean	15	1.0	0.3
Mixed – White / Black African	2	0.1	0.2
Mixed – White / Asian	7	0.5	0.3
Mixed – Other	9	0.6	0.5
Asian - Indian	43	2.8	4.3
Asian - Pakistani	12	0.8	1.0
Asian - Bangladeshi	5	0.3	0.3
Asian - Chinese	6	0.4	0.6
Asian - Other	28	1.8	2.8
Black – African	30	2.0	2.3
Black – Caribbean	7	0.5	1.2
Black – Other	1	0.1	0.2
Any Other	8	0.6	1.1
Missing Data	28	1.8	0
TOTAL	1,524	100	100

TABLE 4: MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND NHS STAFF SURVEY RESPONSES BY ETHNICITY

The predominant ethnic group in both surveys was White – British accounting for 79.2 percent of the NHS Staff Survey and 84.1 percent (1,282) of the media consumption survey (NHS Staff Survey, 2015). The remainder of each of the samples was split between the remaining categories with percentages varying between 0.1 percent and 4.3 percent. Some of the more sizable groups were comparable between the surveys, such as the Asian – Indian that accounted for 4.3 percent of the NHS Staff Survey and 2.8 percent (43) of the media consumption survey (ibid). Also, the Black – African group represented 2.0 percent (30) of the media consumption survey as compared to 2.3 percent of the NHS Staff Survey (ibid). While there were variations

between certain groups, the findings based on ethnicity between both surveys were broadly comparable to one another.

The Cultural Consumption of NHS Staff

With the demographic details of the sample outlined, we can turn our attention to the responses gathered on the cultural consumption of staff. The survey contained questions on five cultural forms with the majority of answers being through free text responses. The only exceptions to this were the newspaper responses where the same multiple-choice categorisation as that found in the National Readership Survey (2015c) was implemented. Also, for the radio questions, free text responses were gathered for the stations being listened to rather than individual shows with this being complemented by a multiple-choice question on the times when radio was most likely to be consumed. The next set of subsections will explore the survey results relating to each cultural form in turn.

Television Shows

The survey contained three questions relating to television viewing habits. The first of these asked for the amount of television watched on an average day with respondents being provided a multiple-choice selection as outlined in the chart below:

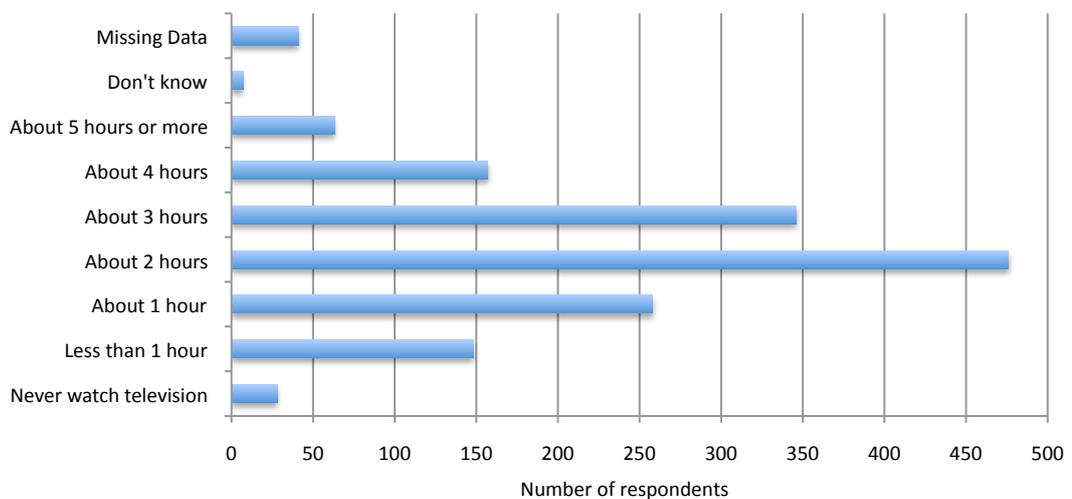


FIGURE 4: AMOUNT OF TELEVISION WATCHED BY VOLUME OF RESPONDENTS

The most common response gathered from the survey was to watch ‘about 2 hours’ of television per day with 31.2 percent (476). This was followed by ‘about 3 hours’ with 22.7 percent (346) and then ‘about 1 hour’ that accounted for 16.9 percent (258) of the sample. Those who ‘never watch television’ or watch ‘less than 1 hour’ totalled 11.5 percent (176) with the other extreme of ‘about 4 hours’ or ‘about 5 hours or more’ offering 14.4 percent (220). Those who stated they did not know or did not answer the question altogether formed the remainder of the sample with 3.2 percent (48).

The questions to identify the television shows most commonly consumed by NHS staff were split between those respondents watched most often and those respondents were most likely to set aside time to watch. Each question allowed space for three individual responses. The tables below show the aggregated top ten responses for both questions. It is worth noting that the percentage of total sample column is gathered from multiple-response data, indicating the proportion of the sample that mentioned a programme across any of their three responses:

Television Shows Watched Most Often	No. of responses	% of total sample
BBC News	418	27.4
Coronation Street	321	21.1
Emmerdale	222	14.6
Eastenders	211	13.8
Big Bang Theory	85	5.6
CSI	76	5.0
24 Hours In A&E	68	4.5
Holby City	67	4.4
Great British Bake Off	55	3.6
Hollyoaks	55	3.6

TABLE 5: MEDIA CONSUMPTION SURVEY RESULTS ON TELEVISION SHOWS WATCHED MOST OFTEN

Television Shows Set Time Aside To Watch	No. of responses	% of total sample
Coronation Street	215	14.1
BBC News	198	13.0
Emmerdale	162	10.6
Eastenders	143	9.4
Downton Abbey	86	5.6
X-Factor	69	4.5
24 Hours In A&E	63	4.1
Strictly Come Dancing	59	3.9
The Apprentice	57	3.9
Holby City	52	3.7

TABLE 6: MEDIA CONSUMPTION SURVEY RESULTS ON TELEVISION SHOWS FOR WHICH TIME WAS SET ASIDE TO WATCH

There were subtle variations between the two sets of responses with some shows appearing where respondents would set time aside to watch them but not in those shows watched most often. Notable examples of this were X-Factor, Downton Abbey, Strictly Come Dancing, Holby City and The Apprentice. The most commonly returned shows across both questions were BBC News and Coronation Street, forming the top two shows in each. On this criterion alone, these shows were immediately chosen as part of the discourse analysis sample. The final show selected, 24 Hours In A&E, was chosen ahead of other popular soap operas Emmerdale and Eastenders on the basis that this genre was already covered by Coronation Street. Other shows such as Downton Abbey, CSI, X-Factor and Big Bang Theory were also ruled out given that they featured more prominently for one set of responses than the other. 24 Hours In A&E appeared as commonly in response to both questions and, relative to the viewing figures of the shows around it, was watched more noticeably by the NHS population than the wider population. For instance, while 24 Hours In A&E regularly attracts audiences of around 2 to 3 million, shows that offered similar levels of response in the survey, such as X-Factor or Strictly Come Dancing, achieve much larger audiences (Kanter,

2013). Even after recent viewing slumps in 2014, those shows were still reported to attract audiences between 7 and 10 million (Plunkett, 2014).

Newspapers

There were two questions relating to the consumption of newspapers contained in the survey. As with the television questions, these covered the general level of consumption before identifying the newspaper that respondents read most often. The chart below shows how often newspapers were read in general terms by the sample:

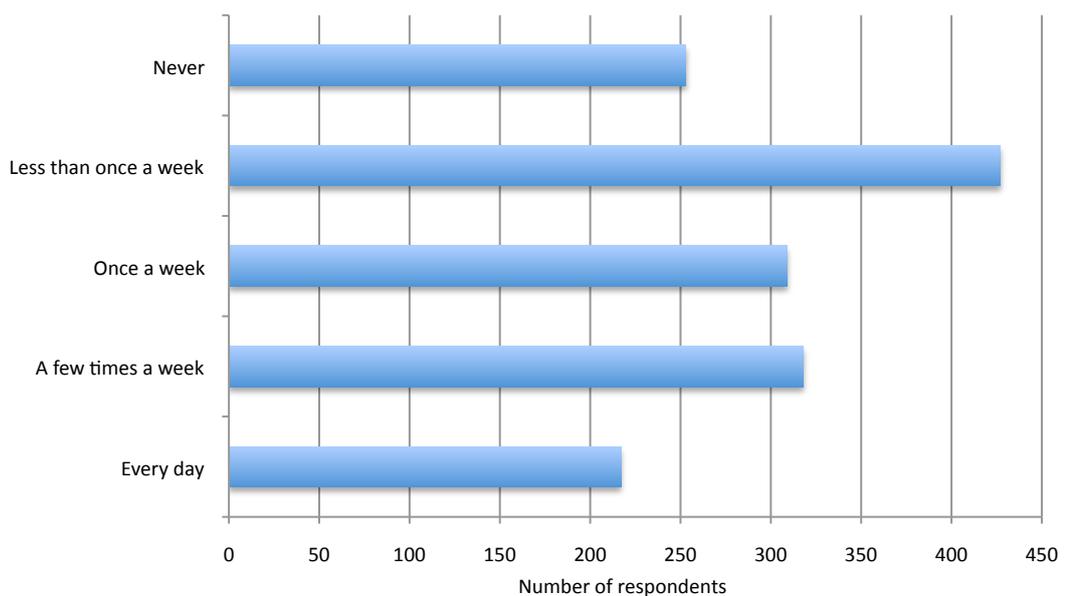


FIGURE 5: LEVEL OF NEWSPAPER READERSHIP BY VOLUME OF RESPONDENTS

The majority of the sample stated that they read a newspaper to some level of frequency with only 16.6 percent (253) reporting that this was never the case. That said, the largest volume of responses related to the lowest frequency of consumption with 'less than once a week' accounting for 28.0 percent (427) of the sample. Those who read newspapers 'once a week' (20.3 percent / 309) or 'a few times a week' (20.9 percent / 318) incorporated similar levels of response from the sample. The remainder stated that they read a newspaper every day, accounting for 14.2 percent (217).

As mentioned previously, the question identifying the newspaper read most often by a respondent used the multiple-choice categories implemented by

the National Readership Survey (2015c). This offered eleven major titles alongside options for a 'local daily newspaper' and 'other daily newspaper' both of which also provided a free text space for the title to be written. The results for the volume of responses are displayed in the table below:

Newspaper Read Most Often	No. of responses	% of total sample
Daily Express	53	3.5
Daily Mail	268	17.6
Daily Mirror	129	8.5
Daily Star	19	1.2
Daily Telegraph	67	4.4
Financial Times	6	0.4
The Guardian	93	6.1
The Independent	44	2.9
The Sun	133	8.7
The Times	83	5.4
Metro	71	4.7
Local daily newspaper	207	13.6
Other daily newspaper	24	1.6
None	317	20.8
Missing data	10	0.7

TABLE 7: MEDIA CONSUMPTION SURVEY RESULTS ON NEWSPAPER READ MOST OFTEN

The largest level of response emerged in the category of 'none' with 20.8 percent (317) of the sample, higher than those stating that they never read a newspaper in the previous question. This is arguably attributable to some newspaper readers not aligning with one specific brand over another, instead casually reading whatever was available. The most commonly read newspaper was the Daily Mail, commanding 17.6 percent (268) of the sample and ensuring its selection for the discourse analysis. The category relating to a 'local daily newspaper' offered the next highest level of response with 13.6 percent (207) of the sample. Given that the survey was implemented at a national level, however, there was a diversity of newspapers returned under this category based on the locality of the respondent. As such, it was not possible to incorporate this meaningfully into the discourse analysis. The

next most commonly returned national title was The Sun, which accounted for 8.7 percent (133) of the sample meaning it was chosen for the discourse analysis ahead of the other major tabloid title, the Daily Mirror (8.5 percent / 129). After these, the highest number of responses came for The Guardian with 6.1 percent (93) of the sample. This was also selected for the discourse analysis ahead of the Daily Mirror so as to represent a range of tabloid, broadsheet and middle market titles. Other notable responses were The Times with 5.4 percent (83), the Metro with 4.7 percent (71) and the Daily Telegraph with 4.4 percent (67).

Magazines

There were three questions relating to magazine readership in the survey. The first of these established broad readership levels, asking if respondents read print magazines either regularly or occasionally. The levels of response are displayed in the chart below for each of the multiple-choice options; ‘yes’, ‘no’ and ‘don’t know’:

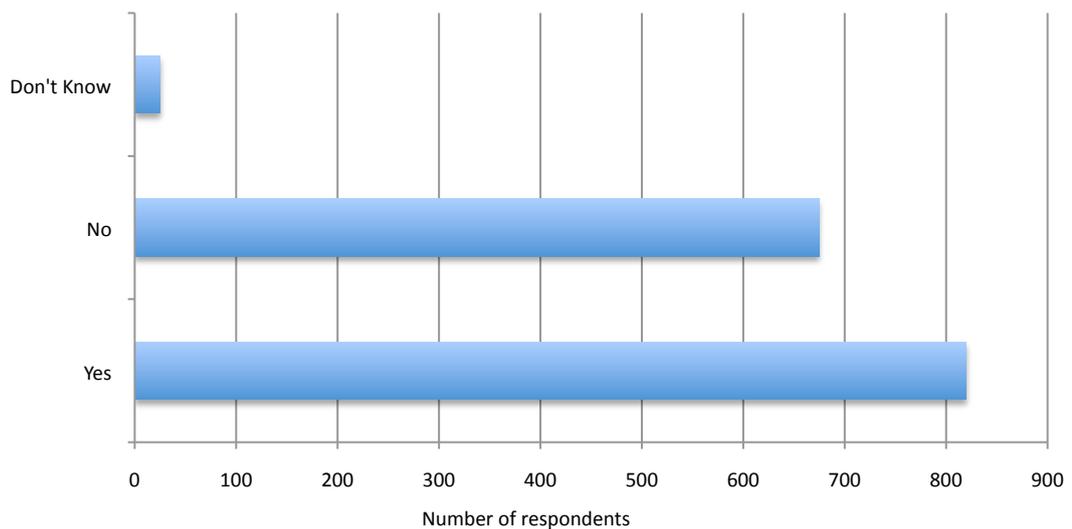


FIGURE 6: MAGAZINE READERSHIP BY VOLUME OF RESPONDENTS

The majority of respondents stated that they read a magazine either regularly or occasionally with 53.8 percent (820) as compared to the 44.3 percent (675) reporting that they did not. Only 1.6 percent (25) of the sample responded that they did not know and 0.3 percent (4) was classified as missing data.

The following two questions identified the magazine titles consumed by respondents. Free-text responses were offered to identify three magazines purchased, as well as three magazines that were read without necessarily being bought. The tables below show the top ten responses gathered for each of these questions:

Magazines Purchased	No. of responses	% of total sample
OK	128	8.4
Heat	93	6.1
Closer	84	5.5
Take A Break	73	4.8
Hello	69	4.5
Now	45	3.0
Cosmopolitan	37	2.4
Chat	32	2.1
Grazia	31	2.0
Nursing Standard	29	1.9

TABLE 8: MEDIA CONSUMPTION SURVEY RESULTS ON MAGAZINES PURCHASED

Magazines Read	No. of responses	% of total sample
OK	134	8.8
Hello	87	5.7
Closer	83	5.5
Heat	82	5.4
Take A Break	78	5.1
Now	42	2.8
Chat	36	2.4
Nursing Standard	33	2.2
Cosmopolitan	32	2.1
Nursing Times	29	1.9

TABLE 9: MEDIA CONSUMPTION SURVEY RESULTS ON MAGAZINES READ

The most commonly returned magazine title across both questions was OK Magazine with 8.4 percent (128) of the sample stating that they purchased it either regularly or occasionally. This was complemented by 8.8 percent (134)

stating they read it without necessarily buying it. The volume of response for this ensured it was incorporated as a text for the discourse analysis. The next magazine included was Heat Magazine, the second most commonly purchased magazine with 6.1 percent (93) of the sample. While it was only the fourth most commonly read magazine with 5.4 percent (82), similar levels of response were evident for both questions. Closer also offered broadly the same number of responses across the two questions and was the third most common, commanding 5.5 percent in both. However, Take A Break closely followed this with 4.8 percent (73) for magazines purchased, and 5.1 percent (78) for magazines read. Given that both Heat and OK Magazine were focussed on celebrity culture, it was decided that Closer Magazine was too similar in tone and would be rejected in favour of Take A Break's real life stories emphasis. Likewise, Hello was the second most commonly read magazine with 5.7 percent (87) of the sample, but was also overlooked based on its similarity to OK Magazine. Given that the majority of the sample was female, it was not surprising to see the top ten lists dominated by women's magazines. The majority of the remaining magazine titles fell under this category with the likes of Cosmopolitan, Now, Chat and Grazia all being classified as such by the National Readership Survey (2015b). Other notable inclusions were work-based titles such as Nursing Standard and Nursing Times that were read much more commonly by the surveyed population than the wider population. Nevertheless, these offered significantly fewer responses than those eventually chosen for the discourse analysis with around 2 percent of the total sample across both questions.

Radio Stations

Three questions were dedicated to radio consumption. As with the other cultural forms, the first of these focussed on the amount of radio listened to while the remaining two identified the radio stations engaged with, as well as the times when this was carried out. The chart below outlines the volume of responses to the first question by multiple-choice category:

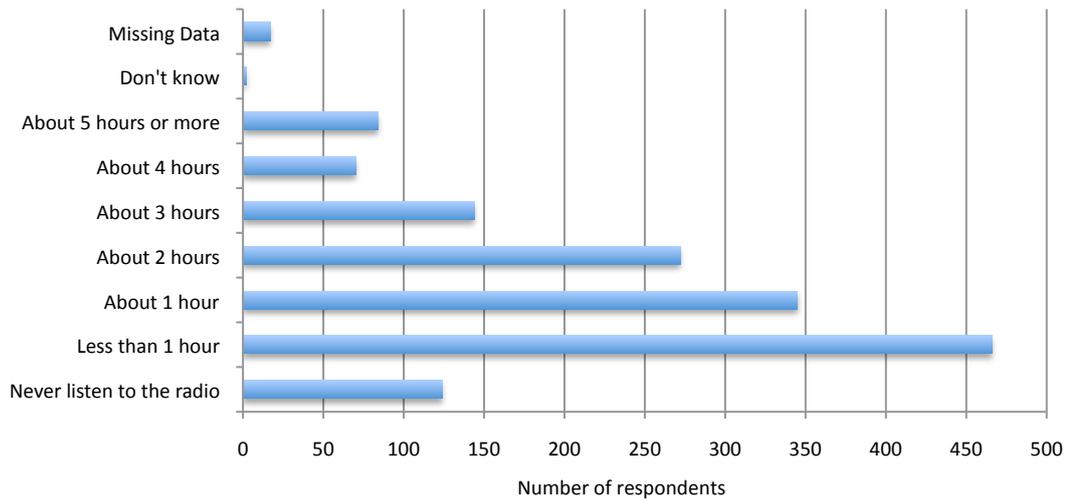


FIGURE 7: RADIO LISTENING BY VOLUME OF RESPONDENTS

The majority of the sample stated some frequency of radio listening in an average day, with only 8.1 percent (124) reporting that they never listened to the radio. The biggest proportion of responses fell beneath one hour per day with 30.6 percent (466) followed by ‘about 1 hour’ with 22.6 percent (345). This indicated that over half of the total sample listened to the radio for around an hour or less. Levels of response dipped as the hours listened to the radio increased with ‘about 2 hours’ showing 17.9 percent (272), ‘about 3 hours’ offering 9.5 percent (144) and ‘about 4 hours’ 4.6 percent (70). However, this trend was broken with the ‘about 5 hours or more’ category that accounted for 5.5 percent (84), slightly more than ‘about 4 hours’. This was suggestive of a dedicated group of respondents listening to the radio for large segments of the day. The remaining responses were split between missing data, 1.2 percent (17), and ‘don’t know’, 0.1 percent (2).

The next question related to the radio station that respondents listened to most frequently with three free-text response spaces provided. The table below shows the top ten responses provided by volume and percentage of total sample:

Radio Stations Most Frequently Listened To	No. of responses	% of total sample
BBC Radio 1	477	31.3
BBC Radio 2	466	30.6
Heart FM	281	18.4
BBC Radio 4	257	16.9
Capital Radio	192	12.6
Smooth Radio	132	8.7
Classic FM	125	8.2
Real Radio	125	8.2
BBC Radio 5 Live	79	5.2
Kiss FM	79	5.2

TABLE 10: MEDIA CONSUMPTION SURVEY RESULTS ON RADIO STATIONS LISTENED TO

The two stations chosen for the discourse analysis showed significantly higher levels of response than the others with BBC Radio 1 commanding 31.3 percent (477) of the sample and BBC Radio 2 offering 30.6 percent (466). For context, the next most commonly listened to stations were Heart FM, 18.4 percent (281), and BBC Radio 4, 16.9 percent (257). To identify the times the two stations chosen for the discourse analysis would be listened to, a further question determining when respondents were most likely to listen was included. Respondents were encouraged to tick as many as the multiple-choice selection as appropriate. The chart below shows the volume of responses received for each of the categories:

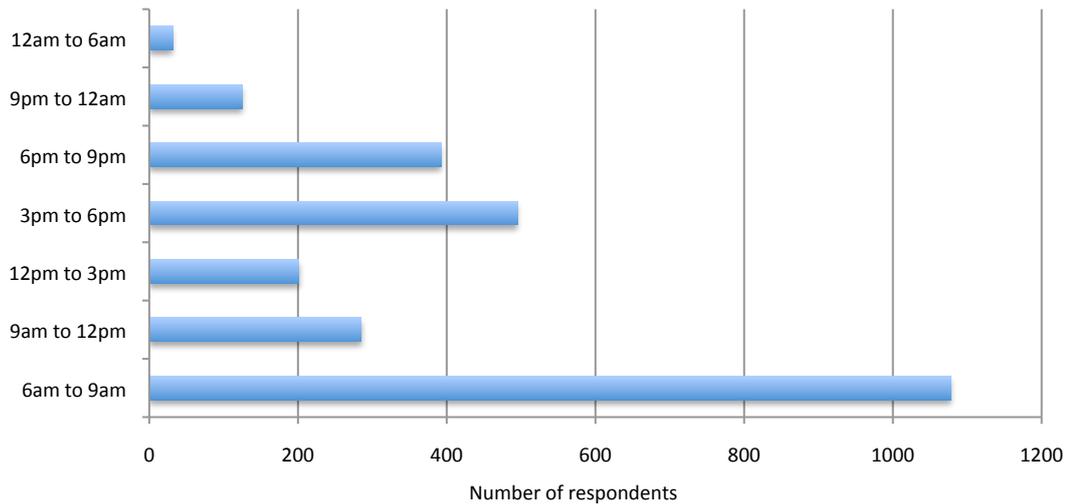


FIGURE 8: TIME RADIO IS MOST LIKELY TO BE LISTENED TO BY VOLUME OF RESPONSE

The 6am to 9am slot received a much higher level of responses than all other categories with 70.7 percent (1,078) of the total sample stating they listened during this time period. This identified it as the time during which the discourse analysis stations would also be listened to. The next highest slots were between 3pm and 6pm, 32.5 percent (495), and between 6pm and 9pm, 25.7 percent (392). This is suggestive of listening habits aligning with journeys to and from work, a form of consumption reported commonly during the interview stage of the study. The other time slots offered between 2.0 and 18.7 percent of the sample.

Internet Usage

The three questions monitoring Internet usage initially identified the level of time a respondent spent on the Internet before addressing the websites visited most regularly for news and entertainment. The headline levels of Internet usage for the sample are outlined in the chart below:

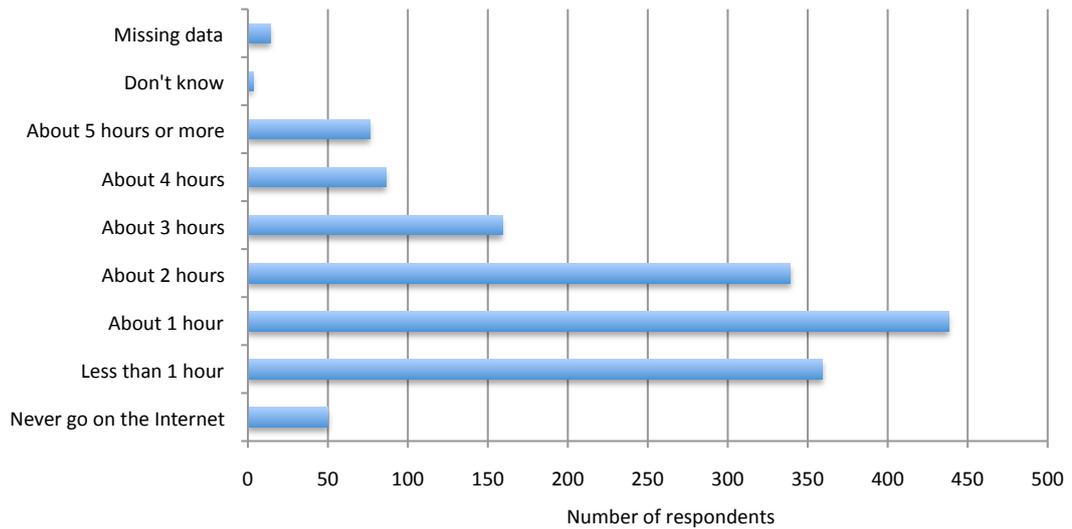


FIGURE 9: INTERNET USAGE BY VOLUME OF RESPONDENTS

Those stating they never went on the Internet, they did not know how much time they spent on it or who were classified as missing data accounted for 4.5 percent (67) of the total sample. This meant the significant majority, 95.5 percent, used the Internet to some degree in an average day. The most common amount of time responded was ‘about 1 hour’, comprising 28.7 percent (438), though this was closely followed by ‘less than 1 hour’ with 23.6 percent (359) of the sample. This meant that over half of the sample, 52.3 percent, used the Internet for about an hour or less. As the amount of time spent on the Internet increased, the level of responses decreased with ‘about 3 hours’ offering 10.4 percent (159) of the sample, ‘about 4 hours’ reporting 5.6 percent (86) and ‘about 5 hours or more’ 5.0 percent (76).

The question identifying the websites respondents were most regularly visiting to read the news provided respondents three free text response spaces. The table below outlines the top ten aggregated websites:

News sites most regularly visited	No. of responses	% of total sample
BBC News	753	49.4
Sky News	162	10.6
Google News	129	8.5
Mail Online	116	7.6
Yahoo News	108	7.1
Guardian News	62	4.1
MSN	38	2.5
AOL News	23	1.5
Sky Sports News	20	1.3
Telegraph Online	20	1.3

TABLE 11: MEDIA CONSUMPTION SURVEY RESULTS ON INTERNET NEWS SITES VISITED

The dominant response from the sample was BBC News, commanding 49.4 percent (753). This ensured it was selected for inclusion in the discourse analysis. Though notably less respondents identified Sky News, it still emerged as the next most commonly reported website with 10.6 percent (162) of the sample and was also included for the discourse analysis. Google News was overlooked for the discourse analysis given that it is not responsible for the journalistic content, instead operating as a search engine of other news sources. This meant that the next news website to be selected was the Mail Online with 7.6 percent (116) of respondents reporting it.

Internet usage for entertainment purposes saw less of an overall response than for the news websites. The question asked respondents to identify the three websites visited most regularly for general entertainment. The table below highlights the top ten aggregated responses:

Entertainment sites most regularly visited	No. of responses	% of total sample
YouTube	263	17.3
BBC iPlayer	144	9.4
eBay	125	8.2
Amazon	107	7.0
Google	101	6.6
BBC	77	5.1
Yahoo	48	3.1
4oD	48	3.1
ITV Player	45	3.0
Mail Online	32	2.1

TABLE 12: MEDIA CONSUMPTION SURVEY RESULTS ON INTERNET ENTERTAINMENT SITES VISITED

The dynamic nature of many of the returned Internet sites made them difficult for inclusion in the discourse analysis. For instance, the most regularly visited site for entertainment was YouTube with 17.3 percent (283) of the total sample. However, the content on YouTube is dominated by user-driven search functionality as opposed to editorial selection. As such selecting which videos to analyse from the site would be problematic. Likewise, auction and shopping sites such as eBay (8.2 percent / 125) and Amazon (7.0 percent / 107) operate around similar principles. The second largest response was provided for the BBC iPlayer with 9.4 percent (144) of the sample but this was felt to be similar to the responses associated with television watching, as was the case for 4oD (3.1 percent / 48) and ITV Player (3.0 percent / 45). The spread of websites across the remainder of the sample, as well as the granularity of the data involved, meant that no texts were selected for the discourse analysis from this question.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the results emanating from the 1,524 respondents to the media consumption survey carried out nationally with NHS staff. Through comparison to the NHS Staff Survey it has been shown how the

population sampled for this study was broadly comparable to that surveyed within the organisation itself, albeit with a leaning towards care-providing staff as opposed to administrative or managerial. The primary purpose of the survey was to resolve the research question 'which television shows, radio shows and printed and online press are commonly consumed by healthcare staff?' The results in relation to this showed largely comparable results to the viewing, listening and readership figures found in audience research such as the National Readership Survey, the Broadcasters Audience Research Board and the work of the Radio Joint Audience Research. That said, there were notable exceptions to this with the likes of 24 Hours In A&E ultimately being selected for the discourse analysis based on the level of consumption associated specifically with the NHS population. Broadly speaking, however, those texts selected for analysis across each of the cultural forms still remained within the top 30 titles consumed by the wider population.

Chapter 6: Introduction to the Findings

Introduction

With the survey results established in Chapter 5, one of the key research questions to the study has been addressed: 'Which television shows, radio shows and printed and online press are commonly consumed by healthcare staff?' The next four chapters will be dedicated to unpicking the remaining research questions with the primary emphasis initially on how older people are represented across the cultural forms being studied. Over the course of chapters 7 and 8, a thematic overview of the discourse analysis and interview data will be provided to this end. In acknowledgement of previous work in the representation of older people, the traditional division of 'positive' and 'negative' representations will be deployed. As noted by Featherstone and Hepworth (1995), images of positive ageing have historically been suggestive of ongoing activity, social engagement, youthful appearance or behaviour and good health. Negative stereotypes, on the other hand, tend towards dependency, infirmity and vulnerability, alongside other character tropes such as the 'curmudgeon' (Hummert et al, 1994). As will be discussed, while these stereotypes were returned from both the discourse analysis and interview data, the manner in which such representations operated and the responses they provoked from the interviewees was much more complex.

Chapter 9 will develop the discussion to explore the variations found between and within cultural texts in regard to their distinctive representations of older people. In doing so, this will highlight the role that corporate and creative processes within the cultural industries play in shaping such representations, drawing from the work of Ryan (1992) and Hesmondhalgh (2007). With these ideas outlined, consideration will also be given to the extent to which the cultural representations found in the discourse analysis were returned by the interview sample. This will address another of the project's research questions: 'Does the cultural representation of older people have any bearing on the attitudes of healthcare staff?' Here, the influence of different cultural representations on those interviewees

engaging with them will be shown to be a tangible factor in how older people are perceived. However, the cultural influences will be considered alongside other sites of meaning making such as the work, family and social settings. As will be shown later in this chapter, the interviewees all expressed favourable opinions towards older people as well as demonstrating knowledge of what entails good quality care. The interview data pointed towards experiential knowledge gathered from culture, work, family and friendship all contributing to how older people were perceived. This finding helps to inform the research question: 'What social and cultural factors help to explain the delivery of quality care or lack of dignified care in the healthcare sector?'

Chapter 10 will act as the conclusion to the study and will consequently summarise the findings developed throughout. Particular emphasis will be given to the unique presence of the cultural industries in producing the representations of older people. Key factors such as market segmentation and conglomeration are indicative of the extent to which other areas of big corporate business have become integrated into cultural production. The complexity associated with this, both in terms of overall ownership and the creative delivery of texts, will be shown to make cultural interventions problematic. Nevertheless, efforts made in organisational culture within the NHS and through community intergenerational projects demonstrate that interaction between generations have been helpful in shifting perceptions of older people. On this basis, suggestions will be made to improve certain areas of cultural representation and what these improvements should entail. This will provide a response to the final research question of the study: 'Is it possible to accommodate messages from the popular discourse around older people into more effective means of dignity training and/or campaigns?'

However, before progressing into these chapters it is worth introducing in more depth the cultural texts that will be under discussion. As was highlighted in Chapter 4, a multimodal discourse analysis, like any other, relies on an understanding of the context in which the discourse has emerged (Burn and Parker, 2003; 3). On this basis, each of the cultural texts analysed

for this study will be described in terms of its target audience and ownership. Alongside this, another pivotal aspect of the cultural representations of older people will be introduced, that of their underrepresentation and absence from large swathes of culture. With these foundations laid, the following section will turn to the other primary source of data for the project – 13 semi-structured interviews with NHS staff. Broad demographic information on each of the participants will be provided, as well as their consumption habits, in line with the ethical considerations of confidentiality and anonymity outlined in Chapter 4.

Discursive Context: The Cultural Texts

As has been outlined, a total of five cultural forms were analysed as part of this study: television, radio, newspapers, magazines and Internet news websites. Within these, based on the survey data, a sample of texts was selected to represent those typically consumed by the NHS healthcare staff population. Each of these texts will be discussed below in order to outline their format, achieved audience, target audience and ownership.

Television Shows

The television sample took on three different texts each offering different formats. We shall begin by outlining the discursive context behind *Coronation Street*. The show is currently aired on UK television station ITV1 three evenings every week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday. That said, occasionally these can increase based on seasonal holidays or specific storylines. Each episode tends to be between 28 and 30 minutes in length including an advertising break though, again, this can vary in certain situations. The show is ultimately produced by ITV Studios through their specifically dedicated Continuing Drama Team based in Manchester (ITV Studios, 2015). As noted by Ryan (1992), the roles and responsibilities for this production team necessarily include creative writing, production, acting and post-production all of which are controlled in-house, although sometimes outsourced to linked companies (ITV Studios, 2015). The show has been aired on ITV since 1960 making it the longest-running soap opera still in production (Hemley, 2010). Actors and characters in the show are

notable for their longevity, with William Roache's Ken Barlow being present since the show's initial commission (ibid). Beyond this, numerous older characters have played and continue to play major roles within the show. These include the likes of Rita Sullivan, Audrey Roberts, Norris Cole, Mike Baldwin, Blanche Hunt and Emily Bishop to name only a few. These play their part amidst a large cast of approximately 64 main actors, meaning that storylines and character usage operate on a rotational basis (ITV.com, 2015). The ITV Media website, in place for potential advertisers, further helps to define how Coronation Street is perceived by the company producing it. There it emphasises the dramatic tone of the show through phrases such as 'catch up with your favourite Coronation Street characters and their dramatic storylines ranging from addictions to affairs' (ITV Media, 2015). However, alongside the sense of drama, Coronation Street is also frequently praised for its less serious tone when compared to other soaps such as Eastenders (see Evans, 2015; Little, 1998). With regard to the show's audience, the ITV Media webpage is helpful once more:

"Coronation Street sits at the heart of ITV's peak time schedule, attracting an average audience of 9.5m viewers for each of its three new episodes every week, with a 39% share...Britain's most loved soap and most watched soap by a mile, the programme attracted over 10m viewers 65 times in 2013" (ITV Media, 2015)

The webpage also determines the audience as being 'broad' while also stating that 'housewives with children' were a key target (ibid). The breadth of the show's popularity is evidenced by the impressive statistics of its viewers, as well as by its prominent placement in the channel's peak schedule. This is complemented by the ITV website's catch-up functionality meaning that any of the shows in the past week are available for online streaming.

24 Hours In A&E is aired on Channel 4 on a seasonal rather than ongoing basis. It is currently in its eighth season and attracts around 3 million viewers per episode (Kanter, 2013). Though being aired on Channel 4, the show is produced by a partner of ITV Studios, The Garden Productions Ltd (ITV

Studios, 2015). Since being commissioned in 2011 the frequency with which seasons are produced has increased, rising to three being aired throughout 2014 (Channel 4, 2015). The season examined for this discourse analysis was the fifth to be aired, being filmed on location at King's College Hospital Emergency Department in Camberwell (ibid). The show was aired every Wednesday at 9pm for the period analysed, with each episode lasting for approximately 60 minutes inclusive of advertising. The show's format is consistent with fly-on-the-wall documentary, using around 70 cameras placed across the Emergency Department, but the setting often leads to it also being categorised as a medical documentary (ibid). In practical terms, the format revolves around narrated fly-on-the-wall footage filmed in the medical setting alongside talking head interviews carried out with staff and patients elsewhere. Each show generally centres on between three and four primary narratives, often thematically linked, dedicating varying degrees of screen time to the protagonists of each.

The Channel 4 Sales website offers further detail on the type of audience the show typically attracts, as well as the benefits it offers for advertisers. Within this, the audience is broadly classified as 'Adults ABC1' (Channel 4 Sales, 2015a). This categorisation relates to the demographic definitions of the National Readership Survey, as outlined below:

Social Grade	Social Status	Occupation	% UK Population
A	Upper middle class	Higher managerial, administrative or professional	4
B	Middle class	Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional	23
C1	Lower middle class	Supervisory or clerical, junior managerial, administrative or professional	27
C2	Skilled working class	Skilled manual workers	22
D	Working class	Semi and unskilled manual workers	16
E	Those at lowest level of subsistence	State pensioners or widows (no other earner), casual or lowest grade workers	9

TABLE 13: NATIONAL READERSHIP SURVEY SOCIAL GRADES (NRS, 2015A)

This would suggest the show has a broad target audience, though primarily centring on higher status occupations. As part of the Channel 4 brand, it also naturally inherits some of the audience associated with that station as well. The Channel 4 Sales website is again helpful in further defining this:

“Due to our challenging and alternative programming, Channel 4 resonates particularly strongly with young (27% 16-34 profile compared to 24% for average UK adult) and upmarket viewers (44% ABC1 profile compared to 41% for average UK adult). In addition, among ABC1 16-44s, Channel 4's advertising is seen as more relevant than any other terrestrial channel” (Channel 4 Sales, 2015b)

From this, we can speculate the audience for 24 Hours In A&E would be generally aged between 16 and 44 and align with the middle class occupational status of the National Readership Survey. Beyond this, we have also established that the show was of particular interest to healthcare staff with its disproportionate presence in the survey responses being testament to this.

BBC News at 10 is aired on a daily basis on primary BBC flagship channel, BBC One. Each programme consists of roughly 25 minutes of national and international news followed by approximately 10 minutes dedicated to regional variations and national weather. For the purposes of this study, only the national and international news was incorporated for analysis. The programme is produced by the BBC News department and is overseen by the Editorial Guidelines approved by the BBC Trust (BBC Trust, 2015a). The majority of the show is filmed in the BBC studios as talking heads to camera, though many reports also incorporate cutaways to various locations dictated by the news story in question. These cutaways often also include further reports from on-location journalists, as well as interviews with interested parties such as professional experts, politicians or members of the public. The audience popularity of the news delivered on BBC One is outlined by a 2013 Ofcom report:

“Broadcasting Audience Research Board figures show that each adult watched an average of around 114 hours of national or international news on television in 2012. The majority of this (62%) was on BBC One or BBC Two and a further 13% on the BBC News channel. However, 16-34 year olds consumed only 38 hours of news on television in the same period, compared to 148 hours for those aged over 35. Although the BBC channels are still the most popular for the younger age group, this group is more likely than older viewers to consume news on ITV or Channel 4” (Ofcom, 2013)

The Ofcom report helps to establish a few important trends in news consumption. Firstly, there are age-based variations on the amount of general news consumed with those aged under 35 consuming much less than

those over. Beyond this, the dominance of the BBC brand with regard to television news appears to operate across all age ranges suggesting a broad audience demographic, especially for the flagship show, BBC News at 10. Recent weekly viewing figures suggest audiences of around four to five million for each episode (Broadcasting Audience Research Board, 2015).

Radio Shows

The radio sample analysed the breakfast time slot of 6am to 9am for two different BBC stations: Radio 1 and Radio 2. Before discussing each of these, it is worth highlighting the organisation's broader radio strategy. The BBC provides ten national radio stations for the UK of which those analysed form two, alongside the likes of Radio 3, Radio 4, Radio 5 Live, 6Music and the Asian Network (BBC Trust, 2015b). This portfolio of programming is intended to offer a range of services across a range of audiences, as is demonstrated by each of the station's distinct service guidelines (ibid). For ***BBC Radio 1*** the guidelines imply the service is primarily aimed at younger age groups:

"The remit of Radio 1 is to entertain and engage a broad range of young listeners with a distinctive mix of contemporary music and speech. Its target audience is 15-29 year olds and it should also provide some programming for younger teenagers" (BBC Trust, 2015c)

The shows within the time slot studied were one hour of the Gemma Cairney show between 6am and 7am, followed by two hours of Nick Grimshaw's breakfast show. The format of both shows blends modern chart music with studio discussions often involving youth culture celebrity guests, and in the case of Grimshaw, a team of other presenters. Since taking over the role of breakfast show presenter in 2012, Grimshaw's listenership has been reported on numerous occasions in the media, with trends showing an overall decrease to an average of 5.9 million listeners per week (Plunkett, 2015). This is comparable to audiences of around 6.7 million for Grimshaw's predecessor Chris Moyles (Plunkett, 2013). Interestingly, the BBC response to these figures was positive rather than negative:

“The BBC has put a brave face on the news, pointing out that the show gained 130,000 under-24s whilst shedding 526,000 over-25s during the quarter – something it appeared to claim was its aim all along” (Dowell, 2014)

As will be discussed in Chapter 9, the BBC radio portfolio is emblematic of broader trends towards market segmentation in the cultural industries. The BBC strategy for Radio 1 is to only increase younger audiences, with the aim of establishing brand loyalty to ensure passage into other BBC stations. The prescribed path for listeners as they grow older is from Radio 1 to Radio 2, with the services and discursive emphases in place for each station helping to signify this. When examining *BBC Radio 2's* service guidelines, this becomes increasingly clear. They define the station's remit as to provide ‘a distinctive mixed music and speech service, targeted at a broad audience, appealing to all age groups over 35’ (BBC Trust, 2015d). The two shows covered in the slot studied on Radio 2 were one hour of Vanessa Feltz from 6am to 7am, followed by two hours of Chris Evans' breakfast show. The format of the shows was similar in structure to Radio 1, built around presenter conversation and music. That said, Radio 2 incorporated more phone-ins from members of the public, as well as a broader range of historic chart hits and celebrity interviews. With regard to listenership, Chris Evans' breakfast show is the most listened to in the United Kingdom with an audience of 9.6 million a week (Plunkett, 2015). Indeed, Radio 2 is the most listened to station in the country with 15.3 million weekly listeners compared to the 10.4 million of its nearest rival, Radio 1 (ibid).

Magazines

The magazine sample took in three distinct titles: Heat Magazine, OK Magazine and Take A Break. These are all classified as women's magazines in the most recent National Readership Survey (NRS, 2015b). *Heat Magazine* is published on a weekly basis with an estimated readership of 811,000 of which 581,000 are aged between 15 and 34 (ibid). The majority of its readers, 54 percent, are classified under the ABC1 demographic category with the remainder C2DE (ibid). The magazine's website for advertisers suggests that the gender split in audience is roughly 84 percent female to 16

percent male (Bauer Media Group, 2015b). The same webpage also helps to highlight the intended discursive tone through phrases such as ‘readers love heat’s irreverent tone and know that it is the only celebrity magazine that they can trust’ (ibid). The focus is heavily upon celebrity culture with the majority of content relating to established personalities through interviews or opinion features, as well as a dedicated television listings section. It is published by Bauer Media, a subsidiary media company to the wider Bauer Media Group responsible for a diverse range of titles in the market (see Bauer Media Group, 2015a).

OK Magazine is also published on a weekly basis and garners a readership of 1,331,000. Of these roughly 673,000 are aged 15 to 34 with the remainder being aged over 35. The split in occupational class is 53 percent ABC1 and 47 percent C2DE (NRS, 2015b). The publishing company behind OK in the United Kingdom is Northern and Shell Media Group, also responsible for New Magazine, Star Magazine, the Daily Express and the Daily Star, among other titles (N&S Media Group, 2015a). OK Magazine’s 2015 media pack helps to outline the discursive content that, once more, focuses primarily on celebrity culture:

“OK! is in a different league from every other celebrity magazine. We are purely celebrity based which means every single feature – whether it’s an at-home, food or fashion – is about celebrity. Since we exclusively cover weddings and at-home shoots it means we get closer to the celebrities than other titles, and we also have a tongue in cheek humour that means while serious issues are dealt with sensitively, our other shoots have a unique sense of fun” (N&S Media Group, 2015b)

The media pack also demonstrates the predominant appeal to women with 88 percent of the readership being female, and only 12 percent male (ibid). In addition, it helps to underline the affluence of its readers by providing several statistics on products they are likely to buy, such as ‘£11.3 million is how much OK! Readers spend on cosmetic products each month’ (ibid).

Broadly speaking, the tone of both OK and Heat Magazine operate in similar discursive realms with articles covering celebrity lifestyle and entertainment.

Take A Break Magazine was the final magazine of the sample, also being published on a weekly basis to a predominantly female, 82 percent, audience. According to National Readership Survey figures, more people read Take A Break each week than any other UK title with an audience of 1,689,000 (NRS, 2015b). This readership was split in age terms between 1,193,000 being aged 35 or over, and 497,000 aged between 15 and 34 (ibid). In terms of occupational class, the majority, 70 percent, fell into C2DE with the remaining 30 percent categorised as ABC1 (ibid). This marks Take A Break as serving a generally older and less affluent audience to the other magazines in the sample. To some degree, the difference is maintained with regard to the content of Take A Break which is defined by its marketing website as follows:

“Take a Break's mix of real life, fashion, beauty, food, home, travel and competitions attracts a hugely varied readership. Readers can be anything from 18 to 80; they are likely to own their own home and to be married, and many have children. Its universal appeal is confirmed by the strength of its reader relationship. It has very strong reader loyalty and is read for longer than any of its competitors” (H Bauer Publishing, 2015a)

While Heat and OK Magazine are both primarily dedicated to celebrity culture, Take A Break instead offers cash for real life stories from members of the public, as well as competitions offering around £29,000 worth of prizes each week (Take A Break, 2015). The features often orientate towards the shocking or taboo with recent examples involving long-term betrayal, unexpected deaths, sudden baldness and extreme dieting (ibid). The article headlines tend to emphasise each story's shock factor, as seen in 'Why did you let them die?' or 'The wedding dress diet to HELL' (ibid). However, the articles themselves, written in collaboration between Take A Break writers and the protagonists, often offer a more sympathetic tone. H Bauer Publishing publish Take A Break each week alongside a portfolio also comprising the likes of Bella, That's Life, TV Choice and '23 successful puzzle

titles' (H Bauer Publishing, 2015b). Interestingly, H Bauer Publishing forms part of the Bauer Media Group mentioned previously as the publishers of Heat Magazine and a range of other magazine titles (ibid). This point will be returned to in the discussion of market segmentation in chapter 9.

Newspapers

The newspaper sample incorporated three titles: The Daily Mail, The Sun and The Guardian. The largest selling of the sample was tabloid newspaper *The Sun* with an estimated readership of 5,347,000 across 2014 (NRS, 2015c). The majority of these, 68 percent, were in the C2DE classification with the remainder classed as ABC1 (ibid). In terms of the age split, 1,444,000 of The Sun's readers were aged between 15 and 34, with the remaining, 3,903,000 aged 35 or over (ibid). While this shows considerably more older readers than younger, the newspaper's advertising website highlights its figure for 15 to 34 year olds is the most in the UK newspaper market (News UK, 2015). Broadly, this correlates to findings from Ofcom, with those aged 55 or over more likely than younger adults to consume news across all platforms aside from the Internet (Ofcom, 2013). In terms of the audience achieved by gender, the majority of The Sun readers were male with 59 percent, the remaining 41 percent being women (NRS, 2015c). The publication company behind The Sun is News UK; the British arm of the Rupert Murdoch owned News Corp also responsible for The Times, amidst other media brands in its sister company Fox (News UK, 2015).

Middle-market tabloid *The Daily Mail* received the second highest readership of the newspapers in the discourse analysis sample. Of the 3,745,000-estimated average audience, 87 percent are aged 35 or over with the remainder aged between 15 and 34 (NRS, 2015c). The gender split reversed the trend evident in The Sun with a marginal majority of 51 percent being female to 49 percent male (ibid). With regard to occupational class, The Daily Mail again differs from The Sun with 64 percent of readers classified as ABC1 to 36 percent C2DE (ibid). DMG Media publish the newspaper on a daily basis, alongside a portfolio of other brands such as Metro newspaper, Zoopla Property and voucher website Wowcher (DMG Media, 2015). The

content of middle-market newspapers has historically tended to offer more celebrity and entertainment centred news than its counterparts, though recent trends in The Sun suggest this gap is being closed. The advertising website offers further clarity on how The Daily Mail perceives itself:

“Our roster of star writers command respect and readers rely on their knowledge, advice and ideas across the spectrum – finance, travel, health, sport – all the important things in life are covered in our signature entertaining and informative style” (Mail Advertising, 2015a)

Broadly speaking the topics covered are similar across both The Daily Mail and The Sun, though the latter has more of a pronounced sports section at certain points in the week. Other than that, key areas such as finance, travel, celebrity culture, news and entertainment are covered in similar ways.

The Guardian broadsheet had the least readership of the analysed sample with an estimated 748,000 readers (NRS, 2015c). The overriding majority of these, 90 percent, were in occupational classes ABC1 with the remaining 10 percent classified as C2DE (ibid). As with The Daily Mail, the majority of readers are aged 35 or over commanding 75 percent of the total audience with the remaining 15 percent aged between 15 and 34 (ibid). The gender split in The Guardian audience was more comparable to The Sun with a majority of males, albeit only 57 percent to 43 percent women (ibid). The Guardian Media Group, and its subsidiary Guardian News & Media, is ultimately responsible for the publication of The Guardian and The Observer, as well as the digital versions of the newspaper. Unlike the other titles in the sample, the publication company appears to be dedicated primarily to its flagship titles. That said the group also funds itself through several investments, including business-to-business events and its own printing company servicing other organisations such as Sainsburys (Guardian Media Group, 2015a). Nevertheless, the character of the newspaper is notable for its independence, as evidenced by the Guardian Media Group’s website:

“The Guardian is internationally recognised for the quality and independence of its reporting and its groundbreaking digital innovation. It is regularly

voted best newspaper site in the world and was recently named newspaper of the year” (Guardian Media Group, 2015b)

In terms of editorial focus, there is much greater emphasis on international news in The Guardian than within The Daily Mail or The Sun, with longer articles and dedicated inserts to a range of topics including society, film and music, education, media and sport. It was also notable for a much more detailed obituary section than the other newspapers of the sample.

Internet News Sites

Three news websites were analysed as part of the sample: BBC News Online, Mail Online and Sky News. While broad figures on audiences are available for the websites, verified demographic information on each is more difficult to obtain. Nevertheless, broader trends in news consumption suggest that those gathering their news online tend to be younger than through other forms such as television and newspapers. A recent Ofcom report stated that ‘44 percent of young people use this platform for news compared to just 15 percent of those aged over 55’ (Ofcom, 2013). With regard to socio-economic status, Internet news mirrors wider consumption trends by having higher proportions of AB consumers than DE. However, this trend was more pronounced for the Internet than any other news platform (ibid). In terms of gender, the form of television generally attracts marginally more female viewers than male, but this is reversed for the Internet sources (ibid).

The most popular of the websites analysed according to the UK Online Measurement Company (UKOM) was **BBC News Online**, receiving over 40.6 million total unique visitors in March 2015 (UKOM, 2015). As with the other BBC texts mentioned throughout this section, the ownership of the website lies with the corporation, with specific responsibility for content falling to the BBC News Department. In spite of the strong numbers for site visitors, a recent report from the BBC Trust saw room for improvement in the digital market:

“Audiences more often identified with and felt a deeper relationship with other online providers, who they felt reflected their personal interests and

provided more ‘colour’ when compared with the BBC’s more formal and impartial offer” (BBC Trust, 2014)

The impartiality of the BBC, as dictated by their editorial standards, tends to orientate the content of the website towards a tone of formality. As will be seen, when compared to the other websites in the sample and particularly the *Mail Online*, this tone was shown to shift significantly. Indeed, the advertising section of the website emphasises the ‘dynamic, addictive content’ as well as its ‘individual tone of voice and world view’ (Mail Advertising, 2015b). In practical terms, the Mail Online is characterised by more opinion pieces, pictorial and celebrity content than BBC News Online with a much more informal, and much less impartial tone. It was the second most visited of the sites in the sample with figures for March 2015 showing 28.1 million unique visitors across all digital platforms (UKOM, 2015). Unlike the BBC, greater detail on the demographics for the Mail Online users was available from their advertising pages. These showed variation from wider Internet news consumption with regard to gender, showing 54 percent of users to be female (Mail Advertising, 2015c). However, the trends in socio-economic status were shown to mirror broader consumption patterns with the majority of users, 73 percent, being classified as ABC1 (ibid).

Sky News saw marginally less unique visitors than Mail Online, recording figures of 27.4 million for March 2015 (UKOM, 2015). The most recent demographic figures available from their advertising arm, Sky Media, suggest that the majority of visitors to the site are male, 56 percent (Sky Media, 2015). Additionally, those aged between 35 and 54 comprise 45 percent of the total audience, with those between 15 and 34 representing 36 percent (ibid). As with the other sites in the sample, the predominant socio-economic category was ABC1 with 60 percent of the audience (ibid). In regard to the general tone of the website, this aligned more with the impartial and formal tone of the BBC than the Mail Online, with similar layouts and stories available.

Before moving onto the interviewees, it is worth briefly considering one of the key points to emerge from the discourse analysis – the absence and underrepresentation of older people in large swathes of culture. The pattern of underrepresentation has previously been noted by numerous commentators (see Robinson and Skill, 1995; Murphy, 2004) and remained noticeable within the texts analysed. The radio sample involved listening to 1,800 minutes of audio where older people or the issue of ageing were only featured or alluded to for 22 minutes. Likewise, the television sample incorporated 818 minutes in which only approximately 90 minutes contained older people. Across the 2,567 newspaper and magazine pages of the analysis roughly 9.5 related to older people. More details on the variations between each of the texts will be provided in Chapter 9. At this stage, however, it is worth remembering that people aged over 65 account for 9.2 million or 16 percent of the population of England and Wales based on the 2010 Census (Office for National Statistics, 2013). Even including peripheral representations or when texts alluded to older people, the coverage of them was still uniformly less than would be expected based on their demographic presence in society.

The Interviewees

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the 13 interviewees were selected after expressing willingness to be interviewed during the survey process. The interview sample was intended to reflect a range of ages, healthcare occupations and consumption habits. In total, the interviewees were drawn from 11 distinct NHS Trusts in England contributing one or two participants. Much like the survey sample, and the NHS workforce more broadly, the majority of interviewees (11) were female. The age of the respondents was concentrated most heavily in the 35 to 44 (5) and 45 to 54 (5) categories. The remaining interviewees were either aged between 25 and 34 (1) or aged 55 or over (2). The range of occupations covered included consultants, research nurses, specialist nurses, ward staff and healthcare students, as will be outlined in the brief descriptions of the interviewees' consumption habits below.

CROOP-001

The first interviewee was a nurse in her forties who specialised in stroke care in both the clinical and administrative setting, dealing with patients and monitoring performance. The NHS had employed her for over 15 years at the time of the interview and she expressed great fondness for her job, as well as an interest in the care of older people. Alongside this, her relationships with older people in the social setting were maintained through daily interactions with her grandparents. There was an overlap between the cultural consumption registered in the participant's survey with the texts analysed as part of the discourse analysis sample. This extended to Coronation Street, The Daily Mail, Radio 2 and both the BBC and Sky Internet news platforms. Aside from this, the interview revealed a much more extensive level of consumption including Radio 4, Radio 1, television documentaries, comedies and casual reading of magazines.

CROOP-002

The second interviewee was a student nurse in her thirties who, at the time of interview, was set to qualify in two months. She had been on numerous placements throughout her studies including on wards with older people. While expressing fondness for older people in general terms, she noted her frustrations at sometimes not being able to dedicate adequate time to their care in the hospital setting. Aside from working in the hospital, the interviewee also reported favourably encountering older people in a second job as a barmaid. That said, she reported a mixture of emotions in relation to her grandparents, favouring one parent's side over the other and with only one grandmother remaining alive. The survey data suggested that the only overlap with the cultural texts forming the discourse analysis sample was Coronation Street. However, in conversation this was revealed to extend to Radio 1's breakfast show, as well as casual news and magazine consumption including Heat, OK and Take A Break. Aside from this, the respondent also reported engagement with other television shows such as Eastenders, Holby City and CSI.

CROOP-003

The third interview was with a female staff nurse in her twenties, specialising in heart failure patients. She expressed how her experiences of older people in this role had expanded her previous perceptions of them as necessarily being ill or infirm. Instead, she noted that her new role had helped her to regard them as a much more diverse social group. She reported good relationships with her grandparents in her youth, though also expressed sadness at one of her grandmothers being diagnosed with dementia recently. No other social contact with older people was declared during the interview. The cultural consumption habits overlapped with the discourse analysis texts through Coronation Street, Radio 1's breakfast show, Heat Magazine, OK Magazine, Mail Online and BBC news. Aside from these texts, the interviewee also stated she watched Hollyoaks, read other celebrity magazines and casually consumed newspapers and television news. More so than other interviewees in the sample, this respondent was typified by the consumption of youth culture texts.

CROOP-004

The fourth interviewee was an endocrine research nurse in her late forties. The nature of her role meant that she primarily encountered patients from aged fifty up until end of life. She provided examples of measures she had personally taken to cater for the specific needs of older patients, demonstrating knowledge of commonly reported care issues. The interviewee's grandparents had died when she was a child and she had no social relationships with older people in her adult life meaning that the work setting was her primary site of experience with them. With regard to consumption habits, there was little correlation between the texts studied for the discourse analysis with the BBC News website being the only overlap. That said, the respondent consumed other cultural texts such as The Apprentice, Downton Abbey, national and local newspapers, The Archers, Radio 4 and Prima Magazine as well as a broad awareness of other cultural forms such as Radio 1 and Heat Magazine. The texts actively consumed by the

respondent were generally of broad audience appeal or more specifically targeting older people.

CROOP-005

The fifth interviewee was a male clinical trials officer in his late forties. His NHS role blended administrative work with patient interaction, including regular experiences with older patients. He stated that his encounters with older people in the work setting were generally with healthier patients as opposed to those potentially found on wards or in emergency departments. Outside of the work setting, the interviewee stated he encountered older people in other social settings including the freemason's society and through volunteering in a homeless shelter. In addition, he expressed fondness for the time spent with his grandparents and neighbours in his youth, though they were now deceased. The respondent's cultural consumption only offered one cultural text from the discourse analysis, BBC News Online. Aside from this, though, a range of television shows were reported during the interview including Men Behaving Badly, sports shows and local and national newspapers. While not engaging with dedicated youth culture texts, the cultural consumption of the interviewee self-perceived as orientating away from texts aimed specifically at older people.

CROOP-006

The sixth interview was held with a staff nurse in her mid fifties working in an outpatients department running a range of different clinics. She expressed fondness for her interactions with older people in this setting and also showed awareness of the principles of dignified care. The interviewee stated having good relationships with her grandparents, particularly a grandfather who lived in the family home. Indeed, she attributed her general fondness for older people from these experiences in her youth. There was little overlap between the interviewee's cultural consumption and the texts forming the discourse analysis with only Radio 2's breakfast show being consistent. Aside from this, the respondent cited Emmerdale, Country File, Downton Abbey and Radio 4 as texts she engaged with. However, the consumption of newspapers, Internet news sites and magazines was limited.

CROOP-007

The next interview was with a consultant of clinical oncology in his late fifties. The nature of his work meant he often encountered older people in the clinical setting and expressed particular awareness of end-of-life care issues. Though stating fondness for older family members in his youth, these were now restricted to the respondent's parents and aunts. The overlap between the interviewee's cultural consumption and the texts of the discourse analysis extended to The Guardian, Radio 2 and BBC News Online. Other texts consumed included television dramas such as Homeland, Mad Men and Downton Abbey, Radio 4, The Economist and The Daily Telegraph. While offering a range of texts, there was greater concentration on higher brow culture appealing to AB consumers. Though encountering older people in cultural and family settings, the interviewee self-identified the work setting as being the primary site of experience.

CROOP-008

The eighth interviewee was a staff nurse in her early fifties working in a varied treatment centre dealing with over 250 patients a week. She considered her role to be very patient-focused, citing reassurance and interaction as some of her key activities. She cited older people in this setting as requiring more time than other patients and expressed gratitude for when family members are available to help staff. She reported that her younger life had included grandparents living in the family home and expressed fond memories of this. Her current experiences with older people were restricted to her mother and stepfather both of which were suffering long-term illnesses. Her cultural consumption reported in the survey aligned with the discourse analysis through the texts Coronation Street and BBC News Online. Other texts consumed included Downton Abbey, Vicar of Dibley, Last of the Summer Wine, Smooth Radio, local television news and Women's Weekly Magazine. The interview revealed minimal consumption of news across any platform other than casual use of the Internet.

CROOP-009

The ninth participant was a stroke co-ordinator nurse in her early fifties encountering patients aged 16 or over, though with more patients aged over 60. She stated numerous examples of good quality care relating to older people, as well as factors such as the physical environment of hospitals that can compromise this. While expressing particular affection for her grandmother, she was now deceased and the respondent stated no other current social contact with older people. The cultural consumption of the interviewee was relatively low generally and only offered one text, BBC News at 10, in common with the discourse analysis. Aside from this the respondent reported casual consumption of television shows such as Stargate, QI and Eastenders, Radio 4 programming and the Metro newspaper.

CROOP-010

The tenth respondent was a neurovascular research nurse in her early forties running studies with stroke and Parkinson's patients, among others. Aside from capacity issues relating to their condition, the interviewee generally expressed similarities rather than differences between older and younger patients. Outside of work, the interviewee stated numerous close friendships with older people and ongoing social contact, as well as exposure to older relations in her youth. The discourse analysis overlapped with the respondent's cultural consumption through two texts, Radio 2 and BBC News Online. Aside from this, the interviewee mentioned television show Grand Designs, Radio 4, various casual news sources and an awareness of magazines such as Heat and OK. Broadly speaking, though, her consumption was centred on less youth cultural texts.

CROOP-011

The eleventh participant was a specialist cardiology nurse in her mid forties. Her role was not ward based but involved patient contact before and after medical interventions. This aspect of her role was particularly rewarding to her and she cited examples of good quality care particularly with regard to older people, such as access to clear information. Social contact with older people was recounted both with grandparents and neighbours in her youth,

and in her ongoing adult life through her parents and the local community. Those older people still in the interviewee's life all remained healthy and active. Two texts from the discourse analysis overlapped with the respondent's own cultural consumption, BBC News at 10 and BBC News Online. Alongside these, other texts were reported during the interview such as Newsnight, Radio 4 and the Daily Telegraph suggestive of an interest in highbrow culture. At the same time, there was a more casual consumption and awareness of shows such as I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here, Heat Magazine and Take A Break Magazine.

CROOP-012

The twelfth interviewee was an oncology specialty doctor in her early fifties. Her role entailed a great deal of patient contact sometimes over long periods of time. She reflected favourably on a number of the relationships with older people gathered through this setting and expressed a strong interest in providing care tailored to the individual. The respondent had strong relationships with older people through long-living and very close grandparents but the only remaining living older relatives were now her mother and Godmother. She also reported encountering older people through her ongoing involvement in a cricket club. The interviewee consumed three texts from the discourse analysis sample, Radio 2, BBC News at 10 and BBC News Online. Beyond this, she also cited texts such as Downton Abbey, House Of Cards, Mad Men, Radio 4, Red Magazine, Heat Magazine and casual newspaper consumption.

CROOP-013

The final interview was with a surgical ward staff nurse in her mid forties. Her role meant encountering a range of different age patients, including a high number of older people. She stated that her interactions with older people were positive and demonstrated knowledge of issues specific to their care, such as elderspeak, respect and privacy. Though reporting limited relations with older people in her youth, her parents were now elderly and she maintained close contact with them. In addition, there were numerous older people present in her local community with whom she had ongoing

social encounters. The only text from the discourse analysis sample consumed by the respondent was the Radio 2 breakfast show. However, the interview also cited Strictly Come Dancing, Downton Abbey, I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here, Radio 4 and Nursing Standard as well as casual news consumption.

Chapter 7: 'Positive' Representations of Older People

Introduction

This chapter will review the data collected as part of the discourse analysis and interview stages of the study with the aim of outlining 'positive' representations of older people. As mentioned in the last chapter, the inverted commas around the term 'positive' are used to imply that the dichotomy of positivity and negativity is not entirely adequate to cover the collective themes emergent from the data. Nevertheless, this division is useful in that it offers a loose framework where ideas emerging from both the discourse analysis and the interviews can be discussed thematically. Also, while the binary of 'positive' and 'negative' simplifies the processes of representation and interpretation at work with the cultural industries and audience reception, the discussion around this in itself intends to illuminate the complexity at work in these areas. The chapter will begin by discussing the theme of active ageing, long associated with positive representations of older people, alongside the linked theme of youthful or taboo behaviour. This will be followed by an outline of themes centring on wisdom, experience and expertise linking this to representations of matriarchs, patriarchs and 'national treasures'. Following this, the related theme of older people provoking amusement or being used as comedic devices will be outlined.

Active Ageing and Youthful Behaviour

The literature review of Chapter 3 discussed how the history of representations of older people has been characterised by negative portrayals of frailty, dependency, immobility and bodily decline (see Miller et al, 1999; Murphy 2004; Martin, Williams and O'Neill, 2009). When discussing this long-existing trend, Featherstone and Hepworth (1994) were keen to note how since the 1960s a more active counter-representation had been introduced. Their study of images of retirement identified this as being suggestive of the 'golden years' of leisure time, illustrated through colourful images of smiling elderly couples engaging with exercise, such as nature walks (ibid). The discourse analysis saw this theme emerge across all of the

cultural forms studied, with magazines offering numerous examples in which the youthful appearance of older people is celebrated. While not specifically describing an older person over 65, this extract from an article in OK Magazine outlines some of the core aspects of the active ageing theme:

“Interior designer Kelly (right) looks a decade younger than her 54 years, so it’s no surprise to discover she exercises every day, rarely drinks and is extremely careful about what she eats” (MA-OK-102)

Though not the main focus of the article, which has a broader context around celebrities who do not eat dairy, the referenced Kelly Hoppen is pictured to the right hand side wearing youthful clothing and smiling. The association being played out through the textual and visual modes of discourse are suggestive of a potential to defy the ageing process through manipulation of diet and exercise. In this example, Hoppen is celebrated for achieving this feat, acting as an exemplar of both what can be achieved and the means by which it can be done. Indeed, the discursive motifs of exercise and diet returned in several areas of the discourse analysis. An article from the newspaper sample of The Daily Mail suggested health benefits in performing ballet in older age (NE-DM-206). Similarly, an episode of 24 Hours In A&E featured a 78-year old patient whose survival was partially attributed to him exercising in the gym ‘five times a week’ (TV-AE-005). Another example came in the sample of radio shows where Vanessa Feltz was discussing a caller’s 70-year old father with phrases such as ‘he certainly doesn’t look it, probably because he goes to the gym every single morning’ (RA-B2-004). The broad discursive association repeated in each of these examples is that the commonly invoked negative stereotypes of ageing can be counter-acted by health interventions. This theme was also demonstrated at numerous points during several of the interviews, particularly in relation to the question ‘How do you personally feel about the ageing process and getting older yourself?’ as these extracts show:

“So I take a multi-vitamin tablet. Cod liver oil and primrose oil. That’s good advice. Then I take aloe vera juice each day. I’ve got a cross trainer and

treadmill and three to four times a week I do 45 minutes on those things...if you look after your body it will last longer” (CROOP008)

“I keep myself relatively fit and healthy, obviously” (CROOP005)

“I suppose life could potentially stay better if you remain in good health and you remain active and still get out” (CROOP006)

“We see patients admitted in their eighties or early nineties that swim in the sea every day. And old age is very much a state of the mind” (CROOP010)

Whether in regard to their ageing process, or in discussions of older people more broadly, the interviewees repeatedly reiterated the value of eating and living healthily. A further notable trend was the perception that active ageing had become ‘common sense’ along with its associated elements of diet and exercise. This is evident in the use of terms such as ‘obviously’, as well as in the instructive tone of phrases like ‘old age is very much a state of mind’ and ‘if you look after your body it will last longer’. The strength of the theme in the interviews can be attributed to a number of factors. As Featherstone and Hepworth (1994) have shown, the representations of these aspects of active ageing have been ongoing for several decades. One could also expect discourse of this nature to be more pronounced in an organisational setting such as the NHS, where debates around the ageing population tend to utilise independence, healthy living and physical activity as key tenets. For our interviewees, then, the cultural sphere, the family sphere and the work sphere all offer possible sources by which this sense of tacit knowledge is gathered.

As noted in Chapter 6, the sample of both Heat and OK Magazines was notable for the scarcity of their representations of older people. Nevertheless, the theme of active ageing was contained in almost all of the examples that the sample offered, commonly alongside another central theme of celebrity status. One such instance was an interview with actor Larry Lamb included on page 99 of OK Magazine based on the notoriety of his roles in programmes such as Eastenders and Gavin & Stacey, which notably overlap with the

popular youth culture associated with the magazine's target audience (MA-OK-103). In the interview there are several insinuations of active ageing:

'Holidays for an actor are a rarity...I generally prefer to travel alone – I'm perfectly happy sitting at a table by myself and watching the world go by' (OK Magazine; MA-OK-103)

Lamb is pictured in a smart suit at the top of the article smiling directly at camera, visually depicting an active, engaged member of working society. Again, the associations made here are suggestive of the potential to remain active into older age both in terms of ongoing leisure pursuits such as holidays and travel, as well as professionally. Similar themes were evoked in a further article in OK Magazine on Vivienne Westwood, entitled 'Icon of OK', in which her long established career in fashion and broader social activity was reviewed with terms such as 'enfant terrible' and 'iconic' (MA-OK-104). Again, one of the thematic emphases here is on her ongoing activity within her chosen field, implied in the text through the listing of her achievements such as involvement in punk and associations with Kate Moss. When viewed in the broader context of an overall absence of older people, the implication is that to be included in magazines of this nature an older person is required to have achieved something notable with their lives and, importantly, to be considered to still be doing so.

The form that this notoriety takes was seen to vary from instance to instance. In the two examples of Larry Lamb and Vivienne Westwood two strong associations most clearly came to the fore. The first of these regards their ongoing activity both socially speaking, and specifically within their chosen professional fields. In these two examples, these fields also overlap with the perceived interests of the magazines' target readership – popular television culture and fashion. The second association, more prominent for Vivienne Westwood, is her continued status as a youthful, subversive and rebellious presence. This is identified through textual references to her wearing a transparent dress when collecting her OBE, as well as her involvement with punk fashion, her political activism and her current relationship with a man

25 years her junior. Visually she is pictured with a short, cropped hairdo in a long white gown offering further indication of her entwinement with fashion and youth culture trends. We shall now explore some of these ideas in a little more depth across the other cultural forms, still using active ageing as our framework.

Professional and Celebrity Active Ageing

The presence of older people across a variety of the cultural texts was often based on their continued professional activity. Numerous Internet news stories relating to the suicide of L'Wren Scott (see IN-DM-001; IN-DM-044; IN-SN-010) offered strong reiterations of her relationship with Mick Jagger, for which reference to his ongoing activity as a globally touring musician were a common focus:

“The designer had been in a relationship with Mick Jagger since 2001 but he was in Australia with the Rolling Stones at the time of her death” (IN-DM-001)

Here Jagger's presence lent additional celebrity coverage to the story and it subsequently benefitted from an increased prominence on all Internet news sites over the following days (IN-BN-014; IN-SN-010; IN-DM-019). While representations showed Jagger to be suffering and grieving from the loss of his partner, which will be discussed as part of a wider theme in the next chapter, his role as an active musician in The Rolling Stones was key to its textual and visual representation. The Mail Online articles, in particular, saw large galleries of photos in which Jagger was prominent, often posing on the red carpet alongside L'Wren Scott, or disembarking an airplane. While not so many images were present across the other news sites, those that were there also featured Jagger in an active role. The notion of continued professional activity was also seen across a range of newspaper articles across The Daily Mail, The Guardian and The Sun relating to Angela Lansbury being made a Dame in the Queen's Honours (see NE-DM-310; NE-TG-301; NE-TS-306). In these articles, it was not only Lansbury's historic achievements such as her honorary Oscar or roles in programmes such as *Murder She Wrote* that were

referenced, but also her ongoing presence on the West End and her status as a current '88-year old box-office sensation' with a recent run of *Blithe Spirit* (NE-DM-512). With the cases of both Jagger and Lansbury the discursive emphasis is on their continued celebrity status and the inherent activity that this involves.

Subtler representations of a similar effect could be found in television, primarily in the BBC News where John Simpson maintains his position as World Affairs Correspondent and was of particular prominence during the 2014 conflict between Russia and Ukraine (see TV-BN-005; TV-BN-007; TV-BN010). The presence of ageing professionals in television news also extended to politicians and experts within a field, examples being John Kerry (as above) and Menzies Campbell (TV-BN-007) though this will be discussed in more detail at a later stage under the theme of wisdom and experience. The wider theme of actively ageing celebrities and professionals was reported in other cultural texts by several interviewees, normally in regards to an older person's presence in magazines:

"They are in Prima. In fact the most recent one had a big article about Joanna Lumley and her charity work and so on" (CROOP-004)

"The only older person I remember reading about in the magazines was Judi Dench, they had an interview with her..." (CROOP-008)

"R: I can remember seeing Helen Mirren in one saying how good she looks at whatever age she is.

I: So age is important in her presence?

R: Yeah, that's right.

I: So what role do you think age was playing there?

R: That she was looking good for her age, which seems to be what magazines are about. Looking good." (CROOP-011)

Both the nature and scale of older people representations in magazines are identified in these extracts. Where older people were present, interviewees reported that their representations used the trope of ongoing professional activity as a central reason for their presence, with interviews often serving

to promote another product. Aside from this, phrases such as ‘the only older person’ are indicative of the scale to which older people are excluded from certain discursive realms. Both the interview data and field notes from the discourse analysis tied this to a wider emphasis on youthfulness and youth culture in magazines such as Heat and OK. The example of Helen Mirren outlined above returns us to this point, suggestive as it is that ‘looking good’ for one’s age, along with ideas of youthful behaviour, is another mechanism by which older people can come to be represented in areas where they are generally found very rarely.

Youthful Appearance, Youthful Behaviour

The notion of ‘looking good’ within active ageing has already been touched on through the motifs of diet and exercise, as well as in the example of Helen Mirren mentioned previously. There was a strong consistency of response from the interviewees when conversation turned to aspects of youth culture, especially the likes of Heat and OK Magazine:

“It’s all about physical appearance. Which is just so dull because we are all going to age and all going to have wrinkles” (CROOP-010)

“I hate them. Both my girls often will have one of those if we go on holiday. And there’s so much bitchy stuff in there and who is on this diet this week” (CROOP-013)

“It’s all about the hype. Looking beautiful and looking good.” (CROOP-002)

I: Do you see older people present in the magazines you read, but particularly ones like Heat?

R: No, not at all. It’s all young, beautiful people.” (CROOP-012)

The examples above demonstrate the clarity with which this theme was returned by interviewees. Within magazines such as Heat, the discourse of youth and beauty is present often even where older people are not. Concerns regarding the act of dieting emerged in many references to younger celebrities, and were commonly found alongside full-page adverts for anti-ageing products (MA-HE-101; MA-HE-201). The sum of these

representations, while obviously associated with healthy and active ageing, collectively generates familiar negative discursive fears of bodily decline. It should also be noted at this stage that there was a greater emphasis of this theme in representations of females than males, demonstrated through the singular presence of women in the aforementioned advertisements for anti-ageing products, as well as numerous references to physical appearance and youthful looks throughout the editorial. The division at play here aligns with the 'double standard of ageing' introduced by Sontag (1978) in which women become doubly excluded from society based on both their age and the value attributed to their appearance. When features of the ageing process such as wrinkles or changes in body shape are perceived to impact youthfulness or beauty, this is treated with concern by youth-oriented magazines and other outlets. Recent news coverage of the appearance of Renee Zellweger, while outside of the sample, is worth mentioning at this point. After posing for photographs at the Women in Hollywood Awards, transformations to her face were widely discussed in television news bulletins, newspapers and online news sources, as with this example from Mail Online:

"The Jerry Maguire actress looked almost unrecognisable with her super line-free forehead, altered brow and suspiciously puffy face" (Davison, 2014)

The level of attention that the article dedicates to physical appearance is substantial, and is typical of many cultural texts aimed at younger audiences where close scrutiny is paid to styles of dress, hair, make-up and accessories. Operating alongside textual references to these facets of Zellweger's appearance are before-and-after pictures of her, one taken at the Hollywood Awards in 2014 and the other in 1998 (ibid). This stark expression of the ageing process over 16 years is viewed with suspicion, both in terms of the potential for Zellweger to have received plastic surgery, as well as at a broader level where age-based shifts in appearance are seen as unwelcome. With the example of Helen Mirren that opened this section, her presence in the magazine was stated to be because she was 'looking good' for her age. With the instance of Zellweger, a counterpoint is found where age driven

changes to appearance are represented negatively, while the continuity of familiar, youthful looks is valued.

The emphasis on youth, though most prominent with regard to appearance, was also seen with regard to the behaviour of older people. Much like youthful looks, if an older person was perceived to be acting unexpectedly youthfully, this could override the tendency to have them absent from many youth-oriented texts. Again, the examples of Heat and OK Magazine are helpful in illustrating this point. Given the magazines' focus on celebrity culture, many of the examples provided thus far have been interviews with active and famous older people. However, there were other instances in which lesser-known older people could come to be represented, provided that their behaviour had elements of youthfulness. The example that follows is from a small editorial article in Heat Magazine outlining eight and a half reasons why the author is anticipating the return of Channel 4 television show, Gogglebox:

“5 – Leon’s obsession with eating crackers and asking June to ‘show us your knicks’” (MA-HE-201)

Leon and June are an older couple regularly featured on the show sat together watching television and conversing with one another. The focus in much of the programme is on the quirks of behaviour that can be observed in the home setting. Other examples referenced in the article are the ‘shrieking of the girl in the Tapper family’ and the ‘gormless boyfriend from the Rock family’ (MA-HE-201). A behavioural quirk outlined above in relation to Leon was a playfully perceived use of sexual dialogue, exemplified in his catchphrase ‘show us your knicks’. A letter from a reader in the same issue of Heat helps to further elucidate the associations underlying this representation:

“Like Leon, my granddad perves over the Made In Chelsea girls, too. Once when we were watching it, he mentioned “Binky” and “winkie” in the same sentence. Luckily, my nana never heard him” (MA-HE-202)

The discursive threads of 'perviness' or sexualised language were strongly evident throughout magazines such as Heat or OK. As mentioned previously, the imagery of youthful bodies in swimwear was a key feature of this, alongside textual devices such as innuendo and a wider focus on physical description of admired physiques and who was or was not 'looking good'. This was most notable in articles such as 'Torso Of The Week' and 'The Week In Pictures'. For older people, aside from the exceptions noted already, exclusion from these magazines is far more common than not. However, another instance where they were included was if they were seen to be engaging with the wider discursive trends of youthfulness and sexualisation. In the case of Leon, the use of terms such as 'knicks' and 'winkie' performs this function and is consequently treated with warmth and admiration by the writers. This finding was corroborated by the interview data, most notably during an interviewee with a nurse in her twenties who regularly read Heat. When asked about the stories she would expect to find about older people in it, her response showed that this initially positive representation becomes more complicated under scrutiny:

"I think really what they try and portray in terms of older people is the more shocking aspect of it...there was a horrible one about a lady. I'm not sure if she was going to be on a Channel 4 programme and that's why they ran the story but basically she was a prostitute and in her eighties. And they had her there in kind of leather, PVC type ensembles...like 'look at me, I'm a prostitute and I'm in my eighties'" (CROOP-003)

Here the interviewee expresses amused horror at the sexual tone of the story, citing the visual imagery of 'leather, PVC type ensembles' as well as the emphasis on age as reasons for this. The centrality given to age in a story like this is worth considering for a moment. A key question when analysing representations of older people in this cultural setting is whether the story would have as much prominence were the protagonist not an older person. The two key features of the article identified by the interviewee in this extract are prostitution and age. While the subject matter of prostitution is taboo in itself, this is lent greater weight by the protagonist being an older

person 'in her eighties'. If replaced by a younger person, the extremity of the case would arguably be diminished and subsequently its merit for editorial inclusion would become less obvious. This would seem to be discursively interacting with more common representations of older people as asexual that have been noted by numerous theorists (Vare, 2009; Hinchliff and Gott; 2008; .Gott and Hinchliff; 2003).

The use of age related 'shock' devices such as this were most regularly found in *Take A Break* magazine where two large double-page spreads were contained in the sample, alongside a more noticeable presence of older people more generally. One article was entitled 'But I'm old enough to be your nanna' discussing an age-gap relationship between a 68 year-old woman, Edna, and a 29 year-old man, Simon. The other had the headline 'I'm just a groom who can't say no!' and detailed the marital history of 66 year-old Ron Sheppard who had accumulated 'seven ex-wives since 1966'. In both instances the sexualisation of the older protagonists is carried out through textual examples such as 'before I knew it, Simon and I had our arms around each other and were smooching' (MA-TB-203) or from Ron's description as the 'George Clooney of Yeovil' (MA-TB-105). Interestingly, however, it is not the sexualisation of the protagonists that takes centre stage; instead it is their age that is the focus of interest:

"I fancied Simon like mad, but I realised there might be a problem. He was 29 years old and I was considerably older. In fact, I was 68...I'm old enough to be his grandmother" (MA-TB-203)

"I worried that Simon's parents would think I was a dreadful old biddy" (MA-TB-203)

"She was 30 years younger than me and I'd never even seen her photo, but we became good friends" (MA-TB-105)

As outlined in Chapter 6, *Take A Break* magazine is characterised by its use of taboo. Throughout the sample articles were notable for their courting of controversial subject matter such as murderous brides and incest between a mother and daughter. The age-gap relationships and multiple marriages

outlined above fit into the same provocative template but are notable for placing the protagonists' age as discursively central. The implication here is that the sexualised behaviour of older people subverts societal expectation. The representations that follow depend on the extremity with which this expectation is broken. With Leon's playful humour the articles demonstrate fondness and warmth, but for the more shocking articles found commonly in *Take A Break* this is greatly diminished. Indeed, the text of the larger articles in *Take A Break* are generally written from the perspective of the protagonists, lending them more ambivalence than the authorial voice found in *Heat* and *OK*. In the examples cited above, then, it is apparent that the themes of youthfulness and its association with appearance or sexualisation can result in both negative and positive representations. Indeed, this finding can be extended to the theme of active ageing more generally. We have already shown how the emergence of representations of actively engaged older people was initially regarded as positive by many critics. This was largely based on its opposition to familiarly negative representations of frail, dependent and vulnerable older people. However, when analysed in detail, representations of active older people do not appear to be so uniformly positive depending very much on the activities being carried out. While professional capability and the maintenance of a youthful appearance into older age are held in high esteem, where activity subverts what is considered to be desirable or the 'norm' for older people, the representation is much more nuanced. Both Featherstone and Hepworth (1995) and Cole (1992) have suggested that images of active ageing do not fit easily into a positive-negative dichotomy. Their emphasis on the maintenance of the body and its continued capability provide alternative representations to common negative stereotypes, yet it still broadly sees ageing in itself as something to be feared. As Cole states such attempts to create 'new positive images of old age' do not 'confront the de-meaning of age rooted in modern culture's relentless hostility toward decay and dependence' (Cole, 1992; xxvi). With this in mind, we will now explore some 'positive' representations of older people that make youthfulness and the body less central.

Wisdom, Experience and Advisory Roles

In the last section the motif of ongoing professional activity was shown to act as an enabler for older people, particularly celebrities, to become present in cultural forms where they are generally uncommon. This section will develop this further by examining a related theme; that of the expertise or experiential wisdom seen to be found with older people and how this can come to form representations in which they play advisory roles. We shall explore these related but distinct ideas through two sections: firstly, the idea of expertise as gathered in the professional setting will be discussed; this will be followed by a discussion of representations where older people are seen to have gathered wisdom from life experience.

Expertise and Professionalism

One of the examples cited previously to outline the professional activity theme was BBC News' World Correspondent John Simpson. Simpson has maintained a prominent position in the BBC News department since becoming political editor in 1980 making him one of the most established and recognisable faces on the programme at the age of 70. As outlined already, the sample illustrated his active ageing through numerous reports delivered on location in the Ukraine during the military conflict with Russia. These were often characterised by shaky camerawork, images of soldiers with guns and the delivery of reports in a hushed tone all implying the sense of nearby danger (e.g. TV-BN-002; TV-BN-003; TV-BN-004). However, Simpson's physical appearance, capability and age were not discursively central to this representation, rather it was his professionalism and knowledge that were primarily displayed. His reports were delivered eloquently and smoothly often amidst apparently challenging circumstances. When combined with his recognisability as a legitimised BBC journalist over many years, Simpson's presence becomes that of an authoritative expert. This idea was corroborated by several of the interviews where several famous older people were suggested as fitting into this theme, largely within the fields of television and radio:

“A bit like Michael Parkinson, you know, they’re at that age, they’ve been in the media for donkey’s years, you know, I remember Parkinson being on right back in the 70s” (CROOP-005)

“The Apprentice has got Alan Sugar who is in his sixties, I think...he seems very dynamic. He seems quite wise. He’s able to suss people out quite well, I think” (CROOP-004)

“You’ve also got David Attenborough and he’s great too. And people love him. He’s an old man now. But he’s a national treasure” (CROOP-010)

“I am listening to the Today Show on Radio 4 in the morning...you know I don’t see John Humphreys who is in his late 60s or early 70s any differently to other presenters” (CROOP-007)

Television was the primary reference point for this style of representation, as seen in the examples of Parkinson, Sugar and Attenborough. In each of these cases, the older protagonist in question is remarked upon with fondness and positivity for their skills and expertise, as with Alan Sugar’s ability for dynamism and to ‘suss people out’. There is also the notion that familiarity plays its part in the representation, as suggested by the interviewee remembering Parkinson from the 1970s. While age is clearly a factor in these processes, being uniformly mentioned by the interviewees, in these instances it acts as an enabling influence benefitting older people with more time to have become experts in their field. Radio 4 was mentioned in the last extract and this also recurred throughout as a perceived hotspot for representations of older people as experts. If magazines such as Heat and OK were typified by an emphasis on youth and appearance, Radio 4 was seen as offering much greater representation of older people on the basis of their acquired expertise. Those interviewees who regularly listened to Radio 4 expressed how its general tone of seriousness offered conditions in which expertise was more valued:

“You get some really interesting, in-depth interviews...it’s much more the older person is seen as being able to relate what’s happening now to what

happened 30 to 40 years ago...and can really talk about their subject” (CROOP-009)

“The nature of Radio 4, I think it is more of an elderly person’s radio station to be honest...the news is certainly generated for an elderly person” (CROOP-005)

“It’s much more ‘news-y’ on Radio 4 and much more in depth as to what’s going on.” (CROOP-013)

With Heat and OK Magazines’ focus on youthfulness set against Radio 4’s prioritisation of serious or ‘intellectual’ subject matter, it is clear that some cultural sites differ considerably in tone. Noticeably, based on the priorities of these different sites the presence of older people also operates in significantly different ways. In those cultural texts aimed at younger people, exemplified by Heat Magazine, OK Magazine and Radio 1, older people would be absent altogether were it not for occasional instances in which they are represented in terms of defying their age, either through behaviour or appearance. For Radio 4, characterised by a more serious and intellectual tone, older people are more commonly presented for their accumulated expertise. In the discourse analysis this theme was evident across several strands. There were numerous examples of politician interviews and subject-specific experts within the BBC News sample, including footage of US politician John Kerry during the Ukraine-Russia conflict (TV-BN-002; TV-BN-003; TV-BN-011) and an interview with David Learmount, an expert on air crashes, for the story of a missing Malaysian jet (TV-BN-006). Within the Internet news sample, Learmount re-emerged once more in the Mail Online discussing the same air crash incident (IN-DM-031). Also, the newspaper sample saw this theme illustrated with several articles about Sir Alex Ferguson auctioning off his £3 million pound wine collection in which his acquired knowledge and connoisseurship is emphasised (NE-DM-405; NE-DM-507; NE-TG-301; NE-TS-403). Finally, David Attenborough was referenced in a similar way in an article from The Sun where he lent his support to a campaign to save jobs at Kew Gardens:

“TV legend Sir David Attenborough is calling on the Government to save 120 jobs at the world famous Kew Gardens. The veteran naturalist has backed a petition demanding ministers reconsider cuts” (NE-TS-506)

Here the terminology of ‘legend’ situates Attenborough as requiring respect, a point further reinforced by the term ‘veteran naturalist’ that defines him by the experience he has accumulated in his chosen profession. Attenborough’s legitimacy in supporting the campaign, tied as it is to issues of the environment and nature, is based on his established history as an expert in that field. In this instance, his status as an expert as well as the fondness and esteem with which he is held contribute to the strength and validity of the petition.

Looking beyond newspapers, the sample of Radio 1 breakfast shows offered no instances of this effect or, indeed, older people more generally. However, Radio 2 did offer a couple of instances in which professional expertise was shown to be valued. A segment entitled Breaking News provided one such example when a listener submitted a news piece regarding the retirement of the longest serving RAC patrolman in history. Presenter Chris Evans’ response expressed clear interest in the knowledge that he has accumulated in this role:

“Tell him he may well be deeply missed by you guys but he may be on the show tomorrow. We’d love to talk to him. How has that business changed over the last 40 years?” (RA-B2-001)

Evans’ enthusiasm is evident both in the phrases used and the tone with which they were delivered, suggesting genuine interest in the topic. The offer of a place on the show to discuss how breakdown recovery had changed over time underlined this point. This particular case is also notable in that the older protagonist has no celebrity status. The majority of the discussion here has cited examples where the older people being represented have pre-existent cultural notoriety, having become famous in the public eye. This is true for the likes of John Simpson, John Humphreys, David Attenborough and Alan Sugar, all mentioned above. In such cases, it is arguable that expertise is

thematically operating in tandem with notions of celebrity. In the next section we will go onto explore other examples of wisdom and life experience drawn from more every day contexts.

Wisdom and Life Experience

The association between old age and wisdom has been a consistently strong one over time in Western society. As Wilson (2000) has noted, this is often incorporated into a 'golden age' theorising of later life in which the loss of a time where 'elders were respected, looked up to and cared for' is lamented (2000; 10). Characteristics of wisdom and spirituality were major factors in the generation of this respect but, it is argued, due to the spread of Capitalist materialism and industrialisation there has been a 'devaluation of the wisdom of the old' (ibid; 11). While this process of devaluation may be taking place, wisdom remains commonly integrated into representations of older people and consequently in societal understanding of them as a group. The interview data saw numerous instances of this theme:

"They can teach us so much, older people, they've been here much longer than we have" (CROOP-002)

"The impression I get is that you may look older on the outside but on the inside you are more or less the same as you were. You've just acquired more wisdom along the way" (CROOP-004)

"They (older people) have a breadth of life information and life skills" (CROOP-011)

"I think we don't give them enough credit for how much they can teach us" (CROOP-012)

Each of these examples was drawn from responses to the question 'What characteristics do you associate with older people?' suggesting that the interviewees maintained wisdom as a central facet to older age. Beyond this, though, wisdom was mentioned in passing and referenced thematically as a positive aspect of ageing in several further interviews as well. We have already discussed numerous examples from the discourse analysis data in

previous sections, with strong overlaps between wisdom and professional expertise. There were, however, further representations of this nature with several portrayals of wise characters in television shows. Soap operas, in particular, contain notable roles for older people with the sample of Coronation Street demonstrating this through scenes its cast of older characters such as Emily, Rita, Norris and Audrey. One particular storyline around Rita's husband leaving her saw Norris and Rita share a warm exchange:

"R: I swear to God, Norris, if you start dishing out sympathy...I've told you I'm fine.

N: Yes, I know, you're fine. So when are you going to start believing that? Because no one else does, certainly not Emily or Mary. Look, what Dennis did...

R: I don't want to talk about it.

N: What Dennis did was unforgiveable. You have every right to feel hurt and angry" (TV-CS-001)

In this scene, Norris, who we shall see in the next chapter is more associated with characteristics of nosiness, is the primary representation of wisdom. This is demonstrated through his capability to put Rita's problems into perspective and offer didactic advice, as in 'you have every right to feel hurt and angry', as well as in his sensitivity. These points are brought home all the more powerfully by the fact that Rita, herself normally a character associated with wisdom and dispensing advice, has acted in uncharacteristically bad judgement. The scene culminates in Rita saying 'you can say 'I told you so'' for Norris to respond 'I thought you knew me better than that' before the two hug. The comforting and advisory presence here is something that the interviewees also noted in other television characters. When discussing the presence of older people in Coronation Street more broadly, interviewees tended to mention wisdom and advice with frequency:

"Characters are seen as quite well-respected and wise. People go to them if they've got things that they want to talk about" (CROOP-001)

“Rita, as well, she’s very strong. People go to her for support. I think that’s what you find with the older characters in soaps. The older characters are portrayed as pillars of the community” (CROOP-008)

This feature was carried across to other characters in soap operas, as well, such as Dot Cotton from Eastenders:

“She’s a great character. She’s been in it for years. She smokes like a chimney. People still go to her for advice. They might think she’s a little old lady sometimes but she’s always got something valuable to say” (CROOP-002)

The data suggests, then, that the presence of older people in long-running dramas like soap operas allows for greater character development in which their wisdom is an underpinning characteristic. As seen with the example of Rita and Norris outlined above, this can sometimes be contravened for certain characters by particular storylines. Nevertheless, wisdom and life experience remain core associations with the characters based on their continual presence within advisory roles over time. There were considerable overlaps found between this dispensing of wisdom and the older person playing a matriarchal or patriarchal position in the family. The interview data saw this strongly emerge in relation to Maggie Smith’s portrayal of Violet Crawley in Downton Abbey:

“In Downton Abbey the matriarch is quite well respected, I think. They show a lot of respect to the older people there” (CROOP-006)

“She’s the pillar of the family and she see herself as that. And the family do too. And she knows things” (CROOP-008)

“Strong. Stubborn. Thinks she knows everything. But she’s probably right about half of them anyway. She absolutely dotes on the family but finds it very hard to show her feelings” (CROOP-012)

“Everyone goes to her for advice, even the younger generation. So she’s quite a strong figure” (CROOP-002)

As with the soap operas, the long-running serial format of *Downton Abbey* afforded time for the character to develop, thus granting her greater complexity than can be found in the often singular negative stereotyping of dependence or within the physical focus of the active ageing trope discussed previously. It should be noted at this stage, that a programmes' serial format did not universally dictate the presence of wise older people, with other factors determining the representations at play. For instance, one interviewee brought up the soap opera *Hollyoaks* as an example where there are far fewer older people represented and, pivotally, that these conform to the commonly portrayed issues of frailty:

“There’s not an awful lot about the elderly, now you come to mention it in *Hollyoaks*...There’s only one regular person in *Hollyoaks* and that’s the nana...lately they’ve made her into a typical older person that’s always going to the hospital. Always something wrong, always poorly” (CROOP-003)

This extract serves to show the complexity operating around representations of older people more broadly. While wisdom and experiential knowledge were strong thematic trends relating to older people in the interviews, and observable in certain cultural texts, there was considerable variability between texts. Soap operas and long-running serials offer greater opportunity for characters to develop over time, with older people taking on greater strength and value based on their attribute of accumulated knowledge. However, the example of *Hollyoaks* suggests that a further key determinant in this style of positive representation is the target audience of the show. *Hollyoaks*, as acknowledged by the same interviewee, is ‘aimed at a younger generation of viewers’ given its focus on university life and youthful pursuits like ‘partying’ or ‘clubbing’ (CROOP-003). This point is used as justification by the interviewee as to why older people are largely absent from the show, returning us to similar ideas of market segmentation previously discussed in regard to magazine and radio culture. Nevertheless, in spite of these issues of segmented audiences adding complexity to the manner in which age and wisdom are represented, its repeated presence across certain cultural forms was incontestable. Aside from the examples

already mentioned, there were also references to wisdom and life experience through discussions with interviewees of radio soap, *The Archers*. Here, once more, the recurrent notion of older matriarchs and patriarchs emerged with regard to character Peggy:

“She’s been in the show for 40 years or so. She’s an Archer. She’s a matriarch and she seems to still maintain a lot of control over the family and they go to her for advice. She seems like a strong character but it’s obvious she’s ageing and you can tell in her voice as well. She has some vulnerability because she was recently widowed and she’s living on her own at the moment” (CROOP-004)

This extract reiterates the commonly referenced role of the advisory matriarch, and its associated strength, indicating its prevalence across certain television and radio texts. Those shows that run on a long-running, serial basis offer greater opportunity for the characteristics of older people to move beyond one-dimensional representations of vulnerability, illness and isolation. The interviewee mentions these features in relation to Peggy from *The Archers* but, unlike the example from *Hollyoaks*, these are set against a long-established understanding of her as a matriarch. In this sense, once again, we see the binary of positive and negative representations of older people complicated. The generally negative attributes of frailty and dependence are still evident even within the rounded and more positive representations of a strong matriarch. Beyond this, even within cultural texts widely regarded as having more representation of older people, such as *Coronation Street*, the depth of these characters demonstrates great variability. Characters such as Rita, Norris, Emily and Ken have all been seen to play the role of an elder advisor and are identified by audiences for this characteristic. Broadly speaking, though, these characters also possess recognisable negative characteristics, as demonstrated by Norris primarily being identified as nosy or a busybody. As a counterpoint, other older characters in the same setting are arguably even more restricted in the representation they provide. One interviewee suggested this in relation to Blanche from *Coronation Street* who was singularly portrayed for not being

'afraid to say what she thought' (CROOP-008). This theme of the cantankerous older person will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter as a negative representation but for now it is worth noting that while an unfavourable stereotype is being portrayed, the same interviewee responded to the character with warmth, stating 'I loved her, she's funny' (ibid). This leads us onto another contested area in which positive and negative representations of older people become increasingly blurred, that of the older person as a comedic device.

The Older Person And Humour

The prevalence of older people as comedy foil within culture has been noted by the likes of Kubey (1980) and Zebrowitz and Montepare (2000). These accounts situate such representations as broadly negative with Kubey, particularly, stating that such comical roles generally highlight stereotypes of physical and cognitive inability. Within this project, the theme of comedy was particularly emblematic of wider complexities associated with representation and reception. Primarily, this was due to interviewees generally expressing fondness for such representations, as seen in the extracts below:

"You can have comedies with older people in, and I can relate to that because my nan and granddad are quite humorous people and that's how they are and that's what I experience" (CROOP-001)

"There was a couple on the news and they were Jewish...lovely, charming couple. They were quite funny as well. They were over 100 years of age and they mentioned that they'd never gotten on together" (CROOP-004)

The positive reception of this humour would often come in spite of the use of apparently negative stereotypes, as was suggested by the example of Blanche from *Coronation Street* previously. Indeed, this was also seen with other characters from the same soap opera, such as Norris who was regarded fondly for his status as a 'busybody':

“He’s funny. He’s always gossiping about people. Very nose-y but people just tell him off” (CROOP-008)

Other examples of this emerging from the data include Victor Meldrew from *One Foot In The Grave*, characterised by the negative older person stereotype of grumpiness, and Ted Grundy from *The Archers* who was regarded as a loveable rogue:

“There’s another character who’s a bit of a rogue and he’s supposed to be in his nineties...and he’s quite funny and comical” (CROOP-004)

The specificities of each of these negative stereotypes will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter. What is of primary interest here is the disjuncture between these representations that rely on traditional negative stereotypes and their receipt by audiences as positive, humorous and well meaning. To help understand the complexity at play in these processes it is worth briefly considering some theories from humour analysis. One commonly cited dimension within humour is that of incongruity in which the comedic essence is based on the ‘resolution of incongruous stimuli’ (Martin, 2007; Neuendorf et al, 2014). In the example of Ted Grundy from *The Archers* cited above, it is possible to see this process in action. The interviewee identifies Grundy as being likely to engage in ‘naughty tricks’ and characterises him as mischievous in spite of his age. The implicit suggestion here is that the display of these tendencies contravenes the expectations of how an older person should behave (CROOP-004). This representation of an older person who ‘should know better’ has a contemporary history demonstrated through the popularity of shows such as *Last Of The Summer Wine*, and was evident in various areas of the discourse analysis sample. There were several, generally brief, newspaper articles situating older people as having incongruous, more youthful behaviours. One such example described a senior German bridge team who had received a 10-year ban from the World Bridge Federation for cheating, compromising the expectation of wisdom and passivity (see NE-DM-407). Another example from *The Sun* demonstrated this with a very small article entitled ‘Drunk Driver, 91’:

“Motorist John Stirling admitted drink-driving and was banned for a year in Holywell, North Wales – at the age of **91**” (NE-TS-507)

This article, quoted in full above, implies a clear and singular link between Stirling’s age and his incongruously irresponsible actions of drink driving. The resultant humour situates the expectations of older people to be of more considered and wise behaviour. The example of Leon and June from Gogglebox mentioned previously in this chapter also operates under similar principles. In this instance, Leon’s playful sexual remarks are a central facet of the show’s humour based on their contravention of asexuality within older people (see MA-HE-201). Magazines such as Heat were demonstrated to find the humour of Gogglebox, and particularly Leon and June, worthy of inclusion making them one of only a few instances where older people were present in their pages at all. Likewise, an interviewee mentioned, with amused horror, another article about an 80-year old prostitute from Heat magazine (CROOP-004). In these cases the reaction that is provoked is typified by less admiration than associated with variations of the loveable rogue outlined above and more by shock or displeasure. Nevertheless, the humour in both instances arguably emanates from the similar sense of taboos being broken and expectations being defied.

While incongruity can be applied to many of the examples gathered from the data, a counter-trend was also identified through cases where questionable cognitive ability was used for comedic effect. The Sun offered two such instances with articles entitled ‘Ken You Spot The Difference, Bill?’ (NE-TS-508) and ‘Old On, I’m 100’ (NE-TS-510). In both cases, the central tone is of amusement based on the protagonists displaying doddery or forgetful behaviour:

“VETERAN actor Bill Roache struggles to open his car door - unaware he is standing beside the **WRONG** motor” (NE-TS-508)

“Evelyn Frost, 100, got her birthday wrong by a day for 99 years” (NE-TS-510)

The humorous aspects of both of these articles are certainly, in part, driven by the familiarity of negative stereotypes of 'senior moments', particularly in relation to the article around Coronation Street actor Bill Roache. Spread over two pages, including a central image of Roache looking confused at the wrong car, the article keenly emphasises his bewilderment and confusion, integrating eyewitness accounts to aid this process. The second article describes Evelyn Frost's long-running misunderstanding over her own birthday recounting her realisation of the error occurring only when requesting a birth certificate to send to the Queen on her 100th birthday. Again, the central thrust of the narrative is of an older person being bewildered and fallible. The display of forgetfulness is tempered in this article given that the error had been ongoing all of Frost's life. Nevertheless the association between age and forgetfulness remains central to the representation provided. When applying commonly espoused academic ideas of humour to examples such as these, the approach that seems most applicable is that of superiority or disparagement theory (Gruner, 1978; Neuendorf et al, 2014). Neuendorf et al state that the mechanisms associated with this style of humour tend to orientate around putdowns and the display of ridiculous behaviours, often targeting marginalised groups through racist or sexist jokes (2014; 67). In the two cases from The Sun mentioned here, the tone and presence of the article appears to conform to these conventions with age discursively being the target of the putdown. That said, there are other factors at play as well. It is important to contextualise the status of Roache when analysing this article, with the prominence of the piece likely to be diminished were the central protagonist not a celebrity. Indeed, much of the humour in this instance also comes from an assumption of shared recognition of Roache's status as a well-known actor between the text and the audience.

A similar example of this was found in an Internet news article interviewing Kylie Minogue in regard to her role as a judge on television show, *The Voice* (IN-BN-048). The article moves on to discuss Tom Jones, another judge on the show:

“Tom Jones has the best signature move’ she announces. ‘It’s a slow one, very assured.

‘The inexperienced ones, like myself, are bouncing around but Tom’s super cool’

Is there any chance Sir Tom is moving more cautiously in case he throws out a hip?

‘Haha! That’s right. But I’m not far behind him!’” (IN-BN-048)

Again, this humorous reference to an older person insinuates familiar negative stereotypes of age driven deficiency. In this instance, the motif is not of cognitive incapability but conforms more to that of physical decline being associated with age. As with the example of Roache outlined previously, it is important to integrate other contextual aspects of the humour here, based on shared knowledge of the protagonist. Jones’ status as a globally renowned singer, as well as often being a humorous presence on talk shows, marks him out as someone who can happily engage in this form of self-deprecatory banter. There are also associations with physical movement exemplified in Jones’ dancing ‘signature move’ which has been in his repertoire for many years. His role as an active performer, respected enough to be a judge on *The Voice*, also makes the humour more playful than aggressive. This point is furthered given that the interview is being conducted with Kylie Minogue, a peer and friend of Jones.

All of the examples above are helpful in outlining the various contextual factors that can contribute to humorous representations of older people. These representations have ranged from the incongruous defiance of behavioural expectation to playing on negative stereotypes of physical debilitation. Indeed, in many of the examples character traits generally perceived to be negative were often deployed for comic purposes. These included the busybody nosiness of Norris Cole, or the cantankerous older character Blanche in *Coronation Street*. Importantly these comic portrayals, though rooted in negative stereotypes, were met by a warm, positive response from interviewees. Theories of humour analysis help to explain

some of the complexity operating within the realm of comic cultural representation and reception. Theories such as superiority and incongruity in humour can be applied to many of the cases, and particularly so within fictional representations such as *Last Of The Summer Wine*. However, even then care needs to be taken to understand other contextual factors that may influence how the representations are perceived. The celebrity statuses involved in some of the cases outlined above demonstrate other dimensions of 'insider' jokes based on a shared cultural understanding of the protagonists. Indeed, humour is a useful filter to demonstrate the continued importance of Hall's conception of how cultural messages are decoded through a shared representation system (Hall, 1997). The use of this within comedy is particularly advanced and demonstrative of the breadth of variables that operate in decoding the messages of cultural texts.

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted many of the instances in which broadly positive representations of older people and ageing permeated through the sample. The first of these to be discussed covered a typical cultural response to negative stereotyping of older people as inactive, frail and dependent with the theme of active ageing. Here we found references to diet, healthy living and ongoing success within one's profession emerging strongly from interviewees. The strength of this theme in the discourse analysis meant that representations of this nature occurred even in the otherwise youthfully dominated magazine culture exemplified by *Heat* and *OK*. Nevertheless, it should still be remembered that even prominent discursive themes such as this need to be set amidst a broader underrepresentation of older people across the majority of cultural texts. The next major theme under discussion related to representations of older people as wise, expert in their field and in advisory roles such as matriarch or patriarch. This was less focussed on issues of the body and placed more esteem on the accumulated knowledge associated with ageing. Again, complexity was found in the manner and location of these representations. Generally, longer running serials were seen to offer greater opportunity for character development where internal

characteristics such as wisdom are fostered. However, considerable variability could be found based on matters such as the target audience of a cultural text and market segmentation. Finally, various comedic representations of older people were outlined from the discourse analysis indicating the importance of incongruity and superiority humour theories in understanding how these messages are received by an audience. Within each of these major sections, it has been reiterated that the binary division of positive and negative representations is not entirely adequate to conceptualise how older people are culturally portrayed. The discussion of humour exemplified this by highlighting how representations of older people drawn from negative stereotypes can be warmly and positively received by audiences. This was found even within interviewees who demonstrated wider sympathy for the plight of older people and strong, close relationships with them. Collectively, this served as a reminder of the importance of Hall's (1997) concept of shared representational systems in establishing the processes at work and the complexity with which they are operating. These ideas will be further developed in the next chapter offering what can be classed as 'negative' representations of older people.

Chapter 8: 'Negative' Representations of Older People

Introduction

While the previous chapter sought to outline what could be classified as positive representations of older people, this will highlight the numerous themes that emerged from the data portraying the same group negatively. The caveat over definitions of negative and positive representations suggested in the last chapter is maintained for this one. The processes of representation and reception have already been shown to operate in a more ambivalent fashion, with positive representations being received negatively and vice versa, as well as vast differentiations based on cultural text and target audience. Nevertheless, this division conforms to the history of academic study in this field allowing corroboration with established tropes of older people representation. Additionally, the problems associated with this dichotomy offer insights into the underlying complexity in how our perceptions of older people are formed. Firstly, the chapter will thematically explore the interview sample and the discourse analysis field notes to highlight the persistent prevalence of representations of vulnerability, centring primarily on issues of physical and cognitive decline. This will then lead into a discussion of one of the most pervasive themes returned from the discourse analysis, that of death. Within this, particular attention will be paid to representations of a 'life well lived' most commonly found in reflective obituaries. The final section of the chapter will initially return to the theme of vulnerability by exploring the theme of older people as victims, before going on to examine other behavioural characteristics often associated with older people such as the busybody or prude, the dirty old man, the technologically incapable, as well as the grumpy older person.

Vulnerability and Decline

The theme of vulnerability has already been mentioned in previous chapters as one of the more historically prevalent representations of older people (see Wilson, 2000; Bytheway, 2003; Misra, et al, 1996). As Featherstone and Hepworth (1994) have stated, the rise of images of active ageing, discussed in

the last chapter, came about largely to resist the dominant older person tropes of physical and mental debilitation, dependency, loss and isolation. While active ageing was a key theme to emerge in the last chapter, the persistence with which vulnerability was portrayed in association with older people was the single most clear thematic trend from the data. Each of the tropes mentioned above were visible within the discourse analysis and saw strong uptakes across all of the interviews. This section will specifically look at two of the most common and obvious forms of vulnerability representation, those of physical and cognitive decline.

Frailty, Immobility and Physical Decline

As Grenier (2007) notes, the prominence of frailty within conceptions of old age exists beyond the cultural sphere and is already well established in academic writing and medical gerontology. Nevertheless, the profundity of images and representations of frail, older people has been noted in culture by Featherstone and Wernick (1995) among others working in the field (Elias, 1985; Hockey, 1990). For all of these writers, issues of the body and declining physical health are central to how such representations operate, marking older people out as 'other' to the norm of capable, independent bodies. Within this project's discourse analysis these issues were seen to permeate the cultural texts in a variety of ways. This extract from a newspaper article in the Good Health section of the Daily Mail offers an initial overview of some of the key elements of such representations:

“One person in three over 65, and half of those over 80, suffer a serious fall at least once a year...older people are prone to falls because, as the body ages, muscles become weaker and less efficient” (NE-DM-205)

This article outlined the development of new shoes capable of preventing falls through sensors that detect where a loss of balance has occurred. The use of statistics and direct sentences imply a level of scientific authority while placing older people as the central focus of the article. It is their status as being more 'prone' to accidents because of physical deterioration that forms the primary representation. This helps to justify the invention of the shoes as

a product, giving them purpose in fulfilling a perceived public need and targeting this specific group in order to make the product more sellable once it comes to the marketplace. This is helpful in highlighting thematic ties between consumerism and older people that has also been noted in studies by the likes of Cole (1992), Ostroff (1989) and Featherstone and Hepworth (1986). Indeed, this theme was particularly pronounced through advertising across the newspaper and magazine sample. Take A Break, for instance, had the same full-page advert on the inside front cover of both MA-TB-101 and MA-TB-401 relating to NHS treatment for cancer. The text stated that '1 in 3 women who get breast cancer are over 70, so don't assume you are past it' with a large, central image of an 81-year old cancer survivor set on a grey background. Here there is direct discursive linkage between age and physical decline utilising scientific matter-of-fact statistics, in this instance relating to cancer. Similar techniques were adopted in an advertorial offering free TV or radio amplifiers to pensioners in The Guardian (NE-TG-304) that, along with another advert in the Daily Mail (NE-DM-110), were collectively associating hearing impairment with old age. This was enhanced by the presence of Dr Chris Steele MP as an advocate for the products. Again, the expertise of Steele endorsing the product, based on his status as an MP and celebrity doctor, lends the advertisement a sense of legitimacy or authority, as does his appearance as an active, content older person.

Further examples of this effect were present in adverts for a self-loading mobility system that can fold into the back of a car (NE-DM-208), for assistance with shortness of breath (NE-TS-514) and in relation to an Alzheimer's Show (NE-DM-414). In all of the cases outlined thus far it is notable that the visual representations of older people were generally favourable and demonstrating little evidence of any impairment or illness, as shown with Chris Steele and the cancer survivor in adverts from Take A Break. At the same time, the discursive textual insinuation is of growing impairment and of a means to resolve it. That the visual aspects of these representations offer positive and hopeful images of older people is arguably due to their intent to sell the product in hand, as well as its associated

benefits. Once more this demonstrates the fluidity with which positive and negative representations can become entwined, returning us to some of the key findings from the previous chapter. However, while this trend was evident in the specific realm of health advertorials for products aimed to curb impairments, other areas offered more outright negative representations. When not tied to the implied benefits of products or advice, the focus tended to be much more on age-related suffering. Some of the clearest examples of this were evident in TV series 24 Hours In A&E, with the storyline involving 83-year old Monica being admitted offering a particularly frail representation:

“Narrator: ‘An 83 year old woman is being rushed to King’s after falling at home. She suffers from osteoporosis and is complaining of numbness in her leg’

-CUTS TO INTERVIEW WITH SISTER-

‘Osteoporosis is a degenerative condition where the bones become fragile and more prone to fractures. You get someone elderly who can come in who’s been absolutely fit as a fiddle, completely self-caring, living on their own, you know, looking after themselves for their whole life and then one fall can end that and just take their independence away’

-CUTS TO ARRIVAL OF PATIENT, LOOKING FRAIL, IN NECK BRACE ON HOSPITAL BED-” (TV-AE-005)

As mentioned in Chapter 6, 24 Hours In A&E is a documentary-style show in which each episode focuses on the outcomes of particular admissions. The storyline arcs of the patients are central to the show’s sense of drama, with narration often implying uncertainty in spite of being recorded transparently after the events have taken place. The open-endedness of the narration in the extract above is demonstrative of this process in action. The sister’s interview also serves this purpose discursively implying the patient may suffer loss of independence, after outlining the medical nature of the condition. The sense of drama is enhanced further by the footage of the patient arriving on an ambulance bed wearing a neck brace. While Monica is

eventually revealed in an interview to be recovered from the admission, it is arguable that the initial encounters with her emphasise her frailty and poor health to raise doubts over her capability to recover. This device was deployed during another storyline from the same episode featuring 78-year old Kevin who had suffered a cardiac arrest while at the gym (TV-AE-005). Similar imagery of a prone older person being wheeled into the hospital commences the scene, Kevin shown in an oxygen mask with staff around him. At a later stage, an interview with a sister from the show deploys similar discursive concern over whether Kevin would survive the admission:

“After a patient’s had a cardiac arrest and we’ve got the rhythm back, the chances are they’ll arrest again” (TV-AE-005)

Again, the sense of drama being developed here allows the older person to be seen as a device to enhance the emotional impact of the narrative. The potential threat of another heart attack for Kevin ensures that there is tension over his ability to recover. While this would be true for anyone who has suffered a cardiac arrest, the emotional impact respective to his status as an older person is instilled through subsequent interviews with Kevin’s wife, Maureen:

“I’ve known him all my life really. It was sort of love at first sight. My first date was just a crossroads dance. He didn’t have a bicycle but I did so he rode my bicycle and carried me on the carrier at the back” (TV-AE-005)

When used in conjunction with nostalgic reminiscence of a shared life from his wife, the visual and verbal discourse suggests that declining health threatens not only the patient but also the people they love. This is not to say that the representations do not offer deeper complexity. Indeed, the show also conducts in-depth interviews with the patients after their recoveries that commonly demonstrate the good humour, tenderness and warmth of the extract above. These, however, are arguably in place to help develop the emotional strength of the storyline, a point that will be returned to in the next chapter. For now, though, it is worth noting that the representation of physical frailty and ill health is the dominant one in 24 Hours In A&E. It

should also be noted how the prevalence of the frailty representation is, in part, down to the setting of the show where most encounters are driven by ill health of some description. What is unique to the representations of older people outlined thus far is the discursive insinuation that death or a permanent compromise to independence is more likely. These major storylines show the themes of frailty and impairment at their most developed with considerable focus being paid to the protagonists' recovery and the emotional consequences of this. There were also, though, several less developed and shorter representations of impairment taking place throughout the show with regard to older people, often for comic relief between storylines. This was observed with a small scene involving an older man and woman in the waiting room responding to the noise of tannoy announcements by saying they cannot understand what is being said, implying deficiency of hearing (TV-AE-005). This impairment was also comically referred to during Monica's storyline where she is continually asking people to repeat questions (ibid). This refers us back to the discussion of comedy in the previous chapter where existing stereotypes can be exaggerated for humorous purposes (Kubey, 1980; Zubrowitz and Montepare, 2000).

The depiction of frailty and physical debilitation has been used for various effects thus far. These have included advertisements and articles where resolutions to such issues are being sold, as well as for the purposes of drama or comedy in 24 Hours In A&E. While drawn from negative notions underpinning the ageing process, these have varied in their purpose. In the last chapter, the use of humour particularly, was shown to draw positive responses from audiences. Also, the representations in 24 Hours In A&E of larger storylines such as those of Kevin and Monica tend to initiate from negative representations of decline before developing into a more detailed and often sympathetic study of the protagonists' other characteristics. Nevertheless, the prevalence of this theme, even when for fairly innocuous purposes, suggests it is well established in the cultural and public

consciousness. Certainly the interviewees responded commonly with references to the physical incapability associated with older people:

“They may be frailer, slower” (CROOP-006)

“What was the case stereotypically was that you’d see very old people who were in the end stage of life and very poorly” (CROOP-003)

“From being on no medication you find you get given more and more and more. You get increasing physical problems going on” (CROOP-009)

I: I was wondering what characteristics you associate with older people?
R: The first thing that came into my head then was deafness, is that the kind of thing you mean?” (CROOP-013)

“Well, elderly people...before I started working with older people I would have thought frail, poor mobility, socially isolated, that kind of poor health, lots of things wrong with them” (CROOP-004)

A number of points emerged from the interviewees’ reflections on physical decline and ill health. Firstly, their status as health workers seemed to be one of the primary sources for this conception of older people. The extracts above were generally drawn from responses to the question ‘What characteristics do you associate with older people?’ with the example from CROOP-003 being emblematic of the influence that exposure to more poorly older people in the hospital setting can have in the creation of negative stereotyping around health issues. As suggested when discussing 24 Hours In A&E, certain areas of admission are more likely to offer staff experiences of older people as frail and physically debilitated than others. Indeed, variation was found between interviewees’ self-ascribed attitudes towards older people based on the experiences they had in both the work and social settings, a point we shall return to later. For now, though, it is worth continuing to outline the persistence of representations of frailty through interviewees’ reflections on their cultural consumption. When asked what would be a typical news story about older people, the responses saw strong references to physical decline:

“To be honest, it’s more likely to be hospital related. Things like waiting lists, patients waiting for hours outside A&E...you’re more likely when you’re watching the news to see an older person sat in a hospital bed or a chair in a home” (CROOP-003)

“I remember there was one about an older man in Wales who was having to go over the border to have his kidney cancer treatment” (CROOP-012)

“Often there are people who have been found because they are so cold and ill and have to be taken to hospital” (CROOP-013)

The examples provided above were relatable to a number of stories from the newspaper sample such as the Daily Mail’s article ‘1 in 6 pick up a bug in filthy hospitals’ where Amanda Redman’s mother is reported to have almost died four times while in intensive care (NE-DM-401), or The Sun’s report ‘E-cig gran blown up in hospital’ where a 65-year old patient admitted to hospital for other health problems was harmed by the explosion of an e-cigarette on the ward (NE-TS-101). In both instances the age-driven physical vulnerability of the protagonists is emphasised as a factor for readers to consider when interpreting the article. However, close analysis of the discourse in such articles revealed complexity in how older people were present. While appearing discursively central to the articles both in terms of textual and visual presence, other narrative arcs are also being relayed. In articles like this the presence of older people was often deployed as anecdotal evidence of a broader problem. So, the plight of Amanda Redman’s mother in the Daily Mail was discursively indicative of issues relating to the transference of bugs on hospital wards, while the ‘e-cig gran’ suggested dangers associated with the e-cigarette product, as well as neglect on the ward to allow the explosion to happen. Interviewees also expressed awareness of how such representations of older people were operating:

“It’s probably more about the care being received. And the identification of things and maybe not the older people at all” (CROOP-011)

“It’s about the health service and having a gripe at the NHS. It’s not about old people. They’re probably using the old people there as a ploy to make

everyone think ‘oh my God, isn’t that awful? An old person is having to move house’. So it’s using the old people rather than anything else, I would say” (CROOP-012)

The use of older people as protagonists in a wider discursive narrative was observable across a variety of cultural forms. However, this was particularly pronounced in relation to news stories. Here the physical vulnerability of older people was often central so as to heighten the meaning behind the broader issue of the article. As identified by the interviewees above, this broader discursive arc was often critical of health care practice, with older people introduced as a means of showing the extent to which failings have stretched. Later on in this chapter, the same effect will be evident in relation to older people’s finances and the pensions system. As will be seen there, and in the examples outlined above, their status as a vulnerable group treated poorly enhances the emotional weight and furthers the potential for criticism. The use of older people as narrative devices will be discussed more fully in the next chapter. At this stage, though, it is worth noting how these representations of physical frailty have become culturally normalised, established as a shared understanding of what old age entails between text and audience. When considering the use of older people to add drama to the storylines of *24 Hours In A&E*, to highlight failings in the health care system as news items, or to sell products reducing impairment in magazines, the overriding representation displays physical frailty as tacitly associated with old age. This aligns with Cole’s assertion of ‘culture’s relentless hostility towards decay and dependence’ (1992; xxvi). While each individual representation from those outlined above may be discursively benign, often provoking sympathy from interviewees, collectively they are indicative of how embedded and universal the association between physical decline and ageing has become. Even where positive representations have previously predominated, as with characters in long-running serials discussed in the last chapter, the theme of physical frailty was observable in health deterioration storylines in shows such as *The Archers* and *Hollyoaks*:

“She (Peggy from The Archers) seems like a strong character but it’s obvious she’s ageing and you can tell in her voice. She has some vulnerability because she was recently widowed” (CROOP-004)

“Lately they’ve made her (Nana McQueen from Hollyoaks) into a typical older person that’s always going to the hospital. Always something wrong, always poorly” (CROOP-003)

The use of the phrase ‘typical older person’ in the extract from CROOP-003 is indicative of the commonality with which representations of frailty or illness are presented and received. These cases show how physical vulnerability exists both at a tacit, assumed level, while being reinforced by integration as the main feature within certain cultural narratives. The next subsection will now go on to examine the extent that this is applicable with regard to representations of mental decline and dementia.

Mental Decline and Dementia

Much like the examples outlined above from The Archers and Hollyoaks in which the physical decline of long-running serial characters is presented as a storyline, dementia and mental decline have also notably been featured in the same programmes. The likes of Mike Baldwin and Lesley Kershaw from Coronation Street (Alzheimer’s Society, 2011), Mo Butcher from Eastenders (BBC News, 2014) and Jack Woolley from The Archers (Vincent, 2013) were all major storyline depictions of dementia from soap operas over the last 25 years. The discourse analysis sample did not overlap with any of these storylines, though interviewees did note dementia as a cultural association with older people:

“Sometimes I’ll catch The Archers, and old people are in there a bit. There was a character with dementia in there and it’s interesting that they explore these things” (CROOP-006)

“I suppose I may be more drawn to it than others but a lot of them are health stories. Dementia is quite popular in the news at the moment” (CROOP-011)

“I think they, generally, if you look at the headlines, they are starting to look at, sort of, dementia and its huge implications and resources it has on the NHS” (CROOP-005)

While the majority of interviewees referenced dementia or mental decline, the extracts above were the only three direct mentions of its presence in culture. Compared to the awareness of physical decline and frailty shown by interviewees in the previous subsection, this is notably less pronounced as an emerging theme. The instances of Mike Baldwin, Mo Butcher and Jack Woolley may have provoked considerable public and critical interest but such cases arguably achieved this status due to their tackling an issue perceived as being socially and ethically problematic. The last two extracts above, particularly, were suggestive of this, aligning issues of dementia with the impact they can have on the NHS. This was demonstrated within the discourse analysis by health-related news stories in the Internet and newspaper sample that made dementia central to representations of older people. One such example came from the Mail Online regarding the potential benefits of chocolate pills for older adults:

“Dr MacDonald said: “This raises the possibility that certain food components like cocoa flavanols may be beneficial in increasing brain blood flow and enhancing brain function among older adults” (IN-DM-008)

The health benefits of certain products and practices was shown in other newspaper articles in relation to dementia, as seen below in a piece discussing the potential advantages of performing ballet in old age:

“The combination of music and movement can play a crucial role in bringing people into the present, away from confusion and low mood” (NE-DM-206)

Much like the previous discussion of physical decline in advertising, both of these examples show dementia to be a problem that can be partially alleviated through interventions, in these instances cocoa pills and ballet. Other indicators of dementia were also present in the newspaper sample with links being made between a decreasing interest in hobbies and cognitive debilitation (NE-DM-404), as well as the role of carers in reducing the

disruption of dementia (NE-DM-414). It is clear, through these examples, that mental decline has become a prominent feature in representations of ageing. Compared to the combination of tacit and direct representations witnessed in relation to physical decline, dementia was less observable in the discourse analysis sample. Nevertheless, the strength of the theme within interviews was substantial with almost all interviewees mentioning it at some point, often in relation to their work or social experiences of older people, as shown in the set of extracts below:

“When there’s a patient calling you and you can’t go and see them or give them the time that they need because as they get older it takes longer to explain. They get confused when they’ve got urinary tract infections or dementia” (CROOP-002)

“I’ve seen people with dementia who shout, say they’re on a ward of seven and they’re constantly shouting and keeping people up” (CROOP-005)

“They can be a bit slower when you’re asking for information. Some of them have memory problems as well, so we have to make sure they have the ability to consent” (CROOP-008)

“I look at my nan on the other side and she has Alzheimers and hasn’t got a clue what’s going on” (CROOP-003)

“My grandmother became quite demented in later life so I do remember her when she was coming to that really bad stage where she was needing 24 hour care” (CROOP-007)

It is apparent through these extracts, as well as in the interviews more broadly, that dementia and mental decline was more notable for interviewees in respect to their work or personal experiences of older people than it was within cultural representations. Such representations are clearly operating within culture, suggested by the notable character portrayals of mental decline at the start of the section and through reportage of scientific research outlining ways to decrease the impact of dementia, observable in the discourse analysis. However, the tacit persistence of this appeared to be

much less pronounced than that for physical frailty. This could be attributed to a number of factors. Firstly, the trope of mental decline within older age has been relatively recent in its introduction, often associated more with mental illness than ageing (Cross, 2010). Secondly, representations of mental decline are arguably more difficult to deliver visually than those of physical decline (ibid). Images of dishevelment, torn clothing and unruly hair have been historically associated with mental illness (ibid), with similar attributes applicable to some of the examples mentioned in this section such as Mo Butcher or Mike Baldwin. However, perhaps the primary delivery of representations of dementia in such examples comes through the character shifts associated with the illness, such as memory loss and confusion. When applied to long-established characters in soap operas, these shifts are decisively more noticeable, deviating away from the traditional behaviour of the character. Notably interviewees picked up on these degenerative aspects as being the most disturbing:

“It’s that aspect I’m most scared of. Not realising when your children have been to see you, or your grandchildren. And being frantic about things that happened years ago and not realising it was years ago” (CROOP-003)

“I keep myself relatively fit and healthy. Obviously I don’t want to end up with dementia or Alzheimer’s” (CROOP-005)

I: So is it the health concerns that are troubling you?

R: And the memory as well. I do Su Doku and play chess because you’ve got to make yourself remember things and exercise your brain. So I do that with puzzles” (CROOP-008)

Given the emphasis from interviewees on their own work and social experiences of dementia, the influence of cultural representations on their attitudes towards it is debatable. Nevertheless, the collective sum of experience across all of these realms certainly resulted in dementia being a particular source of fear, marking it out as an aspect of ageing that was received with outright negativity. Some of the interviewees’ associations with memory loss, demonstrated in CROOP-003 through the reference to

forgetting one's children visiting, lend mental decline additional emotiveness to many other representations of decline. Yet, when coupled with the experience of working with patients suffering dementia who can be hostile and disruptive, the interviewees expressed more fear and ambivalence towards dementia than any other area of decline.

Vulnerabilities associated with physical and cognitive decline have been outlined in this section, demonstrating the consistent prevalence of the theme. While representations of mental decline were less obvious in the discourse analysis sample than those of physical decline, the cumulative effect of both meant that the long-established associations between old age and debilitation were apparently as strong as they have been historically. Discursively these representations operated across all of the cultural forms studied and in a diverse range of ways. Indeed, as the chapter develops we will encounter other forms of vulnerability in the cultural representation of older people being portrayed as victims.

Death and Dying

The spectre of death was present in much of the representations of physical decline and vulnerability outlined above. In cases such as those found in *24 Hours In A&E* or in magazine health advertorials, death was represented as something to be avoided for as long as possible. Medical interventions and practices of active ageing were introduced as a means of this being postponed and life being extended. However, the discourse analysis sample saw numerous instances where the inevitable decline towards death did occur. The most common of these were found in obituaries of famous or notable people. As will be noted, the representations of death here were found to be much more ambivalent than negative, often highlighting positive features of a 'life well lived' and offering heart-warming, bittersweet testimonials. Similar discursive features will also be discussed in relation to the 'right to die' articles that emerged within the sample. This will then move into a further section exploring the more overtly negative representations of death associated with tragic accident or crime news stories.

Obituaries and the Life Well Lived

Throughout the discourse analysis sample, numerous public figures passed away resulting in coverage across all of the newspapers, in Internet news articles and within television news reportage. Though the extent of the coverage varied from case to case, obituaries were observable for famous older people such as chef Clarissa Dickson-Wright (IN-BN-003; IN-DM-003), politician Tony Benn (IN-BN-026; TV-BN-011), novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez (NE-DM-504; NE-TG-505) and actress Edna Dore (NE-TG-201). Beyond this, The Guardian in particular, offered further obituaries for professionals or academics of less immediate public notoriety but who had achieved in a professional sense. These included sociologist Richard Hoggart (NE-TG-104), conductor Neville Marriner (NE-TG-109), branding guru Wally Olins (NE-TG-307) and mathematician Dennis Lindley (NE-TG-403) among others. Aside from the reporting of recent deaths, there were also instances from the sample where memorials for deaths from some time ago were presented. These included a television news feature on Sir David Frost's memorial (TV-BN-010), and a newspaper article on Frank Sinatra's 100th birthday celebrations (NE-DM-505). The volume and scale of these representations made the death of older people one of the most visible themes to emerge from the discourse analysis. Yet while the tone of such representations was as sombre as would be expected, each of the examples outlined above were also notable for their incorporation of warm reflection on the protagonists' achievements and character:

"Loved dearly by her friends and many fans all over the world, Clarissa (Dickson-Wright) was utterly non-PC and fought for what she believed in, always, with no thought to her own personal cost" (IN-DM-003)

"She (Edna Dore) swore like a trooper, smoked like a chimney, detested bullshit and didn't suffer fools" (NE-TG-203)

"He (Wally Olins) was the youngest octogenarian I had met. He was relentlessly curious about buildings, objects, but above all people. He loved talking to anyone of any generation" (NE-TG-307)

“Tony Benn, the leading voice of the radical Left in British politics for more than 50 years has died. He was 88. There have been tributes from across the political spectrum today for the former Labour cabinet minister. He has been hailed by his supporters as a fearless fighter for what he believed in, irrespective of whether it was popular” (TV-BN-011)

As with the discussion of older people’s presence in youth-oriented cultural texts like *Heat* or *OK* magazine, being the subject of an obituary on national television or newspapers required professional notoriety or celebrity status to already be in place. The achievements that granted this status upon the deceased were normally mentioned as a matter of priority, with the most notable often being included in the opening paragraph. Edna Dore’s obituary in *The Guardian* offers a typical example of this with the subheading ‘Television, stage and film actor best known for her role as Mo Butcher in the BBC’s *Eastenders*’ (NE-TG-203). Likewise, the introduction by Fiona Bruce to the BBC News report on Tony Benn’s death identified his reason for notoriety as ‘the leading voice of the radical Left in British politics’, followed by the length of time this has been carried out over in ‘50 years’ (TV-BN-011). The discursive effect of this was to suggest criteria by which a life had been well lived, making it worthy of note. When such criteria of personal success and achievement were met, the resulting obituaries also then generally went into warm appraisals of character and behaviour. Within this, characteristics such as honesty, strong beliefs, ongoing curiosity, behavioural quirks, as well as social and professional engagement were frequently returned as traits that were highly valued. Even in representations of death, active ageing and prolonged social involvement were discursively pronounced. Some interviewees picked up on similar ideas when asked about news stories featuring older people:

“I: What would be a typical news story about older people?

R: Probably death” (CROOP-002)

“There was a story as well about Harry Patch who was the last soldier to serve in the trenches and he died two or three years ago. That was big on the news” (CROOP-004)

“I always flick through to the ‘What’s Happening?’ bit and there’s usually things like all the people who have died. You always get the actors and actresses and well known people who’ve recently past away” (CROOP-009)

These extracts show similar discursive traits at work. The example of Harry Patch shows the interviewee immediately stating his achievements and reason for notoriety, as ‘the last soldier to serve in the trenches’ (CROOP-004). Likewise, CROOP-009 outlines how featuring in OK Magazine’s obituary section requires status such as being ‘actors and actresses’ or other ‘well known people’. This aligns closely with the criteria for the inclusion of living older people within magazine culture discussed in the previous chapter where celebrity status, professional achievement and ongoing relevance to youth culture were key. However, also like the magazine sample, representations of death were much less pronounced than representations of youth. One interviewee who regularly read Heat and OK corroborated this point in the following extract:

“OK don’t really, if I’m honest, cover elderly people unless it’s someone elderly who is famous, for instance Joan Rivers. But I think, I know it’s going to sound awful, but if someone of my age who was of quite high celebrity status, say Beyonce, if she was to pass away she would have half a magazine dedicated to her. But say someone like Joan Rivers, because she was classed and considered older, and in their eyes although it was quite sudden, it was expected because she was older” (CROOP-003)

Here variations between different cultural texts become apparent once more. We have seen The Guardian paying tribute in death to those who have achieved in a purely professional sense, as well as those who achieved celebrity. Within youthful magazine culture, exemplified by Heat and OK, representations of death would only exist were the deceased a celebrity. Even then, the emphasis on youth culture would make any such

representation much less pronounced than if the deceased were younger. Nevertheless, across all cultural forms, while acknowledging variation in volume, the representations broadly operated in a similar discursive fashion, emphasising the factors of a life well lived as outlined above. While death, alongside physical and cognitive decline, is largely culturally represented as to be prevented for as long as possible, once a person has died, positive reflections were by far the most dominant. Once again, this demonstrates the fluidity and complexity of representation and reception, and the limitations of binary, positive and negative, definitions. A similar tone of ambivalence was noticed within the discourse analysis in terms of 'right to die' stories, where the negatives associated with physical decline discursively placed death as the resolution, marking it as the most positive outcome available. Two such example were found in the Daily Mail articles 'Another Briton dies at Swiss Clinic' (NE-DM-102) and 'Why letting my Mother end her life was my final act of love' (NE-DM-108). In both cases those who were assisted in dying were represented as suffering, with death becoming the best resolution:

"But the most shocking thing about it? That my overwhelming emotion on her death was not grief, but relief. Grief was something I experienced a long time before, as I watched the mother I had known slide into dementia and become unreachable" (NE-DM-108)

Here the negativity associated with mental decline meant that death was perceived much less negatively when it was thought to be ending suffering. Similar discursive traits were found in the other article referencing the death of 89-year old, Anne, in the Swiss Dignitas clinic. Phrases such as 'tired with life', 'the time was right' and 'weary of modern life' are suggestive of death being the best course of action (NE-DM-102). Again, the negative of failing health was evoked as a justification for the suicide:

"Neither Anne nor the 99-year old (another Dignitas attendee) was terminally ill nor severely disabled although their health had been failing in recent years" (NE-DM-102)

Other tropes associated with assisted suicide, such as terminal illness or disability, are mentioned here as comparable to the failing health associated with old age. The emotional difficulties associated with this for family members are acknowledged in the article, meaning a discursive sympathy comes into operation. Within this, the notion of death itself becomes more ambivalent and contested with a debilitated or wearying existence shown to challenge the dominant discourse of continued life. Another point to note in relation to these 'right to die' articles is the political context surrounding them. Both articles from the Daily Mail, as well a reader's letter in a subsequent edition (NE-DM-314), noted that a free vote was soon to be held in Parliament on the Assisted Dying Bill. This aligns the articles with those relating to physical decline outlined in the previous section where the plight of older people serve as a narrative device in a wider story. In these cases, the politics and ethics around the 'right to die' debate are the narrative to which older people are contributing, providing situations where death may be as appropriate as continued life.

The Tragic, Untimely Death

Much like the discussions of physical decline in the previous section, representations of accidental or untimely deaths relied heavily on the circumstances around them, with older people often presented as victims of either misfortune, neglect or, in the most extreme cases, murder. Representations of this nature were found throughout the sample, though with much less frequency than the obituaries outlined in the last section. Nevertheless, Internet news pieces, magazine and newspaper articles, and television shows all offered variations upon this theme. One such example came with the story of a missing Malaysian jet plane, on the BBC news website:

"Relatives of the missing passengers and crew members have now been waiting desperately for updates for 10 days since the aircraft disappeared. One woman, whose older sister was making her first plane journey, told the BBC she thought the Malaysian authorities were holding information back"
(IN-BN-001)

The mysterious disappearance of flight MH370 is reported here, citing particular passenger stories to enhance the tragedy. The death of a relative's 'older sister' operates within this story to serve this purpose. Contrary to the more reflective tone of the obituaries and the 'life well lived' themes discussed previously, the discursive focus behind the article is the potential failings of the Malaysian authorities, alongside confusion and speculation over what may have occurred. This shifts the emphasis away from the bittersweet positivity outlined in the last subsection into a much more tragic and negative representation. Other cultural forms were seen to repeat this motif in relation to the same story, most notably with a BBC television news report where Rodney and Mary Burrows were the referenced passengers (TV-BN-009). However, in this instance, the presence of older people was not as the deceased but as the victims of loss:

"Two of those on board were Rodney and Mary Burrows from Australia.

-CUTS TO SHOTS OF OLDER MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY WALKING OR BEING WHEELED THROUGH AIRPORT-

Rodney's parents had been about to visit them in China to celebrate Mary's birthday.

-CUTS TO INTERVIEW WITH OLDER WOMAN-

"There is no news whatsoever. It's just disappeared off the face of the Earth. If we could just find some wreckage or something, that'd be a help, probably"
(TV-BN-009)

Discursively the use of older people is, once more, to enhance the sense of tragedy, albeit through the deaths of their younger relatives as opposed to them dying themselves. Also, once more, the discursive context operating behind this is the authorities' failure to provide adequate information. Again, this corroborates the manner in which older people can form a narrative device in a bigger story, heightening the emotiveness of it. Another example of this was drawn from the newspaper sample where an older patient had died while under the care of a foreign doctor:

“Concerns over the abilities of foreign-trained doctors were brought to the fore by the death of 70-year old retired engineer David Gray in 2008. He was given ten times the normal dose of diamorphine by German locum Dr. Daniel Ubani” (NE-DM-501)

The reference to the death of 70-year old David Gray ensures that he is identified as the victim of the administered overdose. However, the discursive emphasis is upon the ‘German locum’ perpetrator and consequently on the capabilities of foreign-trained doctors more broadly. When used in this context the associations with death become much less nuanced than witnessed in obituaries, remaining discursively oblique so as to suggest only the tragedy of the incident and none of the celebratory tone of a life well lived. This was corroborated by a further Guardian article on the 1994 murder of 76-year old Roseanne Mallon by a member of the Loyalist Ulster Volunteer Force (NE-TG-101). As with the other examples, the death is deployed in a broader context of criticism for the Ministry of Defence and Northern Irish Police Service for not submitting crucial information. However, The Guardian’s scope for larger articles meant that the tragedy of the incident was granted more space to be imparted:

“One Sunday evening Roseanne Mallon was sitting on her sofa at her sister-in-law’s bungalow near Dungannon, County Tyrone, when a gunman walked up the drive, aimed his Czech-made assault rifle at the living room window, and pulled the trigger” (NE-TG-101)

The in-depth textual recreations of the events make the shock value of the murder all the more powerful. The fact that Mallon was a civilian going about her everyday life before being killed ensures the injustice of the incident is made clear. That Mallon was chosen to be focussed upon ahead of the ‘the deaths of 73 others’ makes it possible that her age was thought to fuel this sense of injustice as well. Discursively this plays upon the ideas of vulnerability initially outlined in the previous section. Older people’s presence in such stories is deployed on the basis that the exploitation of their vulnerability provides additional edge to a story. Subsequently, the claims

being made on broader issues such as corporate negligence or foreign-trained doctors are granted additional power. Ultimately, underlying these discursive processes is the portrayal of older people as the victims of an untimely death. However, the representation of victim status was seen to operate much more widely in regard to the elderly. In the next section we will look at other types of victimhood attributed to older people, again exploring physical vulnerability, but also character-driven traits such as trust or naivety. This will then lead into further discussion on other negative character tropes associated with older people such as the 'busybody', 'grumpy' and the 'dirty old man'.

The Characters Of Older People

Both the discourse analysis and the interviews enabled opportunity for some of the more commonly attributed representations of older people to be corroborated. Previous studies have highlighted roles for older people in culture to include depictions of frailty, nosiness, grumpiness, naivety and victimhood among many others (Fealy et al, 2012; Walz, 2002; Miller et al, 1999). This section will outline in turn the character tropes identified in this study, describing the manner in which such representations are carried out, as well as if they resonated with the interviewees' perceptions of older people. We shall first continue the theme of older people victimhood from the previous section, expanding this beyond cases of death and instead into non-fatal assaults or emotional trauma.

The Older Victim

The interview data saw numerous instances where older people were associated with being victims. One of the most common was in relation to crimes such as theft, muggings or assault, as shown in the extracts below:

"Oh, when people get broken into as well. They get into the news then as well" (CROOP-002)

"In the past I can remember there was a lady who was assaulted in the street. Her handbag was stolen, and she was knocked to the ground" (CROOP-004)

“Say if someone’s been hit, because sometimes people will batter older people if they break in their homes or even on the street” (CROOP-008)

These responses were all made following the question ‘what would be a typical news story about older people?’ showing that reportage of older victims in this forum was common enough to be noted across several interviews. However, this theme was also found in fictional representations of older people as well with the following scene from Coronation Street being the most notable:

“-OUTDOOR SCENE WITH BETH AND SINEAD SAT AT BUS STOP WITH OLDER WOMAN PREVIOUSLY SEEN IN BINGO HALL WITH THEM-

OW: My husband was a bus driver. They’re even worse. But it’s cheaper and it stops outside my house.

B: Well, so do cabs!

OW: I make cabs stop around the corner. A taxi driver sees where you live he’ll rob you blind, no questions asked. He’ll be back the following day, wait until you’re out and then he’ll be in.

-BETH AND SINEAD EXCHANGE GLANCES OF INCREDULITY AND AMUSEMENT-

OW: Ooh, it’s late.

B: I’ll give me foot a rub, that’s guaranteed to make it come.

-BETH REMOVES SHOE. CAMERA PANS TO A YOUNG MAN ALSO STOOD AT THE BUS STOP. HE IS LOOKING AT THE OLDER WOMAN’S HANDBAG-

S: Watch out.

YM: Give me your bag! Give me your bag!

-YOUNG MAN GRABS HANDBAG. STRUGGLE ENSUES BETWEEN YOUNG MAN AND BETH. BETH HITS YOUNG MAN WITH HER SHOE-

B: Call the rozzers!

YM: Get off!

-YOUNG MAN DROPS HANDBAG AND RUNS OFF-" (TV-CS-004)

To fully understand the discursive representations at work here, it is first necessary to understand the context in which this scene emerged. Unlike many narrative arcs in *Coronation Street*, this story featuring Beth and Sinead going to play bingo all takes place over the course of just one episode. While Beth and Sinead are established characters within the show, often commonly deployed in comedic storylines, both the older woman and young man were only present in this episode. The short scene outlined above is the third across the episode featuring the same older woman. Prior to this she was shown talking to Beth and Sinead to give them a plaster inside the bingo hall and then later having a further conversation with them revealing she had won the bingo. In these scenes, her presence was noted in the discourse analysis as offering light relief from some of the more central storylines, aligning to the grumpy or habitual older person trope that will be discussed later in the section. However, the final scene outlined above sees the culmination of the storyline and offers a much clearer representation of victimhood and vulnerability. This begins with the older woman voicing concerns over taxi drivers breaking into her home and recurs with the indication she is widowed, through a past tense reference to her 'husband'. Later on this theme is reinforced when the young man attempts to mug her, leaving her visibly shaken and upset. As discussed previously, representations of older people who play major characters in long-running serials use well established character traits to unveil related storylines, developing them over several weeks or months. In this instance, where exposure to the protagonist is compressed into a relatively short time frame, characteristics are much more explicitly and abruptly presented. This results in a reliance on well-established stereotypes of older people that are widely recognised and shared by the audience. As will be discussed in the next chapter, this is one of the key dimensions to the ongoing representation of older people as vulnerable or as victims. That being said, there were still associations made between major older characters in long-running serials

and this particular theme of victimhood, as shown in this interview extract discussing Eastenders:

“They do seem to have older characters on it. But, again, they’re usually stories around something happening to them, which is what that programme is all about. And age seems relevant in that they’re doing something that a young person wouldn’t have been fooled by” (CROOP-009)

While characters such as Dot Cotton were also discussed positively in terms of their advisory roles in the last chapter, this extract highlights the variability at work in older people representations even within the same character. Those storylines deploying her as the central character often used her naivety as a means of narrative development, most notably with regard to her son Nick Cotton. This was also noted in the discourse analysis of Coronation Street through a storyline where Rita’s husband Dennis had left her. Again, this deploys the theme of trusting older people being exploited:

“-RITA AND NORRIS IN CORNER SHOP KITCHEN. NORRIS GIVES RITA A MUG-

R: Thank you. Before Dennis came back in my life I just assumed that was my lot. I just said to myself ‘that’s it Rita, now, you’re on your own, just get on with it.’ Not in a self-pitying way. Because I’ve been lucky. I’ve had love in my life and for that, I’ll always be thankful. Then in he comes and like a fool...

-RITA BEGINS CRYING. CUTS TO NORRIS WHO LOOKS LIKE HE’S ABOUT TO SPEAK-

R: No. I know, I know. You tried to warn me and I wouldn’t listen.” (TV-CS-002)

Here the notion of victim is slightly different to the depictions of assaults or muggings. Rather than the victim of physical activity, Rita and Dot Cotton are victims of their own trust and naivety. For Rita, this results in the representation of emotional trauma and loss of love. For Dot Cotton, the interviewee felt the primary representation was of financial exploitation.

This idea was corroborated by another interviewee but in terms of possible news stories about older people:

“When someone is taking advantage of an elderly person, trying to con them out of their life savings. Or trying to do work on their house and charging them too much” (CROOP-002)

Variations were observed between the representation and reception of major characters such as Dot Cotton or Rita and the starker representations found in news stories or for peripheral characters. That said, common to all of these examples is the portrayal of older people as victims. This was uniformly based on an assumed status of vulnerability in which their victimisation heightens the emotion of the narrative. The nature of this vulnerability differed from case to case often being drawn in response to tropes such as physical weakness and isolation, as well as characteristics such as emotional or financial naivety. The next section will explore the latter of these characteristics in more detail, examining representations of older people as economic actors.

Older People as Economic Actors

The discussion of advertising for older people previous in this chapter highlighted how growing awareness of the social group as economic actors with their own disposable wealth to spend had resulted in new sites of representation for them (Ostroff, 1989; Featherstone and Hepworth, 1986). Within this study, the realm of newspaper and magazine advertising were one such site demonstrating this. However, older people were represented in terms of their economic status in a variety of other ways and across cultural forms. The previous section discussed cultural portrayals of financial exploitation, highlighting how this implied older people characteristics of trust, naivety and vulnerability. Indeed, the filter of financial activity was found to be a useful means of unpicking some key associations with older people, particularly within the context of the pension system. Here, a number of interviewees introduced the theme of older people as a financial burden:

“But I think you’re a burden if you’re not careful. So hopefully I’ll earn enough money to be able to pay for my own care home or get a decent one where I can live my last years happily” (CROOP-002)

“I don’t want to be still doing the job I’m doing now for the next 18 years, but I think that’s a worry of growing older and how long the act of retirement is in proportion to the finances you’ve got at that time” (CROOP-005)

“I do kind of worry because my children’s generation are going to be supporting a vast, enlarged elderly population. Hopefully I won’t be too much of a burden to them, overall in terms of tax they’re paying and everything else” (CROOP-007)

“Because pensions are a big thing at the moment, aren’t they? Providing for your own retirement and being financially independent when you’re retired” (CROOP-011)

I: What do you think would be a typical news story about older people?

R: Probably a lack of money, basically. Whenever you hear about health services these days, it’s budgetary. And older people are exactly the same, it’s pension cuts and tightening of the budget strings” (CROOP-010)

It should be noted that the interviews were conducted six months after the 2014 budget. Nevertheless, the theme of pensions and financial concerns for the future strongly emerged in the interviewees, suggesting it is a familiarly shared representation. Notably interviewees were keen to avoid being a ‘burden’ and expressed a reluctant acknowledgement of the fact that they may need to work for longer to maintain their independence. The linking of this to pensions and the political context was made explicit in the final extract above where the interviewee made clear associations between news stories featuring older people and the yearly budget announcement. The discourse analysis overlapped with the 2014 budget, making it possible to observe this process at its most heightened. The Internet news and newspaper samples, particularly, took in a range of articles outlining the impact of controversial changes to the pensions system. Each of the Internet

news articles listed below alluded to pensioners and the impact that budgetary changes would have upon them:

“Key points of budget 2014: At-a-glance” (JN-BN-028)

“Budget 2014: 'For Makers, Doers And Savers'” (IN-SN-024)

“Minister fuels pension debate with Lamborghini comment” (IN-BN-039)

“BUDGET 2014: It's pay back time: After years of pain, Osborne rewards the British people with tax cuts, cheap beer and bigger bingo prizes” (IN-DM-028)

“Stampede to escape raw deals on pensions: After Chancellor's reforms, 250,000 'trapped' savers race to pull out of annuities as minister says let pensioners buy Lamborghinis if they wish” (IN-DM-050)

The newspaper sample offered a similar array of articles, as demonstrated in the list of headlines on the topic outlined below:

“Make Tax Relief On Pensions A Flat Rate 30% Says Minister” (NE-DM-304)

“Retirees Will Be Told The Date They Are Likely To Die” (NE-DM-403)

“A Pessimist's Guide To Pensions” (NE-TG-205)

“Analysis: Stay healthy as life goes on ... and on” (NE-TG-507)

“Death Date” (NE-TS-401)

In these news articles were a variety of familiar representations such as financial vulnerability, as well as the implicit suggestion that pensions were becoming increasingly problematic in the context of the ageing population. There were other themes at play, however, and one BBC News Internet article was helpful in extrapolating these. The article was entitled ‘Pension reform: Ten hidden consequences’ that in a bullet point list identified different ways the pension changes would affect older retirees. In doing so, it also discursively highlighted a range of assumed characteristics of older people:

1. New pensioners blow their savings.
2. House prices rise.
3. Older people get a shock tax bill.
4. Con artists rub their hands with glee.
5. Existing pensioners feel left out.
6. Remaining annuity deals are less generous.
7. The bank of gran and granddad opens for business.
8. Inheritance tax becomes a bigger issue.
9. The mis-selling threat picks up again.
10. Companies lose a source of credit. (IN-BN-045)

The familiar notion of financial exploitation emerges most explicitly in ‘con artists rub their hands with glee’ where it is suggested that ‘rogue operators will know that catching someone just as they have access to their pension pot could be very lucrative’. This theme is also evoked in ‘the mis-selling threat picks up again’. Alongside this, there is the suggestion that older people could be reckless with pension lump sums or unaware of the tax levied on them through the points of ‘new pensioners blow their savings’ and ‘older people get a shock tax bill’. These also characterise older people with financial naivety. Inevitably, the issue of death is raised as well through the point ‘inheritance tax becomes a bigger issue’. However, while each of these examples offer negative associations, other points within the article provide more positive representations. A much more benign representation of economic activity was shown in ‘house prices rise’ where it was suggested there could be a rise in older people investing in property. The discursive representation is one of controlled affluence and economic wisdom, rather than naivety and vulnerability. Likewise, the point ‘the bank of gran and granddad opens for business’ shows older people as positive economic actors through their contributions to younger members of their family.

Such representations were found beyond this Internet news article, with stories incorporating affluent older people often offering more positive

depictions of the social group. These included portrayals of a self-made millionaire 69-year old in the Mail Online when his son won £108 million in Euromillions (IN-DM-011), Sir Alex Ferguson's £3 million wine collection being sold off (NE-TS-403) and The Guardian reporting on a 73-year old executive in China who earned \$600 million following the purchase of Smithfield Foods (NE-TG-202). Within these reports associations of vulnerability and fallibility are removed, replaced more with the positive depictions associated with expertise and professionalism in the previous chapter. It is possible, then, to identify both positive and negative strands of older people representation orbiting the issue of finances. One article from The Guardian on the nuances of the ageing population helped to identify a key variable in this:

"Professor Sir Michael Marmot, known for his work on the social and economic inequalities underlying poor health, points out in a report from Age UK that 'people of high status decline in physical and intellectual function 12 to 15 years later than those of lower status. They may have paid more attention to advice to stay physically, intellectually and socially active, but that could be because they have enjoyed more favoured social and economic circumstances' he says" (NE-TG-507)

The class-based differences outlined by Marmot in the article show social and economic circumstances as a potential influence on decline of physical and intellectual function. Certainly within the representations of varying economic status outlined above, similar variability was shown based on levels of affluence. Interviewees also noted this trend in their own experiences of older people:

"My grandmother became quite demented in later life so I do remember her when she was coming to that stage where she was needing 24 hour care, but she was very wealthy and ended up in a luxury hotel. So it wasn't your usual experience, of someone in a fairly grim nursing home" (CROOP-007)

"Friends of mine who are older are not financial burdens. They don't struggle financially. So they're not being represented that much" (CROOP-010)

“I think the only thing that worries me is when I’m in the position to retire, and I think that’s the same for a lot of people who aren’t fortunate to be earning lots of money” (CROOP-005)

The identification of class and wealth as an influence on the experience of ageing is hardly new (see Sawchuck, 1995; Featherstone and Wernick, 1995). Nevertheless, the extent that it permeated this theme was noticeably more pronounced than in other areas of the study. Themes associated with celebrity culture, active ageing and remaining youthful incorporated class at an oblique level, but in terms of financial variability, this link is made more explicit.

Older Behavioural Tropes

The idea of trust and naivety as a behavioural characteristic of older people has already been highlighted in previous discussions. This section will explore other behavioural tropes identified by the discourse analysis and interview data in relation to older people. One that was particularly pronounced in the discourse analysis was the ‘dirty old man’. Walz (2002) noted the presence of this trope in American media where there is a general desexualisation of older people, aside from for ‘the older man who is sexually driven, but also sexually inappropriate’ (2002; 100). Newspaper articles, Internet news items and television news reports all featured some level of discursive presence for this through a range of stories around Max Clifford’s court case for sexual assault:

“Max Clifford 'Pinned Woman Against A Wall'” (IN-SN-045)

“Clifford jury goes home for Easter” (NE-DM-506)

“Max Trial Jury Plea” (NE-TS-206)

“The trial of Max Clifford has opened at Southwark Crown Court in London with the prosecution accusing him of using his celebrity connections to bully and manipulate girls and women into sexual acts” (TV-BN-004)

While the crimes were alleged to have happened when Clifford was younger, across the various cultural forms the imagery was of him in the present day

generally approaching the court, dressed smartly. Textually, the historical timing of the incidents is also mentioned but this is placed alongside Clifford's actual age of 71-years old. Thus while the link between old age and inappropriate sexualised behaviour is not explicit, the association was at play within this example and several others. These included cases relating to Dave Lee Travis (NE-DM-303; NE-TS-301), Cyril Smith (NE-DM-101; NE-TS-402) and William Roache (NE-TS-406). It should be noted here that the comedic representations outlined as part of the last chapter play upon similar ideas of normalised desexualisation, albeit with much more positive representations at work. The example of Leon from Gogglebox showed how the careful contravention of this taboo provoked positive media coverage. However, Operation Yewtree stories and those relating to other 'dirty old men' scandals were heavily critical of the protagonists' alleged behaviour. Arguably, then, this marks the point where this behaviour crosses the line of accepted deviancy, disrupting the shared societal understanding of what is appropriate. Given that these stories emerged amongst a much broader set of revelations regarding the sexual deviancy of older celebrities such as Jimmy Saville, Rolf Harris, Stuart Hall and Gary Glitter (Evans, 2015), it was hypothesised that this theme may emerge in interviews as well. This, though, was not the case with none of the interviewees alluding to it. Instead, a range of other characteristics and behaviours were mentioned such as older people being technologically incapable, grumpy and fussy, or as 'busybodies' with too much time on their hands.

Technological incapability was on the periphery of the analysis offering only one notable example from the discourse analysis. This emerged in the MoneyMail Advice Section of the Daily Mail where a letter from an 81-year old complained about the customer service of company Churchill:

"I cannot understand why I, at 81, can compose and send a letter on a computer and send two e-mails and yet someone, probably half my age at Churchill, cannot send a reply" (NE-DM-313)

While the letter demonstrates the protagonist's ability to use computers, the implicit association is that her capability to do so should be reduced on the basis of her age. The discursive weight behind the article, then, implies younger people are more technologically capable than older people. This idea was also identified by interviewees, but noticeably drawn from their work experiences as opposed to cultural representations:

"I do notice sometimes more specifically when it comes to IT, I do notice a difference. Sometimes we ask for e-mail addresses and the older generation never give me an e-mail address" (CROOP-010)

"Sometimes they have a lack of access to information. So they want more information from me than younger patients would do. Because they've sometimes looked it up already" (CROOP-011)

In both of these instances, work is the predominant means by which the experiences are generated. On this basis, both interviewees felt this was an unproblematic behaviour that their own caring activities were in place to overcome. Again, this shows the importance of other sites of exposure to older people, such as work and the family, in how behaviours are understood. The idea of older people being technologically incapable was more acceptable in the work setting, for instance, than being grumpy and fussy. When interviewees noted this trait, they highlighted its disruptive influence:

"You've got other groups of patients who make quite a lot of fuss and can be quite disruptive" (CROOP-001)

"We have complete opposites with patients. Obviously you've got patients with dementia and really demanding patients...it's not hard work, that's not what I mean...they take more of your time, take more of your effort" (CROOP-002)

However, while fussy or grumpy patients were regarded as problematic by some interviewees in the work setting, when experienced culturally the same characteristic was often received positively, as with Victor Meldrew in *One Foot In The Grave* (CROOP-005) or Maggie Smith in *Downton Abbey* (CROOP-

004; CROOP-007; CROOP-012). In these examples the cantankerous, fussy and grumpy older person are responded to with warmth and good humour. Largely this comes amidst awareness that grumpiness is only one of a number of characteristics being culturally delivered. In terms of Maggie Smith, the last chapter saw discussions of her positive representation as a family matriarch and figure of strength in *Downton Abbey*. As has been mentioned throughout the chapter, this is enabled by her presence as a major character in a long-running serial where the nuances of her character are allowed space to develop. As such, Smith can straddle representations of cantankerous grumpiness, alongside those of wisdom and familial strength. On the other hand, Victor Meldrew, though part of a long-running serial, offers a more one-dimensional character where grumpiness is the predominant characteristic. However, this tends to be received positively due to the exaggerated, comedic tone of the stereotype being presented. The interviewee also highlighted this as a stereotypical representation:

“It goes back to him (Victor Meldrew) being grumpy doesn’t it? Which is maybe what people think old people are generally like. Perhaps they are very typical stereotypes, an older person being grumpy when, kind of, that’s just the way he is really” (CROOP-005)

Generally interviewees demonstrated reflexivity towards cultural representations of older people behaviour, drawing on a selection of work, family, social and cultural experiences to identify those that seem more ‘true to life’ than others. Thus, this interviewee saw the trait of extreme grumpiness as unique to Victor Meldrew and not relatable to older people more generally. It should be noted that this interviewee also reported a range of social connections with older people, as well as through work and family that seemed to positively influence their reflections on them generally. However, some behavioural stereotypes were found to be more realistic than others by certain interviewees. The final trope to be discussed in this section, the busybody or nosy older person, was the most obvious example of this. This was noticeable in the discourse analysis through the major character Norris Cole in *Coronation Street*, as well as through more casual

representations in 24 Hours In A&E. This extract from a scene in Coronation Street provides an example of Norris Cole involving himself in other characters' activities:

“-SCENE IN CORNER SHOP. BETH AND SINEAD LOOKING AT MAGAZINES. NORRIS IS BEHIND THE COUNTER-

N: Can I remind you this is not a library?

B: Uh, we're deciding!

N: Oh, so you do intend to make a purchase?

B: Well, how can we buy something if we don't know what's in it?

N: No. But you're going to have read those from cover to cover. It's a magazine, you can tell roughly what's in it from the picture on the front" (TV-CS-004)

While this exchange does not show Norris in the full swing of his busybody role, it does imply many of the same ideas. His unnecessary interventions in other people's lives often comes through the spreading of gossip, but in this instance happens in regard to the removal of Beth and Sinead from the corner shop. Beth and Sinead's comedic role in the show mark this out as being intended for light relief, their knowingly humorous provocation of him ultimately leading to their ejection. As was noted in the discussion of comedic representations of older people in the last chapter, when mentioned by interviewees, Norris was received positively often because of his busybody reputation:

“Well, they all take the mickey out of Norris because he's nosey. Yeah, he always interferes in people's personal business and loves to know what's going on” (CROOP-001)

“He's funny. He's always gossiping about people. Very nosey but people just tell him off. They say things to him like 'you just couldn't wait, could you Norris? To tell everybody?’” (CROOP-008)

Generally, then, interviewees expressed amusement at Norris' character. In the last chapter, we attributed this to the comic exaggeration of an existing stereotype for older people. This effect was in operation through other

characters and representations as well, with Betty from the same show also being described as a 'gossip type' by one interviewee. More broadly, though, there were occasional casual, much shorter representations that discursively played on this characteristic. One such case came in an episode of 24 Hours In A&E during a waiting room cutaway. These were used throughout every episode, most commonly as light relief from the more serious narrative threads. The extract below features an older woman and a young man talking across the waiting room shot from two different 'fly-on-the-wall' cameras:

“OW: Do you smoke?

YM: Yes.

OW: Give it up.

YM: OK

-YOUNG MAN LOOKS AMUSED-

OW: It won't do you any good.

YM: Yeah.

OW: And you'll save £7 on a packet of cigarettes thinking about it. Then you can go dancing” (TV-AE-002)

The comic awkwardness of this scene is enhanced through the editing where cuts are made to show the young man's amusement at the older woman's seemingly sudden interjection. Part of this is based on the inappropriateness of the largely quiet waiting room for such a conversation to happen but another aspect plays on the established stereotype of older people being nosey, involving themselves in other people's activities and having too much time on their hands. This latter notion was also picked up in interviews with regard to representations of older people found in local newspapers:

“The older generation is also the retired generation, so when there's stories about planning permission or travelling people, it's the older people representing the community because they have the time to be there when the cameras come” (CROOP-010)

A wider discussion of the differences between local and national newspaper representations will form part of the next chapter. At this stage, though, it is

important to note how one or two interviewees found the busybody trope to be one that was believable and reflected their personal encounters. This was most clear when interviewees reflected on whether cultural representations of older people mirrored their own experiences:

“I’ve got a neighbour who’s like Norris. He’s 83 and he’s always at the end of his driveway watching what’s going on down the street, who is parking where and how many cars there are outside of the school” (CROOP-001)

Another interviewee corroborated the portrayal of Norris Cole with her own lived experiences of older people:

“I wouldn’t like to dump all elderly into one category. I wouldn’t like to say Norris represents all elderly people. But I’d also say that he probably does, unfortunately. Most of the elderly that I’ve encountered anyway, in this role. Norris sums it up nicely” (CROOP-003)

Again, this helps to highlight how cultural representations of older people can help to solidify perceptions of older people generated from other settings, and vice versa. Both home and work settings were, respectively, mentioned by the interviewees as sites where other examples of the busybody trope can be found. In the latter extract, here, the interviewee even generalises it across elderly people as a social group. Interestingly, this was the youngest of the interviewees and one who was largely engaged with youth culture such as *Heat* and *OK Magazine*, as well as an avid watcher of *Coronation Street*.

This section has helped to highlight some of the more miscellaneous behavioural tropes that were recognised in the discourse analysis and interviews. In each instance, it has been shown that characteristics often drawn from negative stereotyping of older people can be represented comically and, consequently, received positively. Another important finding, though, was the manner in which the interviewees were drawing on a variety of sites to navigate their understanding of older people. The work, social and cultural experiences of older people have all been shown to create a shared

representational system in which characters such as Norris Cole become relatable to real life. This point will be developed further in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the primary ways in which representations of ageing and older people could be classed as negative. In this, notions of physical and mental decline, vulnerability, death and negative behavioural stereotypes have been talked through. As with the last chapter, the limitation to such a binary definition of positive and negative was shown to be problematic, underlining the importance of context in how representations are received and interpreted by audiences. Depictions of vulnerability were often met with audience sympathy, death was often seen as an opportunity to celebrate life, and negative stereotypes were commonly deployed for comedic purposes, prompting a warm response. Broadly speaking, though, the negative representations of older people discussed in this chapter place them as 'other' to the rest of society. This was shown through representations of physical or mental decline, death and in the display of behaviours less commonly associated with younger people, such as trust or having time on their hands. However, while recognising this as a general finding, the last two chapters have also introduced some areas where this trend is disrupted and variability occurs. For instance, radio offered very few negative representations of older people on the basis that, in the sample studied, older people were generally absent altogether. Beyond this, interviewees who identified older people on the radio cited stations such as Radio 4 as prominently and positively featuring them. This variability across cultural forms, largely driven by cultural industry logic of market segmentation, will form a key discussion in the next chapter. The variation between local and national representations, also highlighted by this chapter, will factor into this as well. Finally, a recurrent point across both of the last two chapters has been the manner in which interviewees drew from a range of experiences to ultimately form their opinions on older people. To varying degrees, all of the interviewees encountered older people through a combination of work, social and cultural settings. The next chapter will

explore the interplay between these sites of experience reflecting on the relative importance of each in attitude generation.

Chapter 9: Older People, Culture and Healthcare

Introduction

Over the course of the last three chapters we have outlined the findings from the discourse analysis and interview research elements of the project. In doing so, we have addressed one of the pivotal research questions: 'How are older people represented in television shows, radio shows and the printed and online press?' These findings will be summarised once more in the first section of this chapter, outlining key factors such as the general absence of older people, as well as the most prevalent negative and positive representations highlighted in the previous two chapters. This section will also seek to explain key processes within the cultural industries that contribute to this effect, including discussion of trends toward market segmentation and a reliance on well-established and shared representational systems that allow audiences to collectively navigate and interpret cultural texts in similar ways. With this foundation for the chapter laid, the second section will go on to examine to what extent cultural representations of older people can influence the attitudes and behaviours of healthcare staff. This will be done through closely correlating the respondents' views on older people with the culture they consumed. Consequently, this will unpick the research question: 'Does the cultural representation have any bearing on the attitudes of healthcare staff?' However, to answer this question also necessarily incorporates discussion of other key sites of influence and attitude generation, such as work, family and other social settings. This will link us to another key research question of 'What social and cultural factors help to explain the delivery of quality care or lack of dignified care in the healthcare sector?' In addressing this, the influence attributed to culture will be seen as one of a constellation of effects where interventions in attitude generation can be made to improve how older people are perceived. Such interventions are already underway in work and community settings through organisational culture and intergenerational projects. Consideration will be given to the particular areas of culture where the presence of older people

could be improved, and recommendations made as to what these alterations should entail.

Older People Representations: The Where and the How?

This section builds upon the summary of thematic findings from the last three chapters with the aim of providing a broad overview of the representations of older people within culture typically consumed by healthcare staff. This will form the 'where' of the section's title, explaining the variability associated with these representations across different cultural forms so as to outline hotspots of 'negative' and 'positive' portrayals. The following section will then discuss the role of the cultural industries in these processes of representation, showing 'how' key features of the industries contribute to them.

The Where

Each of the cultural forms analysed will be discussed in turn throughout this subsection, exploring the uniqueness of older people representations associated with them in turn. Before doing so, however, it is worth reiterating one of the key points from Chapter 6, that of the disproportionate absence of older people from the sample of cultural texts. . Demographic statistics from the most recent census showed that people aged over 65 comprise 9.2 million, or 16 percent, of England and Wales' population (Office for National Statistics, 2013). On this basis, the presence of older people across all cultural forms was significantly lighter than would be expected. Though the study did not include a comprehensive content analysis of the cultural sample, it was still possible to offer an overview of how often older people or ageing as a broader topic appeared in each of the texts studied. In the television sample a total of 818 minutes were watched in which only approximately 90 minutes contained older people, approximately 11 percent. Likewise, the radio sample incorporated 1,800 minutes of audio where references to older people comprised only 22 minutes, approximately 1 percent. The underrepresentation was repeated across all of the other cultural forms, albeit with variations in and between certain texts, showing continuity from previous studies in the field (see Johnson, 1988; Robinson and Skill, 1995;

Blaikie, 1999; Murphy, 2004). With this broad point reiterated, it is possible to examine the cultural texts in greater depth.

Television

The television sample consisted of three core texts: *Coronation Street*, *24 Hours In A&E*, and *BBC News at 10*. Each of these will be explored in turn, starting with the long-running soap opera *Coronation Street*. In terms of total presence of older people in the show, over the course of approximately 270 minutes watched, around 17 minutes comprised some form of representation of older people. As will be seen, compared to other texts in the television sample this was relatively light coverage for older people. Yet, while some representations were fairly fleeting and unsubstantial, others demonstrated the presence of major older characters engaged in multiple episode storylines. Characters such as Norris Cole, Emily Bishop, Audrey Roberts and Rita Sullivan have become older people within the show, all being present for between 20 and 50 years. The discourse analysis sample saw only one major storyline involving these characters, the aforementioned fallout from Rita's husband leaving her that spanned three episodes. However, numerous fringe appearances were made from each of the others at various points, generally in communal spaces such as the Rover's Return or the corner shop. Beyond this, there was a further storyline where an older person played a key role, being the victim of a mugging at a bus stop in a scene also involving Beth and Sinead Tinker. The contrast between this mugging scene and storylines developed over time, such as the betrayal of Rita's husband, was stark. With only three minutes of screen time for character development of the older woman, the discursive tone was seen to revert to negative stereotypes of vulnerability unchallenged by pre-established awareness of the protagonist. Consequently, even though Rita's storyline was emblematic of themes of vulnerability and loss, this was tempered by displays of resolve come the end of the narrative, as well as uncharacteristic sympathy from her colleague, Norris Cole. For the unnamed older person mugged at the bus stop, the representation's primary purpose was to showcase the heroic act of Beth's intervention, leaving the victim one-

dimensionally vulnerable and a token presence in the narrative. Aside from this one instance, however, the representations of older people in Coronation Street were relatively inclusive compared to other areas of culture studied. The major characters, while touching on some negative stereotypes both in character and storyline, were granted enough screen time to complicate the ongoing representation and offer depth of character.

Much like Coronation Street, the representations of older people in 24 Hours In A&E were split between those where they were the main protagonists in a storyline and more incidental appearances. In total these appearances amounted to around 32 minutes of screen time across the 235 minutes watched, again an underrepresentation based on social demographics but larger than that observable in Coronation Street. Given the nature of the show, set in King's College Hospital Emergency Department, where older people are more likely to be seen as patients, it was anticipated that their presence would be even greater than this. It was also hypothesised that the representations of older people in this setting would conform to the images of senescence and illness identified by Featherstone and Wernick (1995) and Hareven (1995). This was confirmed in each episode's opening sequence that showed an elderly couple holding hands, the woman in a hospital bed and the man at her bedside. The old man is heard to say 'you must get better and come back to me, I don't want to lose you'. The themes of vulnerability, physical decline, loss and isolation are all discursively evoked in this short sequence, outlining the broader emotional narratives contained in the show. Other appearances also largely aligned with these themes, given that being a main protagonist in an episode naturally meant the need for emergency medical attention. Three independent storylines of this nature featuring older people were observable across two different episodes. One involved a man reporting breathing difficulties, one featured a man who had suffered a cardiac arrest, and the final story related to an older woman suffering osteoporosis. While the health issue was discursively central, reasserting themes of vulnerability and physical decline, the overall representations were in fact more nuanced than this. Alongside the hospital setting,

interviews were also conducted with the patients and their spouses post-recovery. In these interviews, and even within the hospital scenes, the tone was not uniformly sombre but instead offered opportunity for the protagonists' characters to be developed over an episode. For instance, while Kevin's cardiac arrest saw him admitted looking extremely frail and unwell, the interactions with his wife Maureen were warm, emotive and often humorous. As with *Coronation Street*, these major storyline representations were more fully formed than the incidental appearances of older people in the show, offering more chance for individualised characteristics to come to the fore. The brief fringe representations of older people tended to play on negative stereotypes for comic effect. This was observable through waiting room interactions between an elderly couple more interested in their newspapers than each other, as well as with an older woman starting an apparently unwanted conversation with a younger man. In each respective case, the brief representations drew upon older person tropes of disinterested elderly couples and interventional busybodies, generally regarded negatively by theorists such as Hummert et al (1994). On balance, the representations in the show were not as negative as initially expected but, nevertheless, still made issues of physical decline, vulnerability and loss central.

Eleven episodes of *BBC News at 10*, amounting to a total of 286 minutes, were watched as part of the sample. Within this, around 38 minutes contained some form of representation of older people. The format of the show meant that there were spikes of coverage for particularly notable events, such as the deaths of Tony Benn or David Frost. Thematically, while acknowledging death, both of these instances also celebrated the lives of famous personalities with warmth and generous testimonials, aligning to the representation of a life well lived. Significant screen time was also allotted to the conflict between the Ukraine and Russia where John Simpson and John Kerry were notably present as experts in their respective fields of journalism and politics. These representations, alongside others from Menzies Campbell and an air crash expert in relation to a missing Malaysian plane, showed the

older people in question to be capable, active and socially engaged. Other themes evident in the sample related to criminal behaviour either financially with a short story on the Co-Operative bank, or through the legal trial concerning Max Clifford's sexual assaults. In both cases, the discourse was of immoral behaviour and reprisal. Finally, there were two instances where older people were portrayed as victims: in relation to flooding in Somerset, and with regard to a story on changes to the healthcare system. Here, older people were referenced in terms of their vulnerability either to enhance the emotional narrative of the consequences of the floods or to outline their fears regarding their future healthcare. The sum of these representations offers a complex picture of where older people are likely to appear and what these portrayals will entail. Once more, issues of vulnerability, decline and death were obviously apparent, alongside other negative tropes of immorality or the 'dirty old man'. Yet more than in any other text within the discourse analysis, the news also deployed older people for their expertise, demonstrating their value both to the show's format in John Simpson, and for their contributions to society, as evident in Tony Benn, John Kerry, David Frost and Menzies Campbell.

Radio

Two different stations, BBC Radio 1 and BBC Radio 2, were listened to for five days between the hours of six and nine o'clock in the morning. This amounted to 1,800 minutes of audio that involved approximately 22 minutes of airtime featuring or alluding to older people. Compared to the overall presence observed in the television sample, this was noticeably diminished. Taking each station in turn, Radio 1 offered just over 2 minutes of airtime alluding to older people. Within this, the representations themselves were relatively oblique, primarily used for comic effect. One involved the hosts repeating a catchphrase of older character, Mrs Doyle, from Father Ted, while another saw an older producer of the show called Colette perform vocals on a dance track entitled '#Selfie'. The former of these appeared discursively inconsequential, seemingly mimicking a television show for no particular purpose relating to older people. The latter instance, however, saw a brief

conversation between the presenters before Colette made her appearance. Within this, she was referred to as a 'silver legend' resulting in amused reprimands from the other hosts. Set against a backdrop where older people are largely absent, representations incorporating unanswered age-based banter impart a distinctively ageist tone. The only representation that appeared favourable to older people or ageing involved a brief mention of Tom Jones, who was perceived positively by the hosts for his ongoing involvement on television show *The Voice*. This demonstrated discursive themes of active ageing, youthful behaviour and celebrity culture.

BBC Radio 2 offered significantly more coverage of older people than Radio 1 with 20 minutes featuring or alluding to older people over the course of the 900 minutes studied. The references to older people within this were notable for including more members of the public, as well as being much more positive than observed above for Radio 1. These included callers lovingly describing their older relations as part of birthday phone-ins, host Chris Evans' enthusiasm for the expertise of the longest-serving RAC recovery worker, as well as an interview with the writer of the Haynes car manuals. There were also more celebrity-based pieces including the likes of the Queen, Engelbert Humperdinck and Des O'Connor. While the sum of all of these representations were generally warm and positive, there were also clear discursive indications of the value attributed to active ageing, expertise and youthful behaviour. The extract below from Chris Evans in relation to a listener who self-reported as 'old' indicates the overall tone associated with Radio 2 in relation to ageing:

"Getting older, not getting old, that's different. What is old anyway? It's a state of mind that's all. The more you do the younger you will feel, that's a fact" (RA-B2004)

The discursive emphasis in much of the coverage on Radio 2 was on ongoing social engagement into old age. This was as true for members of the public calling in as it was for the celebrities mentioned above. Whereas Radio 1 took a stance bordering on isolationism from older people, Radio 2 showed that

presence was achievable providing certain criteria of active ageing, expertise or youthful behaviour were in place. Generally, however, the tone of the station in terms of the music played and general conversation was more inclusive of an older audience, taking in music from the last 50 years as opposed to chart hits from within the last year on Radio 1.

Magazines

The three magazines studied as part of the discourse analysis provided a total of 1,264 pages for study. Within this 18.25 pages featured or alluded to older people, again marking a dramatic underrepresentation compared to social demographics. For two of the magazines this underrepresentation was even starker as Heat Magazine offered only 1.75 pages of older people representation from the 512 studied, and OK Magazine 3.5 pages from 496 studied. Take A Break showed more coverage with 13 pages representing older people in some fashion from 256 examined. Heat Magazine was particularly notable for its absence of older people offering only two direct representations across its entire sample. One of these was a quarter page article relating to Vivienne Westwood's contribution to fashion, while another two articles related to Gogglebox characters Leon and June. In both cases, the criteria for their presence appeared to be ongoing activity in fields of youth culture, be it fashion or television. More broadly the discursive emphasis was on youth and younger celebrities, with anti-ageing products offering the only other noticeable reference.

Similar themes were evident in OK Magazine where ongoing activity for older people was seen in images of Elton John, Paul McCartney, Barbara Windsor and Prince Charles attending various parties. Another article celebrating Vivienne Westwood's contribution to fashion, alongside an interview with actor Larry Lamb were the only other direct inclusions of older people. Again, there were a number of adverts for anti-ageing products, as well as articles concerned with techniques to defy the ageing process. The discursive sum of both the absence and presence of older people across Heat and OK Magazine

was an underlying fear of ageing, primarily centred upon decline of social relevance or physical appearance.

Take A Break saw significantly more coverage of older people with a primary emphasis on real life stories and contributions from readers, as opposed to the celebrity culture of Heat and OK Magazine. In total, the sample incorporated 256 pages within which 13 pages featured or alluded to older people. The magazine website suggests the discursive tone adopted by stating that it will pay money to readers contributing stories on 'love, betrayal, loss, sin, life' (Take A Break, 2015). As such the feature articles tended to focus on extreme or deviant behaviour, as well as tragedy and bereavement. For older people this involved two stories where they were the main protagonists, one in which an older man is describing his numerous marriages, and another on an age-gap relationship between a 39 year old man and a 78 year old woman. Both instances were notable for discursive themes of sexualised behaviour amplified through sensational headlines such as 'The George Clooney of Yeovil' and 'But I'm old enough to be your nanna'. Based on the discursive context of the magazine, this places such behaviour as being incongruous or deviant for older people, countering but also discursively reinforcing the stereotype of a sexless old age identified by writers such as Milstein (2010) and Kellett (2000). Other features also introduced older people as part of the narrative including an article entitled 'But who will give me away?' about a woman getting married with two fathers giving her away, as well as another with the headline 'Don't end up like me' where the writer's mother died after a life of obesity. In these representations, the older person's physical decline and death was a central aspect of the emotional narrative. The familiar themes of senescence and illness were evoked in both stories, but they were also notable for the brevity of the portrayal. Unlike the main features, written by the protagonists, older people were less central with the focus being on their respective daughters in both cases. As such there is a level of negative starkness to the representation at play, centring on tragic timing and poignancy. Beyond the main features, older people were also present in the form of reader letters or photo

submissions. Within these there was a broader range of representations on show, including images of active ageing demonstrable through 65 year-olds climbing Snowdon and an older reader holidaying in Ibiza, alongside pictures of older relations in nursing homes receiving visits, suggestive of frailty and decline but also good quality care and social engagement. Overall, then, there was an array of older representations at play invoking well-established negative and positive stereotypes alongside incongruous acts of sexual behaviour.

Newspapers

Incorporating The Sun, The Daily Mail and The Guardian over the course of five days, the newspaper sample provided a total of 1,103 pages. Within this total, approximately 74.25 pages contained representation or allusion to older people. While larger than some other cultural forms outlined thus far, this still marks an underrepresentation of older people relative to their broader presence in society. Examining each newspaper in turn, The Daily Mail offered the most coverage of older people accounting for 39.25 from 440 pages. A large proportion of this was in reference to claims of historic sexual abuse perpetrated by Liberal Democrat MP, Cyril Smith, given that it was serialised throughout the entire week, often with double-page spreads. Beyond this, the discursive theme was present in regard to the legal cases of Dave Lee Travis and Max Clifford. Similar themes of corruption and deviancy in relation to older people were also evident in an article on Silvio Berlusconi being given community service for tax fraud, making this a strong factor in the analysis. It was notable that the stories referenced thus far largely contained famous people or celebrities and this was continued for other themes, including celebrity deaths such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Frank Sinatra. Death, however, was also thematically observed for members of the public with two articles relating to older people who had died in the Swiss Dignitas clinic and another two mentioning pensioners being given predictions on their date of death in relation to budgetary shifts in the provision of pensions. While the latter cases hinted at additional themes of economics, affluence, politics and class, death still remained a strong

discursive motif. The death or decline of older people was also introduced into the story to enhance the emotional narrative and substantiate other wider discursive points, such as hospital cleanliness and the training of foreign doctors. In these, the tone implied a great deal more tragedy than the often-celebratory obituary stories, establishing responsibility for the poor treatment of older people in aspects of the healthcare sector. Representations of physical or mental vulnerability also offered a similarly tragic tone, whether featuring celebrities or members of the public. Within this theme, The Daily Mail saw stories relating to the hearing impairment of Bill Oddie and tests for Alzheimers, health articles on the benefits of ballet or the development of shoes that can prevent falls, as well as in adverts for television amplifiers, mobility scooters and an Alzheimer's Show. Even in those cases where prevention or interventions were being promoted, the underlying discursive emphasis remained on the looming potential of physical or mental decline into old age. While the majority of articles offered large take-up of such negative stereotypes, there were other instances where active ageing and professionalism were represented. Stories about Judi Dench, John Humphrys and Angela Lansbury each showed the older protagonists to remain active in their respective fields of work. Overall, then, The Daily Mail saw some variation in tone and topic in relation to older people. Generally, though, the representations centred on old age as a time of vulnerability, with the other notable presence of sexualised behaviour being attributable to a spike within the week analysed.

The Guardian contributed 383 pages to the total sample in which 17.75 pages alluded to or offered direct representations of older people. Of these, the most recurrent theme related to death and, with obituaries, the celebratory tone associated with a life well lived. The range of obituaries contained in The Guardian was much larger than the other newspapers in the sample. Alongside popular culture figures such as Eastenders' Edna Dore and famous author Garcia Marquez, more academic professions such as mathematics and sociology were also covered with Dennis Lindley and Richard Hoggart respectively. Indeed, there were a total of 12 obituaries observed in the

sample covering journalism, music, acting, corporate business, marketing, nursing, academia, architecture and ballet. As mentioned, though the theme of death was dominant, the discursive tone was celebratory, highlighting the breadth of achievements of those who had passed away. In other cases, however, death and a wider sense of vulnerability was observable in other articles where it was deployed less centrally. For instance, the historic murder of Roseanne Mallon in the seventies was deployed to highlight Ministry of Defence failings during the troubles of Northern Ireland. Likewise, older people were mentioned in relation to the Canadian Post halting home deliveries and in relation to political unrest in the Ukraine, suggesting themes of isolation, vulnerability and victim status to enhance a wider narrative. Coverage of the 2014 budget also saw representations of older people as economically vulnerable through changes to the pension system, though in the one article on this in the sample it was dealt with humorously. Much like The Daily Mail there was coverage of older people engaging with deviant behaviour in The Guardian, though significantly less based on the former's emphasis upon the Cyril Smith sexual abuse story. Nevertheless, Berlusconi appeared in two different pieces in relation to tax fraud and ties to the mafia, another article alluded to the gambling debts of retail mogul Sir David Jones, one more suggested corruption involving the elderly Algerian President, and finally the court case of Bernie Ecclestone on bribery charges was also covered. Notably, the sexualised behaviour theme was absent altogether from The Guardian sample. Indeed, aside from the instances outlined above, the discursive theme of expertise and activity into old age was much more commonly observed. This was noted in articles on veteran golfers still performing professionally, Angela Lansbury being made a dame, filmmakers Ken Loach and Mike Leigh being nominated for the Cannes Film Festival, and the return of folk musician Beverley Martyn with a new album. The varying expertise observable across these examples, along with that across the range of obituaries already mentioned, cast older people as either contributing or having contributed a great deal to society. So, while many of the familiar themes encountered in The Daily Mail were evident in

The Guardian, the tone and coverage was generally more favourable in the latter.

Over the five days analysed, The Sun offered a total of 380 pages in which 16.25 featured or alluded to older people, providing the least coverage of the newspaper sample. As with The Daily Mail, there were a large proportion of articles relating to deviance, including the allegations of sexual assaults against Max Clifford, Cyril Smith, William Roache and Dave Lee Travis, as well as reports on Silvio Berlusconi's tax fraud, Sir David Jones' gambling debts and a brief article on an elderly drunk driver. Likewise, the recurrent theme of older people as victims encountered in both of the other papers was repeated once more in The Sun. Stories relating to an e-cigarette exploding in an older woman's face, a car crash involving three pensioners, and a set of crumbling flats that required an older man to jump to safety were all noted. In each instance, the older protagonists were in place to heighten the sense of tragedy as well as highlight broader issues such as the potential dangers of e-cigarettes or poor quality construction. The more positive representations of expertise and active ageing observed in the other newspapers was also maintained in The Sun with articles on Robert Plant, an older dancer on Britain's Got Talent, Barbara Windsor, David Attenborough, Stan Lee, Angela Lansbury and Alex Ferguson. Alongside these generally positive representations, there were also two other articles offering warmer celebrations of age-based achievements such as reaching 100 years old or an elderly couple getting married after a 40-year engagement. Both were suggestive of the value attributed to ongoing social activity. Death was also much less of a pervasive theme in The Sun than the other two newspapers with only three articles offering any form of representation. The lack of any consistent obituary section was the largest contributory factor in this with only one piece on a World War II hero observed. Other references to death involved an older victim in a car crash, as well as in relation to the 'death date' provision in relation to pensions. Overall, then, The Sun offered many of the similar themes to the other newspapers in the sample, albeit with some variation in the scale of coverage. Broadly speaking, the inclusion of older

people in this medium was either dependent on celebrity status or as a victim of tragedy, vulnerability or death. That said there were occasional discursive motifs relating to active ageing featuring members of the public in *The Sun* and *The Daily Mail* or lesser-known professional figures in *The Guardian*.

Internet News

The total sample of Internet news sites took in 140 articles across Sky News, BBC News and the Mail Online. Within this, a total 19 articles alluded to or directly represented older people. Sky News offered the least with only five of the 40 articles offering some form of representation. The themes evoked ranged from death or loss, observable in an obituary on television chef Clarissa Dickson-Wright and another piece on the suicide of Mick Jagger's wife L'Wren Scott, to sexual deviance in an article on the Max Clifford trial, as well as representations of older people as economic actors in stories about the 2014 budget and the Hull City Football Club Chief Executive. Given the absence of older people from large swathes of the sample, Sky News' representations were relatively oblique only appearing central in the cases of Dickson-Wright and Jagger. As with the newspaper sample, it seemed that inclusion of older people was often based on pre-established celebrity status or in the event of something negative happening to them.

BBC News provided 50 news articles to the sample in which ten featured or alluded to older people. Three of the articles covered the pension reforms of the 2014 budget with representations touching on themes of vulnerability and naivety, as well as casting older people as engaged, economic actors. The tone of these was primarily sympathetic to the more vulnerable, offering discursive political critiques of the Budget where older people were deployed as victims. This discursive motif of victim status was also observable in stories about a Los Angeles earthquake, as well as in reference to the missing Malaysian aircraft MH370. In both cases, older people were peripherally shown to be victims of loss seemingly to heighten the sense of tragedy. Obituary articles were present for Clarissa Dickson-Wright and Tony Benn, offering the familiar discursive tone of celebration for a life well lived. The

notoriety of the protagonists was arguably a key contributory factor in this with other older celebrities such as Tom Jones or Mick Jagger also being present as examples of active and engaged older people, even if the latter article also clearly displayed the theme of loss. Generally, BBC News provided a range of representations sometimes even within the same article, but these were largely consistent with those witnessed in the other websites and newspapers covered.

The Mail Online provided 14 articles featuring or alluding to older people from a total of 50 studied, marking the highest coverage from the Internet news sample. A large proportion of this was attributable to the single story of L'Wren Scott's suicide where Mick Jagger was a key figure in all four of the articles dealing with it. This was clearer for articles such as 'The moment when Mick heard L'Wren was dead' than ones where L'Wren was more central, such as 'L'Wren wanted kids, envied my simple life and refused Mick's offer of cash'. The former was largely comprised of photographs of Jagger on hearing the news, embracing themes of loss alongside the underlying associations of celebrity and active ageing. The latter article, constructed around an interview with L'Wren's sister, saw Jagger in a more peripheral role where his affluence and celebrity status were more obviously represented. Two distinct stories relating to pension reforms also mentioned older people, one offering greater positivity towards the budgetary changes than the other sites. The focus on 'bigger bingo prizes', particularly, saw older people as beneficiaries while highlighting stereotypically elderly leisure pursuits. The other article was more critical of the reforms suggesting 'raw deals' for pensioners and a theme of economic vulnerability. The depiction of older victims was also observable in stories relating to the missing Malaysian aircraft, the murder of Claudia Lawrence and briefly in an article about an attack on a cardboard policeman. The primary thematic association was with loss or, in the latter case, the potential for vulnerability to heighten the emotion of a wider narrative. The peripheral representation of older people to further another discursive point was evident in an article around Prince William and Kate Middleton visiting the Irish Guards Parade. There, the

presence of wheelchair-bound older people in photographs was seemingly deployed to enhance positive associations towards the royal couple. The discursive motif of vulnerability was also repeated with regard to physical decline through articles on anti-ageing products and chocolate pills to help prevent strokes in older age, as well as through reportage of the death of Clarissa Dickson-Wright. While the Mail Online offered a larger number of articles than the other sites, as with the newspaper sample, this was largely down to a focus on just one or two particular stories across several articles. Generally, the representations on offer revolved around similar subject matter with older people largely only noticeable on the periphery.

The How

Across the previous discussion of where representations of older people could be found, it was clear that variation existed both in whether they were present altogether and in the type or tone of representation on offer. This section will look to processes of the cultural industry that may help to explain how certain representations come to exist in some cultural forms more so than in others. This will be carried out over the course of two main sections, one covering trends towards market segmentation and another on the *token* presence of older people as compared to *deeper* representations found elsewhere. Prior to this, though, it is worth reaffirming some key points introduced in Chapter 3 regarding the role of the cultural industries in producing cultural texts. The key terms to emerge in that chapter drew from Hesmondhalgh's (2007) conception of the cultural industries as being 'complex, contested and ambivalent' (2007; 4). The complexity within this is attributable to radical developments in how the industries have been owned and organised over the last 40 years. The largest companies in the field are now rarely dedicated to one specific form of culture, instead there has been significant shifts towards huge conglomerate companies with branches dedicated to film, publishing, television and recording among others. Certainly this trend is noticeable through synergies in media conglomerates such as News Corporation, leisure-media organisations like Disney, and information-communication corporations typified by AT&T (ibid; 167).

However, while these were shown to ultimately concentrate ownership into the hands of only a few multinational companies, there has also been considerable growth in smaller and medium-sized cultural industry organisations. Indeed, Hesmondhalgh highlights further complexity in how these cultural companies of varying size interrelate, compete and overlap with each other, stating:

“More than ever before, they are connected – with each other and with other companies – in complex webs of alliance, partnership and joint venture” (2007; 2)

In Chapter 3, it was also mentioned that the production of cultural texts itself had undergone dramatic changes from romantic notions of singular artistic creativity. As Ryan (1992) has suggested, the shift has been away from one or two authors producing a text instead to a ‘project team’ including roles such as creative personnel, technical workers, managers, marketing, executives and semi-skilled or unskilled labour (1992; 124-34). Overall, then, the network of individuals and companies contributing to the production of cultural texts show a pattern of interlinked complexity. In terms of the meanings evoked from a text, this would be expected to result in an array of competing representations across different cultural forms. While the discourse analysis sample offered notable trends of representation within and between certain texts, in others entirely different tones were evident or older people were absent altogether. In seeking to explain this, it is important to reiterate the key point made by Hesmondhalgh that, while complex in operation, the cultural industries, like any other corporations, are primarily interested in supporting conditions that produce profit (2007; 3). To do this, numerous strategies have been adopted over time to maximise profit margins, many adopted from other areas of industry such as branding, vertical integration and conglomeration (ibid). However, for the cultural industries the key to pursuing profit comes with the pursuit of new audiences for the texts being produced. The next section will look to explore one major feature of the search for niche audiences, that of market segmentation.

Market Segmentation

The concept of market segmentation first emerged in the work of Wendell Smith in 1956. Based on his perception that there was growing diversity in consumer demand, he stated:

“Market segmentation involves viewing a heterogeneous market as a number of smaller homogeneous markets, in response to differing preferences, attributable to the desires of consumers for more precise satisfaction of their varying wants” (Smith, 1956; 6)

Since its emergence in marketing theory and practice, Wedel and Kamakura (2000) have argued it has become an essential marketing concept across industrialised countries. Following on from initial phases of homogenised mass production, increasingly flexible production processes and growth of consumer affluence saw businesses begin to identify heterogeneous needs amidst their target markets (ibid; 3). The drive towards segmented markets was observable across all of industry with notable examples being drawn from big corporations such as McDonalds or Coca-Cola. The advertising strategies for both of these companies operates by targeting different markets at different times, such as the children-centred Happy Meal adverts, as compared to more adult-focussed humour in adverts scheduled later in the day (Michman and Mazze, 1998). We have already seen that shifts within the cultural industries led to them operating in much the same way as any other business. As such, similar strategies have been adopted by companies operating in this field with the assumed intent of targeting the ‘small homogeneous’ audiences for their particular brands, as well as consumer engagement in the cultural industries more broadly. One such example from the cultural texts analysed in this study comes with the Bauer Media Group who, via two subsidiary companies, published two of the magazine titles analysed. Heat Magazine and Take A Break Magazine are ultimately owned by the group alongside numerous other mainstream titles returned back from the survey such as Closer, FHM, Grazia, MOJO, TV Choice and Empire (Bauer Media Group, 2015c). As well as their publishing portfolio, Bauer

Media Group also has divisions for radio and television, as well as digital and social media. The structure and organisation defines it as one of the integrated network of conglomerates outlined previously, exemplified by multi-platform activity across a range of media.

When examining the two specific titles associated with this study, Heat and Take A Break, it is possible to discern clear differences based on the audiences they are targeting. This is immediately apparent upon examining the information available to potential advertisers on their respective websites. Heat Magazine self-identifies in this forum as 'the celebrity gossip magazine for the 20 something woman' (Bauer Media Group, 2015b). Compare this to the equivalent webpage for Take A Break Magazine stating 'readers can be anything from 18 to 80' and it is apparent that it has a much broader target audience than Heat Magazine, even if still specifically being aimed at women (H Bauer Publishing, 2015a). Indeed, the webpage goes onto emphasise the magazine's 'universal appeal' based on its blend of 'real life stories, prize puzzles and competitions' (ibid). The subject matter covered by the respective titles was shown to differ on this basis as well, with Heat Magazine's overriding focus on a 'celebrity agenda' and youth culture demarcating it from the 'real life' stories from members of the public found in Take A Break (Bauer Media Group, 2015b). The difference in target audience between the two magazines is arguably a key contributory factor in terms of the representations of older people present within them. Heat Magazine, that both targets and receives primary readership from 16 to 34 year-olds, only offered 1.75 pages from 512 studied. Take A Break Magazine, with its much broader age focus, incorporated 13 pages offering representations of older people from 256 analysed. In terms of explaining the absence of older people from titles such as Heat Magazine, it would seem that age-based market segmentation is a reasonable variable to deploy. But while Heat may exclusively focus on younger people, other magazines even within Bauer Media Group offer far greater presence of older people. These include Take A Break alongside other brands specifically targeting traditionally older pursuits such as Garden Answers or Bird Watching (Bauer Media Group,

2015c). So, while Heat Magazine can be correctly criticised for its dramatic underrepresentation of older people, this needs to be tempered with an understanding of how older people remain present in other magazines, often including those published by the same company.

The discourse analysis of radio also offered another example of market segmentation in practice. Both stations analysed in this study, Radio 1 and Radio 2, formed part of the BBC's broader suite of radio channels including Radio 4, Radio 5 Live, 6 Music and the Asian Network. The divisions at work with examples such as 6 Music and the Asian Network show the relevance of non-age-related variables, primarily defining audiences by aesthetic musical taste and ethnic boundaries. However, within the three top-rated stations, Radio 1, Radio 2 and Radio 4, there have been clear indications that audience age is a central concern for the BBC. In an article for The Guardian regarding the recruitment of Nick Grimshaw to the Radio 1 Breakfast Show, David Hepworth stated:

“The BBC's entire strategy is based on the idea that you can reliably segment the young audience via music and create channel loyalty” (Hepworth, 2013)

The brief overview available on the BBC Trust website corroborates this idea, stating that the target audience was for 15 to 29 year olds although some provision should be made for 'younger teenagers' (BBC Trust, 2015c). This strategy was further evidenced by comments from Nick Grimshaw himself regarding the exclusion of 38-year old Robbie Williams from the Radio 1 playlist where he was quoted as saying 'I don't know if he's now for a Radio 1 audience...to 13 and 14 year-olds he's not relevant' (Rickman, 2012). On the other hand, the BBC Trust describes Radio 2 as targeting a 'broad audience, appealing to all age groups over 35' (BBC Trust, 2015d). When relating this to this study's sample, the variation in terms of the presence of older people was as stark as that between Heat and Take A Break magazine. Radio 1 offered only two minutes of airtime featuring or alluding to older people, compared to Radio 2's 20 minutes, both taken from 900 minute samples of each station. Again, the effect of market segmentation on the presence of

older people appears significant. Again, though, stations such as Radio 4 offer programming more relatable to older people subsequently attracting older listeners, as has been noted by numerous commentators:

“The popularity of the station, which has an average audience age of 55, has benefited from older audiences moving away from “youth obsessed” television” (Khan, 2009)

While the analysis offered by such commentaries cites the movement of older audiences as a negative consequence of market strategy, following the logic of market segmentation this would be precisely the effect that was intended. The movement of older audiences into the segment of cultural production specifically dedicated to them is seen as desirable to corporations aiming to provide tailor-made services based on age. In turn, this enables specificity in the editorial decisions made by the creative teams operating on behalf of each segment. Radio 1 may be unperturbed by a loss of listeners provoked by an emphasis on youth culture, provided that those listeners are transferring to another of the BBC’s stations or products. In this sense, it is arguable that older people are not rejected from culture altogether, but partitioned off and granted their own cultural texts.

Nevertheless, one of the key arguments resulting from this project is that the logic of market segmentation leaves older people almost entirely absent from the culture aimed at younger people. Where they are present in texts such as Radio 1 or in Heat Magazine, it is primarily based on pre-established celebrity status and, importantly, perceived relevance to the target market segment. Thus, Tom Jones can be mentioned on Radio 1 based on his role on television show *The Voice*, and Vivienne Westwood can appear in a Heat Magazine article due to her ongoing presence in the world of fashion. However, there appear to be strict criteria by which their inclusions are enabled. The potential effects of this on audiences will be discussed further in the final section of this chapter. At this stage, though, it is worth remembering the discussions of Chapter 2 where considerable drives within the healthcare sector had placed the dignity of older people much more

central in their organisational culture. Much of the emphasis here is on understanding and knowledge of older people to help foster positive intergenerational relationships and, subsequently, good care. The findings of this study would indicate that the market segmentation between cultural texts runs counter to pushes for intergenerational links. That said, there were numerous texts within the discourse analysis sample, and referenced by interviewees, that offered a range of age representations. The processes at work regarding these will be considered in the next subsection.

Age Range in Culture: Tokenistic or Deeper?

The absence of older people within the discourse analysis sample in texts such as Heat Magazine, OK Magazine and Radio 1 has been highlighted. However, other texts in the sample did offer greater presence of older people with the likes of The Daily Mail, Mail Online, 24 Hour In A&E, Take A Break Magazine, BBC News at 10 and Coronation Street all featuring or alluding to them with much more frequency. Yet even when older people are present, their representations have been shown to vary often within the same text. Coronation Street provides good examples of what we shall term here *tokenistic* and *deeper* representations of older people. As has been highlighted, older people account for some of the show's major characters, including the likes of Norris Cole, Rita Sullivan, Ken Barlow and Emily Bishop. When engaged in major storylines, the show has been celebrated by age-related organisations for its coverage of older people in relation to dementia and physical decline (Alzheimer's Society, 2011). Indeed, even within the sample, a large proportion of the presence of older people was attributable to a story regarding Rita Sullivan's husband leaving her. Though dealing with themes of loss, isolation and vulnerability often associated with 'negative' representations of older people, the culmination of the narrative showed Rita demonstrating resolve and strength of character. Importantly, for those who have watched the show over a period of years, characters such as Rita and Norris also have a life history that give their interactions within the storyline additional context. Thus, when Norris offers uncharacteristic sympathy and concern, the emotional weight of the story is granted greater significance.

The representations of Rita and Norris in this multi-episode storyline would be classified in this study as *deeper* rather than *tokenistic*. This is not to say that the inclusion of the storyline was overly significant in terms of the amount of screen time containing older people. In this sense, as mentioned throughout, older people across all cultural forms were underrepresented based on social demographics. Rather, it is the quality and depth of meaning inherent in the representation that separated it from more token inclusions of older people. This was also indicated in the interview data where those who engaged with long-running portrayals of older characters were shown to receive them warmly:

“Rita (Sullivan), as well, she’s very strong. People go to her for support. I think that’s what you find with the older characters in soaps. The older characters are portrayed as pillars of the community” (CROOP-008)

“She’s (Dot Cotton) a great character. She’s been in it for years. She smokes like a chimney. People still go to her for advice. They might think she’s a little old lady sometimes but she’s always got something valuable to say” (CROOP-002)

“Strong. Stubborn. Thinks she (Victoria Crawley, Downton Abbey) knows everything. But she’s probably right about half of them anyway. She absolutely dotes on the family but finds it very hard to show her feelings” (CROOP-012)

“I: And do you remember Norris Cole as well?

R: Oh yeah. He’s funny. He’s always gossiping about people. Very nosey but people just tell him off. They say things to him ‘you just couldn’t wait, could you Norris? To tell everybody?’” (CROOP-008)

While these examples all related to characters in long-running television shows, the same effect was also evident in similar formats on radio, with The Archers matriarch receiving similar warmth:

“She’s been in the show for 40 years or so. She’s an Archer. She’s a matriarch and she seems to still maintain a lot of control over the family and they go to

her for advice. She seems like a strong character but it's obvious she's ageing and you can tell in her voice as well. She has some vulnerability because she was recently widowed and she's living on her own at the moment" (CROOP-004)

The interviewees' descriptions of these characters help to demonstrate the complexity at work in their interpretations. Often negatively perceived traits such as stubbornness, gossiping and smoking are counteracted by other positive features such as strength, family-orientation and humour. This is arguably attributable to the screen or airtime dedicated to these characters over many years, helping to provide nuance and depth to the portrayal. Also the role of creative teams including writers, directors, researchers, actors and technical staff should also be highlighted for the contributions to the development of such older characters. Though different individuals often occupy these roles over time, with the cultural industries subject to staff turnover in the same way as any other business, the representations were at their deepest when showing consistency of character. This could either mean aligning with pre-existent character traits, or subtly deviating from them to highlight the significance of a storyline.

One interviewee, however, showed how the stretching of familiar characteristics in cultural forums such as long-running serials could challenge the perceived realism of the representation:

"Ken's (Barlow, Coronation Street) always been a solid character. Then when they change the storyline, and make him do something out of character that spoils it a bit. Because he wouldn't do that normally but you get different people writing things" (CROOP-008)

Relating this back to the work of Hall (1997) regarding the meaning exchange operating in shared culture, it is arguable that this interviewee saw dramatic shifts in Ken Barlow's behaviour as a disruption of the established shared context of the character. This also demonstrates the great care that is required to produce representations that are both believable but also challenge pre-established perception of what a character would do in a given

situation. Thus, it is reasonable to say that the production of *deeper* representations of older people is not without difficulty. One key feature, however, is the shared representational system operating between text and audience. When this is too harshly disrupted in the text it is noticeable to the audience and, likewise, when it is operating effectively and being sensitively challenged, it produces similar responses from a range of different respondents.

This is not to say that *tokenistic* appearances of older people do not utilise the shared representational systems or evoke similar responses from audience members. Rather it is to say that these appearances offer only fleeting glimpses of the older person in which complexity of character is much more difficult to develop. This trend was evident across much of the discourse analysis sample. A primary example outlined in chapter 8 involved another scene from *Coronation Street* where an unnamed older woman was mugged at a bus stop following only several minutes of screen time. The brevity of the representation, and the subsidiary status of the older character when compared to regulars Beth and Sinead Tucker, meant that the theme of vulnerability went uncontested. This principle can also be applied to other cultural texts in the discourse analysis, particularly news providers such as BBC News at 10, the three texts of the newspaper sample and the websites forming the Internet news sample. In these, tokenistic appearances of older people demonstrating negative stereotypes of infirmity, loss, vulnerability and physical decline were common. Largely these appearances were deployed as part of a larger story, as evidenced through articles covering NHS bugs, e-cigarettes, assaults, missing airplanes, pensions and poor construction, among others. Once more, the older people in each of these cases were subsidiary to the subject matter under discussion, seemingly in place to heighten the emotional narrative associated with it. In order for this to resonate with the audience, the trend in texts such as these is to restrict older people to the most easily recognisable negative features of ageing. Again, this relates back to Hall's (1997) idea of meaning exchange in shared culture. The reduction of older people to simplistic stereotypes in the articles

outlined above is attributable to the text's need to easily communicate the discursive message. Numerous theorists and historians have identified how deeply embedded associations between ageing and senescence, vulnerability and victim status are within Western culture (Featherstone and Wernick, 1995; Murphy 2004; Martin, Williams and O'Neill, 2009). It is precisely because these associations are in place that they are frequently recycled by cultural texts, so as to ensure that the text is understandable to the audience.

Interviewees also identified another trend towards token appearances of older people in certain cultural texts. One respondent, particularly, who engaged with television shows such as *Strictly Come Dancing* and *I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here*, saw older people included as part of a broader age range of protagonists:

"I think they are like a token person in that age range so they know they're not ageist...I think they have to have a real mix. They must when they choose the people think 'well we have to a certain percentage of this' so there's always a token older person" (CROOP-013)

This relates back to the notion of market segmentation discussed previously. Texts aiming at broad target audiences, such as the prime time television shows brought up by this interviewee, noticeably provide screen time to a range of people. As suggested, this trend is based on maximising the appeal of a text by including public figures familiar to different demographics. Such a trend was also evident in the discourse analysis in *24 Hours In A&E* where storylines were dedicated to a variety of different protagonists, some young and some old. Again, while their presence can be viewed as tokenistic based on the amount of time dedicated to them, this is not to say they were without sensitivity and warmth. Indeed, the interviews in *24 Hours In A&E* often demonstrated positive representations of humour, intelligence, knowledge and self-awareness alongside the frailty and ill health shown in their arrival to the emergency setting. The editorial decisions made across the show enabled adequate screen time of protagonists being interviewed that the

overall representation aligned with the nuance and balance of *deeper* portrayals.

In this subsection, the aim has been to highlight how processes associated with the cultural industries can contribute to the quantity and the quality of representations of older people. The trend towards market segmentation in certain cultural forms has a demonstrable impact on the amount of older people likely to be present in certain texts. Beyond this, for texts where older people are present there are clear repetitions of both positive and negative stereotypes within and between them. As has been suggested throughout the last three chapters, the findings of this study complicate traditional conceptions of positive and negative representation. In these, discursive notions of active ageing, good health, expertise and affluence generally compete against representations of frailty, vulnerability and senescence. However, as the discussions above have demonstrated, factors such as writing and editorial decisions can substantially contribute to the depth of representations, be they negative or positive in their origin. It is in such depth of representation where stereotypes can be acknowledged, challenged and subverted. Where representations remain discursively tokenistic, based on the decentralisation of the older person from the dominant narrative, stereotypes are maintained as the simplest way of communicating between text and audience.

Audience Influence and/or Effect

This discussion chapter has, thus far, addressed the research question of 'How are older people represented in television shows, radio shows and the printed and online press?' while also beginning to highlight the manner in which the cultural industries themselves contribute to the production of these representations. Another key aspect of the study examined the extent to which cultural representations appeared to influence the attitudes of healthcare staff. This section will discuss the findings relating to this, showing how some respondents cited cultural figures as reference points in characterising older people, but also how this was balanced by other sites of attitude generation such as work, family and social settings. We shall begin

by highlighting instances where cultural discourse regarding older people was returned by interviewees, linking this to previous discussions of audience research.

Returned Cultural Discourse

The interview schedule incorporated the question ‘Do you think your perception of older people is similar to the way in which older people are shown on television or talked about on the radio or in the news?’ with the aim of further prompt questions to develop responses. The overall purpose of the question was to discuss the cultural representations already discussed throughout the interview to identify those that resonated, and in what way. Generally, as will be discussed in the next section, respondents called upon their own personal experiences through work, family and social settings to question the cultural representations they were receiving. That said, a number of interviewees also found a great deal of familiarity in the representations, using them as a device to categorise older people from their own lives. The extract below provides an example of this in regard to the returned discourse of vulnerability:

“R: Quite often elderly people can’t stand up for themselves against an able-bodied, I’m not saying they are all men, but able-bodied they’ve got no chance.

I: So this is physically?

R: Yeah, physically. And they are trusting. Very trusting elderly people. They believe what people are telling them when they are getting conned out of money. Not all of them. I hear other stories where they’ve reported them to the police. But you don’t tend to hear about them in the news” (CROOP-002)

Here the respondent’s familiarity with tokenistic representations of older people as vulnerable, commonly generated in news stories, is evidenced in how she perceives of older people more broadly, seeing them as trusting and infirm. This theme was returned across several interviews to varying degrees:

“Sometimes people will batter older people if they break in their homes or even on the street” (CROOP-008)

“Older people seem to be suffering, I wouldn’t say more, but it does seem to be harder when you are older to be going through those hardships” (CROOP-006)

In each of the cases, the commonly represented stereotype of older people as vulnerable was invoked based on general consumption of news, including *The Daily Mail* and *The Sun*. Occasionally, this was corroborated by stories of personal experience but largely these perceptions appeared to originate from the culturally reproduced stereotype. Another instance came through an interview with a female nurse in her twenties who consumed numerous texts taken from the discourse analysis sample, including *Heat Magazine*, *OK Magazine*, *Radio 1* and *Coronation Street*. While offering numerous indications that her work and family experiences of older people had contributed to her perception, cultural representations were still deployed as a means of understanding their characteristics:

“I wouldn’t like to dump all elderly in one category. I wouldn’t like to say Norris (Cole, *Coronation Street*) represents all elderly people. But I’d also say that he probably does, unfortunately. Most of the elderly that I’ve encountered anyway, in this role, Norris sums it up nicely” (CROOP-003)

When relating these cases back to the ideas of audience research outlined in Chapter 3, there is close alignment to theories of agenda setting espoused by studies such as Iyengar and Kinder (1987) and Funkhouser (1973). On numerous occasions the discursive agenda of vulnerability in relation to older people was returned, seemingly drawn primarily from cultural consumption as opposed to personal or work experience. Likewise the example of Norris Cole outlined above shows how familiar character tropes were taken from culture to inform respondents’ opinions. It should be noted, though, that while several interviewees drew from culture in this manner, their perceptions were also typically established through other experiences as well. On this basis, much of the interview data was also relatable to studies

by the likes of Ang (1991; 1996), Gamson (1992) and Graber (1988) where culture operated alongside popular wisdom and experiential knowledge to inform audience attitudes. The next section will examine these alternative sites of meaning making in more detail.

Alternative Sites of Meaning Making

While it was possible to see culture contributing to the attitudes of some of the healthcare staff interviewed, the data also pointed towards other sites of meaning making that helped to round their perceptions of older people. The interview schedule incorporated sections charting respondents' experiences of older people from employment, family and social settings. When asked to reflect upon how their experiences in these settings compared to the culture they consumed, it became clear that many drew upon a mixture of them in their perceptions of older people:

“Like the Panorama documentaries about nursing homes or what happens in hospitals, that’s not something I experience. But then you can have comedies with older people in, and I can relate to that because my nan and granddad are quite humorous people and that’s how they are, and that’s what I experience. So it depends what’s been portrayed in the media as to whether or not you can identify with something you experience in real life” (CROOP-001)

Again, this interviewee brings us back to the work of Hall (1997) where the representational systems between text and audience do not wholly align. When cultural texts such as ‘Panorama documentaries’ fail to match her experiences, the interviewee does not relate to them. The pre-existent perceptions of older people generated from her personal experiences are central here. One primary feature of this were the associations generated from family life with her grandparents, a theme that was returned from numerous interviewees:

“I think my own perception of older people, because I’ve had them in my life, I just see them as older people. They’re no different from me other than they may need some help. My kids love older people and I don’t know if that’s

because they've been involved with older people too, or just because they are nice kids" (CROOP-008)

"We had both sets of grandparents and we'd go and stay with each other. And we had quite a lot of elderly people in our street at home so as children we'd pop in and out of different people's houses" (CROOP-011)

Numerous theorists, such as Harwood (2005) and Tam et al (2006), have identified the family setting as a key site of meaning making in regards to older people. Certainly, in this study, this notion was corroborated by the interview data. Those who spoke favourably of their family experiences with older people, either historic or ongoing, were also uniformly found to be favourable to older people more generally. That said, other experiences of older people were also shown to contribute to how respondents perceived them. The likes of Kenworthy et al (2015), Bousfield (2010) and Hale (1998) have also cited ongoing social engagement with older people in friendship groups outside of the family as another process resulting in favourable attitudes towards older people. Several interviewees, as the extracts below show, mentioned this:

"Friends of mine who are older are not financial burdens. They don't struggle financially. So they're not being represented that much. They are active too and they give a lot to their community. So my friends who are older people I'd rather spend time with them than the younger generation" (CROOP-010)

"A lot of people in my village are older, but they are all very active. I don't know anyone who is bed bound. I don't tend to focus on negative things, if I listen to the news and I hear it, I'll take it in. But I think that in reality, I'm protected more from what's going on with the vulnerable stories" (CROOP-013)

"I'm freemason, and have been freemason for about a year...so I have contact with older people there...I see them as retired professionals...I think you get a certain amount of expertise, ex-military, bankers" (CROOP-005)

Again, in each case, these social interactions with older people clearly helped to inform favourable opinions and attitudes towards them. The latter interview, CROOP-005, was particularly notable for offering a range of different perceptions of elderly people based on experiences gathered in different settings. As well as the freemasons, the respondent also reported encountering older people in a homeless shelter:

“I see them as vulnerable people, some of them, certainly vulnerable and needing help...I work in a homeless shelter at Christmas, and I also work in a soup kitchen a couple of Sundays a month...so I do see older people in that sort of environment who need help and support” (CROOP-005)

Across the interview, based on the site of meaning making being reflected upon, the interviewee’s perception of older people demonstrated variability. When considering friends in the freemasons the dominant perception was expertise, yet when reflecting on voluntary work the familiar trope of vulnerability was returned. This context specific process of meaning making aligns, once more, with the work of Hall (1997) where our personal experiences contribute to our own system of understanding. Experiences gathered from primarily news related culture, family and social interactions all collectively informed the overall perception of older people for the respondent. One other experiential site of meaning making for the interviewees was within the work setting where all encountered older people on at least a daily basis. For some, in the absence of ongoing familial relationships with older people, as well as a relatively limited consumption of culture, work was acknowledged as the dominant site of meaning making:

“My attitudes towards elderly people are very much driven by that, the day to day experience of seeing them, in an average clinic I see 12-15 people in a morning and more than half of them, close to three quarters of them, will be over the age of 65. So I’m dealing with a lot of elderly people all the time, so my views on elderly people are very much determined by the people I see, and as I said, it’s not a stereotype, some of them are intensely irritating people, some are absolutely delightful” (CROOP-007)

It is arguable that the interactions with older people gathered in the work, friendship and family settings are relatable to the deeper representations of older people operating in culture. These tend to offer development over a prolonged period of time, often demonstrating a complex blend of characteristics and traits. Those who encountered older people across any of these settings tended to show more diverse perceptions of ageing and older characteristics. Within this, there is recognition of cultural representations of older people, such as vulnerability and active ageing, as well as character tropes such as the busybody. However, these operate alongside other perceptions driven by different sites of experience forming a constellation of influences in which culture plays a part among numerous other experiential stimuli. For the majority of interviewees, these combined to inform a view of older people as diverse and heterogeneous, as outlined by many of the examples above. That said there were variations in this, particularly with those interviewees who engaged more actively with youth cultural texts such as Heat Magazine or OK Magazine.

Conclusion

This discussion chapter has summarised the findings developed over the last three chapters, expanding them to show how the positive and negative representations associated with older people fluctuate between and within texts based on numerous processes associated with the cultural industry. Key trends towards audience maximisation, such as market segmentation, have helped to position older people as absent altogether from certain texts. Beyond this, the desire of the cultural industries to effectively communicate with their audiences has a tendency to reduce older people to a tokenistic presence, discursively subsidiary to a wider story. These practices take place in many of the texts regularly consumed by healthcare staff, but particularly those targeting younger audiences. While this makes it plausible to connect issues of ageism within the NHS to the culture engaged with by its staff, the majority of interviewees appeared to balance their perceptions through experiences gathered in the work or social setting. In this sense, much like in the work of Ang (1991; 1996), Hall (1997) and Gamson (1992), audience

response comes to be driven by numerous experiential factors of which cultural information forms one of several other parts. Nevertheless, this is not to dismiss the pervasive effect that culture can have on the perceptions of its audiences. The interview sample cited numerous instances where the cultural representations observed in the discourse analysis were returned when reflecting on the characteristics of older people. On this basis, another of the key findings of this study is that culture is a potential intervention point to tackle issues of ageism within the healthcare sector, and across society more broadly. A number of interviews demonstrated the value attributed to good quality interactions with older people in the work and social settings. Indeed, in those instances where perceptions of older people seemed to be mainly characterised by cultural representations, the training and experience received from the work setting counterbalanced the overall perception to some degree. The trend towards market segmentation in the cultural industries, where older people disappear altogether from certain texts, runs counter to trends taking place in the work and community setting. Training within the healthcare sector, outlined in Chapter 2, showed numerous dignity campaigns and organisational culture offering practical and philosophical approaches to caring for older people (see Health Advisory Service, 1998; Department of Health, 2006b; Royal College of Nursing, 2008). These tended to emphasise the importance of interaction and engagement, as well as the more practical aspects of care such as privacy. Likewise, the importance of intergenerational relationships has been emphasised by numerous studies into civic and social engagement (see Stratton and Tadd, 2005; Oberg, 2007; Kruse and Schmitt, 2015). This academic work has been mirrored by efforts from organisations such as Alzheimer's Society (2015), the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (Porter and Seeley, 2008) and the Beth Johnson Foundation (2015) supported by a broader governmental emphasis. As will be discussed in the conclusion, market trends taking place in the cultural industries are potentially more problematic to tackle than the work and community setting efforts outlined above. Nevertheless, to offer an all-encompassing approach to tackling ageism in the healthcare sector and beyond, there are recommendations emerging from this study as to what

shape any cultural interventions could take, as the next and final chapter will highlight.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

The conclusion to this study will reflect upon the research questions that initially underpinned it, evaluating the effectiveness and deficiencies of the mixed-methods approach adopted in addressing them. In doing so, this will build on the discussion chapter preceding this to identify potential avenues that future research in the field could take, as well as highlight how cultural portrayals of later life could be improved. The research questions established in Chapter 4 were as follows:

- 1) Which television shows, radio shows, printed and online press are commonly consumed by NHS staff?
- 2) How are older people represented in television shows, radio shows and the printed and online popular press commonly consumed by NHS staff?
- 3) Does the cultural representation of older people have any bearing on the attitudes of NHS staff?
- 4) What social and cultural factors help to explain the delivery of quality care or lack of dignified care in the healthcare sector?
- 5) Is it possible to accommodate messages from the popular discourse around older people into more effective means of dignity training and/or campaigns?

The initial question of *'which television shows, radio shows, printed and online press are commonly consumed by NHS staff?'* was tackled through the quantitative survey of NHS staff. As outlined in Chapter 5, the sample provided 1,524 responses offering broad demographic comparability to the wider NHS staff population across England and Wales. This response rate was higher than previous studies in the healthcare sector adopting postal surveys, suggesting the minimalist survey design and the dissemination onto wards were broadly successful. The questionnaire primarily tackled respondents' consumption habits in the realms of television, radio, newspapers, magazines and Internet news. This approach was developmental in its intention with the aim being to provide a diverse list of texts within each cultural form that would influence the subsequent research

stages (see Greene and Caracelli, 1997). Again, the results successfully enabled this to occur with a rich array of cultural texts being returned. The tabular data of Chapter 5 outlined these responses in further detail.

Primarily, the discourse analysis was in place to address the second research question of *'how are older people represented in television shows, radio shows and the printed and online popular press commonly consumed by NHS staff?'* Reducing the diversity of texts returned from the survey to those finally selected for the analysis brought with it a range of methodological challenges. The research design and selection process for this stage was based upon a balance of what was achievable within project timescale against what would offer theoretical saturation (Starks and Trinidad, 2007). Future studies could potentially benefit from a farther-reaching discourse analysis, incorporating a greater range of the texts returned from the survey. That said, on completion of the thematic analysis, and following discussions with the supervisory team, it was felt that as practical a level of theoretical saturation had been achieved as was possible. Certainly, the field notes emerging from 13 hours of watching television, 30 hours of listening to the radio and reading 15 different newspaper editions, 12 different magazine editions and over 130 Internet news articles produced a core thematic framework that would feature once more in relation to the semi-structured interviews. The framework emanating from the discourse analysis saw strong thematic alignment with previous work on the cultural representations of older people. One overriding aspect of this was the absence of older people, as was initially introduced in Chapter 6. However, the study also sought to identify the range of ways older people were represented when they did appear, as outlined throughout Chapters 7 and 8. It is worth summarising some of the key points from these chapters at this stage.

The history of cultural representations of older people has been characterised by the continued repetition of negative stereotyping. The likes of Featherstone and Wernick (1995) and Hareven (1995) have highlighted a shift towards senescent representations of later life taking place around the

nineteenth century. This was typified by discursive themes of physical and mental impairment, dependency and decline. The sample for this study showed the continued dominance of these themes across all of the cultural forms analysed. Whether in the depictions of frail older people in 24 Hours In A&E, in newspaper articles where neglect and dependency are pillars of the emotional narrative, or in magazine adverts for mobility scooters, the imagery and terminology predominantly aligned with themes of debilitation and vulnerability. Beyond this, studies of stereotypes of older people have suggested other commonly returned associations with elderly people (see Hummert, 1990; Schmidt and Boland, 1986; Hummert et al, 1994). Of these, tropes of the 'severely impaired' and 'vulnerable' form two of the most commonly reported alongside others such as the 'shrew/curmudgeon' (Hummert et al, 1994; 240). This study also saw instances of this latter representation recurring in the discourse analysis sample. Hummert et al have characterised the shrew or curmudgeon stereotype with traits such as nosiness, poor temper, snobbishness and stubbornness (ibid; 246). These behavioural attributes were evident in well-established characters such as Norris Cole in Coronation Street, as well as in glimpses of older people in shows like 24 Hours In A&E. In the latter of these cases, the trope of nosiness or stubbornness was so well established that it was deployed for comic effect with minimal back-story. For such representations to exist in this context demonstrates how deeply embedded they are within our culture and, subsequently, our shared representational systems.

Previous investigations into commonly held stereotypes of older people also identified positive representations such as the 'golden ager' or the 'perfect grandparent', alongside other matriarch and patriarch based categories (Schmidt and Boland, 1986; Hummert et al, 1994). While not as obvious in scale as vulnerability and decline, the active or golden ageing trope was the most commonly observed 'positive' representation to be taken from the discourse analysis, operating across a variety of the cultural forms studied. The 'golden ager' archetype has been associated with traits such as 'happy', 'sociable', 'healthy', 'successful' and 'independent' (Hummert et al, 1994;

245). When considering the theme of active ageing introduced in chapter 7, the images of ageing in this context were highly demonstrative of these attributes. The advertising in newspapers and magazines, while often alluding to growing impairment through the products being sold, exclusively featured smiling, apparently healthy and well-dressed older people. Likewise, any articles on older people in magazine titles such as *Heat* or *OK Magazine* appeared to be primarily based on the protagonists' ongoing success in their field. Other 'golden ager' traits such as 'adventurous' and 'capable' were evidenced through the likes of John Simpson on BBC News, commonly shown in war-torn countries such as the Ukraine delivering reports to the camera, as well as in other high-profile coverage of ageing experts such as politicians John Kerry or Menzies Campbell. In these instances, the expertise and professionalism of the older protagonists marks a less physical form of activity, engaging instead with traits of intellectual and cognitive capability. Related ideas of wisdom were also noted in regards to the commonly represented older person trope of the 'perfect grandparent' or the 'liberal matriarch / patriarch' (ibid).

The next methodological step of telephone interviews with NHS staff was intended to address two further research questions: ***'does the cultural representation of older people have any bearing on the attitudes of NHS staff?'*** and ***'what social and cultural factors help to explain the delivery of quality care or lack of dignified care in the healthcare sector?'*** Though the semi-structured nature of the interviews meant that the schedule was open to flexibility, these questions were largely addressed through three different sections within the interview. As Chapter 4 highlighted, these orientated towards work and social experiences of older people, alongside those experiences gathered from their cultural consumption. Analysis of the responses showed that numerous facets of cultural representation were mentioned when interviewees were reflecting on their perceptions of older people. This was particularly salient with regard to the dominant analytical themes of vulnerability and physical decline, though was also noticeable with the counter discourse of active ageing and experiential wisdom. This

suggested that cultural representations exerted some level of influence over staff perception of older people, though the extent to which this affected their working practice was undeterminable within the confines of this study. Disentangling the relative impact of work, social or family experiences of older people upon attitude formation, and comparing it to the influence of cultural representation is notoriously difficult. The discussion in Chapter 3 outlined previous research carried out into audience studies, demonstrating the complexity associated with audiences' decoding of cultural texts. Again, the work of Ang (1991) is helpful in highlighting this by referring to 'an infinite and ever expanding myriad of dispersed practices and experiences' (1991; 155). The use of semi-structured interviews to interrogate these competing realms of experience could only reveal so much. The data supported the assertion that cultural representations had some bearing upon the attitudes of some staff consuming them. However, this was seen alongside competing and often contradictory experiences gathered from other settings. To ascribe the level of influence of one experiential realm over another would require further investigation. Previous studies have benefitted from combining interview data with ethnographic observation, highlighting the difference between the principles espoused by staff and their actions when putting them into practice (see Tadd et al, 2011a; 2011b).

Nevertheless, the interview data and its emergent findings help to situate this study within the literature on audience activity more broadly. The precise levels of influence from work, family, social and cultural spheres, as we have seen, are problematic to quantify. However, the work of Ang (1991; 1996) is notable for embracing this complexity while maintaining lessons learned from a rich history of inquiry into audiences. This study aligns with that position, highlighting complex interplays between realms of social experience, yet also demonstrating clear indications of 'agenda setting' from cultural sources (Funkhouser, 1973; Iyengar and Kinder; 1987). Beyond this, the findings from this study also corroborate the work of Gamson (1992) where participants were found to construct meaning through a combination of popular wisdom, media information and life experiences. The continued

value of each of these areas in attitude formation should therefore be formally acknowledged, marking cultural representation of older people as of similar importance to areas such as the family, social peer groups and work settings.

Chapter 9 began to address issues relating to the final research question of '*is it possible to accommodate messages from popular culture into dignity campaigns and training?*' This discussion highlighted how the profit-driven operation of the cultural industries was a potential barrier for cultural interventions to take place. Nevertheless, due to the complex processes at work within the industries, there are precedents for collaboration between healthcare organisations and creative teams. One recent example came with a Coronation Street storyline in which Audrey Roberts suffered a heart attack. The storyline was scripted alongside other episodic narratives taking place in the show by the same creative team. However, this process was done in conjunction with representatives of the British Heart Foundation (BHF) (Bonley, 2012). This partnership originated from the BHF's desire to grow awareness of the symptoms of a female heart attack and resulted in an increase in public awareness and calls to the BHF helpline (ibid). The success of this cultural intervention could also potentially be applied to issues of ageism and dignified care, if similar relationships were to be fostered between dignity campaigns and the cultural industries.

That said, the precise nature of how such an intervention operated would demand close scrutiny. Chapter 9 also introduced the conceptual division between tokenistic and deeper representations of older people. This acts as a guide to the best means of effectively highlighting the key issues of ageism and compromised dignity within the cultural sphere. Any cultural intervention should deliver at a deeper, as opposed to a tokenistic level, demonstrating strong scriptwriting, adequate time devoted to the storyline and fruitful creative collaboration between healthcare experts and creative industry teams. When such deep representations are carried out successfully they have been shown to resonate both with targeted groups, as well as the wider audience. The case study of Audrey Roberts offers one such example,

as does another Coronation Street storyline relating to Mike Baldwin's dementia. Both instances were notable for the inclusion of major characters, long-term storyline development and creative collaboration. In addition, both examples were praised by healthcare organisations for sensitive portrayals of their respective issues. If such deep cultural representations could be assured on a storyline addressing issues of dignified care of older people, this may be a helpful means of educating the NHS staff population in a previously untested manner. Indeed, further work and research into the practical aspects of this forms a key recommendation of the study.

Beyond this, the accumulated knowledge gathered as part of this project offers a range of potential avenues for further research. The survey data provides granularity for targeted text-by-text cultural interventions based on occupation or gender, while the discourse analysis and interviews offer indication of what style of representations generate emotional resonance within an audience. As mentioned already, the value of deeper, sensitive representations should not be underestimated. The reliance of many cultural texts on negative stereotypes of older people, or their omission from the text altogether, only serves to re-instil the status quo where older people are seen as tokenistic or subsidiary. When relating this back to the discussion of dignity in Chapter 2, this principle is as applicable in the healthcare setting as it is in the cultural.

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Appendix A: Media Consumption Survey

Media Consumption & Health Care Staff



A Questionnaire

Date: 24/04/2013
Version: 3.0

About the Questionnaire

This questionnaire has been designed to explore the popular culture and media that health care staff watch, read and listen to. We know that working in the health care sector can be extremely busy, so we have kept this questionnaire as short as possible. It will only take five minutes to complete.

The research being undertaken has been funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and is being carried out through Cardiff University. All information collected in the study will be kept confidential and will maintain your anonymity. All copies of the questionnaires will be securely stored and will only be accessible to the research team. Additionally, any related data will be stored in a password protected computer.

There are two sections to the questionnaire: the first is about what you watch, read and listen to; the second is about you as an individual.

About What You Watch, Read and Listen To

The Television



1. In an average day, how many hours do you watch television? (This should include Watch on Demand services such as BBC iPlayer and 4 on Demand)

- Never watch television
- Less than 1 hour
- About 1 hour
- About 2 hours
- About 3 hours
- About 4 hours
- About 5 hours or more
- Don't know

IF YOU ANSWERED "NEVER WATCH TELEVISION" - MOVE TO QUESTION 4

2. Which THREE television shows do you watch most often? *(Please respond with shows and not genres)*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. Which THREE television shows are you most likely to set aside time to watch? *(Please respond with shows and not genres)*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

The Printed Press



4. How often do you read a newspaper, including regional or local daily papers?

- Every day
- A few times a week
- Once a week
- Less than once a week
- Never

IF YOU ANSWERED "NEVER" - MOVE TO QUESTION 6

5. Which one of the following newspapers do you read most often?

- Daily Express
- Daily Mail
- Daily Mirror
- Daily Star
- Daily Telegraph
- Financial Times
- The Guardian
- The Independent
- The Sun
- The Times
- Metro
- Local daily newspaper, write in below

Other daily newspaper, write in below

None

6. Do you read any print magazines either regularly or occasionally?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

IF YOU ANSWERED "NO" OR "DON'T KNOW"- MOVE TO QUESTION 9

7. Which THREE magazines do you currently purchase, either regularly or occasionally?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

8. Which THREE magazines do you currently read, either regularly or occasionally?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The Radio



9. In an average day, how many hours do you listen to the radio?

- Never listen to the radio
- Less than 1 hour
- About 1 hour
- About 2 hours
- About 3 hours
- About 4 hours
- About 5 hours or more
- Don't know

IF YOU ANSWERED "NEVER LISTEN TO THE RADIO" - MOVE TO QUESTION 12

10. Which THREE radio stations do you listen to most frequently? (e.g. BBC Radio 1, Classic FM)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

11. When are you most likely to listen to the radio? (Please tick as many as appropriate)

- 6am to 9am
- 9am to 12pm
- 12pm to 3pm
- 3pm to 6pm
- 6pm to 9pm
- 9pm to 12am
- 12am to 6am

The Internet



12. In an average day, how many hours do you spend on the Internet?

- Never go on the Internet
- Less than 1 hour
- About 1 hour
- About 2 hours
- About 3 hours
- About 4 hours
- About 5 hours or more
- Don't know

***IF YOU ANSWERED "NEVER GO ON THE INTERNET"
- MOVE TO QUESTION 15***

13. Excluding social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter, which THREE websites do you visit most regularly to read the news?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

14. Excluding social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter, which THREE websites do you visit most regularly for general entertainment?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

About You

15. What was your age on your last birthday?

_____ years

16. What is your sex?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

17. Do you have face-to-face contact with patients / service users / residents aged over 65 as part of your job?

- Yes, at least daily
- Yes, but less than daily
- No

18. What is your occupational group?

- Admin / Clerical
- Consultant
- Doctor
- Registered nurse / midwife
- Nursing / health care assistant
- Allied health care professional (e.g. Pharmacy, Physiotherapy)
- Managerial
- Corporate Services (e.g. Board member)
- Maintenance / Ancillary
- Other, write in below

19. Please specify your ethnicity

Choose one section from A to E, then tick one box to best describe your ethnic group or background

A. White

- English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
 - Irish
 - Gypsy or Irish Traveller
 - Any other White background, write in below
-

B. Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups

- White and Black Caribbean
 - White and Black African
 - White and Asian
 - Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background, write in below
-

C. Asian / Asian British

- Indian
 - Pakistani
 - Bangladeshi
 - Chinese
 - Any other Asian background, write in below
-

D. Black / African / Caribbean / Black British

- African
 - Caribbean
 - Any other Black / African / Caribbean background, write in below
-

E. Other ethnic group

- Arab
 - Any other ethnic group, write in below
-

PLEASE TURN OVER

THANK YOU

**FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ANSWER OUR QUESTIONS -
THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS NOW COMPLETE**

**PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE
STAMPED, ADDRESSED ENVELOPE PROVIDED**

**SHOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN BEING INTERVIEWED AT A LATER DATE,
PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS BELOW:**

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

E-MAIL: _____

FOR ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

**SIMON READ
e: READSM@CARDIFF.AC.UK**

Appendix B: Discourse Analysis Templates

Discourse Analysis Protocol - Television

General Details

Name of Text:	
Date of Text:	
Time of Text:	
Reference:	
Discursive Origins:	
General Impressions:	

Representation A	
Start time	End time
Aural Soundtrack	
Verbal dialogue	
Non-verbal dialogue	
Non-verbal communication	
Music	
Sound effects	
Visual Delivery	
Mise-en-scene	
Set design	
Dress	
Body language	
Post-production Effects	
Editing	
Filming / recording	
Colour grading	
Other	

Discourse Analysis Protocol – Radio

General Details

Name of Text:	
Date of Text:	
Time of Text:	
Reference:	
Discursive Origins:	
General Impressions:	

Representations of Older People

Representation A	
Aural Soundtrack	
Verbal dialogue	
Non-verbal communication	
Music	
Sound effects	
Post-Productive Effects	
Editing	
Technical effects	
Other	

Discourse Analysis Protocol – Internet News

General Details

Name of Text:	
Date of Text:	
Time of Text:	
Reference:	
Discursive Origins:	
General Impressions:	

Representations of Older People

Representation A	
Written Text	
Headline	
Articles	
Links	
Visual Design	
Text layout	
Font	
Colour usage	
Images	
Website Functionality	

Discourse Analysis Protocol – Newspapers

General Details

Name of Text:	
Date of Text:	
Time of Text:	
Reference:	
Discursive Origins:	
General Impressions:	

Representations of Older People

Representation A	
Written Text	
Headline	
Articles	
Visual Design	
Page layout	
Font	
Colour usage	
Images	

Discourse Analysis Protocol – Magazines

General Details

Name of Text:	
Date of Text:	
Time of Text:	
Reference:	
Discursive Origins:	
General Impressions:	

Representations of Older People

Representation A	
Written Text	
Headline	
Articles	
Visual Design	
Page layout	
Font	
Colour usage	
Images	

Appendix C: Semi-Structured Interview Schedules

High Consumer Interview Schedule

Employment / Older People Questions (7-10 mins)

1. Before we progress any further, I was wondering if you would mind telling me a little about what your job role is within the NHS and what that entails.

a. Follow-up questions on specifics of job role (hours worked / tasks / interactions / how long in the organisation).

2. What aspects of your job do you enjoy?

a. What is particularly enjoyable about those aspects?

b. Are there any particular elements that lead you to not enjoy it?

3. Are there any particular elements about your work that you don't enjoy?

a. What are these?

b. Why do you think they happen?

4. We're now going to move onto some questions specifically related to older people. What characteristics do you associate with 'older people'?

a. Explore the answers in depth, especially when there's a correlation between the identified themes from the discourse analysis (e.g. loss; sadness; alienation; active ageing etc)

5. What do you think is required to adequately care for older people in the hospital setting?

a. Explore the responses in depth – look at exploring issues of care provision, physical environment and so on.

6. Can you talk me through any examples of where you think an older person has received good quality care in your organisation?

- a. How did this come about?
- b. What factors made this good quality care?

7. And are there any examples where you feel an older person has received poor quality care in your organisation?

- a. How did this come about?
- b. What factors made this poor quality care?

8. Can you think of any instances where an older person has stopped you from working effectively?

- a. Can use answers to previous questions potentially to explore this in more depth.

9. How do you personally feel about the ageing process and getting older yourself?

- a. Prompts – Does it scare you? Are you looking forward to it? Why so?
- b. Explore answers for perceptions of older people.

Social Background Questions (3-5 mins)

10. That's the set of questions relating to employment finished now. These following questions look at other, more social experiences of older people. I was wondering if you could tell me a little about your youth. Were older people present very often in your life as you were growing up?

- a. Talk about grandparents – how often they visited or were visited; good or bad relationships with them.
- b. Explore any other potential relationships (teachers; nannies; carers)

11. Do you have much contact with older people these days outside of working with them as patients?

- a. Dependent on age, talk about parents.
- b. Explore any other potential relationships (work colleagues; friends; social contacts)

12. With regards to the older people you are still in contact with, are you concerned about them going into hospitals or care homes?

- a. Location of care provision.
- b. Explore concerns in depth for perceptions of older people – why concerned; why not concerned.

Cultural Representation Questions (7-10 mins)

13. That's all we are looking for regarding social interactions with older people. Now I'm going to ask a few questions regarding what culture you engage with. You mentioned watching (Coronation Street / 24 Hours In A&E / BBC News) in the survey issued earlier in the year. Could you tell me what it is about these shows that you enjoy?

- a. Are there any characters / storylines you especially identify with? Why?
- b. How do you think older people are portrayed within this / these show(s)?
- c. If shows are no longer watched, why did you decide to do this?

14. In terms of radio listening, you mentioned you tended to listen to BBC Radio 1 / BBC Radio 2 and often in the morning. Could you tell me a little more about why you listen to these shows?

- a. Are there any particular aspects to the show that you enjoy?
- b. How do you think older people are represented? Are they mentioned or referred to often? Why do you think that might be?
- c. If shows are no longer listened to, why did you decide to do this?

15. You stated in the survey that you read (insert relevant newspapers / magazines e.g. Daily Mail; Take A Break; Heat etc). Could you talk me through your reasons for choosing these titles?

- a. What do you enjoy about these titles? Any elements you don't enjoy?
- b. Do you have any thoughts on how older people are represented in these titles?
- c. If you have decided to no longer read these, what were your reasons for doing so?

16. Your Internet usage survey answers suggested that you tended to visit Mail Online, Sky News or BBC News to get news updates. Could you tell me your reasons for choosing these web news services over others?

- a. What features of these sites do you enjoy the most?
- b. Are there any particular styles of story that take your interest?
- c. Do you have any thoughts on how older people are represented on such sites?
- d. If you have changed your Internet reading habits, could you explain why?

17. Do you think your perception of older people is similar to the way in which older people are shown on television or talked about on the radio or in the news?

- a. What differences and similarities do you think there are?
- b. Why do you think these differences or similarities may exist?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Low Consumer Interview Schedule

Employment / Older People Questions (7-10 mins)

1. Before we progress any further, I was wondering if you would mind telling me a little about what your job role is within the NHS and what that entails.

a. Follow-up questions on specifics of job role (hours worked / tasks / interactions / how long in the organisation).

2. What aspects of your job do you enjoy?

a. What is particularly enjoyable about those aspects?

b. Are there any particular elements that lead you to not enjoy it?

3. Are there any particular elements about your work that you don't enjoy?

a. What are these?

b. Why do you think they happen?

4. We're now going to move onto some questions specifically related to older people. What characteristics do you associate with 'older people'?

a. Explore the answers in depth, especially when there's a correlation between the identified themes from the discourse analysis (e.g. loss; sadness; alienation; active ageing etc)

5. What do you think is required to adequately care for older people in the hospital setting?

a. Explore the responses in depth – look at exploring issues of care provision, physical environment and so on.

6. Can you talk me through any examples of where you think an older person has received good quality care in your organisation?

- a. How did this come about?
 - b. What factors made this good quality care?
- 7. And are there any examples where you feel an older person has received poor quality care in your organisation?**
- a. How did this come about?
 - b. What factors made this poor quality care?
- 8. Can you think of any instances where an older person has stopped you from working effectively?**
- a. Can use answers to previous questions potentially to explore this in more depth.
- 9. How do you personally feel about the ageing process and getting older yourself?**
- a. Prompts – Does it scare you? Are you looking forward to it? Why so?
 - b. Explore answers for perceptions of older people.

Social Background Questions (3-5 mins)

10. That's the set of questions relating to employment finished now. These following questions look at other, more social experiences of older people. I was wondering if you could tell me a little about your youth. Were older people present very often in your life as you were growing up?

- a. Talk about grandparents – how often they visited or were visited; good or bad relationships with them.
- b. Explore any other potential relationships (teachers; nannies; carers)

11. Do you have much contact with older people these days outside of working with them as patients?

- a. Dependent on age, talk about parents.
- b. Explore any other potential relationships (work colleagues; friends; social contacts)

12. With regards to the older people you are still in contact with, are you concerned about them going into hospitals or care homes?

- a. Location of care provision.
- b. Explore concerns in depth for perceptions of older people – why concerned; why not concerned.

Cultural Representation Questions (7-10 mins)

13. That's all we are looking for regarding social interactions with older people. Now I'm going to ask a few questions regarding how older people are represented in culture. Firstly, do you consider yourself to watch much television?

- a. How much do you watch?
- b. What programmes do you tend to watch?
- c. Why?

14. Do you listen to the radio much in day-to-day life

- a. How often do you listen? For how long?
- b. What stations or presenters do you tend to tune into?
- c. Any particular reason?

15. Do you often read magazines or newspapers or any online Internet news?

- a. How often do you read them?
- b. Do you read them in depth or just browse?
- c. Any particular newspapers, magazines or websites that you read more often than others?
- d. Any particular reason?

16. Have there been any examples of older people in the news recently that have caught your interest?

- a. Explore the answers in depth.

b. Potential to mention Operation Yewtree at this stage – but only if provided as a response.

c. What do you think the impact this reportage of older people may have on how other people think of them?

17. Do you have any thoughts on how older people are represented in the programmes and printed products we have just talked about?

a. What associations do you have with the characteristics of older people as they are represented in popular culture?

b. Are there any older people in popular culture that especially spring to mind?

18. Do you think your perception of older people is similar to the way in which older people are shown on television or talked about on the radio or in the news?

a. What differences and similarities do you think there are?

b. Why do you think these differences or similarities may exist?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME