THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

New Lad or Just Like Dad?

Young Working-Class Masculinities and Career Choices in Hull

being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of PhD

in the University of Hull

by

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Acknowledgements

Before commencing on my PhD journey, I read several books which introduced and outlined the process. A commonality in all of these texts was the assertion that undertaking a thesis on a part-time basis was an extremely challenging if not meritorious endeavour. The consensus, too, seemed to be that this pathway was even more so when combined with full-time employment in an unrelated occupational area or field. In negotiating this pathway, I would, therefore, like to express my sincere gratitude to the following esteemed colleagues and my family for all the help and encouragement they have offered me over the last 6 years.

Firstly, I am deeply indebted for all the support Dr Suzanne Clisby and Dr Rachel Alsop, my supervisors, have provided me with. I have always looked forward to our meetings with herbal tea in hand (thanks Suzanne for introducing me to the 'vanilla, honey and camomile' infusion) having a stimulating and constructive discussion about my research.

My heartfelt appreciation must be extended to all participants for their honesty, generosity and openness in the telling and retelling of lived experiences.

Finally, I must mention my family who have always believed in and encouraged me right from being the only one of us to attend university through to my undertaking a PhD as a mature student. Thanks to Mum and Sally for both being a willing 'pair of ears' when I was, for example, rehearsing for my first ever conference or sounding ideas for the thesis. Dad, I will also be putting on the kettle for the foreseeable future! This I hope will go some way to express my appreciation for all the cups of coffee you made me while I was writing up my latest chapter, either late in the evening, and/or at weekends.

Chapter 1

Hairdryer or Hammer?

Young Masculinities and Career Choices

"Through sex role socialisation, boys learn that men and women have different abilities, interests and aptitudes that dictate different jobs for men and women which leads men to proscribe certain jobs which are perceived as women's work" (Hayes, 1986: 92).

Research Questions

In this doctoral thesis, I aim to address the following three research questions, to:

  i.   Develop a more nuanced understanding of the gendering role that working-class masculinities have in shaping educational and career aspirations
  ii. Consider how vocational choices continue to define and validate these gender identities
  iii. Explore how contemporary laddism intersects with prevailing hierarchies of young, white and working-class masculinities.

New Lad or Like Dad? Introducing the Research

As Prime Minister Elect, Teresa May, stated in her inaugural speech, 11 July 2016, white, working-class boys are often left behind. These sentiments broadly capture the underlying rationale behind the research. My academic interest in young working-class masculinities is firmly embedded in two antecedents. Firstly, is my previous professional role as a careers guidance practitioner. Specifically, my first research question derives from my desire to develop a

more nuanced understanding of the gendering role that working-class masculinities have in shaping educational and career aspirations. Integral to this process, is my second research question of exploring how vocational choices continue to define and validate these gender identities.

Regarding the second antecedent, undertaking my PhD has coincided with the purported resurgence of misogyny and the interconnected rise in laddish culture (Day, 2013; Phipps & Young, 2013; 2015; Williams, 2014). With the latter appropriated by middle class men, both national press coverage and academic research highlights the pervasiveness of this exaggerated form of masculinity in a number of contexts (Phipps & Young, 2013, 2015). Ostensibly, this new variant of laddism is not too dissimilar to that enacted by the working class 'lads' in Paul Willis's (1977) seminal ethnography, *Learning to Labour,* published nearly 40 years ago. My third research question, then, is in line with the latter comparison. Namely, I explore how contemporary laddism intersects with prevailing hierarchies of young, white and working-class masculinities.

Comparatively speaking, a sizeable number of the participants were drawn from engineering, motor mechanics and construction-related full-time courses or apprenticeships (which I will collectively refer to as 'the trades' from this point onwards). Therefore, a more in-depth analysis of working-class laddish culture, specific to these industries is facilitated. Application of Beasley's (2008a) revisionist taxonomy of hegemonic masculinity is deployed in interpreting, analysing and presenting my research findings.

Framed within a feminist and sociological gender analysis, the above research questions are explored by focusing on men undertaking vocational training during the initial stages of their career pathways. Demarcating the sample of 114 participants, 72 men and 23 women, aged between 15 and 25, along with 19 key professionals took part in the research. All participants were recruited from the following sectors: catering, construction, engineering, motor mechanics, administrative-based roles, IT and preparatory courses for the armed forces. Face-to-face life history interviews, with 51 young men, comprised the main tool of data generation. In view of its identification as a working-class city (Featherstone, 2012), I selected Kingston upon Hull (usually abbreviated to Hull

in colloquial usage and referred to as such from this juncture forward) as the contextual setting for my research.

Having introduced the research above, I now turn to exploring some of these introductory themes in more depth. I begin by considering how my work with the careers service influenced the development of my first research question. Further discussion on the interconnections between working-class masculinities in shaping vocational choices then follows. Included here is my rationale for utilising both a feminist and sociological gender analysis and Beasley's (2008a) revisionist taxonomy of hegemonic masculinity in framing my research findings. Here, too, I consider why my research should focus on wider working-class masculinities rather than the narrower scope of just career decision-making. Specifically, I wish to explore intersections with laddism and the potential impact this has on how they 'do' masculinity i.e. their leisure pursuits, lifestyle choices and aspirations. Although not exclusively, this analysis is conducted predominantly through the narratives of participants working or training in one of the trades.

Developing a Professional Role into Academic Interest

As referred to briefly above, carrying out research into how young working class masculinities may shape career aspirations is necessarily influenced by my autographical background (Roseneil, 1993). In other words, it evolved from my former professional roles based in the Connexions Service[1], firstly as a careers officer and more recently as a team manager[2]. For the whole duration of the 7 years I was employed in these posts, the potential adverse impact of gendered expectations on career choices became only too apparent to me. Especially pertinent for me, however, was when a young man's aspiration was to undertake a childcare apprenticeship. During his interview, he relayed how he could not fulfil this goal because of the enormous backlash he received from his father,

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[1] Connexions was a New Labour Government initiative introduced in 2001 to replace the former Careers Service in England. 47 partnerships were originally set up at its conception as the major providers of information, advice and guidance to 13-19 year olds (up to 25 for those with special education needs). Wales and Scotland have retained their own careers services, Careers Wales and Careers Scotland respectively.
[2] I managed a team of 10 Connexions Careers Officers.

brothers and friends. He was further accused of being a "poofter" and/or paedophile and it was understandably causing him a great deal of anguish. The aspirations of the majority of the teenagers I regularly interviewed were in line with one of the key indicators of the prevailing inequality between men and women, namely, the *horizontally* and *vertically* segregated workforce (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). Collectively, a significant body of vocational, governmental and international research[3] has been dedicated to exploring the deep-rooted and ingrained stereotypical attitudes that underlie and contribute to the persistence of these patterns (Dales, 2006). Despite the prolificacy of this research, teenagers have continued to be funnelled into gendered pathways (Holdsworth et al., 2007; Bradley, 2013; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). Inclusive of these segregated trajectories have been both academic subjects taken (Van de Werfhorst et al., 2003; Bell et al., 2005; Blenkinsop et al., 2006) and subsequent career choices (Gottfredson, 1981; Kelly, 1989; Looker, 1993; Furlong & Biggart, 1999).

Initially, my interest in this funnelling was channelled into developing, co-ordinating and leading the dedicated *Gender Equalities Research Forum*. As an additional responsibility, this was integrated into the duties I performed as Team Manager within the Hull Connexions Service. Comprised of a membership from a cross-section of departments with the City Council, one of the roles of this specialist group had been to both understand and challenge gendered segregation apparent across the city.

The catalyst underlying the group's formation was a newspaper article that appeared in the national press during 2007. Within this piece, the delivery of poor quality careers advice and guidance was identified as the major contributory factor underlying the persistence of a horizontally segregated workforce (CYN Now, 2007). This media coverage was, in fact, drawing on the findings of a survey carried out in 2007 by Girlguiding UK of just under 300 female participants aged between 14 and 26. Of those polled, 35% believed that they had received gender biased vocational advice. In other words, the

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[3]The governmental and vocational research undertaken predominantly under the last New Labour administration (1997-2010) was utilised to inform the work of careers guidance practitioners. For example, guidelines were implemented for effectively challenging gender stereotyping in occupational choice.

respondents felt that they had been actively steered towards female-dominated professions such as teaching, hairdressing and childcare by both careers officers and their teachers (CYP Now, 2007).

Locally too, this theme was echoed within a Yorkshire-based research project led by Suzanne Clisby at the University of Hull: *Breakthrough: Researching Gendered Experiences of Education and Employment in Yorkshire and Humberside.* Many of the women interviewed felt that careers officers, whether inadvertently or not, had reinforced gendered expectations about 'suitable' career choices. Therefore, in making decisions about their futures, these exchanges had subsequently impacted through reducing the breadth of choices open to them (Holdsworth et al., 2007).

The findings of both these studies are indicative of national trends. Collectively, women are subject to disadvantage through the comparatively lower status of the feminised jobs in which, statistically speaking, they are likely to find employment (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014; McDowell, 2014). For instance, they are disproportionately aggregated in those sectors described as the '5 Cs': cleaning, catering, caring, cashiering and clerical (DCLG, 2006, 2009). Among the reported adverse implications of this embedded division of labour have been thwarted aspirations (CYP Now, 2007; CFWD, 2013) and differential earning potential between the sexes (Bird, 2012). Commonly referred to as the gender pay gap, predictions, based on median hourly earnings[4], suggest that females earned around 19% less than their male counterparts (McGuinness & Watson, 2015).

Returning to the Gender Equalities Forum, one of its main goals was to reconcile gender divergence, in academic and career choices, through preventative action. Achievement of this objective was via adoption of strategies to support the improvement of careers-related frontline delivery. Integral to this process was the implementation of recommendations put forward in the paper 'Quality, Choice and Aspiration: A Strategy for Young People's

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[4] Median hourly earnings are the preferred measure of the Office of National Statistics (McGuinness & Watson, 2015).

Information, Advice and Guidance'[5] (DCSF, 2009a). The application of these were aimed at consolidating the role that careers education, information and guidance (CEIAG) programmes in Hull's secondary schools and sixth form colleges played in actively challenging gender streaming in vocational aspirations.

More specifically, these recommendations were applied in order to meet key criteria within the Hull Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) Gold Standard[6] (Morris, 2010). Local educational institutions and training providers had been keen to achieve this award in recognition that they were working within national legislative guidelines for CEIAG delivery (DCSF, 2009a). In supporting this aim, the Forum developed a range of materials to meet the 'Challenging of Gender Stereotypes' criteria (Morris, 2015). Examples of these activities were career lesson plans, discussion-based group tasks and workshops rolled out to Key Stage 3 pupils. Hull City Council recognised the proactive nature of this approach as 'best practice'.

My academic interest in this area was steered by and evolved simultaneously alongside the above professional initiatives. A gradual awareness arose, though, that the constraints of working as a careers officer on a day-to-day basis were largely going to preclude the depth of exploration I had wished for. As time elapsed, doctoral research, given my existing academic credentials, appeared to be the next logical step. One notably defining moment in this realisation was my attendance at the Breakthrough Project's Conference, held in 2007, where the key findings emerging from the women's lived experiences were discussed and debated. In point of fact, it was this event that provided the inspiration for the formation of the Gender Equality Forum. At the same time, with its coverage of education and employment trajectories, my passion for the academic study of gender was established. Specifically, in complementing the Breakthrough project, my intention in this thesis is to explore these issues from

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[5] The paper was written towards the end of the last labour administration (1997-2010). However, this policy direction changed when the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition Government came to power in 2010.
[6] A locally developed initiative, awarded to institutions if their career education programmes met the key criteria set within the documentation. This comprehensive assessment exercise included portfolio-building of evidence, interviewing of key staff and inspection of the participating institution by an assessor.

a young man's perspective. The contextual setting (in line with the parameters of doctoral research) will be more tightly circumscribed, though, with it being the city of Hull as opposed to the wider Yorkshire and Humber region (see Chapter 4).

Hearing Men's Voices: Exploring Multiple Masculinities

A feminist and sociological gender analysis set within prevailing gender regimes (Walby, 2011) frames my academic inquiry into the two research questions. In other words, it is recognised that the contextual setting for my research is one whereby deeply ingrained gendered socio-cultural practices prevail (Holdsworth et al., 2007). Theoretically, Raewyn Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity has been particularly influential in this regard (Robinson, 2008a). With origins that can be traced back to the early industrial epoch, masculinity has been theorised as holding the culturally exalted position within gender regimes (Connell, 2005; Walby, 2011). Intrinsically it is, therefore, not embodied by all or, indeed, most men. As Connell (1993: 610) maintains: "hegemony is a question of relations of cultural domination, not head-counts". Being an idealised variant of masculinity, it has been reserved largely to fantasy figures, role models, popular and sporting heroes (Alsop et al., 2002). In Chapter 6, following Mac an Ghaill (1996) and Robinson (2007), my findings suggest that hegemony is closely interconnected and defined by hierarchies of heterosexuality. Likewise, Kimmel maintains masculinity is ultimately the "flight from the feminine" (2009:48). Accounting for the high prevalence of homohysteria (i.e. the social anxiety of being perceived as gay) (Anderson, 2011; Bush et al., 2012) amongst my participants, their behaviours were policed and monitored through a vocabulary of misogynist and homophobic epithets (Smith, 2007; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012).

Pivotal to the theoretical application of hegemonic masculinity, is recognition of time and space delimitation (Rotundo, 1993; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Alsop et al. (2002:141) explicate:

"Indeed, it is increasingly recognised within the literature on men and masculinities that hegemonic masculinity is a 'historically mobile relation' (Connell, 1995:77) and that the content of hegemonic masculinity is fluid over time and between cultural contexts".

In Chapters 4 and 6, I explore the evocations of the fishing industry, decimated in the mid-1970s via the Anglo-Iceland Cod wars of 1975-6 and how participants located a *"fishing mentality"* (Frank, (Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) as influencing emerging masculinities. In framing and interpreting these research findings to assimilate such contextual differences, Beasley's (2008a) revisionist taxonomy of hegemonic masculinity, which is discussed further in Chapter 3, is deployed. Here a conceptual demarcation is proposed between 'supra-hegemonic' (reflecting global masculinities) and 'sub-hegemonic' (which alternatively, could represent more localised or national identities) is introduced. Given this plurality, both could co-exist, albeit hierarchically, within the same locale. In other words, one variant assumes the dominant positioning over the other (Beasley, 2008a; 2008b). It is acknowledged that Beasley's work has been heavily critiqued (for example, see Messerschmidt, 2008). Nonetheless, I will maintain, in Chapters 3 and 6, that this framework provides the necessary clarity in unravelling the complexities of masculinities in the locale.

In Chapter 6, I argue that the emergent machismo and laddish conformist masculinity, sharing similarities (although not the same variant) with the *Loaded* and *Nuts* script described above, constituted the prevailing sub-hegemonic variant described by Beasley (2008a). With a discourse of heteronormativity running in parallel to it, performativity was through accrual of masculine credit (De Visser & Smith, 2007). Acquisition of this kudos was acquired by engagement in socially approved masculinised behaviours, activities and trajectories. Integral to these were heterosexual sexual conquests, sporting prowess, excessive alcohol consumption, and employment in traditionally masculinised and working-class occupations.

Aside from this conformist and sub-hegemonic variant, as Connell (2000) maintains, masculinity should not be perceived as a homogenous or singular construction. Rather, as Spector-Mersel (2006) argues, it should be typified by its multiplicity of co-existing variants *"across persons"* in any given society (Spector- Mersel, 2006) including in different contexts (Robinson 2008b:21). Therefore, similarities and differences *within* genders, as well as between males and females, need to be explored in a gender analysis of men and masculinities. Inclusive of these are intersections with a wide range of variables including youth sub-cultures ethnicity, social class and generational differences (Nixon, 1997). In addition to the sub-hegemonic masculinities, identified above, protest masculinities and a new identify which I typify as *Mr Average* emerged through the narratives of research participants. The main influence for the latter, as I describe below, was the television series *The Inbetweeners* and the acceptability this programme to being ordinary or average.

In carrying out this research, my intention has been, as far as possible, to capture the potential heterogeneity of working-class men. Despite this intention, both the men and women were all White British. Sampling was contingent upon the participants either volunteering for the study, or being preselected by gatekeepers (see Chapter 2). Nevertheless, the final sample is largely reflective of the ethnic mix of the city. Statistically speaking, 89% of Hull residents are White British with 1% Asian or Asian British and 2% Black or Black Asian (ONC, 2015c). As discussed in Chapter 4, Hull is a cultural context depicted by a 'pariah' image of insularity and stand-aloneness (Featherstone, 2012; English, 2014). With its geographical isolation, the city's in- and out-migration remains comparatively low. Taking all these factors into account, it follows that there was a predominant implicitness about whiteness with it being taken for granted by the young men.

This implicitness is best demonstrated by the absence of the young men 'othering' ethnicity to legitimatize their masculinities. Previous research (Cohen, 1992, 1997a; 1997b; Fine et al., 1997; Haylett, 2001) highlights how race is often integral to a rhetoric of blame, during economic restructuring and recession, amongst working-class men. Rather, my participants validated their fragile masculinities through misogynistic and homophobic laddish discourses

or banter (see Chapter 8). As whiteness was a given, ethnicity was not a point of reference in legitimating their identities in this way.

Where whiteness, albeit indirectly, did arise as an emerging theme was via the young men's disgust with their peers they referred to as *chavs*. The latter epithet is often used disparagingly to refer to the working-class. As Lawler (2005: 430) states:

> "there is, increasingly an implicit coding of the "working
> class" *as* white. Of course, working class people are not
> exclusively white, but their emblematic whiteness might
> be necessary to their continuing disparagement."

Lawler (2005; 2012) argues there has been an increasingly middle-class disgust towards and othering of the white working-class during the process of silently positioning the former as both socially desirable and the norm (Clisby, 2009). Consequently, the working-classes have been demonised and stereotyped by the media and politicians alike (Lawler, 2012). They are demonised for their ignorance and dearth of taste. For example, as emblems of their *chav* status, they are derided for their choice of clothing and wearing an abundance of cheap gold jewellery (Hartigan, 2005). Vicky Pollard from the BBC comedy show *Little Britain* and the late Jade Goody (who rose to fame via the reality show *Big Brother*) are two examples of the way in which the white working-class have been represented and vilified (Jones, 2012). Outside of the UK, similar distain has also been reported as grounded internationally in various cultures (Rhodes, 2012). For example, in Australia *bogans* are labelled and derided in similar ways to *chavs* (Pini & Previte, 2013) while in America *white trash* has ubiquitously been applied in a derogatory fashion (Hartigan, 1997; Hartigan, 2005).

The participants, as I elaborate on in Chapter 6, deployed this middle-class disgust, or, as I term it *chav hate,* to validate their orthodox notions of working-class respectability. *Chavs* were typified as residents of Hull estates, *"rough areas"* (Carl, aged 18, Catering) suffering from what Wacquant (2007:69) describes as "heightened territorial stigmatization" (see Chapter 6). The young

men despised them predominantly, though, for being unemployed and *"scroungers on benefits"* (Gary, aged 25, Engineering). Unable to secure an apprenticeship or employment, demarcating themselves from the *chavs* by accentuating their desire to work provided some legitimatization to their fragile but respectable masculinities (see Chapters 6 and 7). Coupled with misogynist and homophobic discourses, to subjugate women and gay men respectively, *chav hate* provided a further tool for ensuring the young men's positioning at the pinnacle of localised hierarchies of gender relations.

Data Generation

Data was generated from students attending seven educational institutions including six training centres and one college of further education. The rationale for this use of multiple institutions was to encourage a diverse range of working-class men to take part in the research (albeit within the parameters discussed just now). All 114 participants were sampled from four broad occupational sectors: catering, construction-related trades, administrative-based roles and preparation for the Armed Forces. Key professionals interviewed were either teaching, working as learning mentors or employed in other support roles within these fields. The young men and women participating, on the other hand, were either undertaking apprenticeships or attending full-time college courses.

It was recognised from the outset that by generating data from various perspectives and formats bias, which may arise from reliance on just one source, could be mitigated (Green, 2010). A number of other methods were, therefore, employed in a complementary capacity to the life history interviews. For instance, these interviewees were asked to complete a short questionnaire covering factual and biographical data only. Outside of the interviewing room, participant observation was carried out predominantly to explore the masculinised environments[7] of the training centres in which much of the data was generated. Both content analysis and reviewing of secondary sources

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[7] See Chapters 2 and 8 for a discussion on how these spaces were masculinised beyond them being populated mainly by men.

supplemented this process. Finally, the keeping of a research diary for the entirety of the fieldwork proved invaluable in recording my experiences. As a female researcher, this was especially informative because I was frequently collecting data in contexts where sexual objectification of women appeared to be a routine occurrence (see Chapter 8).

'Real Men's Jobs': Masculinity and Work

Returning now to a more in-depth discussion of my first research question. As McDowell (2014) maintains, men, as well as women, albeit in different ways, can be constrained in their vocational decision-making. Over the last two years, the UK has seen the emergence of two noteworthy women political leaders. For example, Nicola Sturgeon became First Minister for Scotland in 2014 and Teresa May took over as Conservative Prime Minister in 2016. Leanne Wood and Caroline Lucas (a job share with Jonathan Bartley) are also the leaders of smaller parties (Plaid Cymru in Wales and the Green Party of England and Wales respectively). Nevertheless, despite these and other significant advances, men still have the collective advantage over women in the workplace via the 'patriarchal dividend'. Primarily this collective advantage is procured through the latter's enforced subordination (Connell, 2005). Employment patterns in the UK, which continue to remain highly gendered, are reflective of this power gap (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014:158). More noteworthy, in this regard, is the vertically segregated composition of the workforce. In other words, males are disproportionately represented at the top of the occupational hierarchy in senior, corporate, political and executive positions (Chusmir, 1990; Galbraith, 19892; Charles, 2002; CFWD, 2013; Fawcett, 2014).

These occupationally segregated patterns and inequalities have their antecedents in childhood. Through the process of gendering, children are socialised into gendered roles, identities and arrangements within gendered [local] socio-cultural and economic frameworks (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). In other words, they become aware of and learn at an early age what it is to be a boy or girl. Agents of gendering (such as parental and wider familial influences, the media etc.) contribute to the formation of these roles by reinforcing what is

gender appropriate or not (Garett et al., 1977; Jacobs, 1989; Martin, 1990, 1995; Martin et al., 1990; Wigfield et al., 2002).

Through these processes, every child will experience and internalise, to some extent, gender stereotyping (Martin, 1990, 1995; Martin et al., 1990). Consequently, the seeds of stereotypical career choices and continued segregated divisions of labour are sown (McDowell, 2004; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). In supporting this assertion, research has consistently shown that in primary school boys and girls have expressed preferences for traditionally masculinised and feminised occupations respectively (Garett et al., 1977; Martin, 1990, 1995; Martin et al., 1990). These findings seem based on well-developed assumptions about what are 'suitable' female and male jobs (DCLG, 2006, 2009; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014):

> "Through sex role socialisation, boys learn that men and women have different abilities, interests and aptitudes that dictate different jobs for men and women which leads men to proscribe certain jobs which are perceived as women's work" (Hayes, 1986: 92).

Based on the norms and conventions of what will be argued are socially constructed gender roles (see below), these repetitive stereotypical messages appear to be perpetuated beyond childhood and well into adolescence (Oakley, 1998). By the time a teenager is required to initiate developing tentative career aspirations into more concrete plans, they will be firmly embedded. As this decision-making stage also coincides with the intensity of peer pressure peaking, it is arguably even more difficult for teenagers to attempt to risk deviating from the norm (Gilligan, 2002). Young people, therefore, have continued to be funnelled towards sectors that are either masculinised or feminised i.e. where there is an over-representation by one gender (Newton & Williams, 2013; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014).

These gendered trajectories are mirrored in the composition of apprenticeship programmes. For example, 98% of apprentices in electro-technical, construction, vehicle maintenance and repair industries are male. Similarly, in

2013, men comprised 96% of students in engineering and driving vehicle sectors (Newton & Williams, 2013). By contrast, they are significantly under-represented in traditionally feminised sectors. In hairdressing and childcare (early years and education) only 8% and 3% of apprentices, respectively, are male (Fuller et al., 2005a, 2005b; EOC, 2006; Newton & Williams, 2013).

In terms of my research and in congruence with the above tendency towards conformity, Hancock (2012) highlights the connection between the career choices of young men and validation of their masculine identities. That is, waged work has traditionally been a defining and determining component of these (Tolson, 1977; Grotevant & Thorbecke, 1982; Connell, 2000, 2002, 2005; Haywood & Mac An Ghaill, 2003; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Goodwin & O'Connor, 2005; Wise, 2006; Hancock, 2012). The extent of this was such that employment, for many years, provided the principal pathway through which males derived their sense of personal identity. Accomplishment of this trajectory was through assuming the role of breadwinner, and thereby, providing financially for their wives and children (Bernard, 1995; Creighton, 1999; Hancock, 2012).

However, Hancock (2012:394) asserts that these traditional career trajectories are intrinsic to conventional and machismo ways of performing masculinities, which are:

> "are now under threat because there are less traditional working-class jobs available, which leads to 'new rites of passage for young men' (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 1995:20). When work is rendered weak, or taken away, there is an erosion of both identity and masculinity for many men (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 1995; Willott & Griffin, 1996). Haywood & Mac an Ghaill (1995) argue that unemployment, coupled with decline of traditional industries, and the resultant feminising of work, has led to threats of what had been a key source of masculinity."

Socio-economically speaking, northern working-class cities, for example, Newcastle (Nayak, 2006) and Sheffield (McDowell, 2004) have been especially affected by these transformations. Hull proves to be no exception. As touched upon briefly above (and explored further in Chapter 4) the city's economy, for many years, was reliant on deep sea fishing (Tunstall, 1972; Gillett & MacMahon, 1989; Gill, 1991; Booth, 1999; Avery, 2008; English, 2014). However, the Anglo-Icelandic Cod Wars of 1975-6 culminated in the industry's decimation. Hundreds of crew and shore workers, including those in ancillary roles such as fish processing, lost their jobs (Booth, 1999; Avery, 2008; English, 2014). Coupled with the declining ship industry and deindustrialisation, the conditions were set for the decades of economic and social deprivation that followed. Adverse consequences, including isolation, poverty and an association with deprivation, are still evident in the city today (English, 2014).

A commonality shared by these northern cities, undergoing economic regeneration, has been a move towards service-oriented sectors (Glucksmann, 1994). In Hull, for instance, the leisure and tourism industries experienced a boost with the opening of Hull Marina in 1983 and The Deep Aquarium in 2002. Retail industries have also taken on a higher profile (given the decline of the fishing, shipping and heavy industries) with the opening of, for example, St Stephens shopping complex in 2008 (Avery, 2008; Robinson, 2010).

More recently in Hull's local market, there have been a significant number of job losses in both the private and the public sectors. The combination of the ongoing recession, which coincided with the timing of the research, and the platform of austerity and public sector cuts introduced by the Coalition/Liberal Government in 2010 were the driving forces behind these changes (BBC News Online, 2012). For instance, there was the closure of the electronic-based company Comet (Ruddick, 2012). Job losses were also incurred at other organisations including Seven Seas (BBC News Online, 2012), McCain (Stones, 2012), and Smith and Nephew (Hull Daily Mail, 2012). Moving to the public sector, Hull City Council has stated, in response to continued reductions in funding from Central Government, year-on-year reductions in staffing levels have had to be implemented. The consequential impact of these have been both voluntary and compulsory termination of employment for over 2000 staff

(Bridge, 2012: Young, 2014) with continuance of this pattern into 2016 (BBC News, 2016).

Inevitably with these changes to the local employment infrastructure, a sharp rise in unemployment has been evidenced. Running concurrently with the fieldwork (undertaken from January-April 2012) unemployment peaked at a 17 year high in the city (Gentleman, 2012). According to the East Hull MP, Karl Turner, this rise represented a 112% increase over the previous year alone (Turner, 2012). Jones (2012) maintains that this approximated to 18,975 jobseekers competing for 218 jobs in the city.

In turning around the fortunes of the city, hopes are pinned on the successful bid for City of Culture 2017 and the revenue this is envisaged to bring into the city. It is also hoped that £80 million investment in a new offshore, state-of-the art wind turbine assembly and exploration facility in the locality will bring the promise of 700 new jobs. At the time of writing (in 2016), it is yet to be seen what impact these will have the job opportunities for young men and women.

Regarding my first research question, I wish to develop a more nuanced understanding of the gendering role that working-class masculinities have in shaping educational and career aspirations. With gendered expectations constituting a core theme, working with teenage men is particularly fitting. As Kimmel (2009) maintains, the teenage years and young adulthood are coincidentally the most gendered stage of the life span. With the intense peer pressure during this period, I wish to identify what restrictions the young men encounter, via their gender and class, in their decision-making. Therefore, 70 of the 117 participants recruited (61%) were men aged between 15 and 25 who were about to make or had recently made career decisions. Face-to-face life history interviews with 43 men formed the main tool of data generation. Threaded throughout these were narratives pertaining to the negotiation and formation of the occupationally specific masculinities participants embodied.

Given the above factors (i.e. local labour market restructuring and high unemployment), in Chapter 7, I also explore if there has been a shift in what is considered to be socially appropriate work. Within a discourse of

heteronormativity (Butler, 1995), the continuing role of homohysteria, defined as the social anxiety of being perceived as gay (Anderson, 2011; Bush et al., 2012), in choosing feminised careers, such as hairdressing, is also considered. Specifically, this will be around its function as a surveillance regime in policing deviations from socially acceptable, albeit somewhat rigid, masculinised vocational trajectories.

Boys will be Boys? The Comeback of Laddism

Moving on to my second research question of exploring how contemporary laddism intersects with prevailing working-class masculinities in Hull. The national press has recently reported that misogyny has made a comeback (Day, 2013; Williams, 2014). Such is the apparent prevalence of this resurgence that the British comedian Bridget Christie in her Radio 4 comedy series, *Mind the Gap,* based much of her act upon it. This sexism discourse, though, is integral to the wider rebirth of a misogynistic and homophobic laddish culture (Phipps, 2014a, 2014b; Phipps & Young, 2013, 2015a, 2015b Phipps & Young 2013, 2015).

Again using the media as an example, there is the comedy *The Inbetweeners* with a franchise that has spawned three successful television series and two films. By way of a brief synopsis, the storylines centre on the four male protagonists and the 'over the top' teenage antics of these hapless lads as they struggle to negotiate the rites of passage to adult manhood. Accompanying the unfolding pathos, this comedic genre includes profuse swearing, vulgarity and 'gross-out' gags that thinly disguises imagery and dialogue grounded in homophobic jibes and blatant misogyny. For example, in what defenders of the series describe as an ironic take on laddish behaviour, the four Inbetweeners are stereotypically Neanderthal and single-minded in their approach to sexual conquest. With the objectification of women commonplace, they don t-shirts with the slogan 'pussay patrol' and continuously refer to women by epithets such as: clunge, fanny, minge and gash. Incidentally, as I discuss in later chapters, my participants often use these four protagonists as role models for being an ordinary or average lad. While this ensures that they can escape the

prevailing sub-hegemonic masculinities, these identities are nevertheless also actively constructed and policed by misogyny and homophobia.

So what lies behind this re-emergence of misogyny and these laddish performativities? In fact, over the last few decades, the discourse of laddism has ebbed and flowed (Phipps & Young, 2015). The notion of the 'new lad' rose to prominence in the early 1990s through its relentless promotion by the media (Alsop et al., 2002). With its antecedents in traditional working-class performativities, this identity was regarded as "the lad reborn but with an ironic postmodern twist" (Bradley, 2013: 58). Excessive alcohol consumption (particularly lager or beer), football, the relentless pursuit of women, devouring pornographic materials and subscribing to lads' magazines such as *Loaded* (and later *Nuts* and *Zoo)* were all emblematic facets of this new way of doing masculinity. While 20 years on these magazines are no longer in circulation, nevertheless, their formula which glamorised and defined the above lad mind-set in the 1990s, continues to proliferate on the internet. *Loaded,* for example, has now reconfigured and has an internet presence. Furthermore, *The Lad Bible* may only be 3 years old but attracts more traffic than the two foremost online newspapers *The Daily Mail* and *The Guardian* (Six O'clock News, 2015).

However, this so-called *Loaded* and *Nuts* script of masculinity has tended to be appropriated by the middle-classes. *That's what she said,* published in 2013, provides an example of recent research on this phenomenon. The study reported on the widespread prevalence of a culture of laddism within UK university campuses (Phipps, 2013). Misogyny has been rife in spaces such as elite drinking societies, rugby and debating teams (Phipps & Young, 2013, 2015). Young women have also recounted how they had been coerced into performing degrading simulation of sexual acts (Day, 2013). Wet t-shirt competitions have also been organised on various campuses for male amusement and titillation (Phipps & Young, 2015). The research also described how politically incorrect banter, as exemplified by websites such as *Uni Lad* and *The Lad Bible,* was both a form of male bonding and integral to this student culture. At the extremity of this sexist regime, *Uni Lad* was temporarily closed down after its casual trivialisation of rape (Balcombe, 2012). Critical to this dialogue had been reference to statistical evidence, suggesting that most victims

do not go on to report it (Beckford, 2012). Therefore, it was discussed online whether it would be worthwhile for men to commit rape, because in all likelihood they would evade prosecution (Aroesti, 2012).

This all begs the questions what about the working-class men whose behaviours the middle-classes have emulated? Clearly some working-class men do attend university and therefore may be taking part in the rituals, misogyny, banter and laddism just described as taking part on campus. University is often perceived as a middle-class route (McDowell, 2004). The "working-classes" is a broad church and in this thesis I am interested in considering those young men who would not consider university as part of their life trajectories (even if they had the academic credentials to do so). Are those men undertaking vocational routes also engaging in the same type of laddish behaviours? If so, how does doing lad impact on career choices? Ostensibly, this new variant of laddism is not too dissimilar to that enacted by the working-class 'lads' in Paul Willis's (1977) seminal ethnographic research published nearly 40 years ago. Are these young men, as part of their rights of passage to adulthood performing laddish masculinities in the same way? Is it just a form of protest masculinity (as with the lads in Willis's study) or is it more wide-ranging than that?

With the above discussion on masculine typologies covering identities "across persons" or men, Spector-Mersel (2006: 68) also makes the further conceptual separation *"within persons"* when discussing multiple masculinities. That is, as Robinson and Hockey (2011) maintain, as a contextual configuration there will be a fluidity or variability in how masculinities are enacted dependent on whom an individual man is interacting with. Robinson et al., (2011:34) elucidates on its application:

> "Masculine identification, from this perspective, is processual and essentially incomplete, emerging from an individual's contextual sense of who he is (and who he is not), as well as the ways in which other people identify and categorise him".

How do these contextual configurations relate to laddish behaviours? Are they enacted with certain group more or are they more homogenous across different contexts? These are questions that will be explored further in Chapter 6. A majority of the male interviewees (74%) were undertaking their training in traditionally masculinised industries or trades. Consequently, in Chapter 8, this allows a more in-depth analysis of working-class laddish culture specific to these industries. Banter, which Cockburn (1988) defined as an aggressive form of humour with its on-going personal, hurtful and offensive jibes, is intrinsic to both the perpetuation and policing of [laddish] masculinities. Essentially a misogynistic and homophobic discourse, the impact on women, gay and less assertive heterosexual men will be explored.

Conclusions

Within this chapter, I have introduced and provided an overview of the thesis. I have explained how my academic interest in this research area evolved slowly via my former professional role as a career guidance practitioner. Constraints of a busy and demanding job meant that I was unable in this role to explore and understand the complexity of why young, white working-class make the vocational/career choices that they do. In Chapter 7, I finally achieve this goal through analysing and interpreting participants' narratives in identifying contributory factors. Some of these affirmed my concerns as a careers officer (such as a lack of insightful work experience opportunities and near absence of careers education programmes in schools). Others, though, were interesting and new findings for me, for example, the role of homohysteria in the decision-making process (see Chapter 7).

In Chapters 5 and 6, I explore the heterogeneity of working-class masculinities and the differences as well as the commonalities between men. For instance, hypermasculinity or exaggerated male stereotypic behaviour (Kimmel, 2009) is not always about bravado but may be performed as a coping mechanism to deal with deep-seated personal problems (see participant narratives in Chapter 5). Differences are not only between men but also as Spector-Mersel (2006: 68)

states "across persons" necessitating a consideration of how masculinities are a contextual configuration.

Simultaneously to commencing my PhD I also became interested in the reported rise of laddish culture, notably on university campuses and how this relates to my own research. As an identity appropriated by middle-class men, I was keen to explore the behaviours and actions of those it was purported to be based on i.e. working-class men. Questions I am seeking to answer in Chapters 6 and 8 include: are these men also engaging in this high level of misogyny and homophobia? Is the phenomenon one that extends beyond the more privileged finding new ways of doing masculinity? Returning briefly to my first research question, I am also interested in finding out about the relationship between 'being a lad' and career choices. Working with a high number of young men (and a small number of women) training or employed in the construction industry allows a nuanced understanding of the culturally specific laddism and how adult masculinities are made (Chapter 8). The mechanisms through which these identities are acculturated are compared and contrasted with the above middle-class variant. For now, though, in the next chapter the discussion will turn to issues of methodology.

Chapter 2
Out on the Shop Floor
Methods and Methodology

The Why, the How and the When: Data Generation

Having presented a brief introduction to the thesis, including key theoretical themes and debates in masculinities research, the discussion now focuses on the practicalities of data generation. Firstly, I argue that the deployment of a gender analysis, informed by a feminist and sociological approach, provides the optimum framework for carrying out my research on the interrelationships and intersections between working-class masculinities, laddish culture and career trajectories. Carried out in the contextual setting of Hull, from January-April 2012, the 'how' and 'when' aspects of the fieldwork are then addressed. Requisite to this dialogue, a rationale is provided as to why all 114 participants (compositionally, 72 males and 23 females, aged between 15 and 25, along with 19 key professionals) were drawn exclusively from the area of vocational training. The young men and women were either undertaking full-time courses or apprenticeships in: business administration, customer services, IT, preparation for the uniformed services, motor mechanics, engineering and constructed-related trades (bricklaying, joinery, painting and decorating). All key professionals (for example, tutors and support staff) were employed by one of the seven training centres I negotiated access to and were aligned to one of the above industries.

In congruence with the above gender analysis, I contend the utilisation of qualitative mixed methods ensures the neutralisation of bias. Table 1 provides an overview of the research process. Each method deployed is also detailed in turn below. Particular attention is paid to the 51 life history interviews with young men as the main tool of data generation. Numbered amongst the other methodologies were interviews with women (life history) and key professionals (semi-structured). Participant observations and analysis of secondary sources

Table 1: Overview of the Fieldwork

Training Centre	Apprenticeships or courses the participants were drawn from	Fieldwork Dates	Life History Interviews: Men (Course type & Number)	Life History Interviews: Women (Course type and Number)	Peer Paired Interviews (Course type & Number)	Semi-Structured Interviews with Key Professionals	Extended Questionnaires	Informal Interviews	Totals
1.	Construction	January 2012	Bricklaying (3) Joinery (2)	-	-	Tutor (1)	-	Support Staff (1)	7
2.	Construction	January- February 2012	Bricklaying (3) Joinery (4) Painting & Decorating (3)	Joinery (1)	-	Learning Mentor (1) Tutors (4)	-	-	16
3.	Catering Engineering Health & Social Care	February 2012	Catering (2) Engineering (4)	Catering (1) Health & Social Care (1)	-	Engineering Tutor (1) Placement Officer (1) Centre Manager (1)	-	-	11
4.	Uniformed Services Preparation	February 2012	Uniformed Services Preparation (3)	Uniformed Services Preparation (2)	-	Tutor (2)	-	-	7
5.	Motor Mechanics	March 2012	Motor Mechanics (5)	-	Motor Mechanics (8)		-	-	13
6.	Engineering	March 2012	Engineering (6) Fabrication & Welding (2)	-	-	Centre Manager (1) Placement Officer (1)	-	Internal Examiner (1) Centre Manager (1)	12
7.	Business Administration Customer Services I T	March-April 2012	Business Admin (2) Customer Service (1) IT (3)	Customer service (1) Business Admin (2)	-	Centre Manager (1)	Male (19) Female (15)	-	44
Other	-	February-April 2012	-	-	-	Careers Advisers (2)	-	Interviews with young men (aged 24 and 29) to explore specific concepts (2)	4
Totals			43	8	8	16	34	5	114
Methodologies utilised across all training providers:	Vignettes (interviews and dyadic interviews), supplementary documentary evidence, participant observations and maintaining a reflexive diary. Biographical questionnaires were also given to each participant taking part in the life history interviews.								

are also undertaken. With this combined approach, findings are either confirmed through shared experiences or commonality of viewpoint, or alternative perspectives are captured. Finally, I discuss a number of ethical considerations in carrying out the research. Highlighted amongst these are the importance of gaining informed as opposed to passive consent, especially, when working with teenagers aged under 18.

Rationale for a Feminist Methodology

Before moving forward to focus on the methods of data generation employed, it is important to establish that one of the major tenets in feminist research is the process of reflexivity (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002). That is, researchers are recognised as being embedded in the socio-political world. Therefore, their political and personal values are integral to the way in which research is first selected and then subsequently undertaken (Roseneil, 1993; Hammersley, 1995; Green, 2010). Consequently, in producing knowledge that is accountable, the researcher's intellectual biography must be acknowledged (Letherby, 2003). Reflexivity, which can be subdivided into personal[8] and epistemological[9], invites a researcher to explore how they inform and influence the research process (Nightingale & Cromby, 1999).

It is my former professional background as a guidance practitioner that provides the antecedents whilst also, simultaneously, serving as the conduit for the development of this research. Having previously worked for the Connexions Service for 7 years, I became increasingly aware of the entrenched nature of gender streaming in occupational choice. In understanding this phenomenon, career development theories are arguably the most obvious starting point for theoretically framing the research. After assessing previous studies (for example, McQuaid & Bond, 2004, 2007), I consider that the parameters and

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[8]"Personal reflexivity involves reflecting upon the ways in which our own values, experiences, interests, beliefs, political commitments, wider aims in life and social identities have shaped the research. It also involves thinking about how the research may have affected and possibly changed us, as people and as researchers" (Willig, 2001:10).
[9] "Epistemological reflexivity encourages us to reflect upon the assumptions (about the world, about knowledge) that we have made in the course of the research, and it helps us to think about the implications of such assumptions for the research and its findings" (Willig, 2001:10).

consequential constraints of taking such an orientation would have necessarily delimited the scope of the study. Notably, this is in terms of the interrelationships between working-class masculine performativities, particularly laddish ones, and career choices.

As outlined in Chapter 1, a gender analysis, through a feminist and sociological lens, can provide a more holistic and nuanced approach in exploring this synergy. It also provides the optimum framing for exploring the intersections between laddish culture and young working-class masculinities. Gendered and socio-economic frameworks (i.e. gender regimes) determine the social position of women and men, and, consequently, the power imbalances existing between them (Walby, 2011; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). In this way, how gendered expectations impact on educational, employment, leisure and other life choices can be understood in terms of gender relations. Therefore, not only does my research, carried out within these frameworks, have the potential to provide insights from a male perspective it can also be informative regarding the position of women too (Hammersley, 1992; Kelly et al., 1994; Letherby, 2003).

The above arguments are further supported by the obligation to situate them in congruence with the current orthodoxy when carrying out research with teenagers. Underpinning the emergence of this paradigm, is the premise that research should be 'with' rather than 'on' participants (France, 2004). This is in view of the increasing recognition that, when relaying their lived experiences, children and young people can be reliable witnesses. Therefore, their involvement in the research process has evolved from being 'objects', with studies being carried out on them, to active participants (Widdicombe & Woolfitt, 1995).

In accordance with the above discussion, the feminist methodological approach taken in the study is one of a mixed-methods analysis led by the generation of qualitative data. As outlined throughout the chapter, I argue that this optimised the articulation of the lived experiences and perspectives of the participants. Placing this approach within the context of my own academic biography, it represents a significant methodological shift for me. Previously, I studied Psychology at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. When I was

undertaking these degrees over 20 years ago, the emphasis within the discipline was placed firmly on the 'experimental method'. As a consequence, sociological research tools, such as the research interview and ethnographic research methods, were critically dismissed as unscientific and 'softer' options. Moreover, reflexivity did not form an integral part of the purportedly 'value-free', 'objective' quantitative methods that I trained in. When I first embarked on my PhD journey, steered by this background, I automatically made the assumption that I would employ quantitatively-based questionnaires as the main tool of data generation.

However, there is some debate amongst feminists about whether use should be made of these methods. As Oakley (1981) discusses in her pioneering article, this dialogue evolved because data generated quantitatively is dismissed by some theorists (see, for example, Reinharz, 1979; Graham & Rawlings, 1980; Graham, 1983; Pugh, 1990; Westmarland, 2001) as 'masculinist' research characterised by androcentricity (or male bias). For instance, there has been a history of generalising exclusively male samples to women (Stanley & Wise, 1993). Mies (1983) and Hammersley (1995) also argue, with their focus on the public and abstract, wider gender regimes transpose into scientific methods. By extension, purported inherently hierarchical relationships exist between the researcher and research participants. With usage of these malestream methods, it is argued that women are invariably objectified in quantitative research and their voices muted (Westmarland, 2001; Buckingham & Saunders, 2004).

More recently this position has been countered (for example, Kelly et al., 1994). Rather than concentrating on the subjective experiences of women through qualitative methods, as originally proposed, the important role of quantitative methods in facilitating social and political justice has increasingly been recognised (Letherby, 2003). In line with this stance, the selection of methods used, then, should be on the basis that they answer the research question or questions (Oakley, 1998; Westmarland, 2001). As Kelly et al (1994: 150) maintain:

> "What makes feminist research feminist is less the method
> used, and more how it is used and what it is used for."

With the above debate in mind, I am, nevertheless, arguing here that, within the scope of broader qualitative frameworks, the employment of a feminist and sociological gender analysis optimises the telling of participants' lived experiences and perspectives. Both teenagers and key professionals are active participants in the sense that emerging themes and issues within the research are grounded in their subjective accounts. As will be considered in detail shortly, these narratives are captured predominantly through life history interviews.

Multiple Methods

I acknowledged the importance of employing a mixed-methods analysis, including the generation of data from different sources and by various tools, in carrying out my research. As Green (2010) argues, the reasoning underlying such an approach is that it can serve to neutralise bias, which may arise from reliance on just one source. Life history interviews with male research participants, aged 16-25, were the principal technique deployed to capture their narratives and lived experiences. However, by also including other methodologies (i.e. life history interviews with women, semi-structured interviews with key professionals, questionnaires, participant observation and analysis of secondary sources) themes from the above interviews can be confirmed, or, alternatively, contrasting perspectives may emerge (Gillham, 2000). Either way, they enhance the completeness and richness of the generated data set (Davies, 2014).

Although a convenience sampling frame was utilised in capturing the voices of the 114 participants (comprising of a gender ratio of 86 men and 28 women) it was, nevertheless, a purposive one. Initially, I aimed to recruit 16-18-year-old participants from three broad types of vocational courses: traditionally masculinised and feminised occupational areas together with those where there is increasingly more parity in terms of gender composition (Hakim, 2000). My rationale for these selection criteria was to include men from programmes where contrasting levels of gender segregation was evident. That is, in terms of the number of students enrolled on them, I planned to drawn participants from

courses where males were in the majority, minority, or a more equal footing to females. However, this initial fieldwork plan proved to be problematic. Primarily, this goal was impeded by the fact that for the duration of the fieldwork (January-April 2012) there were no men undertaking traditionally feminised courses such as childcare, beauty therapy or hairdressing at the training centres I approached. Table 2 provides further details of the final sample, including the gender breakdown of participants, aged between 15 and 25, and the courses they were drawn from.

Table 2: Participants, aged 15-25, by Course and Gender

Course	Men		Women		Totals
	Interviews	Questionnaires	Interviews	Questionnaires	
Construction	13	-	1	-	14
Engineering	12	-	-	-	12
Mechanics	13	-	-	-	13
Catering	3	-	1	-	4
Health & Social Care	-	-	1	-	1
Business/IT	7	19	3	15	44
Uniformed Services	3	-	2	-	5
Totals	**51**	**19**	**8**	**15**	**93**

The seven educational establishments where the research is carried out were situated in a diverse range of geographical locations across the city including East, North, West Hull and city centre based. However, the catchment area of each training provider was city-wide (and beyond) with students being supported with transport costs, if appropriate, including where a learner was not in receipt of Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)[10]. The sample reflects this geographical spread. Participants not only lived in Hull, but also in outlying East Riding villages such as Hessle and Cottingham.

Contextually, there were some notable differences between each of the seven institutions. Six of these providers were dedicated vocational training centres.

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[10] EMA was a means-tested (based on parental income) financial scheme with payments of up to £30, and was open to 16-19 year olds undertaking at least 12 hours of guided learning on academic, vocational and unpaid apprenticeships. It was phased out in England by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition government (2010-2015) from 2011 onwards (Coughlan, 2011).

The FE college, on the other hand, catered for a myriad of courses including academic pathways (for example, A levels). On my first visit to the latter, I noted the following in my research diary:

> *"My initial impressions of the [name of FE college] were how welcoming and modern it is. The college reception area is brightly decorated with colourful and comfortable furnishings. Even walking through the many corridors on route to the School of Construction, there is a continuance of this ambience. The stark contrast of the School of Construction, therefore, is even more conspicuous. In juxtaposition to my impressions thus far, this building feels cold, brutal and austere. The décor is industrial and grey rather than the yellow hue of the main buildings. A distinctly masculinised space. Perceiving it as imposing and unwelcoming, especially for a woman, I suddenly found myself feeling on edge and nervously anticipating the day ahead.*
>
> *Advancing further into the centre, I was surrounded by young men but apparently no women. Much later in the day, I discovered there are in fact only two within the whole school (one employed as a learning mentor and the other undertaking her training as a joinery apprentice). Both of these women are segregated from the men in a separate office and workshop respectively"* (Research Diary Extract, 31st January, 2012).

One of the training centres, which offered prominently construction-related trades, similarly kept women working or studying there at the margins. Employed in support roles or undertaking feminised courses, such as Health and Social Care, I encountered them 'concealed' in upstairs offices or small classrooms. The 'main stage', the relatively larger ground floor space, was left for the men to occupy. With walls decorated in sombre colours, including the reception areas, similar to my experiences of the school of construction, for the

entirety of the fieldwork I felt slightly on edge when entering this masculinised preserve. My discomfort as matter out of place, however, was most extreme in a centre that was completely dedicated to construction-related training. The feeling of being an intruder was most acute there. Many of the men stared at me. Not in an overtly sexually aggressive way although I did encounter this occasionally (see Chapter 8). Rather, I would contend it was because I was both a stranger and a woman invading their male space.

By contrast, there was the centre dedicated to business administration. Formerly playing a role in Hull's maritime history, the building had been converted into a training provider for those wishing to pursue careers in administration, IT support or customer services. Even though the décor was shabby with peeling paint and old-fashioned furnishings, circa 1980s, staff work hard to portray a professional image through dressing in smart suits, and running the centre in a business-like manner. The ambience appeared formal and efficient. Although slightly oppressive, perhaps because it was so business oriented and not a relaxed and friendly environment, it was in no way as foreboding as the masculinised centres described above.

As Masson (2004) recommends, my access to the seven institutions was via negotiations with gatekeepers. Letter or email contact formed the initial approach. A follow-up telephone call was then made a few days later. The ease of this process was facilitated by the fact that six of the centres, with the notable exception of the FE College, were integral to, or, alternatively, accountable to an umbrella training provider. Moreover, one of my former line managers from the Connexions Service, who was very supportive of my research, had moved on to a role with duties that include responsibility for this organisation. I, therefore, made contact with him in the first instance. The adoption of this 'top-down' approach was particularly effective in opening doors to lower tiers of management (i.e. operational managers of individual training centres) during the initial organisation and setting up of the fieldwork. Following on from this success, I adopted the same strategy when I approached the FE College. Although I had not been acquainted with the Principal prior to the research, the above process proved to be equally effective in this context too.

The usual procedure, in these circumstances, involved me being signposted to a nominated contact. Invariably, they became the gatekeepers I liaised with for the duration of the fieldwork. In order to reach this stage, though, it entailed several meetings with operational managers often numbering more than one in the same training centre. However, in the longer-term, when I was in the field, this investment paid off. Ultimately, it made the process an organised and efficient one. Interviewing arrangements (in terms of age range, programme level, types of course, how many interviews were undertaken per day etc.) were frequently made prior to the days I attended the centre in order to carry out the fieldwork. Within the male-dominated industries, this extended to having a member of staff readily available to bring participants directly to me.

While there is a degree of inevitability about gaining access via a gatekeeper when working in educational establishments, such as colleges or schools, there are potential risks too (France, 2004; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). For instance, the gatekeeper may have shaped the carrying out and development of the research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). With training centres playing a major role in the recruitment of participants, potentially, they may have restricted access to only those men they wished me to interview. For example, they could have been selective in ensuring that the optimum positive image of their provision was conveyed. Despite this concern, many of the gatekeepers were actually very supportive of the study because exploration of career aspirations was one of its central themes. Therefore, they assisted me in drawing participants from the most diverse pool of young people possible. In turn, this level of co-operation is reflected in the composition of the final sample.

Working with the support of educational institutions, in fact, enhances the original aims of the research. In the trades, for instance, shop floor banter played a crucial role in 'testing' participants' potential integration into these industries' informal macho, laddish cultures. Being based in the training establishments, I was in a good position to pursue a deeper exploration of this discourse and subsequently develop it as a key emerging theme from the research. The function of banter in the acculturation of laddish performativities

is considered and discussed in Chapter 8. For now, I will move on to provide a brief outline of and rationale for the range of methods utilised to generate data.

Life History Interviews

In-depth life history interviews with 51 participants, comprising of 43 men and 8 women, were my main method of data generation. As a research tool, these have long been acknowledged as humanizing (Peacock & Holland, 1993) and empowering (Anderson & Jack, 1991) in that participants are in a position to determine the focus and direction of the research (Devault, 1999). Grounded in the narratives of young men and women, a rich source of data was potentially accessible through exploring different dimensions of their lived experiences. As a feminist researcher, I was interested in finding out about participants' subjective accounts of their experiences, views, personal beliefs and understandings of their own lives (Hesse-Biber, 2007b; Davies, 2014). Inclusive of these narratives were capturing:

 i.   Lived experiences of local hierarchical masculine performativities including any variance dependent on contextual setting or interpersonal interactions
 ii. The intersection of laddish culture with these variants of masculine performativities
 iii. Retrospective recollections into how masculinities potentially shape and influence the career decision-making process
 iv. Wider life goals and aspirations.

I spent between 2 to 4 days at each of the seven training providers, with differences in duration dependent upon both the number of participants interviewed and methods deployed. Meetings with managers, to organise the fieldwork, were undertaken on additional and separate days to the above timeframes. The duration of the life history interviews was between 60-90 minutes, therefore, well within the recommended parameters of 2 hours or less (Hearn, 1998). With 8 hour days spent at each training centre, I carried out up to six interviews daily. The only exception to this schedule was where one of the

engineering providers organised eight for the day I was booked to go there. To a certain extent, especially when participants were retelling some of their painful experiences, these full days were exhausting. However, the interviewing skills and experience I acquired through many years of working as a careers officer in schools equipped me well for this fieldwork plan.

On a practical level, wherever possible, permission was sought to use audio equipment in recording exchanges given the completeness and richness of the data set it generates (Davies, 2014). Doing so is considered advantageous in capturing material (for example, silences and hesitations) useful during analysis that, nevertheless, would be lost if recorded in a written format only (Anderson & Jack, 1991). Overall, this process was utilised in all face-to-face exchanges except with two participants who expressed a wish for audio equipment not to be used. In both of these instances, brief notes were made during the interview with more extensive notes being written up immediately afterwards.

In terms of the structure of the interviews, five interviewing guides were developed. Dependent on which participants are taking part, these vary somewhat in the questions posed. The versions catered for:

   i.   Young men on traditionally masculinised educational or career trajectories
   ii. Young men on non-traditional educational or career trajectories
   iii. Young women on traditionally feminised educational or career trajectories
   iv. Young women on non-traditional educational or career trajectories
   v.   19 Key professionals (see Table 3). These participants were either undertaking teaching or support roles in the seven training centres and vocational training areas described above.

Both the compilation and preparatory stages of these schedules included the trialling of individual questions before the guide itself, in its entirety, was piloted. Supplementary questions were also added for instances where a research participant appeared reticent or expressed difficulty in providing answers. I also undertook the measure of rote learning the content of the

guides. From prior experience of working as a careers officer, I was aware that this promotes the development of greater rapport with an interviewee. As each schedule simply served as an aide memoire, then, I only occasionally needed to glance at it. With the discussion principally led by interviewees, the guides were designed to leave enough flexibility for them to tell their stories as they wished. For instance, the ordering of questions could have been interchanged depending upon how the interview developed (Holdsworth et al., 2007). In this way, a process was derived where all participants' voices were heard (France, 2004).

A caveat at this juncture is the acknowledgement that the researcher shapes the research process and findings (Glucksmann, 1994). Outside of the interview room, the predetermined topics I wished to cover together with the interpretation and thematic analysis of generated data are controlled by me. I, for example, compiled the above interview schedules with a view to exploring the participants' educational and career trajectories. While interviewees raised themes, I had not anticipated, as notably occurred with banter, much of the data generated was in response to *my* questions.

By asking these questions, it could have potentially influenced what I focused on in the participants' narratives, and by doing so determine what answers came back. I was, though, mindful of placing interpretations, in accordance with my theoretical stance and frameworks, on the data generated (Borland, 2006). Particularly, this awareness has been most evident during the empirical analysis of the research findings where, via coding, meanings in the transcripts were sought (Hesse-Biber, 2007a). However, through frequently returning to the original transcripts (and by use of a mixed-methods analysis) careful attention has been taken to ensure that the participants defined and redefined the major concepts and themes within the study (Holdsworth et al., 2007).

In facilitating this telling and retelling of participants' narratives, the aim to reduce power differentials is a commonality shared between feminist research and that carried out with young people (Letherby, 2003; France, 2004). It is theorised that this objective can be eventuated through striving for a non-hierarchical and collaborative relationship between researcher and participants (Hammersley, 1992). For instance, it is argued that interviewers should aim to

'connect' with interviewees via the development of trust and rapport (Roseneil, 1993; Arksey & Knight, 1999). With this in mind, albeit balancing it simultaneously with the maintenance of a 'professional manner' (McKee & O'Brien, 1983), I had been fully prepared to answer participants' questions about myself. The only proviso, though, was an unwillingness to respond to any questions which I considered may have endangered my personal safety. As Lee (1997) asserts, this is an important factor for women researchers to take into account when interviewing men. In the event, this situation did not arise. Rather, comparatively innocuous questions such as "do you originate from Hull?" were the only types of questions directed at me.

A Female Researcher in a Man's World

Having briefly touched upon it above, the discussion will now turn to providing further insights from my perspective as a female researcher. Overall, most interviewees displayed a keen willingness to talk openly about their thoughts, perceptions, opinions and lived experiences. Establishment of the underlying rapport, between the participants and me, seemed to have been facilitated by two strategies. Firstly, I tended to inject humour into an exchange, especially, in the early opening stages. My rationale behind doing so was primarily to diffuse any tension where an interviewee appeared particularly nervous. Secondly, the participants often assumed the role of educator. As I do not originate from Hull, having only moved to the East Riding of Yorkshire 6 years ago, there were elements of the local dialogue I was still unacquainted with. Similarly, my acquaintance with teenage dialogue was minimal. In both instances, by explaining phraseologies and meanings I had previously never encountered, the participants drew on their expert knowledge. My unfamiliarity could have served as a barrier in developing rapport with the interviewees. On the contrary, though, it appeared to have eliminated some of the power differentials from the exchange.

The success of the above rapport is authenticated by some of the men informing me, after their interviews, that they trusted me. I consider this trust to be quite a responsibility because participants, in the telling of their narratives, often

opened up about the painful and difficult experiences they have endured (see Chapter 5). However, Reay (1995) maintains, with an empathetic listener, the interviewing situation can be a rewarding one too. Several of the participants, especially those with deep-rooted personal problems, described what a cathartic experience it had been for them. As Arendell (1997) states, this process seems to have been facilitated because I am a woman. The men were certainly willing to discuss their experiences, motivations and emotions with me. Being regarded as an "older lady" (Will, aged 18, Engineering), middle-aged and of a similar age to some participants' mothers, was particularly advantageous. For example, Will (aged 18, Engineering) disclosed how, comparatively speaking, it was much easier to open up about his fears and insecurities with me. By contrast, he would never have contemplated doing so with a younger woman.

Even with this openness, it would naïve to assume that structural inequalities between researchers and participants can be totally eliminated. The former always preserves some control over the research process (Skeggs, 1994). There were many times, as indicated above, where I felt able to work collaboratively with the interviewees.

Countering this, however, were occasions where such an arrangement does not reflect my experiences at all. I discovered that the pendulum of power could sometimes swing firmly in favour of the male interviewees for the duration of the interview and sometimes even when just in a training provider itself. Even during the first day in the field, I was struck by how much the male-dominated and seemingly misogynistic environment impacted on my initial impressions of the centre in which I was carrying out interviews. My observations on this ambience are captured in my research diary:

> *"The centre is such a 'macho' and masculinised*
> *environment. It is almost as if each man was*
> *ostentatiously displaying his masculinity as a peacock*
> *would display his feathers"* (Research Diary Extract, 24th
> January, 2012).

I consider it is through this ambience that I became acutely aware of how my gender was being perceived. At the time, I was just grateful for how amiable and supportive everyone was.

> *"On one level, I was made to feel very welcome for the entire duration of time I spent at the centre. Nothing appeared to be too much trouble. Tutors, support staff and students alike were only too willing to be interviewed. Frequent checks were made to see if I was alright and required anything. My coffee cup was also constantly replenished and I was even offered chocolate biscuits! I did feel strongly, though, that I was being perceived in a certain way. Almost as if I was an intruder invading their territory. Consequently, the men, both students and staff alike, reacted to me in a very distinct manner"* (Research Diary Extract, 24th January, 2012).

Looking retrospectively at these experiences, old-fashioned chivalry or gallantry was being extended towards me in ensuring that I was 'looked after' appropriately as a woman. Further evidence of this, as both Pitt (1979) and Cockburn (1983) found, is that participants refrained from swearing in my presence (unless they explicitly sought permission to do otherwise first). Doors were also always opened for me, with the men doing so holding back until I had passed through them first.

> *"Albeit on a hidden level, I feel very much that masculinities are being played out and that 'my role' in this situation is resolutely regulated to a subordinate position. I am frequently referred to as 'this lady' and treated in what can be described as a correspondingly ladylike manner. That is, the attentive behaviour and courtesy being shown towards me could be interpreted as old-fashioned in this day and age. For me, it resonates with how my grandfather, as a self-ascribed gentleman,*

would have treated the 'fairer sex' i.e. women" (Research
Diary Extract, 19th April, 2012).

As a researcher, there were clearly advantages to this situation especially in
terms of helping me recruit participants and the setting up of interviewing space
and times etc. Nevertheless, while the men may not have been conscious of it
and genuinely believed they were being polite I would maintain, in this regard,
that this behaviour equated to a low-level form of sexism. However well-
intentioned the men may be, I would argue that their interactions with me were
intrinsic to the misogyny interwoven in the cultural fabric of the trades (Wright,
2013). Perceived as an *"older lady"* (Will, aged 18 Engineering), I was
effectively beyond sexual objectification and placement on the 'bitch-dyke-
whore' taxonomy (although see below for the exceptions to this exclusion). As
an othered, subordinate and weaker identity, I needed to be interacted with
accordingly.

Younger men participating in the study recognised that the cultural fabric of the
trades abounds with stereotypes and sexism. The process of successfully
transitioning into their work-related adult identities, though, necessarily
entailed subscribing to these cultural practices and rituals. Therefore, whether
socialised into it or not, they also appeared to hold perceptions and performed
actions that were fundamentally misogynist too. These initial impressions,
developed after the first few hours of the fieldwork, were later confirmed after I
had been interviewing for a few days.

In spite of this entrenched culture, the actual practicalities of collecting data in
these particular environments has proved to be a fairly straightforward
endeavour. Prior to embarking on the fieldwork, I had expressed some
concerns, to my supervisors, about how the male participants would react to
having a woman interviewing them (see Chapter 2). These misgivings have
proved to be without foundation. Some of the young men actually commented
on how much they had enjoyed conversing with me as an older woman. When I
probed further, Will (aged 18, Engineering), opined that, comparatively
speaking, he was finding it much easier to be his *"true self"*, opening up and

being honest with me as opposed to either men[11] or women of his own age. Transitional performativities, discussed above, appear to account for this openness (Butler, 1995; Robinson, 2008a; Robinson et al., 2011; Robinson & Hockey, 2011). To reiterate, the lads acknowledged that there were variations in the way they performed their masculinities contingent upon whom they are interacting with. For example, these divergences involve adopting laddish behaviours with their male peer group, but generally behaving more sensitively with women.

With some of the men, there was occasionally reticence when answering questions about the sexual objectification of women. It is interesting to speculate on how a male researcher would have found undertaking this aspect of the interview given, it seems, that the men are embarrassed to disclose to me the extent of their involvement in the prevailing laddish discourse (see Hearn (1998) for a discussion on men interviewing men). It could have been that my gender prohibited me from entering the 'closed world' of the workshop as many women before me had encountered (Wright, 2013). In the event, tenacity, on my behalf, paid off. Initially reticent participants have opened up about the sexist regime they both encountered and then actively perpetuated.

In keeping with the misogynist culture of the trades (as discussed in Chapter 8), I also found myself, on occasion, being subjected to overt sexual evaluation. While this was only with a very small number of the participants it, nevertheless, provides me with a more direct insight into how women can be perceived and might feel when interacting with men in these male-dominated macho professions. For instance, I recorded the following two exchanges in my research diary. The first of these took place with an apprentice.

> *"Today I interviewed a young man, Jack, aged 18, who is*
> *undertaking a Joinery apprenticeship. I found it to be an*
> *unsettling and uncomfortable exchange. When invited to*
> *sit down, he moved his chair from its original position so*

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[11] This was irrespective of their age. There was no separation between older and young men as Will had demarcated with women.

that it was in closer proximity to mine. In the process of doing so, he invaded my body space. Moreover, he positioned his legs so that they were either side of my chair thus encasing my body. This meant that his legs continuously brushed against mine for the duration of the interview. My natural inclination throughout was to move backwards and I consequently pushed as far back as possible into my chair. Jack also openly stared at my breasts and appeared to sexually evaluate me by further running his eyes over the entirety of my body." (Research Diary Extract, 24th January, 2012).

The second but similar interaction is this time with a tutor:

"Graham, a tutor, was amongst my interviewees today. What is striking about this exchange is how self-conscious I felt during it because of his overt sexual evaluation of me. My cheeks actually coloured! As with Jack's behaviour, this was undertaken in such a blatant way that I was made only too aware of exactly what he was doing. In this instance, Graham gazed intently at my breasts. Consequently, I felt the need to keep adjusting my t-shirt to ensure that it had not slipped too low or that I was revealing too much flesh. Putting my reaction into context, as with all of my interviews, today I am wearing a self-selected 'uniform' of crew neck t-shirt, cardigan, smart black trousers and low-heeled shoes. When prompted, colleagues have previously described this apparel as "casual but conservative". Therefore, I made the judgement, informed by my previous professional role as a careers officer, that this would be suitable clothing for the task at hand i.e. carrying out interviews and fieldwork predominantly in the construction industry. I consider it is neither too casual nor too formal (which potentially could have made me appear to be

unapproachable). Graham witnessed me continuously adjusting my t-shirt which I believe clearly signalled my discomfort. Even so, he blithely carried on appearing to be unperturbed by my reaction. In fact, it seemed to provoke him. He actually smirked on a couple of occasions when I rearranged my t-shirt" (Research Diary Extract, 11th March, 2012).

My feelings of discomfort are very evident on both occasions. Here, I record how I felt after my interview with Jack:

"Listening to the audio recording of the interview, after I arrived home, I could tell how awkward I felt. I am naturally introverted and when I feel uncomfortable socially, as I did on this occasion, I tend to overcompensate by laughing profusely. At the time, I offered myself some reassurance. For instance, as Jack had already informed me that his mother is a similar age to me I tried to persuade myself these apparent sexual overtures were just down to my overactive imagination. In seeking alternative explanations, I accounted for his behaviour by a potential lack of social skills when it came to judging appropriate body space boundaries.

If this exchange had been purely a social situation rather than an interview, I would have made my excuses to leave at the earliest possible time. Perhaps the obvious question, in these circumstances, was why I did not terminate the interview. I did feel some self-imposed pressure to remain with the interview. Despite my temporary discomfiture, very valuable and interesting data emerged from these exchanges and I made the decision that I simply did not want to lose it. Ultimately, I wanted to acquire the expert knowledge (the lived experiences, perceptions etc.) which only participants

themselves could impart" (Research Diary Extract, 24th
January, 2012).

Aside from the issue of my personal feelings in these exchanges, it is interesting
to compare the above situations with the literature that addresses power
imbalances between the researcher and the participant. Much has been made of
the fact that the former is regarded as holding the vantage point (see Kelly et al.,
1994). As detailed above, there has been debate about reducing power
differentials in order to equalise the relationship between the researcher and the
researched (Buckingham & Saunders, 2004). I consider that in the above
scenarios, though, the power pendulum was strictly tipped in both interviewees'
favour for the duration of the interviews.

In hindsight, an analysis of these experiences seems to indicate, as opposed to
being based purely on sexual attraction, both men were motivated by the
establishment of power. Hearn and Parkin (2001) maintains that men are able
to exercise power over women through subjecting them to sexual harassment.
Concurring with other researchers (for example, DiTomaso, 1989; Cockburn,
1991) I argue that their overt sexual overtures towards me were an instrument
for ensuring I was put back in my place as a subordinate identity and thus a
more conciliatory female (Wright, 2013). The coinage of women (i.e. their
subjugation and sexual objectification), as established above, was frequently
utilised as a conduit for proving heterosexual prowess (Cockburn, 1983).
Although the male participants may have discussed me in sexually graphic
terms in a group situation, the usual arena for these exchange, this would not
fully account for the behaviour of some of them in a one-to-one situation.

As a woman carrying out doctoral research, I could potentially be threatening in
an environment where, according to many of the tutors, practical skills are
favoured over academic achievement. For example, when negotiating access to
one training provider, Simon, the Centre Manager (and my gatekeeper),
continuously justified his career decision-making. Inclusive of this discussion
was a rationale as to why he had not pursued his education in the same way as I
was pursuing mine. He explained to me that he felt he could have performed
better academically but had, instead, focused his energies on his work in order

to safeguard the year-on-year success of the centre he managed. My presence and purpose for being in the centre, it seems, were perceived as a personal threat and he consequently reacted defensively. Our exchange, therefore, appears to have served as a catalyst for Simon in seeking validation for his educational choices, achievements and credentials. In fact, I assumed the role of reassuring him that he had made the right career decisions. Simultaneously, I deemed that I had to 'downplay' what I was doing. Again, as on other occasions, my performativity became one of conciliatory female in order to fit in with the prevailing male culture (Wright, 2013).

Dyadic Interviews

Use of dyadic interviews (Morgan et al., 2013), as a method of data generation, constituted a spontaneous rather than a necessarily planned approach. During the fieldwork, I was offered the opportunity to interview students still at school. As an integral part of their year 10 and 11 school options, these young men were attending one of the training centres once a week to study for a National Vocational Qualification in Motor Mechanics[12]. Initially the target age, when sampling participants, had been men aged 16 or older who had transitioned into post-compulsory education, training or employment. The introduction of 15-year-olds, though, added the possibility of a further dimension to the research. That is, the perspectives of those school at school and who had not yet made definite decisions on their post-compulsory educational or vocational routes were included within the study.

Given that these participants were only in college for a limited time period when I visited their training provider, I arranged with the tutor to meet with two participants simultaneously. While this format entails bringing together two people with a common purpose, in this case the course, it also proved to be useful in other ways. In particular, it enabled participants to bounce ideas off each other. Thereby, themes were explored which, perhaps, may not have arisen if these young men had been interviewed alone (Eliot, 2010).

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[12] This qualification was taken in lieu of other academic alternatives such as the General Certificate of Education (GCSE).

Semi-Structured Interviews with Key Professionals

As a study on young, working-class masculinities, recruitment of the 19 key professionals (see Table 3 below) was primarily undertaken for two reasons: either to confirm emerging themes from the subjective accounts of the young men, or, alternatively, to offer contrasting perspectives on emerging issues. The lived experiences of these participants further provided some intergenerational comparators in terms of long-term practices, rituals, and developments within their specific sector. For instance, these standpoints have been telling when exploring young mens' acculturation into the laddish cultures of the engineering, motor mechanics and construction-related trades (see Chapter 8). Tutors' narratives also proved interesting in terms of issues such as recruitment and progression constraints after the course.

Table 3: Staff Interviews by Role

Role	Method of Data Generation		Totals
	Semi-Structured Interviews	Informal Interviews	
Tutor	8	n/a	8
Learning Mentor	1	n/a	1
Placement Officer	2	n/a	2
Management	3	1	4
Careers Officer	2	n/a	2
Internal Examiner	0	1	1
Support Staff	0	1	1
Totals	**16**	**3**	**19**

The outcome of interviewing tutors was that their narratives have been utilised to a much greater extent than I originally visualised. Firstly, extracts of their transcripts have been deployed as supporting evidence to the young men's accounts. Secondly, they have also been utilised in establishing and confirming themes that did not arise in the other participants' standpoints, or at least to only a very limited degree. Notably, the latter usage was evident when developing the cultural construct of the *fishing mentality* (see Chapter 6). Tutors' narratives on this theme enabled the young men's fragile performativities to be contextually situated. Specifically, through echoing the

extinct fishing industry's rites of passage to manhood, these young men's masculinities were at risk of becoming redundant (Allen, 1999; McDowell, 2014).

The Perspectives of Young Women

Rather than being a decision made at the outset of the research, inclusion of young women within the study (i.e. 8 participants) gradually evolved during the fieldwork stage of the research. Young men, tutors and support staff highlighted from their standpoints (albeit inadvertently) some of the challenges women encountered whilst training in male-dominated occupational sectors. Perhaps the most critical moment was when women were problematized, especially those undertaking an apprenticeship in one of the trades. In othering them they were described as sexually promiscuous "sluts" (Stephen, aged 16, Joinery), "needy" (Tracy, Learning Mentor), and disruptive to lessons and the male operatives' training. Moreover, these negative connotations appeared to apply to nearly all women. The only exception to this classification of 'women' appeared to 'lesbians', who, being perceived as 'unnatural women' (Papp, 2006), seemed to be allowed slightly more leniency.

By inviting women to take part in the research, it provided me with the opportunity, on gender grounds, to interrogate these narratives. With a dearth of women operatives in the trades, there were limited opportunities to include them in the research. However, Susan's narrative, a trainee joinery apprentice, proves to be very telling in interrogating the above emerging themes, particularly through highlighting the repercussions of aggressive misogyny within these industries. For instance, I describe in Chapter 8 how she was segregated from the men on her college day release programme. A sexist decision, based purely on her gender and assumed heterosexuality - because as a heterosexual woman she was perceived to be too much of a distraction in the masculinised space of the workshop.

Banter, as a laddish discourse, emerges as one of the key themes of the research. One of its primary functions is to serve as a conduit for the legitimatization of

the young men's fragile masculinities. The accounts of the participants, explored in Chapters 6 and 8, suggest that it is primarily through this misogynistic discourse that sexual objectification and subjugation of women takes place. With most men, complicit in this sexist regime, a true account, including its impact, can arguably only be derived through the inclusion of women's standpoints.

These episodes of misogynistic practices were not just restricted to traditionally masculinised spaces such as the workshop or rugby pitch. For example, in one of the training centres, there were a small number of girls on traditionally female-dominated courses although they were still outnumbered by the lads on construction-related ones. In this establishment, the Common Room formed the main arena for socialising during breaks and lunchtimes. As a laddish and masculinised space, rife with banter, according to Kayleigh (aged 18, Catering) women were continuously *"pestered for sex and dates"* upon entering it. Such an environment appeared to marginalise the women students in that they are forced to spend their recreational periods away from the predatory behaviour of the men in the Common Room, pushed to the margins as it were, of the college's corridors or classrooms. By including some of these women's experiences, too, I was better placed to capture the nature and extent of misogyny as a validating tool in masculinity.

More generally, I was also interested in hearing the subjective accounts of women on programmes where there is increasingly more parity in terms of gender composition (for example, catering). With these participants, I wished to explore whether the misogyny discussed above extended to their courses. Similarly, I wanted to talk to women on traditionally feminised courses or apprenticeships. In the latter case, I wished to explore these participants' views about why more young men were not entering these professions.

Questionnaire I: Collating Biographical Data

In order to generate biographical data and also tailor individual questions to the circumstances of the interviewee, the 59 participants (51 men, 8 women) taking

part in the life history interviews were asked to complete a short questionnaire. With its structured format, consisting of predominantly closed-ended questions and answers, this type of questionnaire is recognised as the optimum method for collecting factual and/or biographical data (Gillham, 2000, 2008; Roulston, 2010). In terms of ensuring its effectiveness (i.e. whether it is 'fit for purpose') trialling of individual questions took place before the piloting of the questionnaire in its entirety (Bradburn et al., 2004; Gillham, 2008).

The following areas were covered by the questionnaire:

   i.   Age
  ii.   Gender
 iii.   School attended
  iv.   Qualifications gained
   v.   Work experience
  vi.   Employment history (both part and full-time jobs)
 vii.   Occupational history of the following family members:
        a) father
        b) mother
        c) siblings
        d) grandparents (on both sides of the family).

The actual implementation of the questionnaire took place at the beginning of and was therefore integral to the life history interviews. Guidance from the literature suggests that the ideal conditions for the disclosure of personal information descriptors are after trust and rapport, between the researcher and research participants, is established (De Vaus, 1996; Gillham, 2000; Davies, 2014). Taking this into account, the questionnaire was completed collaboratively with me, as the researcher, rather than asking the interviewee to work through it independently. Approaching it in such a way served as an 'ice-breaker'. Rapport developed between us, a factor facilitated by ordering the questions so that the more neutral ones were asked at the beginning of the questionnaire. A second rationale for working through the questionnaire with the participant was that it provided me with the opportunity to ask any supplementary questions. I used, after seeking permission, audio equipment to

record the responses. Therefore, I was able to capture, more fully, any additional information supplied.

Questionnaire II: Career Aspirations and Goals

When negotiating access at one training centre, the gatekeeper offered me the opportunity to incorporate an extended version
of the questionnaire into the research itinerary. It was to be distributed to the entire student body. Initially this tool was for diagnostic screening only so that I could, theoretically at least, be more systematic in approaching potential interviewees. In the development of the questionnaire itself, the above shorter generic version formed its core. Supplementary questions, derived as a means of collating the further information required, focused on respondents' educational and career decision-making:

i.   Influences (for example, individual family members, key professionals, potential salary, the media and college prospectuses) that contributed towards choices regarding the following:
   a) GCSE and A level options
   b) Work experience and/or college tasters
   c) Apprenticeship programmes
   d) Current courses
   e) Career path

ii.   Respondents' aspirations in 5 and 10 years' respectively.

My gatekeeper, though, only distributed the questionnaire to learners who were not in the training centre on the day I arranged to go in. Via this process, 34 (19 males and 15 females) were completed in total with respondents ranging in age from 16 to 19. All respondents were undertaking apprenticeships in either business administration, customer services or IT. While I could not use this data for diagnostic purposes, just described, it nevertheless provides supporting evidence, in Chapters 6-8, to the main findings emerging from the 75 face-to-face exchanges undertaken.

Informal Interviews

Over and above the methods covered above, five ad hoc informal interviews were also carried out during the research process. Opportunities to carry out three of these arose when I was undertaking participant observations at two of the six training centres. In each of these instances, the discussions are with key professionals. By contrast, I also engaged in two further exchanges with men aged 24 and 29, respectively, who were both postgraduates at the University of Hull. These informal interviews were undertaken at a relatively early stage in the fieldwork, whilst I was working towards understanding the developing and emerging themes of the research. For example, one particular focus was on the concept of "man-up". I had never encountered this terminology prior to the research. By gaining the perspectives and understandings of these participants, however, I have become familiar with its meaning and usage in different contexts. On a practical note, while none of these informal interviews were recorded, via audio equipment, they were immediately written up after the exchange had taken place.

Vignettes

In order to aid the interviewing process, vignettes were employed (see Barter & Renold, 1999). These essentially consisted of asking participants a number of hypothetical 'what if' questions. The purpose, here, was to draw out participants' viewpoints, beliefs and attitudes etc. to situations they had never previously encountered. For example, the following vignette was used to explore perceptions about peers making gender atypical career choices:

> Your male friend [name] tells you he would like to become
> a nursery nurse/hairdresser.

>   i.   How do you react?
>   ii.   What do you do if he tells you he is worried about
>   the reaction of his friends or peers at college to this
>   career choice?

Use of Media

During piloting, the TV series and film *The Inbetweeners*[13] were frequently points of reference for Nick (aged 18, Catering) when describing and defining variant ways of performing masculinities. To explain briefly, the show is a British comedy about four school-aged teenagers. In terms of peer group hierarchies, they are neither popular (i.e. one of the 'cool' lads) or unpopular (for example, a 'geek') falling somewhere 'in-between' these two ends of the spectrum. The show chronicles their usually hapless attempts with women, alcohol consumption and other comparable teenage experiences. Despite the show being comedic and 'over the top', it provided the men taking part in the research, particularly the teenage ones, with role models. These fictional protagonists seemed to affirm the acceptability of being "ordinary" or "average" as opposed to aspiring to be one of the *"cool lads"* (George, aged 19, Bricklaying) at the top of the peer hierarchy.

Prior to the research, I was unfamiliar with both the television series and film. Consequently, during the interview with Nick, when he likened himself to one of the central characters, I failed to fully grasp his perspective and perceptions. In order to resolve this situation, I decided to watch the film. Soon afterwards, I followed this up with the three television series that were aired on Channel 4 prior to its release. Familiarisation with *The Inbetweeners* franchise proved to be an invaluable investment for the duration of the remaining fieldwork. Serving a facilitatory role, references to *The Inbetweeners* operated in a similar way to the vignettes, described above, ensuring coverage of the key themes. For example, this process was in evidence when discussing masculine performativities during the life history interviews (see Chapters 3 and 6 for further details).

Ultimately, the men, and occasionally women, could draw on our joint knowledge of *The Inbetweeners* franchise in order to enlarge upon their own beliefs, experiences and understandings. For instance, Laurence (aged 18, Customer Services) explained to me that success with women is contingent

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[13] There is a second film in the franchise, *The Inbetweeners 2,* but this was not released until 2014- two years after the fieldwork had taken place.

upon men *"acting more sensitively"*. However, he then continued on to speculate that this demands negotiation of a fine line as most women, from his perspective, do not like their men to be overly-sensitive. In the construction of his argument, Laurence referred to two separate storylines involving the central characters, Simon and Jay, from *The Inbetweeners*. Both of these instances provide examples of what *"stepping over the line"* (Laurence, aged 18, Customer Services), in this respect, actually encompasses. Laurence, in concluding his commentary, added that both characters were rightly *"dumped"* for their *"wimpish"* behaviour and not *"manning-up"* sufficiently for their women.

Supplementary Documentary Evidence

Analysis of secondary sources was used to substantiate and cross-reference data generated through the more direct methods described above. Included here were the following formats:

i.   National, regional and local statistics on a range of indicators comprising:

      a) Educational qualifications and credentials achieved across the UK, in the Yorkshire region and in Hull.

      b) Occupational composition of the workforce in Hull

      c) Unemployment statistics (local, regional and national comparators).

ii. Published sources (e.g. books, journal articles).

Content analysis was also carried out on the training centres' recruitment literature, including:

- prospectuses
- advertising brochures
- internet pages (especially those providing course outlines).

The purpose in performing this analysis was to explore any covert and overt messages in how the selected courses were presented to potential applicants. Particularly, this analysis is in relation to gendered expectations about educational and career trajectories (see Chapter 6 for a discussion of this analysis).

Participant Observation

Two further complementary methods were deployed, with the first of these being participant observation. The rationale underlying its usage was to explore the 'informal' cultures of the training centres. Integral to the approach were guided tours of campuses and workshops. Perhaps more informative, however, was working alone when observing behaviours in settings such as canteens, common rooms and in corridors (during breaks or at lunch time). Observations were restricted to the times when I was not interviewing, and never amounted to individual sessions lasting longer than 2 hours. However, this time frame was frequently less. Despite these palpably limited participant observations, interesting evidence to support the emerging themes from the interviews were still yielded.

Reflexivity: Research Diary

Finally, I maintained a research diary for the duration of the fieldwork (Davies, 2014). On a day-to-day basis, these observations captured and tracked my thoughts on the research as it progressed. For example, the diary includes any issues encountered and ideas I generated. As the above discussion indicates, I also reflected on how my age and gender, as a middle-aged female researcher, affected the research process. Specifically, these thoughts are in relation to my interactions and experiences of carrying out research with male interviewees training in masculinised professions.

Ethical Considerations

Consistent with a feminist methodological approach and the specific requirements of working with young people, ethical considerations have been paramount in all aspects of the research process. Likewise, this stance is in congruence with the British Sociological Association (BSA, 2014) and University of Hull regulations. A particular area for consideration has been participant anonymity. Use of unique identifier codes for all completed questionnaires and typed transcripts is implemented for this purpose (Gillham, 2000, 2008). Pseudonyms have been also exchanged for participants' real names, throughout the thesis, including where exerts from transcripts are included in the text (Davies, 2014).

A second step in managing 'identifying details' (Saunders, 2015: 617) is the anonymization or disguising of locations (Nespor, 2000; Moore, 2012). I replaced the name of each training centre, from 1-7, accordingly. However, I elected not to change the name of Hull to a more generalised description. There are risks with this strategy, namely, that participants could be recognised by not disguising the contextual setting of the research. As I provided in-depth information on which courses the training centres were offering, it would be possible for a person with local knowledge of providers to work out the name of at least some of the providers. For instance, there was only one training centre in Hull, at the time of the fieldwork, which was dedicated to offering preparation for the uniformed services courses. Alternatively, some of the young men had distinctive experiences (such as Josh who was violently assaulted by his father) and it could be possible to identify him with the location of the research known.

My supervisors and I did spend a considerable amount of time debating whether to name Hull. Ultimately, the decision was reached to do so as the contextual framing of the fishing industry (which again, would clearly establish the setting as Hull even if it had been anonymised) was too valuable in situating the fragile masculinities the participants were performing. The rationale for this decision was presented to and passed by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Ethics Committee. However, it has been agreed that should any publication arise from the research, the more generalised description of a 'North-Eastern

English City' will be adopted. Moreover, care will be taken to ensure that any further identifying details (such as the fishing mentality) are either precluded from a publication or be subject to further anonymization.

To reiterate on the previous discussion, access to the seven institutions, and by extension all participants, was gained via negotiations with gatekeepers (Masson, 2004). In the literature, however, there is some debate about their usage (France, 2004). For instance, Reay (1995) actively steers away from targeting teachers for this role; perhaps in recognition that gatekeepers may potentially seek to influence and manipulate the research process (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). A specific concern in this regard is 'passive consent' (Wiles et al., 2007). In other words, once an educational or training institution has given permission for research to be undertaken, an implicit assumption that all teenagers will automatically participate could be made. In such circumstances, there may likely be limited opportunities for them to 'opt out' (Weithorn & Scherer, 1994).

Steps in this study, though, were taken to counter such an eventuality. The aims and objective of the study were communicated in both verbal and written formats. In the latter case, a research brief was disseminated to each participant (Sin, 2005) and stated that withdrawal from the research process could take place at any juncture (Stanley & Sieber, 1992). Further to being included in this written communication, a dialogue between each participant and me around withdrawal and consent formed an integral part of the opening development stage of each interview (Gillham, 2000; France, 2004).

Safeguarding Concerns

A significant proportion of the sample were aged 18 or under. For instance, 49% of life history interviewees were either 16 or 17 years old. Moreover, the participants of the dyadic interviews were all aged 15. In these circumstances, legislation (i.e. the Children's Act 1989, 2004) makes it clear that professionals, working with teenagers under 18, have a responsibility not to withhold information regarding safeguarding or child protection issues. In other words,

this accountability is for circumstances where a child or young person may be at risk of danger either to themselves, from an adult or another young person (France, 2004; Masson, 2004; BSA, 2014).

In accordance with this legislative framework, the following steps were taken:

- The research has been undertaken in line with BSA (2014) and the University of Hull guidelines and regulations. Approval, in line with the latter, was also been granted by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Ethics Committee.

- Use of a gatekeeper, at each institution, also served as a further check. This could, for instance, have included their challenging of the proposed research thereby ensuring that it did not put the participants 'at risk' (Masson, 2004).

- The interviews were all undertaken on a one-to-one basis (with the exception of the dyadic interviews) because the presence of a member of staff could have potentially led to bias (Letherby, 2003). Moreover, this involvement of a third party would have jeopardised anonymity of participants' narratives. As I was invariably alone with participants, I held a valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate for the duration of the fieldwork.

- Discussion of the boundaries and constraints of anonymity formed part of the opening stages of all interviews. In other words, the participants were made aware that if a safeguarding or child protection issue arose it would have to be passed onto the appropriate authorities (France, 2004).

- Through my former professional role of Safeguarding Co-ordinator in the Connexions Service, I developed an extensive working knowledge of how to deal with and report safeguarding issues. Inclusive of this experience is both school procedures and those of the Hull Safeguarding Children

Board[14] (HSCB). I was in a position, then, to have utilised this knowledge-base as and when required.

Support beyond the Research Process

Given the nature and scope of this research, occasions did arise when these discussions led to the identification of the need for further support. Strictly speaking, this lies outside the parameters of the research process. However, assisting participants in acquiring additional help or support is in line with the feminist goals of facilitating social change and individual empowerment (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002; Letherby, 2003). Where appropriate, therefore, I provided participants with information about and contact details of relevant agencies.

Conclusions

In the above discussion, I trace the rationale as to why the lens of a feminist and sociological gender analysis has been utilised for exploring working-class masculinities. More specifically, this framework enables a more nuanced understanding of these performativities and intersections with discourses of laddish culture and career aspirations. The importance of reflexivity is also highlighted in terms of how my former professional role as a guidance practitioner shaped and influenced my interest in this area. An argument was then put forward as to why predominantly qualitative methodological tools have been selected for data generation. It was emphasised that this choice is based on answering the research questions.

I then moved on to discuss each stage of the research process including sampling, gaining access, the importance of informed consent, carrying out the interviews and analysis. Integral to this approach was highlighting any issues I encountered in the field. Particular attention was drawn to my role as a female

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[14] As part of the Children's Act (2004), the HSCB has responsibility for the development of protocols when reporting safeguarding or child protection issues within Hull (Bradshaw, 2010).

researcher, and carrying out research with male participants training or working in traditionally masculinised environments. A thematic analysis of this scenario will be presented in Chapter 8. Before this stage, however, in the next chapter I use the concepts of hegemonic and sub-hegemonic masculinities, grounded in working-class understandings, as frameworks to explore what it is to be a young man in Hull today.

Chapter 3

Unmasking Young Masculinities
The Rites of Passage to Manhood

"… a conception of how men live their lives and what is going on in their heads, both now and in the past, as well as what guides their presentation of masculinity, is central to the project of theorizing masculinities" (Robinson, 2008b: 21).

Introducing Masculinities

In Chapters 1 and 2, the 'how' and 'why' of the research process were discussed. Here I initially present a more in-depth theoretical review and analysis of the academic masculinities literature. In the parameters of this sociological framing, I argue that gender is both socially constructed and embraces a typology of masculine performativities. Drawing on the work of Connell and Beasley, I explore how this plurality of identities is played out in relation to culturally exalted or hegemonic or more localised sub-hegemonic masculinities. Integral to this discussion, feminine and gay performativities will be at the forefront. The rationale, here, is that these assume subordinate or marginalised positions within hierarchies of masculinities.

In the second half of the chapter, I move on to discuss the ramifications of masculine performativities in shaping career choices. These potential consequences include highlighting how hegemonic or sub-hegemonic masculinity and conformity to its frequently limiting parameters can play a powerful, if not always conscious, role in the vocational decision-making process. Roles played by parents and friendship networks in this process are also considered. Finally, the importance of career education programmes, work

experience and the input of guidance professionals in challenging occupationally segregated trajectories are highlighted.

Boys will be Boys? Exploring Multiple Masculinities

The phraseology 'boys will be boys' captures a widely held belief, underpinned by the media and pop psychology, that masculinity is a genetic predisposition. Defined as a monolithic and fixed concept, the extent to which it can be influenced is, therefore, necessarily limited (Whitehead & Barrett, 2001; Connell, 2005). Within the huge body of literature produced through feminist and later critical men's studies[15], this notion that there are is a naturalised and biological dichotomy between the sexes has been countered and critiqued (Oakley, 1972; 1981; 1998; Reinharz, 1979; Graham & Rawlings, 1980; Graham, 1983; Pugh, 1990; Westmarland, 2001; Alsop et al., 2002; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Beasley, 2008a). Rather, drawing on anthropological findings, it has been maintained that they are, in fact, a socio-cultural product (Alsop et. al. 2002).

In alignment with these findings, I am arguing that rather than being biologically determined (Morgan, 1992), masculinities (and femininities) constitute socially constituted and fluid performances or scripts (Butler, 2006). The theoretical framing of Goffman's (1959; 1974) dramaturgical model of social life underpins this positioning. Pivotal to this theory of social interaction, is use of theatre imagery in providing a nuanced understanding of face-to-face encounters. Morgan (1992) argues that masculinity is not something a man *has*. Rather, it is something he *does* or acts out in everyday life. Consequently, individuals can be likened to actors, playing a role, on a stage or *front stage* as Goffman (1959) defines it. Just as a performer will play an array of characters, men have transitional and fluid masculine faces or scripts contingent upon the contextual setting they are interacting in (Spector-Mersel, 2006).

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[15]Men studies is an interdisciplinary academic field that focuses on areas relating to masculinity, gender, men and politics (Alsop et al., 2002).

Integral to this process is a discourse of impression management. Every social interaction is governed by numerous contextual constraints including common cultural practices, values, norms and beliefs. Pertaining to masculinities, inclusive of these social reference points are 'acceptable' gendered presentations of self (Goffman, 1974; Spector-Mersel, 2006; Robinson et al., 2011). Returning to the dramaturgical framework, men as social actors, perform their masculinities in such a way as to make a good impression, which will include presenting a different masculine face dependent on context (such as when with their peers or work colleagues). As agentic beings, they reflexively construct their scripts (either consciously and highly intentioned or subconsciously and habitually) to avoid embarrassment or social censure (Bricknell, 2005). An 'audience' is also present any given social situation i.e. the other people a man is interacting with. Their role will be to scrutinize the actor's behaviour, ensuring that it is gender appropriate and punishing any transgressions. As Bricknell (2005: 32-33) succinctly puts it:

> "socially constituted masculine selves act in the social world and are acted on simultaneously" (2005, 32-33).

What Goffman (1959) defines as the *back stage,* however, offers some reprieve from all this scrutiny. Away from the public domain and the process of impression management, roles or scripts, they play out dependent upon the audience in a specific setting, can be eschewed. The *back stage* is a space where men can let their guard down, unwind and relax (Robinson et al., 2011). In other words, it is where they can be their true, inhibited selves (Goffman, 2011). Invariably this scenario only occurs when a man is either alone or at home surrounded only by his close family.

There has been an extensive literature produced on masculinities emerging through the interdisciplinary academic field of men's studies and later applied within Feminist, Sexuality and International studies. The aim within this doctoral thesis, with the space limitations, is not to reproduce this critical analysis. Rather, key themes and proponents (such as Willis 1977; Britain, 1989; Mac an Ghaill, M. 1994; McDowell, 2004; 2014; McCormack and

Anderson 2010; Anderson, 2008) will be drawn on in understanding how performativities are played out within the local contextual setting of Hull.

As discussed in Chapter 1, Raewyn Connell's ubiquitous and omnipresent concept of hegemonic masculinity has been particularly influential in situating these social-cultural gender identities (Robinson, 2008a). It usage has been pivotal in understanding the relations between men and masculinities are the latter are not homogenous. Within prevailing gender regimes (Walby, 2011) men have often been collectively regarded as assuming the dominant and prevailing position over women (Bradley, 2013). Masculinities, though, are not just relational to women and femininities but also to each other. As Connell (2000) maintains, masculinity is not nor should be perceived as a singular construction. Rather, typified by its multiplicity it should be regarded as varying *"across persons"* in any gender regime (Spector- Mersel, 2006). In other words, not all masculine manifestations not equal in terms of power and privilege (Kimmel, 2009). Connell (1987; 1993; 1995; 2000; 2002) has conceptualised a theoretical schema of plural identities that are framed and relational to the most culturally exalted form of performativity in any given society i.e. hegemonic masculinity. Beasley (2008a: 170-1) takes up the argument:

> "The term hegemonic masculinity' is most importantly a
> means to recognising that 'all masculinities are not created
> equal' and involves framing that draws attention to the
> delivery within masculinities, to multiple masculinities.
> Masculinity in this reading is not a piece, nor simply about
> power externalised. It is not only about men's power in
> relation to women […] hegemonic masculinity holds an
> authoritative positioning over other masculinities
> (Beasley, 2008a: 170-1).

The prolific application of hegemonic masculinity by empirical researchers is also incontrovertible within Masculinities, Feminist, Sexuality and International Studies literature. Moreover, its usage has been evidential in a diverse range of fields from criminology, prison sociology to gay and sexuality studies

(Demetriou, 2001). Indeed, the extent of this has been such that the concept has enjoyed an unparalleled position of privilege, being considered as the cornerstone for situated masculinities in the scope of academic discourse (Beasley, 2008a).

As the most exalted variant, Connell (1993:610) contends that "Hegemony is a question of relations of cultural domination, not head counts". As such it is not the performativity that is most commonly enacted and embodied by men. Rather, it is an idealised variant that is reserved for role models, fantasy figures and even sporting heroes (Donaldson, 1993). Moreover, in any given gender regime, hegemonic masculinity is a 'historically mobile relation' (Connell, 1995:77) being delimited by time and space (Rotundo, 1993; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). In other words, the fluidity of this dominant identity is such that it varies internationally in different parts of the world, and, moreover, across cultural contexts, communities and localities within the same country (Rotundo, 1993; Alsop et al., 2002; McDowell, 2004; Spector-Mersel, 2006; Robinson & Hockey, 2011). Alsop et al., (2002:141) explicates on its usage in contemporary Western society:

> "Hegemonic masculinity in Western society is recognised
> in most literature as hinging on heterosexuality, economic
> autonomy, being able to provide for one's family, being
> rational, being successful keeping one's emotion in check
> and above all not doing anything considered feminine".

The application of masculinity, then, should be approached through spatial and temporal lenses. In support of this contention, Beasley (2008a; 2008b) has argued that the taxonomy of Connell's hegemonic masculinity should be revisited. She suggests that a conceptual separation between 'supra'-hegemonic (perhaps reflecting global masculinities) and sub-hegemonic (which alternatively, could reflect more localised or national identities). However, these plural hegemonic identities could also co-exist within the same local space, albeit their relationship would probably be hierarchical with one assuming a dominant position over the other (Beasley, 2008). Messerschmidt (2008) critiques this revisionist approach suggesting that coverage to these

themes have also been addressed in his work with Connell (see Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Nevertheless, I argue that for the interpreting, analysing and presentation of my research findings, Beasley's framing provides clarity in unravelling the complexities of masculinities within the locale. Beasley (2008: 192) advises further on what this process entails and the benefits derived from its application:

> "while retaining usage of the overall term hegemonic masculinity when appropriate, I wish to attend to plural hegemonic masculinities within this by employing the language of *"supra"* and *"sub"* hegemonic. De-massification of the term hegemonic masculinity is called for in order to avoid insufficient nuanced and uniform top-down analyses".

Whether in plural or singular mode (i.e. hegemonic and sub-hegemonic masculinities co-existing in a locale or on their own) they retain exalted positions (albeit hierarchically if in plural mode). Central to this positioning, is that hegemonic masculinity is essentially heterosexual masculinity (Kimmel, 2004). As such, the subjugation of women through the 'patriarchal dividend' is pivotal to these arrangements (Alsop et al., 2002; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Highlighted in Beasley's (2008a) quote above, Connell (1987; 1993; 1995; 2000; 2002) proposes a theoretical schema or hierarchy of masculine performativities each with differing access to power and privilege. These are based on relationships of complicity, dominance and subordination (Robinson, 2008).

Numerous variants have been recognised including gay, ethnically differentiated masculinities and the more empathetic forms such as the *New Man* (Chapman & Rutherford, 1988) whose emergence is largely attributed to developments in consumer markets and more products developed and marketed specifically at men (Nixon, 1997). In Connell's (2005) spectrum of masculinities, there are some men who may not be able or willing to achieve the associated ideals of hegemonic masculinity, but, nevertheless, are complicit with it. Consequently, through this process, these men derive benefit or some privileges by sharing in

power over women (i.e. the patriarchal dividend as described in Chapter 1) and subjugated masculine identities (Connell, 2005; Robinson, 2008). In Chapter 6, I describe an emerging identity from my research, *Mr Average,* who provides an example of this variant.

Protest masculinity, as coined by Connell (2000), has been another significant theorised identity linked invariably to working-class men (Harland et al., 2005). In the absence of any 'real' sense of power (such as economic capital), they seek, in their protest, alternative means by which to exercise power. For instance, one such adopted strategy has been to engage in extreme behaviours such as excessive alcohol consumption, substance misuse or gang warfare (Harland et al., 2005). However, this terminology could equally be applied to the long-term unemployed, disaffected youth or middle-class men who 'opt out' of the educational and career trajectories which they are expected to follow (McDowell, 2004).

The decision to deploy Beasley's demassification of hegemonic masculinity arose when analysing the conformist masculinity that many of the young men coveted. In interpreting this key emerging theme, I first attempted to do so within the umbrella of Connell's theoretical schema of gender relations. Several conflictions, however, emerged during this process. Notably, these centred around whether the participants' scripts of masculinity were of a hegemonic or protest variant.

As stated above, all men have masculine privilege through the 'patriarchal dividend' (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). In other words, men have collective advantage over women through being afforded unearned rights, advantages and benefits (Alsop et al., 2002). Variations in the extent of this privilege, however, are contingent upon access to social capital[16], economic resources and institutional power (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Invariably, these are the preserve of upper middle-class men whereas working-class performativities, usually defined as marginalised or protest variants, have a dearth of such

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[16] Social capital refers to the anticipated economic or collective benefits gleaned from the preferential co-operation and treatment taking place between groups and individuals (Shaw, 2015).

capital. In the relative absence of this social and economic power, these men have been aligned with hypermasculinity scripts i.e. exaggerated male stereotypic behaviours such as aggression and physical violence.

As I will be arguing in Chapter 6, within the emergent hierarchy of gender identities, it is the *chavs* who are engaging in protest masculinity. Not only are they living in the stigmatized neighbourhoods of Hull's estates, but they are also for the most part, or at least perceived as, NEET (not in education, employment or training). Furthermore, the participants maintained that *chavs* regarded long-term unemployment as a favourable and preferred choice. Antithetically positioned against this protest variant is conformist masculinity which many of the participants aspired to. The research findings suggest that this script constitutes sub-hegemonic performativities.

While this contention conflicts with previous research, as noted above, there are various reasons underlying the reasoning behind this proposed theoretical departure. Firstly, there are the conditions of insularity and stand-aloneness which have been attributed to Hull (Featherstone, 2012). Geographically isolated, local men are comparatively removed from scripts of global and national masculinities. With Hull being ascribed as a working-class city, performativities which reflect this cultural context can be envisaged as assuming the pinnacle role of localised hegemonic masculinities. As I discuss in Chapter 6, other identities including women, gay men, Mr Average and *chavs* are all organised in relation to the above orthodox masculinities. This is another rationale underpinning the assertion that the conformist scripts constitute hegemonic ones via their role in legitimatising masculinities.

Beasley (2008) and Shaw (2015) both maintain that sub-hegemonic is reserved for machismo, whereby brawn, physical strength and psychology resilience are all emphasized. These are attributes associated with working-class men and the conformist script acted out by my participants (see Chapter 6). Finally, Shaw (2015) also links sub-hegemonic variants to laddish behaviour whether that be drinking copious amounts of lager, or engaging in risqué banter grounded in misogyny and homophobia (again, all behaviours many of my participants engage in). The power of Beasley's (2008) sub-hegemonic variant as a

legitimatizing role is evidenced by appropriation of laddish behaviours on university campuses (see below).

It should be noted that the concept of masculinity has not been without its critics. Moller (2007:265) for example, dismisses it as "disciplinary tunnel vision". In particular he contends that by rendering all men as coherent on a theoretical schema, the nuances and complexities of actual masculine performativities are precluded.   Nevertheless, in attempting to understand young masculinities in Hull (and their specific interrelationships with masculinities), I would suggest that identification of localised understandings of hegemonic masculinity is central to this process.

As all noted in Chapter, the fluidity of masculinities is not just delimited to time and space but also should be viewed as a contextual configuration that is subject to varying performativities dependent upon whom an individual is interacting with (Robinson et al., 2011; Robinson & Hockey 2011). As Spector- Mersel (2006: 68) also notes, this fluidity extends "across persons". Therefore, in fully understanding masculinities within a localised context it is important to consider different contexts participants interact in such as sport (Robinson, 2008a); leisure activities, social drinking (Landrine et al., (1988; Harnett et al., 2000) and romantic relationships (Redman, 2001; Allen, 2007).

'Straight as a Die': Compulsory Heterosexuality

Within gender regimes, hegemonic or sub-hegemonic masculinities shape and define what are considered to be the currently regarded as socially acceptable behaviours and practices (Connell, 2005; Beasley 2008a; 2008b; Walby, 2011). Procedurally, sanctions are enforced on those men who deviate from these prescribed standards. Intrinsic to the success of this surveillance regime (Smith, 2007; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012) has been the collective monitoring or policing by men of one another in order to confirm whether their behaviour is deemed suitably appropriate or not.

Central to the continued dominance of hegemonic masculinity, as discussed above, is a regime of heteronormativity, which in essence referred to what Rich

(1980) and Jeffreys (1990) both classified as 'compulsory heterosexuality'; that is, the social pressure applied to men and women to be actively or visibly 'straight'. As a consequence, alternative sexual orientations such as homosexuality, bisexuality and transgender are to be discouraged, alienated, stigmatised and marginalised (Ferfolja, 2007)

In policing this regime, at the heart of male bonding and solidarity has been both "flight from the feminine" (Kimmel, 2009: 48) and homohysteria (i.e. the social fear of being perceived as gay) (Bush et al., 2012). Emerging from these discourses has a dialogue grounded in misogyny and homophobia. For instance, this has been well documented as occurring in organised sports (Anderson, 2008) and the construction industry (Cockburn, 1983; Wright, 2013). These verbal exchanges are through the conduit of banter, an aggressive form of humour which has been argued to replace emotionality and sentimentality (Collinson, 1998). Integral to the 'jokey' discourse of banter is a rich vocabulary of abuse. Examples include usage of derogatory labelling such as 'wimp', 'sissy' and 'poof'. These vociferous expressions of homophobia can serve as a way of validating heterosexuality through vocally denigrating homosexuality (Herek, 2000). Apparent here with the use of this language, is the symbolic linkage of homosexuality with what are deemed to be 'feminine attributes'.

Therefore, being perceived as feminine or 'other' is actively discouraged with verbal abuse often leading men to modify their behaviour in order to fit in with 'the crowd' i.e. their peer group. In turn, this may develop into adopting other stereotypical machismo traits, for example, toughness, self-reliance, aggressiveness, economic independence and 'proven' heterosexuality (Connell, 2005). In this way, not only is acceptance as part of the group membership achieved but the social constructions of hegemonic or sub-hegemonic masculinities are simultaneously reinforced (Beattie, 2004).

In terms of young masculinities, there have been conflicting findings regarding acceptance of homosexuality within the peer group. Ethnographic research by McCormack (2012) suggested that there has been a decline in the prevalence of homophobia in UK schools. McCormack and Anderson (2010) also found pro-

gay attitudes in a sixth form setting. However, the authors acknowledged that this was in a context which was both middle-class and privileged. By contrast however, other studies have suggested that homophobic school bullying continues to be a powerful and pervasive issue. Such incidents have been reported as experienced by two-thirds of gay, bisexual and lesbian young people (Akhtar, 2011). It has also been estimated that this type of bullying is on the increase. For instance, a 10% increase in bullying (via verbal abuse) was reported between 1984 and 2003 with extreme cases leading to self-harming or suicide attempts (Shabi, 2005). The nature and extent of growing up as a gay man in Hull, coming out and choosing a career are all explored in Chapters 5,6 and 7. How homosexuality is used to define and reinforce hegemonic masculinity will also be considered.

Along with homosexuality, Connell has contended that "hegemonic masculinity is always constructed in relation to women" (1987: 183). As will be discussed in more detail below, pressure to conform is most prevalent during adolescence. Within a discourse of compulsory heterosexuality, a dating culture emerges during this time. Despite the legislative and social progress made in increasing women's equality and positioning in relation to men, a double standard has continued to function. This is a finding that has been found repeatedly over a period spanning three decades (Smith, 1978; Lees, 1986; Holland et al., 1998; Clisby 2009).

Derogatory epithets such as 'slag' or 'slut' are still found to be attributed to women perceived as engaging in promiscuity. Alternatively, sexual experience is coveted amongst the male participants. In accord with this, those with a reputation for being a "bit of a lad" are socially rewarded as proof positive of their heterosexuality. Within schools this can extend to the development of laddish male cultures, with [sexual] experience forming a key factor in enhancing a young man's status within the peer group. Achievement of this was frequently via 'bragging' about their sexual conquests (Wood, 1984; Ferfolja, 2007). On a wider level too, the on-going derogation of young women has served as a mechanism for the validation of masculine supremacy (Ferfolja, 2007; Wright, 2013).

'Lads' Culture': Young Masculinities and Sexuality

In specific relation to this study, the above practices are not unique to young men still in compulsory education. These laddish cultures in fact seem to continue beyond the classroom and prevail in both workplaces and leisure activities such as competitive sports (Anderson, 2008). The notion of the *new lad* first emerged in the 1990s after the more metrosexual model of masculinity, the '*new man'* were rejected by men and women alike (Bradley, 2013). Largely perpetuated by the media, the new lad devoured soft pornographic materials and lads' mags such as *Loaded* and *Nuts* (Cumming, 2015). He also a prolific chaser of women. Bradley (2012:58) describes this variant of masculinity as "the lad reborn, but with an ironic postmodern twist". However, it has been over the last 3 or 4 years that the re-emergence of misogyny (amongst men as opposed to just media hype) has made a comeback (Day, 2013; Phipps & Young, 2013; 2015; Williams, 2014). Laura Bates, for instance, in the everyday sexism project asks women to record instances of the misogyny they encounter on a daily basis. She received an overwhelming response from women and these instances of sexism and misogyny have been catalogued these on her website (Bates, 2014)

A discourse of laddism has also been evidenced as gaining momentum within UK universities (Phipps, 2014a, 2014b; Phipps & Young, 2013, 2015a). While dismissed, particularly by those practicing it, as harmless banter this competitive male chauvinism can easily spill over into harassment and violence (Phipps, 2015b). It was in September 2014 that the prevalence of laddism in UK universities first came to prominence through an NUS survey. It revealed that 37% of women had been subjected to unwanted sexual advances. Other commonalities include having sexual comments directed at them and touched inappropriately. Furthermore, the findings of the 2010 Hidden Marks: A Study of Women Students' Experiences of Harassment, Stalking, Violence and Sexual Assault suggest that one in seven respondents had experienced some form of serious physical or sexual assault. Two-thirds (68%) also incurred some kind of verbal or non-verbal sexual harassment on campus (NUS, 2010)

Laddism has been found in a range of university social and sporting societies including debating teams and elite drinking clubs (Day, 2013). Williams (2014) also identifies college songs that demean and objectify women. Freshers week has been identified as a particularly hazardous time (Phipps & Young, 2013, 2015; Williams, 2014) The national press has also reported these behaviours, critiquing in particular the 'Uni Lad' website. Commentary on this issue has particularly centred on the level of misogyny these social networking site have embodied, with heterosexual male students bantering with one another about their sexual conquests (Aroesti, 2012). Rape jokes are also commonplace online (Phipps, 2014). With increasing equality for women and men's position in gender regimes being undermined, laddism is often about ensuring that women are put back in their place. It is however, also all-encompassing in its portfolio of equality oppressing. Homophobia, transphobia classism and racism are all part of this comparatively new laddism discourse.

Moving to the other contexts, the increasing ubiquity of social networking sites and other digital technologies has led to an upsurge in cyber misogynist discourse and bullying. For example, the Olympian Rebecca Adlington has been the victim of abuse by Twitter trolls. The majority of the abusive comments have been aimed at her physical appearance, with trolls likening her to a whale or dolphin (Le Marie, 2014; Topping, 2014). Her noteworthy Olympic achievements were eclipsed, it seemed, by her perceived transgressions from stereotypic ideals of female attractiveness. Rebecca estimated that approximately 80% of the abusive remarks she received were from men.

Staying with social media, with the rise of new technologies the process of sexting, whereby sexually explicit images, texts and messages are shared online, has emerged. (Albury 2013, Ringrose et al., 2013; Lee and Crofts 2015; Lee et al., 2015). While some young women engaging in the process may be consensual and in longer-term relationships (Russell et al., 2016; Lee and Crofts 2015) the process is also abused. For some, it is coercive discourse whereby they feel pressurised in sending 'sexy' images of themselves for male titillation (Ringrose et al., 2013). Boys also frequently share these images with the girl's consent thus subjecting them to 'slut shaming' (Russell et al., 2016).

Masculinities and Work

In the second part of the chapter, I now consider the gendering of work, childcare and domestic arrangements. The persisting patterns of a horizontally and vertically segregated workforce were highlighted in Chapter 1. In further analysing this gendered division of labour, albeit with some variations in how it is perpetuated, this segregation is characteristic of all advanced industrial societies (Blackburn et al., 2002; Blackburn & Jarman, 2006; Jarman et al., 2012). These differences have their roots in the development of capitalism and modern industry which saw the growth of factories that separated the workplace from the home-based family unit. With the development of male employment outside of the home, women were left to care for children within the home (Rowbottom, 1973; Anderson, 1993). Banyard (2010:8) notes:

> '[I]t is true that unequal gender relations are intimately connected with capitalism. Yet gender inequality cannot simply be designated an unfortunate by-product. It predates capitalism... because at some point in human history the concept of female inferiority was woven into the very fabric of how we see ourselves, how we treat each other, and how we organise society' (Banyard, 2010:8).

Evidence of these deep-seated assumptions is still apparent despite significant advancements in the position of women in the workplace in the post Second World War years (Abbott, 2006). For instance, with women comprising nearly half of the total workforce their representation within it has been the highest since industrialisation (Fawcett, 2014). The working population then has become statistically more gender-balanced (Dales, 2006). The media has greatly exaggerated this progress as the 'feminisation of the workforce' (Irving, 2008) in spite of the persistence of structures of inequalities (i.e. horizontal and vertical segregation). As discussed in Chapter one, women continue to be disproportionately clustered in the '5 Cs' cleaning, catering, caring, cashiering and clerical (Grimshaw & Rubery, 2007; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). Coupled with these horizontally segregated patterns, is the gender ratio of part-time working arrangements. Men are four times less likely than women (10% to 44%

respectively) to be employed on this basis. When roles such as those comprising the '5 Cs' are undertaken part-time, they are invariably characterised by low pay and limited training and promotion opportunities (Fawcett, 2014).

Midway through the second decade of the twenty-first century, occupational sectors can still be broadly divided into 'women's work' and 'men's work' (Fawcett, 2014). Alongside these has been the emergence of a third categorisation 'gender-neutral' which is expanding the most out of the three (Hakim, 2000). However, within the scope of the thesis, the term gender-flexible will be substituted for gender neutral. Recognition here is being given to the fact that no jobs can in reality be described as 'gender neutral'. For example, although men may have some token status in what remain occupations populated largely by women, they take their gender privilege with them (Zimmer, 1988). The same scenario is also applicable to those roles that are quantitatively more gender-balanced. In this way, men benefit from what Williams (1992) described as the 'glass escalator effect'. For instance, despite their minority status in some professions, they are more likely than their female counterparts to earn higher salaries and occupy managerial positions. In nursing, for example, male nurses are twice as likely to be in senior posts compared to women, especially, in the most prestigious hospitals (Ford et al., 2010). Men are also more likely to carve out 'gendered niches' which are invariably more highly salaried than the roles women are likely to populate within the same profession (Pringle, 1993; Williams, 1995; Crompton, 1997; Lupton, 2000). As discussed below, managerial roles provide a good example.

Changing economic conditions and societal attitudes, and to some extent, the introduction of key legislation for example, Equal Pay Act (1970) and Sexual Discrimination Act (1975)[17], have led to increased participation by women in a variety of occupational sectors that previously have been dominated by men. Inclusive of these have been the significant inroads made into the traditionally masculinised middle-class professions such as self-employed barristers (Legal

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[17] These acts have subsequently come to form part of the wider Equality Act (2010), which bought together different laws under the same umbrella legislation. The Equal Pay Act (1970) eradicated the previous practice of differential pay between men and women (i.e. females earning less), whilst being employed in a similar or identical post. Secondly, the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) introduced legislation that deemed it unlawful for employers to treat an employee less favourably on the grounds of their sex.

Futures, 2011). Despite these successes, however, there is still a long way to go in terms of achieving full equality between men and women within the workplace (Dales, 2006; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014).

One of the major ways in which this is evidenced is the persistence of the gender pay gap or differential earning potential between the sexes (Bird, 2012). As discussed in Chapter 1, predictions, based on median hourly earnings[18], suggest that females earn approximately 19% less than their male counterparts (McGuinness & Watson, 2015).   The disproportionately high numbers of women working part-time (as highlighted above) contributes considerably to this gendered salary differentiation (Fawcett, 2014). Aside from the large proportion of women working part-time, further reasons for the perpetuation of this gender gap have included men receiving higher bonuses and undertaking more overtime. They also work slightly longer average working weeks in paid work (40 hours compared to 37 for women) (CMI & WiM, 2013). This is linked to the gender imbalance in the private sphere where women continue to do the overwhelming majority of unpaid household management labour (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014).

Even in middle-class professions, where women are making the most ground in terms of increased participation, men have still continued to outnumber them (Irving, 2008). Overall, it seems that in many fields including sectors of growth such as engineering[19], barriers for female progression apparently abound. The challenge remains, therefore, to reverse this trend for a male-dominated workforce through encouraging more women to train and work within a broader range of professions (Fawcett, 2014).

Over and above these patterns indicating a horizontally segregated workforce, further statistical analysis suggests a second-related issue. That is, men are found to be disproportionately represented at the top of the occupational pyramid in senior, corporate and executive roles (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). This *power gap* also holds true for those sectors where women have

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[18] Median hourly earnings are the preferred measure of the Office of National Statistics (McGuinness & Watson, 2015).
[19] Engineering is one of the areas I draw participants from in this study.

increasingly challenged their male colleagues for senior managerial posts and/or directorships (Abbott, 2006). In reality, though, while a third of working women are appointed as managers these are still usually comparatively junior positions (Martin & Roberts, 1984; Wajcman, 1998; The Guardian, 2005; Holt, 2012). Women also do not enjoy the same opportunities for advancement as their male counterparts. In other words, employment is still vertically as well as horizontally segregated in favour of men despite women's increased representation in the workforce (Chusmir, 1990; Galbraith, 1992; Charles, 2002; Fawcett, 2014; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014; McGuinness & Watson, 2015).

Vertical segregation is a pattern that persists across all areas of employment, including social and cultural institutions such as religious bodies and in the arts and media (Holt, 2012). Statistics have provided evidence for this contention, for example, 91% of directors (within the UK top companies), 93% of the most senior roles within the police force and 81% of national editors are the respective ratios of posts occupied by men (Fawcett, 2014). Despite what ostensibly translates to the significant under-representation of women, statistics such as the above, nevertheless, are indicative of an improving position. For example, the number of female directors stood at 0.6% in 1974 compared to 9% in 2001. Similarly, the number of managers who were women has risen from 2% to a third over the same time frame (The Guardian, 2005). More recently, some further progress has been made with women being reported as representing 57% of all company executives. However, only 40% were departmental heads and less than 25% were employed as chief executives (Holt, 2012; CMI & WiM, 2013).

In analysing this limited progress, Fawcett (2013) put forward two major reasons for the over-representation of men in senior positions. Perhaps reflecting their wider dominant social positioning, there is firstly the barrier, for women, of 'recruitment in your own image'. That is, those appointed to the upper echelons within organisations are usually white, middle-class males. In effectively mirroring the majority of those already employed at these levels, this invisible mechanism ensures retention of the status quo (Fawcett, 2014). A second inequality, namely the gendered division of labour in the home (see below for a fuller discussion), may preclude women from applying for more

senior ranking posts. With many women assuming primary responsibility for both childcare and household chores, these duties may be perceived as incompatible with the demanding nature of the above jobs that frequently entail long hours and that are not family friendly (Marshall, 1995; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014).

It appears that these gender differentials vary from sector-to-sector. For instance, they seem to be much more pronounced in skilled trades (incidentally, from which many of the participants from this study were drawn) (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). Research by the Chartered Management Institute and Women in Management (2013) suggests that managerial positions are similarly affected. A male executive will earn approximately £400,000 more over the entirety of his career compared to a woman undertaking an equivalent role. On the other hand, the gap seems least pronounced in personal services and sales (Perfect, 2011).

While the gender pay gap is not as marked amongst young employees, it is nevertheless still evident. Reflecting the above trends, young men earn 16% more than women of the same age, despite the latter achieving higher academic credentials (from GCSE passes achieved through to attaining higher degree classifications) (ONS 2015c; Stats Wales, 2015; Hillman & Robinson, 2016). Even from the onset of their careers then, it appears that men assume a dominant position and have economic advantage over women.

The ramifications of the gender pay gap also closely interconnected with the private sphere i.e. family life. Shelley et al., (2007) found that employers who are also fathers are perceived as more committed to the roles and receive high remuneration than their childfree male counterparts (with the latter closely interconnected with the enduring male breadwinner ideology- see below). The same authors, however, found the reverse is true of women. While childfree women are seen as more committed than both men without children and women with, mothers are penalised through the *motherhood penalty* (Kahn et al., 2014). That is, aside from lower salaries, their commitment and competency are more likely to be questioned (Cuddy et al., 2004; Shelley et al., 2007; Kahn et al., 2014).

Political contingencies play a pivotal role in gender relations. While women were already being disadvantaged by the motherhood penalty, power and gender pay gaps, the programme of austerity introduced by the Coalition Conservative/Liberal Government in 2010 accentuated this situation somewhat. Referred to as the 'triple whammy' (Garnham, 2012) women, particularly from ethnic minorities and the working-classes, have been profoundly affected as mothers, workers and consumers. In the first instance it is young women, notably single parents, who have been most affected. Provision that they depend upon, such as Sure Start, has either been reduced or ceased completely during the recession. Perhaps partly in reaction to these circumstances more women, compared to 10 years ago, have been reported as more willing to countenance a domestic-centred regime as a traditional housewife (Bradley, 2013; Manning, 2013).

It is older working women, though, who have been most affected by issues such as an increased risk of unemployment (Saner, 2012). In terms of employment patterns, 40% of working females are employed in the public sector as opposed to only 15% of men (EHRC, 2011). Comparatively speaking, the deep and on-going cuts to these services, arising from the Coalition Government's austerity programme and continuing under the present Conservative government have, therefore, impacted more detrimentally upon women (TUC, 2010; Allen, 2013; BBC News, 2016).

Concurrent to these concerns, as discussed above, has been the resurgence of the new lad and its accompanying misogynistic and homophobic discourse (Phipps, 2016). Taken alongside the impact of the impact of the 'triple whammy' (Garnham, 2012) and commenting on the overall position women, Anna Bird, Acting Chief Executive of Fawcett (2012, cited in Saner, 2012) has proclaimed: "the evidence is that women's equality is turning back a generation".

It seems, then, that this gulf between men and women is deepening as a consequence of the policies of the Conservative/ Liberal Democrat Coalition Government (2010-present) with the so called 'triple whammy' in terms of employers, consumers and as mothers. Taking an overview then, the much

discussed 'glass ceiling' phenomenon may have incurred some 'cracks' enabling a minority of women to 'break through'. For the vast majority however, it seems to have remained largely intact (Johnson, 2004; Fawcett, 2014), allowing most senior, well-paid and privileged positions to be occupied by men (Johnson, 2004; Holt, 2012; CMI & WiM, 2013; Fawcett, 2014).

Clearly continuing to tackle gendered expectations is important in terms of challenging existing inequalities and discriminatory practices. By extension, this will enable the realisation of aspirations coupled with the nurturing of talent (Dales, 2006). As discussed in Chapter 1 undertaking research with teenagers at the beginning of their career trajectories seems to be a key starting point in understanding why gender streaming persists (Blenkinsop et al., 2006; Wise, 2006). Working with this age group will be timely in a contemporary context of changing attitudes to gender identities, work roles and equalities legislation but one which is also witnessing the parallel rise in misogyny and laddish culture.

The findings of Fuller et al., (2005a) highlight some of the potential issues the teenagers in my research may be facing in their career decision-making. In their study of apprenticeship programmes, both young men and women believed that horizontally segregated occupations such as plumbing could be performed equally well by both genders. Initial interest in gender atypical careers has also often been expressed by at least a minority of teenagers (EOC, 2005). However, even where placements in non-stereotypic industries have been completed, the majority revert back to stereotypic trajectories in terms of actual careers chosen (Hodkinson et al., 1996; Higgs, 2011).

From these findings then, perceiving work roles as suitable for either gender appeared to be a much less threatening proposition than actually undertaking the jobs themselves (Kingston, 2005). It is therefore important to try and establish what underlies this continued reticence to 'crossover' perceived gender boundaries in order to pursue gender atypical careers (Dales, 2006). The remainder of this chapter will explore this issue, focusing on the potential determinants of gender expectations in educational and vocational decision-making.

Breadwinning: A Man's Place is at Work

Historically a key underlying theme of the gendered division of labour in the workplace and home has been the male breadwinner ideology. Hancock (2012) suggests that a centrally defining component of male socially constructed identities has been waged work. To reinforce the status and respect of their dominant position, men have traditionally taken on the role of breadwinner providing financially for their wives and children. According to functionalist approaches (for example, Parsons, 1956) this deeply ingrained discourse has emerged in capitalist industrial societies coincident with the industrial revolution. Running in parallel with it has been an almost biologically existentialist belief that given the sexual dimorphism of human beings (the emerging presumed immutable differences between the sexes), suitability for different types of work has 'naturally' evolved (Alsop et al., 2002). Although predominantly unspoken, such a belief brings legitimacy to the resultant bipolar world of inequalities between men and women as the natural order of things (Dales, 2006).

As the breadwinners, men were seen as naturally suited to take on the instrumental but superior types of waged work (Connell, 1987). Traditionally inclusive of these have been the manufacturing jobs that were often seen as corresponding to the innate skills and qualities of men, as defined by hegemonic masculinity (Cockburn, 1983; Martin & Roberts, 1984; Savage, 1992; Wajcman, 1998). Discussed previously, given this primary position of power, hegemonic masculinity is by definition oppressive of other identities. The expectation for women in accordance with the breadwinner ideology was that they would assume a complementary but subordinate role. In the idealised form of this discourse, married women were expected to be financially dependent on their husbands. Integral to this subordinate position, was focusing their perceived 'natural' nurturing qualities on domestic responsibilities, including childcare. This necessarily involved relinquishing work, at least on a full-time basis, upon marriage (Hudson, 1995; Bradley, 2013).

General disregard for women's working patterns has also been reflected in how part-time supplementary work and its monetary reward, what Siltanen (1994)

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refers to as a 'component wage', were collectively and frequently described as 'pin money'. Usage of the term in this derogatory sense highlighted its perceived primary function for the buying of trivial personal or luxury items. By inference, then, it was not utilised for any essential items, provision for which would be available through the breadwinner's salary (Anderson, 1993). Therefore, in this way, women's contributions did not present any threat to the earnings of the male breadwinner. In assent with the argument above, this attitude also extended to circumstances where a woman through financial necessity, worked on a full-time basis. Ultimately her career was simply not given the same credence, recognition, status or power as her male partner's (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014).

It has, however, been suggested that this conception of the breadwinner ideology has become outdated (Crompton, 1999; Bradley & Dermott, 2006). According to social policy experts, as a consequence of changes to socially accepted gender norms alongside economic restructuring, a dual-earning family model has replaced it (Lewis, 1992; 1997). However, the reality of the model, when applied to heterosexual couples, appears to involve men working on a full-time basis and women continuing to supplement the family income through part-time employment (Rubery et al., 1986; Rubery & Fagan, 1995). Even where both parties work full-time, women continue to additionally carry out the majority of the reproductive labour (Kahn et al., 2014). It is only in 1-2% of all couples that men take on the role of primary caregiver. Even then, there are often extenuating circumstances behind this decision. For instance, the female partner may earn the higher income and so for financial considerations alone, continues working (Fawcett, 2014). In other words, the 'new model' does not appear to differ markedly from the breadwinner discourse but rather appears to be a recycled version of it.

With geographical mobility more commonplace and grandparents frequently working too, traditional wider familial childcare support may no longer be a viable option. According to the Family and Parenting Institute (2011) another factor that continues to force women into a gender regime of domesticity is the high level of expenditure incurred through employing professional childcare services. When these are no longer a financially viable proposition for many

parents, mothers have given up work in order to look after their children themselves. In this respect, this situation is class and educationally intersected, with working-class women in lower skilled employment more likely to be in this position (Kahn et al., 2014).   On the one hand, there are increased lifestyle choices open to women. For example, contemplating life as a single woman and/or childfree.   However, becoming a mother often carries with it the penalty of reverting to traditional roles and understandings, as Chapman [2004:206] articulates:

> "Cultural notions of masculinity and femininity run deep
> [...] for couples who want to have children conventional
> nuclear forms remain a convenient option for many,
> because the traditional gender script helps women and
> men to decide who should do what."

Hence, working women do work are further burdened by a second form of segregation in the home. In what has been described as the domestic chores gap (Warde and Hetherington, 1993; ref) or second shift (Hochschild & Piatkus, 1990). Seventy percent of women in the UK have been reported as performing most if not all the housework (Warde & Hetherington, 1993; Sullivan, 2000; Crompton, et al., 2005). These national trends are also reflective of international ones. It seems that in countries as diverse as the United States, Canada, Australia and Norway, women have been found to perform significantly more housework-related duties than men (Baxter, 1998).

Given the above gender bias this leads to the question, what about men's roles in terms of both housework and childcare? Research suggests that young males say they are keen to have equality in marriage including taking an active role in the discourse of parenting (Dermott, 2005). It appears that one barrier to realising this, apart from the above financial considerations, is the social pressure to validate their own performance of masculinity through waged work. Consequently, men are often drawn into workplace cultures that involve, for example, working long hours and post-work networking. Therefore, the reality for many heterosexual couples has become for mothers to take on primary responsibility for both childcare and housework while fathers have simply

assumed the supplementary role of 'helping out' (Warde & Hetherington, 1993; Dermott, 2005).

'Following in Dad's Footsteps': Career Choices

It is within these historical, socio-cultural and economic frameworks that teenagers make decisions about their future careers. Linked to this contextual setting, findings of several surveys (for example, Ofsted's (2008) 'TellUS3' National Report) concur that so called 'informal influences' (i.e. those outside the parameters of formally delivered careers guidance and CEIAG packages) play a significant role in shaping teenagers' decision-making about their futures. In a British Youth Council (BYC), National Children's Bureau (NCB) and Young NCB survey (2008), 63% of respondents identified parental views as a major contributory factor in the choices they made. Other relatives including siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles have also been cited as assuming a similar role. Conversely, 59% suggested that friendship networks had also been sourced for information and advice-giving (Blenkinsop et al., 2006).

Parental influence, in this regard, seems to take place through a process of 'steering'. That is, the above entrenched gendered expectations and societal norms appear to be transmitted through their parents and also wider family members' vocationally-related guidance and support. Teenagers are therefore encouraged to follow stereotypical educational and career trajectories (Kingston, 2005; Spafford, 2012). This has been suggested as impacting on both academic subjects selected and post-16 routes (be they vocational or academic pathways) (Ball et al., 2000). Sometimes the pressure to confirm to parental expectations can be strikingly intense. Wise (2006) highlighted this issue, describing how Careers Scotland had received complaints from parents because their teenage children had been the beneficiaries of advice and guidance on non-traditional career routes. Hayes (1986) also noted similarly adverse parental reactions concerning sons who wished to forge a career in female-dominated professions.

One underlying issue in such instances is the fact that parents have been found to possess outdated labour market information as to which opportunities are available to their children (Wise, 2006). As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, previous generations in Hull (before long-term unemployment became an emerging trend) have been employed in the fishing or trade-related industries (such as joinery, plumbing etc.). The former has long declined and there has been a contraction of the latter, particularly, due to the on-going recession at the time of the fieldwork (Rhodes, 2012; Moulds, 2012; Turner, 2012). Family may have little or no knowledge of the increasingly service-oriented local economy (which offer more career opportunities) when offering advice to their teenage relations. Instead, in reinforcing rigid gender boundaries, options on suitable careers may be biased towards what they do know, that is, traditional industries that have few or no opportunities available (Wise, 2006; McDowell, 2014).

Class Differences: Working-Class Aspirations

It is important to recognise that a class differential operates when it comes to actual career and educational trajectories selected. UK research has suggested that 56% of teenagers whose parents were undertaking a professional career wished to pursue a similar pathway. In comparison, only 13% of children whose parents were employed in semi-skilled occupations wished to do likewise (Universities UK, 2007). Working-class young people do not appear to have the same opportunities for progression (Taylor, 1992), perhaps given that they do not have access to the same social and economic resources (Le Grand, 2010; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012).

Parental aspirations (i.e. their aspirations for themselves) are reflected in those they hold for their children. Where there is a history of unemployment in the family, this mirroring is particularly apparent. In these cases, parental influence actually appears to mitigate efforts to raise and broaden teenagers' aspirations (DCSF, 2009a). For instance, where there is a dearth of financial resources or economic capital influenced perhaps by previous generations' working patterns, research suggests that the wish to leave school early in order

to earn money has remained strong (McDowell, 2004; McQuaid & Bond, 2007). Additionally, this trajectory extends to securing a paid job as opposed to focusing on achieving qualifications and career progression. EMA was awarded to provide both financial support and an incentive for teenagers to continue with their education. However, it offered less monetary reward than undertaking an unskilled manual job (Legard et al, 2001; Archer et al., 2005). With the phasing out of EMA by the Coalition government (2011-2015) from 2011 onwards, the situation was only intensified.   Furthermore, as college bursaries (in lieu of EMA) are not always readily available, there seems to be less incentive in widening career opportunities through attending college or a training programme (Roberts, 2005).

On an unconscious level it has been argued that parents may have an additional negative influence albeit unintentionally (Wise, 2006). Specifically, this has been manifested through their role as active agents of socialisation in reinforcing messages about idealised hegemonic and sub-hegemonic masculinities, and subordinate feminine gender identities to their children, even before they go to school (Gilligan, 2002, Connell, 2005; Beasley, 2008a; 2008b). For boys, as discussed below, this may in turn affect their behaviour and academic performance in school (Willis, 1977; McDowell, 2004) then later, their career pathways (Hancock, 2012; McDowell, 2014).

Friendship Networks and Peer Pressure

During the teenage years the primary influencer for the gendering of socially acceptable behaviours shifts from parents to peer or friendship groups (McQuaid & Bond, 2004a, 2007). In terms of vocational decision-making, though, these networks only appear to become important in the absence of coherent careers educational programmes being in place (Fuller et al., 2005a, 2005b; McQuaid & Bond, 2007). Likewise, little support from the Connexions Service has also been cited as having a similar effect (Milburn, 2009).

Blenkinsop et al., (2006) offers further insights into their role of friendship networks in teenagers' decision-making at 14 and 16. In this study, both the

teachers and young people interviewed, suggested that these relationship structures only ever formed a secondary influence. However, there was a caveat to this finding. It seemed that staff adopted a proactive stance in discouraging pupils from choosing learning or career pathways based predominantly on what their friends were doing (Blenkinsop et al., 2006).

Despite the findings above indicating that friendship is not a major influence on career choice, other research has suggested that these networks influence the decision-making process, albeit in perhaps more indirect ways (McDowell, 2004). Pressure to conform reaches its pinnacle during the teenage years (Gilligan, 2002). Coincident and simultaneous to this pressure is the key vocational transitions and prerequisite decision-making at ages 14, 16 and 18 (McDowell, 2004; Archer et al., 2005; Foskett et al., 2008). Before moving forward, it is important to emphasise a gender differentiation here (Holdsworth et al., 2007). Men have the rules of femininity powerfully enforced from an early age. Masculinity is valorised so that young women can perform masculinities and cross some gender boundaries relatively easy compared to men in the same situation (Connell, 1995; 2000; 2005). For males, "flight from the feminine" (Kimmel, 2009:48) and transgressive deviations from socially approved heterosexual behaviours are policed via a rich vocabulary of homophobic abuse (Connell, 2002; Harland et al., 2005; McCormack & Anderson, 2010; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012).

The impact of conformity on career choices is perhaps evidenced through both genders expressing reservations about transgressing socially approved behaviours. However, boys are much more emphatic in their rejection of this option (Kingston, 2005). For instance, Fuller et al., (2005) reported that young men believed that they would find it four times more difficult to embark on a childcare apprenticeship, compared to undertaking a traditionally macho role such as in the construction-related trades. According to Wise (2006) the main barrier here is the reaction of peers. The young men interviewed in her study felt that it was not 'cool' or socially acceptable to express an interest in a "lassie's job".

As a barrier, this resistance appears to be at its most prevalent amongst less academic or lower ability teenagers (Blenkinsop et al., 2006). Paul Willis's now

classic 1977 ethnographic research *Learning to Labour* is telling in this regard. He described how the working-class *lads* he followed, developed their own school counter culture (Willis, 1977). With a plentiful supply of manual labouring jobs that provided validation of protest variant of masculine identities (Beasley, 2008a; Beasley 2008b), the lads turned their backs on the ethos of liberal education. In doing so they resisted moves for upward social mobility through examination success, raised aspirations and subsequent entry into higher status white collar jobs (Willis, 1977).

Echoing the findings of Willis, McDowell (2004) suggested that in areas of deprivation and high unemployment (such as Hull, see Chapter 4 for a further discussion), peer pressure resulted in working-class young men assuming 'laddish' qualities. As discussed above, this discourse of macho (i.e. laddish) masculinity makes it more likely for boys to reject what were perceived as female characteristics (Mac an Ghaill, 1994). Such a resistance to step over gender boundaries perhaps can be understood. With peer pressure to conform to 'doing' hegemonic, sub-hegemonic or protest variants at its most intense, many men subsequently feel insecure about their own identities (McDowell, 2004; Wise, 2006). In attempting to redress this imbalance, the validation of masculinity via waged work has continued to be an important aspect of conformity. The young men in McDowell's study, for instance, remained resolute in their intention to pursue a career in the same declining, relatively unskilled manufacturing or manual labouring jobs as 'the lads' in Willis's study had progressed onto. Given this mismatch between aspirations and decreasing employment opportunities, McDowell (2002:39) has redefined this form of working-class hegemonic masculinity as "redundant masculinity".

Although as established above peer pressure in the teenage years is recognised by its intensity, concerns about the gender appropriateness of work appears to extend beyond adolescence. There is a wealth of research suggesting that men working within traditionally female occupational sectors are stigmatised (Cockburn, 1988; Heikes, 1991; Morgan, 1992; Allan, 1993; Carmichael, 1995; Decorse & Vogtle, 1997). On the one hand, long-term unemployed males stated that they no longer cared what their friends thought about their career choices, including when contemplating feminised or gender-balanced jobs such as administrative posts (Wise, 2006). Countering this somewhat, Simpson (2005),

in her research focusing on men working within non-traditional sectors such as nursing, found interviewees expressed shame and embarrassment about their chosen professions. Again, the underlying reason cited behind such feelings was fear of rejection by their peer group. While family members appeared to be largely accepting of these non-traditional career choices, male peers and friendship groups were perceived as being far less supportive (Fuller et al., 2005a, 2005b; Kingston, 2005; Simpson, 2005).

In Simpson's (2005) research, it seemed that these issues were more prevalent amongst the heterosexual males interviewed. These particular fears were enhanced by various beliefs. For example, Cockburn (1988) suggested that men who do 'women's work' are dismissed as failures or eccentrics. Likewise, some non-traditional career choices have been stigmatised through their negative connotations of sexual perversion. Included here has been the conjecture of a potential linkage between men expressing a desire to work with children and their suspected paedophilia (Fuller et al., 2005a, 2005b; Simpson, 2005). Moreover, electing to undertake traditionally female jobs can be perceived as an admission of homosexuality (Lupton, 2006). Necessarily, this would entail transgressions from hegemonic, sub-hegemonic or protest hypermasculine constructions of performing masculinity (Carrigan et al., 1985; Connell, 2002). For many of the men in Simpson's (2005:367) study, these transgressions created internal feelings of discomfort and "role strain". As a direct consequent, some men reported they were taking active steps to change careers to what have traditionally been considered as masculinised jobs (Simpson, 2005).

Even for those men who planned to remain in traditionally feminised employment, their decision was frequently rationalised through a more nuanced form of segregation. Crompton (1997) described this phenomenon as 'gendered niches'. Essentially, this concept describes the masculinisation of certain specialisms within traditionally female occupational areas (Pringle, 1993; Williams, 1995; Lupton, 2000). A version of this technique was deployed by the teenage men McDowell (2004) followed from school into the workplace, as justification of their career choices to peers. Alternatively, the older men in Simpson's study (2005) had actively sought certain specialisms within jobs that were more in line with stereotypically traditional masculine attributes. Taking

nursing as an example, some selected the area of mental health nursing because the element of danger and increased risk attached to it. This decision was in juxtaposition to other perceived 'softer' specialisms such as children's nursing (Williams, 1995; Simpson, 2005; Lupton, 2006).

These niches are also applicable in the gender balanced or masculinised professions. A relevant example here is management. Positions such as operations and financial managers (which incidentally pay higher salaries), tend to be disproportionately taken by men. On the other hand, women are more likely to be employed managing staff in development, training or human resources roles (Bradley, 2013). Trends such as these then suggest a 'recycled' way in which socially ascribed roles (as an integral part of the breadwinner ideology) are still being perpetuated (Crompton, 1997). That is, new ways of segregating men and women have emerged that contributes to some extent in counteracting progress made in breaking down wider patterns of segregation (i.e. by occupational sector).

The investment in the above tactics could be considered advantageous, in light of the benefits continued employment in traditionally female-dominated industries may afford. In line with their wider position of superiority and dominance in society and despite being in a minority within these professions, men are, nevertheless, afforded numerous career advantages compared to women (Floge & Merrill, 1986; Heikes, 1991). In mirroring male-dominated professions, men are also over-represented in senior posts within these feminised sectors. Through riding the 'glass escalator' (Williams, 1995; Kvande, 2002), vertical segregation is further perpetuated by the fast tracking of men to the upper echelons of feminised professions (Allan, 1993; Decorse & Vogtle, 1997). Despite these opportunities for advancement and promotion, riding the glass escalator in this way may be perceived as a 'softer' option by other men in more masculinised professions. Comparatively speaking, achieving similar success in male-dominated professions is likely to be perceived as tougher with competition between male counterparts being both inevitable and widespread (Lupton, 2006).

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance

The discussion will now turn to what Blenkinsop et al., (2006) refers to as the structural dimensions of the decision-making process: the impact of institutional ethos, culture and provision. Inclusive of these framings are the professionals outside of the family membership who work with and support teenagers, making decisions about their futures. Examples include: teachers, support staff (such as School Career Coordinators) and Connexions Careers Officers.

A coherent Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) programme spanning the school years 7-11 complemented by the input of guidance professionals has been argued to be a crucial ingredient in effectively challenging gendered expectations about suitability of learning or career trajectories (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). These frameworks provide the requisite knowledge base, skills, support and planning that enable teenagers to make informed decisions about their futures (Harrington & Harrington, 2002; Gothard, 2003). According to the DCSF (2009a:10) "in this way IAG is a powerful driver of social mobility through raising aspirations." As an integral part of this aspiration, CEIAG programmes should include initiatives that tackle the continuing prevalence of gender stereotypical choices. With these barriers challenged or broken down, this should, theoretically at least, open up and increase the opportunities available to teenagers (DCSF, 2009c).

Various policies and projects, particularly commissioned by the New Labour Governments (1997-2010), were charged specifically to tackle this issue. The Geri (Gender Equality and Race Inclusion) Project for example, was one such programme introduced in secondary schools. Established in 2001, the aim of this initiative was to break down ethnic and gender stereotypes that were seen as producing inequality, prejudice and a dearth of progress within the workforce (Geri Project, 2012). Its implementation in schools was available via a comprehensive and interactive range of learning resources (for example, DVDs, printed guides and web-based learning resources). While this has been a very positive and well-received project, it is clear that along with other similar

initiates it did not make the progress that was originally envisaged (Morris, 2010).

In a local context part of the issue arose from the fact that it was frequently rolled out as a stand-alone entity within Hull's secondary schools. Contributing to this was the dearth of wider careers education programmes in most of the city's educational institutions (Morris, 2010). It is perhaps not surprising then, that Geri failed to counter the forces of more informal influences and, their potentially substantive role in the formation of deeply ingrained stereotypical attitudes. This is particularly so, given that even in situations where there is the provision of comprehensive CEIAG programmes and one-to-one guidance interviews, they have still arguably in reality failed to challenge them (Wise, 2006; McQuaid & Bond, 2007).

In 2011, the potential for a comprehensive package of career guidance and education suffered a severe setback. The frontline services for teenagers, Connexions, was swept away in many parts of the country as an integral part of the enforced budgetary constraints imposed by the austerity measures of the Coalition Government (2011-2015). Coupled with the loss of the Connexions Grant[20] ring-fenced for funding Connexions Services, many local authorities made the decision to significantly reduce or cease delivery of its information, advice and guidance functions in their entirety (CYP Now 2011). In Hull, only the most at need young people, namely, those with special educational needs or at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, training or employment) receive the service (Morris, 2015).

As Foskett and Hemsley-Brown (2001) maintains, is that without robust impartial CEIAG systems in place students are more likely to turn to their teachers for advice. As an influencing factor, this is particularly potent where academic subjects are being selected (Blenkinsop et al., 2006). When it comes to informed decision-making, this becomes problematic because teachers' implicit attitudes regarding different types of careers often lack objectivity.

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[20] The Connexions Grant was devolved by central government to councils, for the provision of information, advice and guidance services in each local authority. The ring fencing of this money was removed as part of the Coalition government's educational reforms.

Rather, they tend to reflect their own values and belief systems (Foskett et al., 2008).

Moreover, research has suggested that (hetero)-sexist ideologies thrive within the institutional processes and cultures of schools (Ferfolja, 2007). Policing of compliance to heteronormative conformist behaviours and silencing of non-heterosexuality and gender deviant identities (by students and teachers alike) ensures clear demarcation between binary masculine and feminine gender identities (Ferfolja, 2007). Homophobia, transphobia and sexism are all integral to this surveillance regime governing appropriate behaviours for boys and girls (Bradley, 2013). The potential implications of this situation are twofold. Firstly, teenagers' perceptions of careers may be subject to their teachers' bias (Foskett et al., 2008). With teachers being found to silence gender non-conformity (Ferfolja, 2007; Russell et al., 2016), the institutional (hetero)-sexist ideologies of schools can serve to reinforce stereotypic connotations of socially acceptable career choices.

In tandem with this gender streaming, other research (for instance, Taylor, 1992; Keys et al., 1998; Hemsley-Brown, 1999; Foskett & Hemsley-Brown, 2001; Foskett et al., 2008). suggests that even where information on post-16 routes is provided; it is habitually biased in favour of academic routes. Teachers have been found to be less well informed about vocational routes and is reflected in the quality of advice imparted to their students (Taylor 1992; Keys et al., 1998; Foskett & Hemsley-Brown, 2001; Foskett et al., 2008). As Fuller et al (2005) and the TUC (2012) assert, this situation is particularly problematic because occupational segregation abounds on apprenticeship programmes.

It is therefore imperative that the quality of CEIAG programmes (which continue to be criticised for the weak information and advice they provide) are improved (Swanson & Fouad, 1999; Higgs, 2011). As discussed above, middle-class teenagers can take advantage of their family connections and access to greater knowledge of career opportunities in making decisions about their futures. In contrast working-class pupils (those most likely to follow vocational routes) rely much more heavily on the input of CEIAG support mechanisms (Hughes & Gration, 2009). There is also an increased likelihood of them

adhering to more rigid gender boundaries in their career choices. Consequently, it is their aspirations that are most likely to be affected by systems that have been critiqued for failing to challenge these stereotypes (Ofsted, 2011; Higgs, 2011). This is particularly so because most young people at this phase in their lives are unsure about which career path they would like to pursue (Ofsted, 2008). Hence they are more susceptible to the influence of parental views, socialisation, peer pressure and teachers' bias.

With limited formal intervention, such contextual barriers may have adverse long-term implications on teenagers' academic progression, personal development and potential career choices (Blenkinsop et al., 2006; DCSF, 2009a). The degree of influence exercised by these informal factors including their contribution to the continued division of labour was recognised by the last Labour administration (1997-2010). For instance, inclusive here was the introduction of strategies designed to extend CEIAG delivery to primary schools in order to further counter their impact (DCSF, 2009a). Similar initiatives have also been developed in Careers Scotland (Wise, 2006), perhaps reiterating the impact that these influences have on gendered expectations.

Work experience, Blenkinsop et al., (2006) suggest, serves as a mechanism through which teenagers can 'try out' different jobs. In other words, they are empowered to confirm or re-evaluate their career plans. However, criticism still continues to be levelled at this aspect of school CEIAG packages. It appears that despite a willingness amongst teenagers to embark on work experience opportunities in non-traditional fields, they continue to be placed on predominantly gender stereotypical ones (Fuller et al., 2005a, 2005b; Higgs, 2011; Mahadevan, 2011). This predilection was illustrated in a recent Ofsted report 'Girls' Career Aspirations' (2011). Out of the 1,725 placements inspected only 164 were non-stereotypical, with the most popular areas for girls being retail, healthcare, office work, and hair and beauty (Higgs, 2011).

These findings were supported by an earlier research project carried out by the EOC in 2005. With a sample of 566 pupils, there was no female representation on engineering placements and only two males on childcare ones. Despite this process of steering, the EOC also reported in the same survey that 70% of girls

expressed a willingness to consider traditionally male occupations. Both potential opportunities for promotion and advancement were motivating forces (EOC, 2005). However, these findings were contradicted somewhat by the Ofsted study 'Girls' Career Aspirations' (2011). With a smaller sample of 200 girls, only 17 were interested in science-related careers and even fewer (7 respondents) an engineering one (Higgs, 2011).

While these samples have highlighted the issue, the more qualitative nature of this study supports the process of getting to the bottom of this disparity. In other words, countering gender streaming in employment trends depends upon identifying the underlying reasons behind the willingness to consider gender atypical careers but then failing to commit to following such a pathway. In particular, this is in light of the success of the locally-based post-16 tasters programme I ran as part of the Gender Equalities Forum (I outlined in Chapter 1). In brief, teenage men and women undertook placements in both traditional and non-traditional sectors. This not only extended to the range of careers teenagers were willing to consider including gender atypical ones, it also raised their aspirations (Bradshaw, 2011). The above factors and CEIAG support mechanisms, then, interweave to impact on how teenagers make decisions about their future educational and career pathways.

The discussion now turns to choices of subjects both at GCSE and A Level. More specifically, I consider the potential this decision-making has for setting young men and women on differential pathways for the duration of their working lives (Blenkinsop et al., 2006). In terms of subject preference, it appears that these follow traditional gender boundaries. Boys have shown an inclination for masculinised subjects such as PE, mathematics, physics and chemistry with girls electing for music, art, humanities and languages (Stables, 1990; Colley et al., 1994a; Colley et al., 1994b; Francis, 2000; Brown, 2001; Colley & Comber, 2003; DCLG, 2006, 2009). The extension of this pattern can also be observed in the actual subjects selected. Studies suggest that this gender variance is apparent at all the key decision points for teenagers i.e. 14, 16 and choice of which degree to study at university (Van de Werfhorst et al., 2003; Bell et al., 2005). There is some evidence that subject preference and subject choice are affected by the type of school attended (Stables & Stables, 1995). An

underlying explanation accounting for this could be the (hetero)-sexist ideologies of schools, discussed above, and variations in the silencing of gender non-conformity or compliance (Ferfolja, 2007). For instance, attitude to subjects taken have been found to be less polarised in single sex schools (Colley et al., 1994b; Stables, 1990) where femininity has to be less rigidly policed in the absence of boys and the masculization of space (i.e. subjects being the preserve of men) this may entail.

It appeared that in the 1990s, this gender bias, particularly around options selected in Year 9, was becoming much less rigid than in previous decades (Colley, 1998; Radford, 1998). Especially notable in this regard is the sciences and arts, where a clear delineation between boys and girls looks to have decreased over time (Archer & Macrae, 1991). However, this argument has been countered somewhat through changing subject boundaries under the national curriculum. These have concealed gender differences to a certain extent in that it has become compulsory to take certain choices and options (chosen by the student themselves) became more limited. Perhaps because of this then, both sexes appear now to study similar GCSE subjects (Batho, 2009).

Even if the national curriculum may have worked to reduce gender bias in GCSEs, more defined distinctions are still evident when it comes to selection of A Level courses (DCLG, 2006, 2009). It looks as if males have continued to opt for mathematics and physical sciences, while conversely females have elected for biological science and arts-based subjects (Bell et al., 2005). Moreover, females have continued to be under-represented at university in subjects including engineering, computer science, physics and mathematics (DCLG, 2006, 2009). From these inauspicious beginnings, further under-representation occurs in those occupational areas where the above subjects form essential prerequisite qualifications (Stables & Stables, 1995; Brown, 2001). Clearly, this situation has implications for the skills deficit outlined above (Johnson, 2004; O'Donnell, 2008).

Conclusions

Pulling the various threads of the above discussion together, it seems that gendered expectations have a powerful hold on the career decisions of young men. As described above, there is a spectrum of plural identities through which masculinities can be performed. However, it is conformity to hegemonic constructions of 'doing masculinity' that appear to be particularly influential in guiding career choices. Failure to do so may bring social sanctions. Potentially, this is a difficult situation for teenagers to negotiate. On the one hand, peer pressure is at its most intense at this age but on the other hand, young men and women still have to reach decisions about their future working lives. Added to this is the fact that vocational decision-making is a complex phenomenon with a myriad of further contributory factors underlying it (for example, parental or wider familial influences and peer pressure). This study seeks to explore these issues in a localised context. How are masculinities performed in a localised context? In what way do they influence career or other life choices? Are there any significant factors intertwined with these? The next stage in the process is to turn to a deeper analysis of the contextual setting for the study- the city of Hull. Consequently, this will be the focus of Chapter 4.

Chapter 4

The Forgotten City

Hull's Maritime History, Culture and Heritage

"From Hell, Hull and Halifax, Good Lord deliver us"
(John Taylor, 1622 cited in English, 2014).

"...the sad decline [of the fishing industry] that has seen so
many seamen seek other employment and once-bustling
docks redeveloped into leisure facilities" (Freethy, 2012:5).

Introducing Hull, the 'Pariah City'

In this chapter, the focus shifts to an in-depth exploration of Hull as the
contextual setting for the thesis. Over the last few decades, the city has been
subjected to derision, scorn and isolation (English, 2014). Traced back to the
1970s, these unfavourable assessments have their antecedents in the dual
demise of the fishing and shipping industries (Neave & Neave, 2012). As a
consequence of the many years of economic and social deprivation that
followed, the reputation and image of Hull have continuously been portrayed in
a negative light. In the media, for example, an article appearing in *The
Guardian* newspaper described the city as "an isolated rather grim east coast
town" (Gurnham, 2011). Even more pejoratively, in 2003, it was identified as
the UK's "most crap town" by Idler magazine (English, 2014). However,
perhaps the most defining moment in terms of these negative connotations
emerged in 2005 when *Best and Worst Places,* a Channel 4 TV programme,
announced that Hull ranked as the least desirable place to live in Britain.
Topping this poll has had far-reaching consequences, serving to blight the
reputation of the city in the years following the episode being broadcast (Avery,
2008).

The city also sustained a further setback. During the flooding crisis of 2007, the East Riding, South and West Yorkshire all suffered a deluge of approximately 400 million tonnes of rainfall. In Hull, this equated to a sixth of the annual rainfall in just 12 hours (Holt & Freeman, 2007). Havoc, devastation and wreckage were induced. With 10,500 homes being evacuated, many residents endured prolonged periods of not being able to return to their properties. Other flood affected areas, however, received much more support from the New Labour government (2005-2010) than Hull. In criticising this comparative lack of responsiveness, the Council Leader Carl Minns (2007 cited in Holt & Freeman, 2007) branded Hull as the "forgotten city". Taken together, all of the above events seem to reinforce the city's stand-aloneness. A 'pariah' image characterised by its discourses of geographical isolation, insularity, deprivation and marginalisation (Featherstone, 2012; English, 2014). As such, this makes Hull a very interesting if not challenging context in which to base the research.

Looking towards the reminder of the chapter, firstly the rationale for choosing the city as the contextual framing is developed. I present an argument as to why 'time' and 'space' matters in the formation of localised identities, and by extension career aspirations. While Chapter 3 provides an overview of the national and global research, here I will take the opportunity to explore key emerging themes within a more localised setting. Assuming a historical perspective, the discussion will, in part, entail a brief tracing of the employment trajectories through time. Requisite to this intergenerational perspective is highlighting how the city's function as a leading port has been particularly influential. By contrast, I also consider the adverse impact on employment opportunities arising from the decline of local manufacturing, shipping and fishing industries in the 1970s. As highlighted above, this discussion is set against the backdrop of the many years of economic disadvantage and social deprivation that subsequently followed.

In the next section, I move the discussion temporally forward to contemporary Hull. Aside from offering an analysis of demography (for factors such as ethnic mix) some space will be reserved for data relating to career trajectories, unemployment statistics and occupational structures. Finally, I also explore the move towards a more service sector driven local economy and the impact of this transition for the fit between masculinities, career aspirations and available job

opportunities. As part of this theorising, consideration will be given as to how the city's historical employment opportunities have shaped and influenced localised understandings of working-class masculine performativities (including laddish ones).

A King's Town: Taking an Historical Perspective

When embarking on a discussion regarding understandings of masculinities within a specific locality, place or time, acknowledgement must be given to the fact that geography matters. McDowell (2004:93) elaborates further:

> "As geographers, sociologists and anthropologists have all
> demonstrated, place or locality, the set of socio-spatial
> relations, that constitute the particular meaning of a place,
> is a significant part of the social construction of identity
> and people's sense of belonging, whether to a class, to a
> neighbourhood or to a spatially defined interest group."

In order to develop an understanding of these socio-spatial relations, placing particular emphasis on employment trends, I briefly trace the City's history below. Turning first to geographical location. Hull is approximately 154 miles from London being situated within the county of the East Riding of Yorkshire (Freethy, 2012). With an estimated population of approximately 260,000, it forms the county's largest settlement (English, 2014). The origins of the city can be traced back to an outer area of the hamlet of Myton, namely, the port of Wyke (Gurnham, 2011). Its establishment can be credited to the affluent Cisterician monastery of Meaux. The monks, at the time, required an outlet for exporting wool from their estates. King Edward I (1272- 1307) later acquired the port in 1293, from the abbey, in order to utilise it in military campaigns against Scotland during the First War of Scottish Independence (Frostick, 1990). On 1st April 1299, a royal charter was granted renaming the settlement as Kingston upon Hull or King's town upon Hull (Avery, 2008). As discussed in Chapter One, whilst this name has been formally retained it is customary to abbreviate it to Hull in colloquial usage.

An exact date as to when the port was founded has never been confirmed, but its existence was first recorded in 1193 (Freethy, 2012). What can be stated with more certainty is that, over the last nine centuries, Hull has numbered amongst only a select number of English cities, in terms of population and economic activity, which can boast continuity as a leading hub (Neave & Neave, 2012). It is the city's geographical location to which this survival has been largely attributable. Standing on the north bank of the River Humber estuary, lying at the junction with the River Hull 22 miles from the North Sea, easy access to a vast hinterland was gained via the rivers of Yorkshire and East Midlands (Robinson, 2010; Neave & Neave, 2012).

The above commercially and strategically advantageous positioning secured Hull's future as the foremost port on the east coast of England (Gurnham, 2011). In 1897, the honour was bestowed of being named as the third busiest port after Liverpool and London (Neave & Neave, 2012). With an emphasis placed on trading, this function inevitably influenced and shaped the employment trajectories of the local populace (Frostick, 1990). For instance, Hull was central to the medieval wood industry during the reign of King Edward I with the merchandise being exported to northern Europe from its hinterland. Imports, on the other hand, included raw materials, principally timber, from the Baltic region. Along with oil seed, timber has continued to be a major import right up to the present day (Robinson, 2010; Freethy, 2012; English 2014).

Historically, the economy of Hull also became increasingly dependent on seafaring (Tunstall, 1972; English, 2014). Initially in the 18th and 19th centuries, whaling played a major role in the town's fortunes. By 1800, for instance, approximately 40% of all the country's whalers sailed from the port. However, through overfishing, this industry had declined by the mid-19th century (Robinson, 2010; Gurnham, 2011). Emphasis then shifted to deep sea trawling in the 1840s (Gillett & MacMahon, 1989). It was the migration of trawlermen from Kent and Devon to Hull, attracted by the discovery of Silver Pits fishing grounds, located some 30 miles east of Spurn Point, which facilitated the move to this new industry (Frostick, 1990; Neave & Neave, 2012). With these foundations in place, the increasing proliferation of fishing improved the prosperity of the town. It also generated the development of an array of

complementary trades and processing industries alongside of it (Thompson, 1989; Frostick, 1990; Gill, 2003).

Outside the parameters of fishing, other industries also emerged in the city as a direct consequence of the port. These mostly centred on the processing of imported goods (for example, making paints) or servicing shipping. Diversification has, in fact, always characterised Hull's economy (English, 2014). Geographically, an East and West divide demarcated the city's two major industries. A tight-knit fishing community (which Hull is strongly identified with) developed in and around St Andrew's Dock and Hessle Road in the West (Thompson, 1989; Gill, 2003). On the other hand, in the East, the docks flourished (Gurnham, 2011). Paralleling the segregation between these sectors and localities, each ensuing community has their own rugby league team. In the East is Kingston Rovers. Hull FC, who won the Challenge Cup at Wembley in August 2016, are based in the West.

Aside from the above two industries, with the advantageous positioning of the docks a number of manufacturing sectors developed. Neave and Neave (2012:38) describe how manufacturing, in a broader sense, has played a crucial role in local historical employment trajectories:

> "By the late 19th century Hull had become as much as an
> industrial city as a port. Well-known firms included
> Rank's (corn millers), Smith and Nephew (makers of
> medical goods), Needler's (confectioners), and Reckitt's.
> The last began as starch manufacturers in Dansom Lane in
> 1840, then moved into making other household products
> and eventually entered the pharmaceutical trade. A
> century later Reckitt and Colman, as it had become,
> employed some 7,000 people making famous brands such
> as Brasso and Dettol."

Through the combination of booming manufacturing industries, shipping and being the foremost fishing port within the country, Hull enjoyed a peak of prosperity and self-confidence in the years preceding the First World War. The

quality and scale of architecture constructed at this time, provides an enduring reminder of this golden age. For example, the Edwardian Baroque Guildhall and the City Hall were both erected during this period (Neave & Neave, 2012). Moreover, in 1897, 4 years after Sheffield and Leeds both received the same honour, Hull's position of importance was recognised through being granted city status. (Avery, 2008).

Unfortunately, this era of prosperity was short-lived with a reversal in the fortunes of the city following shortly after the First World War. In the 1920s and 1930s, exacerbated by overproduction in the fishing industry, manufacturing declined (Gillett & MacMahon, 1989). A later contributory factor in this downward turn was the devastating impact of the comprehensive bombing raids during the Second World War. The city's prime positioning now became its downfall. Its perceived Strategic importance, deriving from close proximity to a major estuary and mainland Europe, was regarded as a major threat. Such was the extent of the damage incurred that Hull ranked as the most heavily bombed location outside of London (Freethy, 2012). Over the duration of the war, 1,200 people were killed during air raids with a further 3,000 suffering from injuries (Robinson, 2010). While the main target was inevitably the docks, the destruction was, nevertheless, widespread throughout the city. Ninety-five percent of houses either sustained damage or were completely destroyed. The impact of this devastation was long-term, with completion of post-war reconstruction taking many years (Robinson, 2010; Gurnham, 2011).

Perhaps the defining event, though, that has shaped Hull's contemporary labour market was deindustrialisation, both at a national and a regional level, from the 1970s onwards (English, 2014). As McDowell (2004) comments, these dramatic and hard-hitting changes particularly affected working-class men in Scotland and Northern England (for example, Sheffield in South Yorkshire). The disappearance of relatively well-paid and stable jobs in heavy, manufacturing industries, in sectors such as steel production and coal mining was commonplace. Simultaneously, an upward trend in unemployment was also conspicuous in these communities (English, 2014).

For Hull, though, the major factor underlying its economic downturn was the decimation of the fishing industry via the Anglo-Icelandic Cod Wars of 1975-1976 (Thompson, 1989; Mitchell & Tate, 1997). Alone, this dispute accumulated in hundreds of job losses for shore workers and crew from the trawlers (Avery, 2008). The sheer magnitude of this shrinkage in the fishing industry was far greater than simultaneous rationalisation of other industries such as engineering, shipbuilding, steel and textiles. Therefore, the conditions were set for years of economic and social deprivation with the impact of these hardships still evident in the city today (Gurnham, 2011). In fact, it has been argued that even four decades on, Hull has never really recovered from the collapse of the fishing industry (English, 2014).

Part of Hull's decline, though, can also be accounted for by the fact that compared to sea transportation, alternative transportation methods, via road, offered greater time and financial efficiencies. Consequently, and in common with cities such as Sunderland and Liverpool, Hull's once prime location as a port was dismissed as geographically isolated or insular. That is, it has lost its competitive advantage to towns and cities in more accessible locations (Gurnham, 2011). Automation, containerization and globalization have also been factors, since the 1970s, in this demise (Freethy, 2012).

Albeit not to the same scale as it was in its heyday, the city's port, nevertheless, still remains comparatively busy. Approximately that 13 million tonnes of cargo are handled by the port per year (Freethy, 2012). Diversification has also been implemented to recompense for the decline of the fishing industry. Such initiatives have included the introduction of Roll on Roll-off ferry services to mainland Europe, with estimations suggesting that a million passengers per annum are handled by them. The health care and chemical sectors have remained strong with facilities of well-known British companies such as Smith and Nephew, Reckitt Benchkiser and British Petroleum (BP) continuing to be based in the city (Robinson, 2010; Neave & Neave, 2012).

Retail and Tourism: Regenerating the Local Economy

In common with other northern cities that have suffered from deindustrialisation, alternative sectors based in Hull have moved to the forefront within the local economy (Gurnham, 2011). These developments have been integral to a 15 year £2 billion city centre master plan of diversification, investment, rebranding and regeneration. Initiatives had included the high profile £165 million Humber Quays business district, opened in 2008, which gained World Trade Centre Status as the 'World Trade Centre Hull and Humber'. However, as a consequence of the recession that commenced from the late 2000s onwards (to be discussed in further detail below) much of the further planned building development projects have been put on hold. Additionally, Hull Forward (a local development agency) lost its funding because of governmental budgetary cuts in public spending. The regional developmental agency Yorkshire Forward was also abolished for the same reasons (Brown, 2012; English, 2014).

Returning to the above master plan, two principal targeted areas of regeneration and investment that have experienced continued growth are retail and tourism. Taking the first of these sectors, the opening of the £200 million St Stephen's shopping complex in 2007, for example, was key in the marketing and rebranding of Hull as East Riding's mecca for retail and cultural entertainment. Such developments also signal a redistribution in employment opportunities which require a different skills set to the one required in manufacturing industries (MacDonald & Siranni, 1996; Poynter, 2000; Castells 2010). This is in line with the prediction that the majority of workers will be increasingly employed in posts where the provision of some type of service is one of the key aspects of their role (Sturdy et al., 2001). On a wider level, the skills and attributes required for these employment opportunities have stereotypically been deemed as feminine (Irving, 2008).

With over 5 million annual visitors to the city, tourism also plays a central role in the project of on-going regeneration and revival of Hull's economy. With Hull's successful bid as the City of Culture 2017, it is envisaged that this accolade will encourage more visitors to the city and subsequently generate

more employment openings within the tourism industry (English, 2014). The city already hosts a number of events, notably, the annual arts and live music *Freedom Festival*. Celebrating the work of the Hull abolitionist MP, William Wilberforce, the festival seeks to celebrate freedom in all guises. There are also numerous arts and maritime heritage attractions open to visitors (Neave & Neave, 2012). Notable amongst these are the world's first underwater aquarium *The Deep* and the Ferens Art Gallery (McCurrach, 2008). Within the Museum Quarter, *The Arctic Corsair,* the city's last surviving sidewinder trawler, has been transformed into a floating museum. The Quarter is also home to Wilberforce House[21], the Streetlife Museum of Transport and the Hull and East Riding Museum (Gillett & MacMahon, 1989).

Despite the above plans for continued regeneration, Hull has been notably hard hit by the Coalition Governments' (2010-2015) austerity measures and a continuance of budgetary savings by the current Conservative government (2015-present). The Centre for Cities has identified that the conditions arising from the economic downturn will continue to impact harshly on vulnerable cities such as Hull, Belfast and Liverpool (Centre for Cities, 2012). For instance, the targeted growth area of retail had been affected by the continuing recession. Knock-on effects of the economic downturn have included a reduction in consumer spending, on the high street, and shop closures (Russell, 2012).

Rising unemployment has been another area of concern highlighted by the Centre for Cities. During the above 3-year reporting period, 2009-2012, two-thirds of the cities that experienced the largest increase in new claimants for Job Seekers Allowance were in the North of England. On the regional landscape, therefore, the fallout from the budgetary cuts is clear. Moreover, with it having one of the highest unemployment rates in the country, the most acute increase occurred in Hull. At the time of the fieldwork, between January and April 2012, unemployment was at a 17 high year having doubled since 2005 (Gentleman, 2012; Turner, 2012). The creation of an additional 20,000 jobs would only have enabled Hull to have equalled national levels of unemployment (Brown, 2012).

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[21] The former home of William Wilberforce.

High levels of youth unemployment have been identified as requiring urgent prioritisation (Turner, 2012). With a 113% increase between 2011 and 2013, concerns have been raised that another generation of young people, through long-term worklessness, are at risk of a lifetime of poor health and poverty. According to the Hull East Labour Member of Parliament, Karl Turner, this situation is in spite of teenagers' motivation and willingness to find employment:

> "I get parents visiting me in my surgery every week telling
> me their kids have applied for jobs but they're one of
> hundreds of applicants. And even these are jobs in retail
> and shops." (Turner, 2012 cited by Spereall, 2012).

Of course, retail is a pressure point in that it has been affected by the recession both indirectly and directly. In the latter case, for example, stores such as the electronics-based firm Comet, a victim of internet shopping, have all but disappeared, both at local and national levels, from the High Street (Hull Daily Mail, 2014).

Recovery, though, is looking auspicious. Built on the city's historic Alexandra Dock, Siemens have made an £80 million investment in a new offshore, state-of-the art wind turbine assembly and explore facility. With this new development named Greenport Hull, it is envisaged that it will be fully operational in mid-2017 and will create approximately 700 new jobs in the local area. Potentially, there will also be hundreds more employment openings in the supply chain. These new posts will cover all aspects of a modern manufacturing facility from the shop floor through to engineering project management. In this way, Jones (2014 cited by English, 2014) argues that Hull has the potential to become a national centre for the renewable energy industry. However, a cautionary note to these plans is offered by the Centre for Cities. They argued that the city's geographically isolated positioning, in tandem with a number of identified social problems (see below), could ultimately limit its productivity going forward (Featherstone, 2012).

'Life at the End of the Line': Spatially Located Lives

The shape of the local economy and by extension availability of employment opportunities, can play a crucial role in the formation of individual aspirations (Gothard, 2003). In Hull, the tendency to live predominantly spatially circumscribed neighbourhood-based lives potentially may accentuate this situation. As I will explain in Chapter 6, some of the participants are seeking (or wish to in the future) social and geographical mobility. There are, nevertheless, a significant majority of local young people who appear reticent to relocate either from the estate they grew up on or Hull itself (Featherstone, 2012; see also Chapter 6). It would seem that this strong identification with the local area is particularly apparent amongst working-class young adults (Westwood, 1990; Callaghan, 1992; Baumann 1996; Pearce, 1996; Taylor et al., 1996; O'Byrne, 1997; Watt, 1998; Ball et al., 2000; Charlesworth, 2000). Such spatially circumscribed lives, referred colloquially within Hull as the 'end of the line syndrome' (Fourteen to Nineteen Partnership, 2010) serve only to narrow the scope of career and other opportunities open to teenagers (McDowell, 2004; Clisby, 2009). This scenario is particularly applicable in recession-hit Britain, with a shortage of available jobs for those at the point of entry into the labour market.

Another potential explanation for these spatially circumscribed lives is that as Furlong et al., (1996) contend, the expectations and aspirations of young adults are depressed. Living in socially and economically deprived areas has been identified as the underlying cause of these narrowed horizons. Hull is currently placed as the third most deprived local authority district in England (DCLG, 2016). Along with high unemployment, a number of other social problems have been recognised in the city (Featherstone, 2012). These include: poverty, welfare dependency, economic stagnation, educational underachievement (see Chapter 5), petty criminality, youth delinquency, drug addiction, and community fragmentation. Coupled with these issues, have been the UK's lowest weekly wage and well below average rates of business start-up (Spereall, 2012).

Progressively, these issues have been reinforced over three decades of deindustrialisation and failed regeneration schemes (Robinson, 2010). Spatial differentiation and geographical inequality can also be as pronounced within cities as well as between them (Jarvis et al., 2001). In Hull, for example, there are pockets of deprivation particularly within the post-war estates (such as Bransholme and Orchard Park), that were built as a consequence of the devastation caused by the bombing raids (Avery, 2008). It is within these that the above social problems are argued to be more visible (Featherstone, 2012).

Further accentuating this situation somewhat is that Hull's geographical boundaries in that they are tightly circumscribed around the inner city. Therefore, many of the comparatively more affluent villages (for example, the largest being Cottingham), peri-urban and rural communities surrounding the city fall outside the unitary authority of Hull. Therefore, there is an absence of suburbs to balance the inner city statistics (Young, 2014b). The status quo looks to remain unchanged at least in the immediate future. A referendum was conducted in 2014 asking whether the boundaries of Hull should be extended to include surrounding rural communities and towns. With a turnout of over 75% of eligible East Riding voters, 97% rejected the proposal (BBC News Online, 2014).

It is difficult to precisely diagnose what may be the root course underlying the above social issues. One suggestion advanced is Hull's geographical location and the insularity that it has given rise to (Featherstone, 2012). As an inherent part of this isolated state, its in- and out-migration has perhaps not surprisingly been particularly low. Looking at this in more detail, when it comes to the former there has been an increase in the diversity of the ethnic mix of the city with black or minority ethnic (BME) residents now making up 10.9% of the population, compared to the 2001 census figure of 3.8 %. When it comes to out-migration, it appears that this represents something of a 'skills drain' in terms of who leaves the city. Numbered among these are the 'self-made' men and women who move to the more affluent East Riding (Featherstone, 2012; English, 2014). Likewise, graduates from the University of Hull remain on average in the city for a year or two before moving away for employment opportunities (Parkinson, 2013).

However, local regeneration depends upon the development of a skilled and well-qualified workforce. Raising aspirations is a crucial ingredient in the success of this enterprise (DCSF, 2009a). As discussed above, for example, the opening of Greenport Hull in 2017, along with the preparatory work in the intervening period, presents opportunities for those working in the renewable energy sector. Recruitment to one of these posts, though, requires a match between local residents' skills sets and those stipulated for the newly created roles. In these circumstances, both young people and older workers may have to undergo training and retraining to plug any 'skills deficit' (Morris, 2015).

Aside from raising local 'depressed' aspirations, the interlinked pattern of Hull teenagers following gendered career trajectories needs to be addressed. Effectively, this means that the pool of potential applicants for jobs has been effectively halved (Dales, 2006). In Hull, this is a challenging issue given that the local economy has become increasingly focused on tourism and the service sectors. On the one hand, young people may not have the academic credentials to apply for professional positions (Morris, 2015).

As I discuss in Chapter 7, the young men strived to reinforce their masculinities through training in traditional but declining industries. Therefore, this career orientation precluded them from considering sectors such as retail work, where opportunities were more plentiful (McDowell, 2004). Greenport Hull may offer opportunities to do 'men's work' but in order to fulfil this aspiration, as discussed above, the rights skills set will still be required. Competition for these jobs is also envisaged as being tough. Pulling the threads of this discussion together, there is a danger that teenagers within the city could be left economically stranded and disengaged from mainstream society (Jones, 2012; 2014). Therefore, a 'ghetto culture' could potentially arise whereby the current economic isolation not only continues to prevail but becomes more pronounced.

Risk, in this sense, is increased given that many teenagers grow up with spatially circumscribed lives, and are surrounded by social problems including high youth unemployment. With social isolation apparent, there is a danger of teenagers adopting a 'not for the likes of me' attitude and precluding themselves from greater career opportunities that may necessitate a move from the area.

Therefore, aspirations may be suppressed in order to fit in with the limited range of employment openings available within the area, or, alternatively, acceptance of unemployment may become a 'given' (Ball et al., 2000; McDowell, 2014).

Masculinities: The Mythology of the Fishing Industry

Using Beasley's (2008) revisionist taxonomy of hegemonic masculinity (see Chapter 3) the discussion now turns to the sub-hegemonic working-class masculinities and how these are potentially shaped by 'space' and 'time'. In Chapter 3, masculine performativities were argued to be delimited within these framings (Rotundo, 1993; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Not only do they vary internationally, in different parts of the world, but they also differ across communities and localities within the same country (Rotundo, 1993; McDowell, 2004). Contributing to this, Hancock (2012) has suggested that a central defining component of these socially constructed identities has been waged work. That is, work regimes are deeply entrenched in gender practices and vice versa. In exploring the relationship between employment and masculinities in Sheffield, Taylor and Jamieson (1997: 153) argued that:

> "Nostalgic evocations of earlier industrial practices
> resonate through masculine imagery and practice."

It is also acknowledged that on a wider level, different industries impact on and define the communities that emerge and are formed around them. Yorkshire-based examples include the steel industry in Sheffield and mining in Wakefield (Mitchell & Tate, 1997). In the main trawler towns of Fleetwood, Grimsby and Hull, similar working-class tight-knit insular ghetto-like communities developed. Locally in Hull, the fishing populace was clustered around the geographical areas of St Andrews Dock and Hessle Road (Gill, 2003; Thompson, 1989). Such was the wide-reaching influence of these communities that Mitchell and Tate (1997) maintain that fisherman made the towns they were located in. Equally, though, these authors also argue that these places made the fisherman. As will be explored in more depth within Chapter 6, this

relationship is acknowledged within the narratives of my participants. That is, occupational choice and leisure pursuits are frequently attributed to Hull being a fishing town, or, more precisely, *"the fishing mentality"* (Frank Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) of local residents. These standpoints are supportive of the notion that urban daily rhythms and localised social practices echo those of dead industries and ways of life (Allen, 1999). By extension, there is seepage of these into local consciousness and the constructions and reconstructions of gender identities (Taylor et al., 1996).

In everyday discourse, and more specifically within the lived experiences of the participants in my study, the fishing industry has been attributed as playing a major role in the employment opportunities of the city. However, the sociologist Jeremy Tunstall (1972) argued that in terms of the total working population of Hull in the 1960s, the fishing industry only accounted for 7 % (approximately 9,000 at its peak). Moreover, within the same time frame, only 3% were actually fisherman on the trawlers, with the rest of these workers employed in areas such as the maintenance of trawlers, fish processing and auxiliary industries (Tunstall, 1972). Thus despite the emphasis on Hull being a fishing town, as the above statistics indicate, fishing was not the major industry modern mythology would suggest.

When it came to the cultural fabric of the industry, 'down dock' was regarded very much as a man's world and monopoly (Mitchell & Tate, 1997). As a way of life, though, this was in marked contrast to industries in neighbouring cities such as Leeds that were sustained through the employment of women in factories. However, it should be noted that the underlying rationale behind their recruitment was that, with the absence of equal pay legislation, they were 'cheap labour' (Gill, 2003). While women worked in Hull's fishing industry, their roles were restricted to specific tasks such as the making and braiding of fishing nets (Thompson, 1989).

Intrinsic to and much influenced by the culture of the fishing industry, was the formation of a 'macho' aggressive but respectable form of working-class masculinity (Gurnham, 2011). Most of the men were not well-educated and frequently possessed attitudes that today would be regarded as chauvinistic

(Mitchell & Tate, 1997). In some but not all ways, these behaviours are reflective of the discourse of laddism grounded in misogyny that, as discussed in Chapter 3, has recently made a re-emergence and has gained momentum within universities (Phipps, 2014a, 2014b; Phipps & Young, 2013, 2015a, 2015b Phipps & Young 2013, 2015; see Chapter 3). Within fishing, a certain macho bravado was required as it was argued to be the toughest and most dangerous of the lost industries (Freethy, 2012). Mortality rates were notably high, with more injuries and deaths than in other 'risky' industries such as coal mining (Schilling, 1966). Moreover, the Holland-Martin Report of 1969 calculated that the standard mortality for trawler men was seventeen times that of the male population as a whole. Over 150 years, approximately 6,000 men lost their lives through trawling (English, 2014).

The eventual demise of the fishing industry had far-reaching consequences for subsidiary Hull based industries that were supported it. For many of those affected, this downturn became a long-term trajectory of being unable to find work. Numbered among those in this position were railway workers who operated the trains that carried fish inland, ship-building workers at the firms who constructed new trawlers, and workers in service trades which catered to fisherman (Tunstall, 1972).

However, Hull has always been first and foremost a port and distribution centre, a role as, highlighted above, which still continues today (Neave & Neave, 2012). Also, other types of employment such as the chemical industry and engineering have continued to be essential to the local economy. It is important, therefore, to recognise in the formation of gender identities that these industries (in addition to fishing) may play a role in this regard. These ideas will be explored further within Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

Conclusions

This chapter has explored how 'place' and 'time' can potentially shape gender identities and career choices. From a historical perspective, Hull's central role as a port has necessarily influenced the growth of industries within the city.

Even today as tourism takes prominence in a programme of regeneration, the revenue generated is powerfully reflective of Hull's maritime history. However, with the emergence of developments such as globalisation, the city's once valued geographical positioning has now become its major disadvantage. That is, a common theme when describing Hull has been to focus on its insularity. The fortunes of the city deteriorated with the demise of its defining industry, fishing, along with shipping and wider manufacturing decline from the 1970s onwards. After years of subsequent economic deprivation, a number of social problems have emerged. Persistently high unemployment rates number among these, a situation intensified by the on-going recession at the time of the research.

There is optimism in Hull though. A major plan of regeneration has taken place. Tourism, retail and more lately, renewable energy sectors are at the forefront of the vision for moving the city forward. Coupled with this, is the successful bid for the City of City, 2017, which it is envisaged will boost the tourism industry and go a significant way to dispelling the city's negative imagery.

With respect to the formation of gender identities, particular emphasis in this chapter was placed on the macho hegemonic performances of fishermen. It was also acknowledged, that Hull's wider historic industrial composition may shape young men in how they perform masculinities including the career choices they make. These themes will be explored further in the following chapters via the lived experiences of the young men. For now, the next chapter will remain with the local contextual setting through further exploration of the social economic frameworks of the city. Participants, via their narratives, will be introduced and the temporal significance of being self-ascribed 'lads' and 'lasses' will be explored.

Chapter 5
Meeting the Lads and Lasses
Narratives of the Participants

Introducing the Lads and Lasses

In this chapter, I introduce the 72 young men and 23 young women taking part in this research. Contextualising participants' biographical backgrounds, I utilise comparative demographic data pertaining to Hull residents. I then present ten narratives selected as optimally representing the commonalities between and diversity amongst all of my participants. Describing themselves as lads and lasses, adolescence formed an important transitory life stage for these young men and women as they moved from childhood into adulthood. No longer *"kids"* but free from the shackles of *"grown-up shit"* (Adam, aged 17, Motor Mechanics) the emphasis was on pleasure, recreation and experimentation (for example, with sexual partners, social drinking and use of street drugs). Overshadowing this carefree time, though, for many were the deep-seated personal problems they were experiencing. These ranged from familial problems, being the victims of childhood violence, estrangement from parents, pressure to conform to the rigidity of gender stereotypical roles and expressed anxieties about finding employment during the economic downturn.

Socio-economic Frameworks

Socio-economically speaking, Hull is traditionally a working-class city. General employment patterns are indicative of this self-ascribed status (Avery, 2008; Gurnham, 2011; English, 2014). The proportion of the workforce employed as managers, professionals and associate professionals in Hull (32%) is lower than UK regional (40%) or national (45%) indicators (English, 2014). It is notable, however, that none of the 'working-class' Hull participants have fathers employed in any of these roles. Rather, the majority of the participants'

fathers[22] were undertaking roles that can be considered either male-dominated elementary occupations or skilled trades. Moreover, where this information was available[23], the lads' grandfathers had also been employed as unskilled manual workers, tradesmen or in the fishing industry. There was also some evidence of an intergenerational theme, with family members (for example, grandfathers, fathers, brothers, uncles, cousins etc.) either following a similar vocational trajectory or running their own family businesses.

Outside of traditional career pathways, there were three fathers who have entered either feminised professions (i.e. childcare and nursing) and ones where there is increasing gender parity (e.g. catering). Their sons had not followed in their footsteps in these instances. Two had become IT apprentices, while Aaron, aged 16, was undertaking a motor vehicle mechanics course. Commenting on his father's employment as an auxiliary nurse, Aaron did not perceive this to be gender deviant behaviour. A caveat here, as will be developed thematically and more fully in Chapter 7, is that generally the young men tended to emphasise a marked differentiation between the career trajectories of others and what they themselves would realistically opt for. It seems that more wide-ranging options, including atypical career orientations, were permissible where others are concerned. When, for example, I asked Aaron if he had or would ever consider a similar pathway to his father, he emphatically stated no. The risk of peer censure (i.e. being labelled as gay) associated with 'crossing over' to a feminised profession (Simpson, 2005), was one of the main reasons he articulated for this refusal (see Chapter 7 for a more in-depth discussion on gendered expectation in career choice).

The data generated from all methodological sources suggest that the participants' mothers and grandmothers followed predominantly gender stereotypical employment trajectories. As detailed in Chapter 3, the feminised sectors they worked in can be broadly defined as the '5 Cs': cleaning, catering, caring, cashiering and clerical (Grimshaw & Rubery, 2007; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). To reiterate, these roles, especially when undertaken on a part-time basis, are characteristically defined by low pay, limited training and

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[22] Included here are fathers of both the young men and women taking part in the study.
[23] The young men were frequently unsure about what jobs their grandfathers had undertaken.

promotion opportunities (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). Perhaps echoing the lower status consequently attributed to these jobs, the young men are frequently dismissive of them. Jake (aged 16, Joinery), for example, had difficulty controlling his laughter when he explained that his mother was employed as a dinner lady (see Chapter 6, for an extract from this interview).

Other mothers had returned to full-time education. Their undergraduate programmes, however, tended to be in feminised professions such as nursing. By contrast, there is also a small number of mothers who were not in any type of paid employment. Some were homemakers taking care of their young children. Alternatively, others having relinquished work when their grown-up children were born were not, according to their sons and daughters, intending returning to the labour market. Finally, regarded with derision by their offspring, were two mothers who number amongst the locally-based long-term unemployed. Ultimately, this condemnation was because their economic inactivity was perceived as a choice as opposed to circumstantial, i.e. being unable to secure employment due to a dearth of openings in the local job market.

Educational Performance and Academic Credentials

Within both national and regional contexts, including Hull, the currency of qualifications plays an increasingly pivotal role in career progression and success (McDowell, 2014). As Roberts (1995:45) elucidates, geographical location or where a person lives can have a marked impact on their future, especially, for those with few academic credentials:

> "Place makes the most difference to the least qualified young people. Those who succeed in secondary school are able to progress into higher education after which they typically seek jobs in the national labour market or, at any rate, in other areas from where they received their school education. Young people who leave school at age 16 or 17 and enter the labour market are more affected by the local labour market conditions, whatever these may be."

Consequently, not achieving the prerequisite entry qualifications for the next stage of an employment, training or educational trajectory can potentially blight or frustrate the employment prospects of teenagers transitioning into the job market (McDowell, 2004).

Reflecting the depressed aspirations discussed in Chapter 4, compared to other localities within the Yorkshire and Humber region the number of Hull residents achieving NVQ Level 4 and above is still comparatively low. In 2010, 17% of working age people in the city had no qualifications compared to 11% nationally. Adult skills levels in Hull (NVQ 2, 3 and 4) are also significantly below the regional and national averages. More positively, there has been significant improvements since the 2001 Census when it was estimated that 42% of the city's adults possessed no qualifications at all. Levels of economic deprivation amongst school children attending Hull's state schools are approximately twice the national average and their academic achievements and career prospects may be blighted as a consequence (DCSF, 2009a). A specific indicator of educational attainment is the widely applied Level 2 benchmark of achievement i.e. 5 A*-Cs (including English and Maths) at the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). Table 4 below, compares the percentage of boys, girls and all school leavers achieving this benchmark across Hull, Yorkshire and Humber and England.

Table 4: Local, Regional and National GCSE Results by Gender (2013-14)

Cohort	Local: Hull (%)	Regional: Yorkshire and The Humber (%)	National: England (%)
Boys	42	50	52
Girls	48	59	62
All School Leavers	45	54	57
Source: ONS (2015c).			

In Hull, attainment in terms of the Level 2 benchmark has been improving year-on-year (English, 2014). Nevertheless, the latest comparative data given above still suggests that the overall percentage of school leavers in Hull gaining these

academic credentials is 12% and 9% below the national and regional standards respectively (ONS, 2015c). In terms of male participants, there is considerable variance in the qualifications attained. As detailed in Table 5, only 33% of those interviewed (14 in total) achieved 5 GCSEs (including English and Maths) at grades A*-C. At the other end of the spectrum, 28% of the sample achieved D-G grades, a range defined and referred colloquially as FUDGE: *"My grades spell FUDGE"* (Stephen, aged 19, Motor Mechanics).

Combined with the above lower GCSE attainment, has been relatively poor performance in the earlier stages of compulsory education. For instance, Hull has fallen behind the national and sub-regional averages for Key Stage 2 in English, Maths and Science (Spafford, 2012). As a consequence, the city's schools have consistently appeared at the bottom of published national league tables. The gap between the educational attainment of Hull's young people and those of their peers, both at regional and national levels, thus continues to be failed to be bridged (Avery, 2008; English, 2014; ONS, 2015c).

Table 5: Male Interviewees: Qualifications Achieved

Range of GCSEs Achieved	Young Men (Number and Percentage)
5 or more GCSEs A*-C (including English and Maths)	14 (33%)
5 or more GCSES A*-C (Without English or Maths)	7 (16%)
1-4 GCSEs A*-C (including English and Maths)	10 (23%)
D-G grades	12 (28%)
Total	**43 (100%)**

As again is indicative in Table 4, when it comes to gender comparisons girls are clearly outperforming boys. In fact, this qualification gender gap evidential in Hull prevails across all local authorities in England and Wales (ONS 2015c; Stats Wales, 2015). Moreover, such is their success, girls are repeatedly outperforming boys at all levels of academic achievement from the number of GCSE passes achieved through to attaining higher degree classifications

(Hillman & Robinson, 2016). Potential reasons for this trend will be discussed in Chapter 6, including my male participants' indifference to or even abhorrence of academic study.

'I'm not a man yet!' The Transition to Manhood

As discussed in Chapters 1, one of my research questions entails exploring the purported rebirth of laddish culture and its accompanying misogynist and homophobic discourse. As an exaggerated variant of working-class manliness, research suggests this latest incarnation has been appropriated predominantly by the middle-classes (Phipps, 2014a, 2014b; Phipps & Young, 2013, 2015a, 2015b). My focus, though, is on how laddish performativities intersect with contemporary prevailing hierarchies of young, white and working-class masculinities in Hull.

Traditionally for working-class young men, the socially constructed and transitory period of adolescence has been regarded as a preparatory apprenticeship for adulthood (Bernard, 1995; Brannen & Nilson, 2002). By commencing their working lives during this period, the stable rites of passage to manhood were assured (Hancock, 2012). Adult responsibilities would be anticipated albeit remain hypothetical at this juncture (Brannen & Nilson, 2002). Therefore, these men could retain their status as 'one of the lads' enjoying the more hedonistic adult activities (for example, consuming alcohol and chasing women) whilst, simultaneously, deferring the responsibilities that accompanied settling down (McDowell, 2004).

With the erosion of these traditional trajectories to adulthood, via deindustrialisation and the local demise of the fishing industry in Hull, this "Peter-Pan Mind-set" has been temporally extended and can potentially last up to a decade. Kimmel (2009:4) defines this comparatively recent and emerging life stage as "Guyland". As with the appropriation of laddish cultures, this protracted phase remains largely the preserve of the middle-classes (Kimmel, 2009). For the working-class participants in my research, their shared understandings of 'youth' or compressed period of Guyland is temporally

referenced to teenagers aged between 16 and 19. Most interviewees were keen to draw a clear demarcation between this transitional period and adulthood. Achievement of this distinction was through the application of the colloquial epithets lads and lasses in describing both themselves and their peers. For example, when I referred to his peer group as men during his interview, Sam (aged 16, Painting and Decorating) fiercely insisted: *"Do you mean lads? I'm not a man yet!"*

Narratives

Having provided some background information, a synopsis of ten participants' narratives, 8 young men and 2 women, now follows. These participants are chosen because their accounts draw attention to both the commonalities and diversity in the lived experiences of the lads and lasses. For example, evidence of the performativity of a multiplicity of masculinities and their intersections with a number of youth sub-cultures inconvertibly emerge from these narratives. A range of career trajectories and experiences is also covered. With a sample where the majority of participants are aged between 16 and 25, and with the aim of the research being to explore young masculinities, the men selected are exclusively from this age range.

Women are also included in the selected narratives in recognition that gender is inherently relational (Alsop et al., 2002). In other words, the continued prevalence of gender regimes and hegemonic performativities are dependent upon relationships of complicity, dominance and subordination (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; see also Chapter 3). The subjugation of women via the 'patriarchal dividend' is pivotal to these arrangements (Alsop et al., 2002; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). The treatment of female participants, particularly by men teaching or training in the trades, proves to be enlightening in this regard (see narratives 4 and 6, Susan and Kayleigh respectively, below).

Narrative 1: Sean

Sean, aged 16, lived in West Hull and recently had come out as gay.

Unlike most of the participants, Sean was in full-time employment. However, this business administration role, rather than being permanent, was a fixed-term contract to cover maternity leave. Sean, therefore, still faced insecurities about his future. Preceding this temporary job, he had been an apprentice within the same organisation. Both his employer and training provider made arrangements to ensure he could continue the day-release programme and achievement of accredited qualifications (that formed a mandatory requirement of his apprenticeship) during his fixed-term post.

With the aspiration to follow in the footsteps of his *"auntie"*, by embarking on a career in business administration, Sean can be described as what Williams and Villemez (1993:64) typify as a *"seeker"* in actively pursuing entry in a female-dominated profession. He had initially considered hairdressing, too, which both his mother and sister had chosen as their careers. Comparatively poor remuneration and a lack of job security were the underlying reasons cited for dissuading him from following this occupational pathway. In hindsight, Sean considered that he made the right choice and stated he *"loves"* his administrative role.

A penchant to work principally with women extended to having older co-workers too. These preferences can be understood in terms of Sean's self-ascribed escape bid from continuing in full-time education beyond compulsory school leaving age. That is, Sean was determined to find a business administration apprenticeship in order to guarantee his entry into the adult world of work. By doing so, he effectively removed himself from the relentless pressure he believed prolonged interactions with peers, via undertaking a full-time course, would have entailed.

In understanding these aspirations, their antecedents can be traced back to the many years of homophobic school bullying Sean endured. Suffering from consequential low self-esteem and a lack of confidence, he developed social

anxiety particularly when attempting to relate to and interact with other teenage men. While Sean cultivated several close friendships with girls since leaving school, he remained guarded reckoning that teenagers are extremely judgemental. Reticent to mix with his peer group, he deliberately restricted his socialising in "town" to the early evening. Through adhering to this self-imposed curfew, he could safely return home without encountering young men and women, of his own age and acquaintance, frequenting pubs and bars later in the evening.

At school, the major strategy deployed by the perpetrators of the homophobic bullying was on-going verbal abuse. Emotionally, Sean's coping mechanism in these circumstances was to comfort eat. Consequently, he gained weight that, in turn, induced the development of his poor body image. He therefore believed that his peers judged him negatively both for his physical appearance and sexuality. Motivated to try and improve these perceptions, Sean unsuccessfully attempted to follow numerous diets and exercise regimes. The latter were usually undertaken covertly, away from prying eyes and the further risk of ridicule, in the privacy of his home.

Sean also maintained that his self-ascribed underachievement in his GCSEs (although gaining a couple of Cs, the majority of his grades fell within the D-G range) was singularly attributable to the constant emotional abuse he incurred at the hands of his peers. With frequent absences from school because of the bullying, any time he was actually in attendance he was left devoid of the energy and motivation to apply himself fully where his studies were concerned. Sean subsequently found himself falling increasingly behind and struggling to catch up with his fellow students. He carried the strong conviction that had he remained in full-time education, this pattern would have reoccurred. Therefore, Sean focused his attention on securing a work-based learning programme, and continuing his education via day-release. Incidentally, he did not believe he would encounter the same peer pressure undertaking this mode of education as he otherwise would have done so on a full-time course. Selecting what he perceived to be a female-dominated profession contributed considerably to his convictions in this regard.

Looking to the future, Sean was single but hoped to meet a man to settle down with. Although still deeply affected by his parents' divorce, he admired his mother's resilience in coping as a single parent, and bringing up both his sister and him alone. Seeing her as a role model, he was adamant that he will retain financial independence even if he should eventually meet someone. Sean did not feel that children would enrich his life, preferring to invest energy into his career ambitions. These included the longer-term goal of progressing, in a few years' time, into the junior managerial role of team leader. Preferably, this promotion would be based with his current employer.

Narrative 2: Carl

Carl, aged 18, was attending a full-time Level 1 catering course.

Living at the time of the fieldwork on an East Hull council housing estate, Carl expressed a strong desire to escape from these surroundings. His major aspiration was for a different but better life than his family, friends and neighbours. Referring to them individually and collectively as *chavs*, he described how they viewed economic inactivity as a lifestyle choice. Many, particularly young men and women of his own age, he relayed were spending their Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) on weed, resin and MCAT. Carl, on the contrary, abstained from alcohol and recreational drugs, believing both ultimately result in trouble i.e. violence, vandalism and police interventions. As outlined below, he had personal experience of all three of these. Rather, after assessing the direction his life had previously taken and not wanting to continue being a *"toerag"*, Carl was channelling his energy into undertaking vocational training and seeking employment opportunities (albeit unsuccessfully).

Looking back, having been the victim of bullying from primary school onwards, compulsory education had been an unhappy experience for Carl. He pinpointed being taunted to a childhood illness, which resulted in him having to spend prolonged periods in a wheelchair. In trying to counter this abuse from his peers, Carl adopted the dual strategy of assuming the role of a joker whilst, simultaneously, being initiated into the gang of *chavs* on his estate. Neither of

these activities improved his popularity, but rather led to detrimental consequences. Via regular engagement in anti-social behaviours, Carl was issued with an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC)[24]. Furthermore, through continually playing the class comedian and being otherwise distracted in school he underachieved in his GCSEs gaining grade Es and below.

After leaving school at 16, Carl's first job was as a butcher's apprentice. Unfortunately, he was sacked shortly after commencing it. An aggressive verbal confrontation had taken place with his manager after Carl had refused to serve customers. By his own admission he could be volatile frequently losing his temper with minimal provocation. In the above instance, Carl reacted in this way because he lacked sufficient confidence to interact with members of the public. As customer service was a crucial ingredient of his role, he felt backed into a corner and "lashed out" accordingly.

Low self-esteem and confidence continued to be major obstacles for him. Carl was undertaking a catering course, at the time of the interview, and had been offered progression to the higher level programme by the training centre. However, he was going to decline this place. Carl's rationale for this decision arose primarily from the fact that the curriculum of the Level 2 course contained substantial elements of hospitality training i.e. more direct face-to-face interactions with customers. He was also daunted by the prospect of regularly handling cash, believing himself as negatively stereotyped in light of the notoriety of the estate in which he resided. With its reputation for prolific thievery, Carl held the opinion that any job applications he made would not be seriously considered. Therefore, he has reached the conclusion that there is no point embarking on a career in this occupational area.

Rather, Carl's career orientation focused more towards becoming a plumber's apprentice. In fact, he had undertaken numerous construction-related courses prior to embarking on his present programme. Trapped in his own cycle of education, Carl only selected catering because at that juncture he had not been

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[24] Although not legally binding, an Acceptable Behaviour Contract is an early intervention made against individuals who are perceived to be engaging in anti-social behaviour. A breach of it is frequently used as supporting evidence for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) (Burney, 2009).

successful in securing a plumbing apprenticeship. There had been one potential opening in this regard. A former tutor encouraged him to progress onto a Level 2 plumbing programme at a sister training provider. However, Carl dismissed this as a viable option because the travel from his home to the centre entails two bus journeys.

Aside from his career trajectory, Carl's wider life aspirations included eventually getting married and having children. He explained, though, how difficult it is to meet a "nice girl" on his estate describing most women or *"chavettes"* living there as:

> *"Tarts with skirts up to their arses and […] shagging all the older lads".*

While Carl acknowledged there are a few *"sensible girls",* his lack of confidence prevented him from approaching them. Coupled with these self-doubts, was a further barrier. With the persistence of gang rivalries, Carl resolutely believed that he would be beaten up by the lads these women *"hang out with"* from other estates. This situation only reinforced his desire to seek a better life in a more affluent area of Hull.

Narrative 3: Edward

The youngest of five children, Edward was aged 19. He still lived at home with his parents in a *"respectable"* part of East Hull. Neither parent was in paid employment, with his mother being disabled and his father having taken on the role as her full-time carer.

Edward was undertaking an apprenticeship in IT. Leaving school with good grades in his GCSEs, predominantly A*-Cs, he immediately progressed onto a National Diploma in IT at a local sixth form college. While this Level 3 qualification is a recognised trajectory for entry into university, he ultimately rejected the continuation of academic-based studies. Rather, Edward's preferred route was work-based learning. Consequently, he had been

undertaking an IT Practitioners Level 2 apprenticeship for the last 5 months. Unfortunately, the training provider had not been able to find Edward a suitable placement during this time. With no relevant work experience on his CV, finding IT-related employment remained an elusive prospect.

An IT related career, though, had always a back-up plan for Edward. A long standing ambition to join the army had originally been his first choice. The desire to pursue a military career evolved out of a deep interest in Chinese and Japanese culture. In turn, the latter had been ignited by the many strategy games Edward regularly played on his Xbox. Influenced by this realm of fantasy along with Eastern cultures, his aspiration had been to become a general commanding a platoon of soldiers. However, health-related issues, being asthmatic since birth and developing diabetes during sixth-form college, effectively ended his dreams of an army career.

Edward described himself as essentially a quiet person, enjoying his own company or socialising with his few close friends. In this respect, he believed that he differed considerably from the majority of his peers. He also disliked *"modern music"* preferring classical pieces for their calming qualities. These perceived divergences from his contemporaries also extended to resisting peer pressure to smoke or try recreational drugs. Edward accounted for this strength of character through his admiration for the disciplined lifestyles of the Japanese and Chinese. He drew on these cultures in reinforcing the resolve to be his "own man". It was also the calibre of discipline that formed the main attraction of the military for Edward. In western civilian life, he maintained that legislative constraints prevent adequate discipline and punishment being enforced. Consequently, social disorder and unruliness have developed into the norm. He cited a lack of good manners, respect for others, the commonality of violent acts and young children committing acts of vandalism as supporting examples of these issues.

By way of contrast, Edward attempted to live by the standards of being *"an old-fashioned gentleman"*. Integral to the personal standards of conduct he subscribed to were the possession of impeccable manners, showing women due respect and refraining from swearing in their presence. Edward was also

categorical in his strong disapproval of overt displays of sexuality, especially what he regarded as the now commonplace occurrence of men touching women inappropriately in public (including without their permission).

Regarding longer-term plans, Edward wished to remain living locally in Hull. In facilitating this ambition, he was hopeful of purchasing his parents' house from them once he was an established wage earner and had accumulated sufficient capital to do so. Although he was single, he wanted to eventually meet a life partner. Despite his parents' long and happy marriage, he remained unconvinced of the validity of the institution. Like other young men in the study, Edward dismissed marriage as just *"a bit of paper"*, with a high probability of divorce being the likely outcome for most couples. He was also adamant that he did not want children emphatically stating how much he *"hates them"*. In particular, this was because they would disturb the peace and quiet he so valued.

Narrative 4: Susan

Susan, aged 17, had followed in the footsteps of her father and grandfather by embarking on a career in joinery. Performing well in her GCSEs, achieving predominantly A*-Cs, she nevertheless found classroom-based learning boring. Consequently, she applied for apprenticeship programmes. Attracted by the largely vocational content, Susan perceived this route as the most fitting trajectory for the acquisition of new skills. Opting for an atypical career path, however, had not been without its difficulties. Susan faced much peer resistance, suffering jibes that she was incapable of performing a *"man's job"*. More extremely, her sexuality was frequently questioned. Susan was also resigned to the fact that the quality of her work was much more likely to be critiqued than that of her male colleagues. She stated that this placed her under an enormous amount of scrutiny. Continuously proving herself as a female joiner and working twice as hard as male operatives, Susan believed, were necessary in order to be accepted on the same terms as them.

Her day-to-day interactions with male colleagues tended to be strained. Integration issues were particularly apparent during her weekly day release at a local training centre. Susan attributed this to the fact that male students were intimidated and threatened by her. Contextually, with the economic downturn and a subsequent dearth of local employment openings, especially in the construction sector, she was in direct competition for what the men supposed were rightfully their jobs.

Attempting to resolve this tension her presence created, the training centre's solution was to segregate her from the male students. Ultimately, this separation was achieved through removing her from the main workshop. Susan was thus forced to work in isolation. In other words, she was effectively blamed for these issues. Even these steps, however, did not prevent her from being the target of sexually offensive jokes. Susan remained stoical, recognising that there is simply no room for sensitivity within the construction industry. Although frequently upset by the lads' banter, her strategy was to remain quiet in the above situations rather than overtly react to it.

The above exclusion from younger men also extended beyond the training provider and into the workplace. Susan's supervisor always ensured that she was paired with older *"lads"* (i.e. middle-aged men) with whom he opined, according to Susan, there was less likelihood of her becoming sexually involved. Even with these men, however, she still felt pressurised to masculinise her behaviour in an attempt to fit in. Inclusive of this performativity was refraining from wearing make-up, dressing in unisex clothing, swearing more profusely, retelling outrageous jokes and generally behaving more boisterously than she would ordinarily do so.

Outside of work, Susan's career choice was impacting adversely on other areas of her life. She had split up with her boyfriend through his jealousy of her daily interactions with male colleagues, and what hypothetically he concluded these exchanges might lead to. In meeting someone new she also encountered difficulties. Men were seemingly put off by her undertaking a more *"macho job"* than them.

Looking towards the end of her apprenticeship, there was some uncertainty regarding whether she would be taken on permanently after her training period has come to an end. Susan believed her gender could be advantageous, though, if the worst case scenario did occur and she needed to find alternative employment. Elderly female customers, in particular, embraced having her in their homes. Amongst the feedback she received, a frequent comment made was how much more secure they feel with a woman doing the job rather than a man. According to Susan, Age UK has charities under its umbrella whereby older people can "pay in" so that all their maintenance is performed by female operatives. Therefore, she believed this could potentially be a good opening for her.

Narrative 5: Ben

Ben, aged 22, was undertaking an advanced apprenticeship programme in fabrication and welding.

He described how, with increasing maturity, he had transformed into a reformed character after being *"a little shit"* when he was a teenager. At his school, popularity and *"coolness"*, albeit maintained through threat and intimidation, were synonymous with being a *"chav"* (which he ascribed himself to be). Along with his peers, he regularly engaged in gang warfare, recreational drug-taking, anti-social behaviour and criminal activities. However, involvement in the above high risk behaviours led to personal tragedy. One of his friends was murdered by a rival gang while another committed suicide after years of substance misuse. These events later served as a catalyst for Ben to question and assess the direction his life was taking.

Leaving school with a handful of low-graded GCSEs, the range of which spelt *"FUDGE"*, he walked into a *"dead end job"* at the same firm his father and brothers worked. The longer Ben was employed there, the more acutely aware he became of the limited opportunities open to him. Therefore, encouraged by his girlfriend, he successfully applied for the advanced apprenticeship programme in fabrication and welding. He expressed gratitude for the second

chance this opportunity has afforded him in *"making something of his life"*. His family, especially his *"nana"*, were proud of him too. When presented with a framed photograph of Ben receiving his NVQ certificate from the Lord Mayor *"she cried tears of joy"*.

Despite this success and upward turn in the direction his life was taking, Ben recounted how he has experienced an on-going struggle with the culture of the engineering industry. More specifically, the often cruel and aggressive discourse of banter that his colleagues readily engaged in was the major source of difficulty. For Ben, this dialogue entailed being the recipient of unrelenting taunting about his premature hair loss. Being fully aware about the extent of his sensitivity around this issue, however, just encouraged the lads to make the *"ragging"* even more persistent and hurtful.

Ben also acknowledged that another core facet of this discourse potentially alienates women from working within the industry. Namely, this was the equally pervasive sexual objectification of women and accompanying predatory behaviour whenever his colleagues encounter *"fit birds"*. As with the banter regarding his hair loss, he considered it unlikely that this misogyny will cease. With sexism so deeply ingrained within the cultural fabric of the industry, he maintained that even if there were more female operatives entering the sector it would still persist.

Looking towards the future, Ben hoped to marry his girlfriend and eventually have children. Although he predicted that his partner will want to continue pursuing her career, he very much positioned himself in the role of primary breadwinner. He outlined his plans to work on the oil rigs because of the attractive salary package and opportunities for career progression. Ben envisaged that this career pathway would enable him to provide a good standard of living for his family, including a respectably sized house and a *"decent car"*. Finally, he was determined that his children will be privately educated in order to ensure that they avoid the same pitfalls as he encountered at school.

Narrative 6: Kayleigh

Kayleigh, aged 18, was undertaking a Level 1 catering course. A single mother to Brooke, both of them lived with Kayleigh's father in Hull.

During her early teenage years, Kayleigh's parents divorced acrimoniously. She described how her relationship with her mother had remained strained, as a consequence of the break-up, only seeing her sporadically since it happened. Kayleigh frequently did not attend school which she attributed to the above situation. Ultimately, this absenteeism adversely impacted on her GCSE performance achieving grade E in English and maths, alongside a B in information and communication technology (ICT).

After leaving school, Kayleigh initially found employment as a waitress in the same restaurant her father worked at, but left shortly afterwards when she *"got caught pregnant"*. As a teenage mother, she assumed that the opportunity of pursuing a career was effectively over. With her family providing childcare support, however, she was able to enrol onto her catering course.

Upon her initial return to education, she had hoped to follow a career in engineering. The realisation that she would be the only female in the workshops soon made her reconsider this aspiration. There were two underlying reasons behind this change of vocational direction. Firstly, Kayleigh's ex-partner (and father to Brooke) was prone to violence and would have *"kicked off"* had she taken the engineering route and been surrounded by lads all day. A second-related factor was the widely held perception, prevalent amongst Kayleigh's peers (including her boyfriend) that only *"a slag"* chooses a male-dominated profession. In other words, the woman in question was deemed to be primarily interested in undertaking the course because of the men rather than any genuine interest in engineering. She believed that this attitude was integral to a wider double standard. As in previous generations, Kayleigh opined that her male peers were socially rewarded for being sexually experienced whereas young women were penalised for the same behaviours. Moreover, it was predominantly girls who actively policed and monitored this labelling of other females as slags if their behaviour was deemed inappropriate.

Despite choosing a qualitatively more gender-balanced course, attendance at a training centre where the majority of the student body were men still adversely impacted on Kayleigh's social interactions. Specifically, this was apparent in the Common Room where the majority of the socialising within the centre takes place. Here she described how, when together, the lads become *"dirty-minded"* i.e. openly discussing sexual acts and pestering women for dates and/or sex. On many occasions, Kayleigh and her friends had been made to feel uncomfortable in these situations. Therefore, they frequently sought refuge in corridors during break times in order to avoid the Common Room, the young men and their banter.

Upon completion of her training, Kayleigh aspired to become a chef. She worried that the economic downturn could potentially impact on her chances of finding a suitable position. Longer-term, she was interested in owning a restaurant, although she struggled to articulate what motivated her in pursuing this aspiration. In the interim, though, she was just content to have been given the opportunity to combine training for a career with motherhood.

Narrative 7: Josh

Josh, age 16, was attending a uniform services preparation course. Recently, his aspiration for a military career suffered a setback when his application to the army was rejected on medical health grounds.

Along with his mum and siblings, Josh lived on a council estate in East Hull. His childhood was traumatic, experiencing violence when his father, in a fit of rage, attempted to cut off his arm with a hand saw. Aged only four at the time, Josh was, understandably, profoundly affected by this abuse and still carried the scars both mentally and physically. He underwent psychiatric treatment, when he was ten, after suffering a bout of depression and self-harming. However, he dismissed this medical intervention as *"complete bollocks"* because his issues remain largely unresolved. These included a negative body image centring on the scarring on his arm where his father had carried out the attack on him. Josh felt that any exposure of this injury heightened the sense of shame he

experienced at what he allowed to happen. Consequently, he refused to remove his shirt or bare his arm in public.

> *"I shouldn't have let the fucking cunt do it to me. I don't have my arms out. I don't take my shirt off. I just keep it locked away. I don't want people to see I was weak […] I could do him. When I fight I don't let the frustration go because if I did I'd kill someone. Fucking kill him. Me hands are a right mess from just fighting and stuff like that".*

As can be inferred from the quote above, Josh elucidated on how he continued to experience anger management issues. Further scarring on his hands evidenced both regular fighting (i.e. most days) and where he punched the walls in order to release his enduring frustrations. While the frequency with which he actively seeks out physical confrontations had diminished, he still occasionally resorted to violence by targeting lads with *"big reputations"* in order to validate and reaffirm his masculine prowess.

Josh attributed this reduction in his desire to engage in aggressive behaviours to two factors. During the day, he poured his energies into the uniform services preparation course he had been undertaking since leaving school. The high levels of demanding physical and sporting activity this programme entailed allowed him to release some of the tensions he still experienced. Secondly, at nights and weekends, he drank vast quantities of alcohol that helped him unwind. While Josh also smoked cigarettes, he limited his recreational drug-taking to the occasional use of speed. He believed that this restraint was a necessity as it would impact adversely on his mental health if he was to become a *"big drug head"*.

Despite a somewhat erratic school attendance record, Josh performed well in his GCSES gaining A*-Cs across the board. As already touched upon, the above deep-seated personal issues had potentially impeded his career ambitions for a military career. Josh was devastated when the application he made to join the infantry, in the army, was rejected on mental health grounds. In contrast, his

mother was relieved by this outcome because a family friend had died in Afghanistan. Josh, however, remained resolute that the threat of death did not hold any fear for him.

If his appeal against the above rejection proves unsuccessful, as a back-up option he planned to undertake further training in order to qualify as a tradesman. With the currency of an internationally recognised skills set, he intended to emigrate. The primary reason for doing so was to seek a better quality of life. Although he had considered Australia, he preferred Spain for its closer proximity to his family in Hull.

In terms of relationships, while anti-marriage, Josh stated he enjoys having *"lasses"* in his life. He has already ruled out fatherhood, expressing anxiety that he may turn out like his dad who he described as having "no time for". Josh's ex-girlfriend has recently suffered a miscarriage. In hindsight, he believed that this is the best possible outcome given his background and worst fear of what he might become- a replica of his father.

Narrative 8: Neil

Neil, aged 19, had just entered the third year of full-time post-compulsory education. After aborted attempts at media and music courses, and facing increasing pressure from his mother, he selected a trade i.e. Level 1 in motor mechanics.

Describing himself as a *mosher*, Neil's taste in clothing, enjoyment of rock music and "hippy" values were all shared experiences with his family. Embracing membership of this sub-cultural identity, however, was not without its risks. Specifically, these arose from the existing gang rivalries between *moshers* and *chavs*. According to Neil, this feuding can be traced back as far as the 1960s when his grandmother, as a *"rocker"*, experienced similar tensions with *"mods"*. The intense dislike between rival fractions had often culminated in violence. Neil cited examples in support of this contention. His *"mosher mate"* had been recently stabbed and his father had to undergo a nose

reconstruction. Both of these incidences were as a direct result of being attacked by *chavs*.

Academically Neil struggled at school. He was later diagnosed as dyslexic when he was 18. While he became increasingly frustrated with the difficulties he encountered at school, the teachers misinterpreted the situation. Accusing him of a lack of application in his studies, he was placed in lower sets. He left school with grade F in his English and Maths GCSEs. However, he performed better in his option choices achieving Cs in Music, Product Design and Art. Neil then attended a further education college, studying music before progressing onto a media course in his second year. At this time, he had a tentative career plan to become a sound engineer. However, this was subsequently abandoned when he failed to achieve the grades required to progress onto a higher level media course.

Outside of school and college, Neil pursued the main passion of his life, playing bass guitar and performing backing vocals in a hard core punk band. Work was being undertaken on their fourth CD, with promise that they may be signed to an American label after being talent spotted at one of their gigs. It was the general family consensus, however, that motor mechanics was a good back-up option if the above plans for the band do not come to fruition.

Neil complains that the continuation of his education for a third year entailed a certain level of sacrifice and frustration. Yet another year on Educational Maintenance Allowance (i.e. £20 per week) barely funded his smoking habit let alone a social life. To indulge his other pleasures, including occasional drug-taking (mainly *"weed"*) and binge drinking, he had to rely on hand-outs from his mother. Despite this financial support, he still considered that a lack of money prevented him from living life to the full.

Looking to the medium-term future, upon completion of her university degree in nursing, his mother was seriously contemplating emigrating to New Zealand. Neil was somewhat reticent about this proposed plan given that his *"life"* including his father, extended family and band were firmly rooted in Hull. His

mother, whom he described as a formidable woman, had been pressurising him to go with her nonetheless.

Taking a longer-term view, Neil expressed a desire to live with someone and have children. He described his wariness about the commitment of marriage. His parents and step-parents were divorced, and, therefore, he associated the institution with acrimony, pain and suffering.

Narrative 9: George

George, aged 19, lived at home with his mother and stepfather. He was estranged from his biological father whom he had never met. However, he regarded his stepfather as his *"dad"*. Recently, his girlfriend, Stacey, had moved temporarily into George's parents' house while the couple saved up for their own place.

As for his career, George was undertaking a Level 1 bricklaying course. Driven by anxiety at both his lack of work experience and paid employment, he was taking his studies extremely seriously. Some tensions between George and his other male students, because of their opposing attitudes, frequently arose where site banter and practical jokes are concerned. Accepting that these exchanges were an integral part of the construction industry, he deemed, though, that the immaturity of his fellow students mean they took things too far. For George, this *"pratting about"* was particularly where such incidences frequently disrupted the learning process. Disgusted also by the continual sexual objectification of women, he cited both the use of derogatory language and relaying of details of the intimacy shared with sexual partners in a public sphere as examples of this degradation.

At school, George described himself as being an *"average lad"*, likening his performativity to that of the character Simon from the TV series *The Inbetweeners*. Neither popular nor unpopular, he had a tendency to be a "follower", and was easily distracted in lessons when other lads instigated

trouble. Such antics contributed significantly towards George's underachievement academically, obtaining D-G grades in his GCSEs.

His parents encouraged him to make his own decisions about his career path. Guided by his hobbies, rugby, football and boxing, he decided to undertake a Level 1 sports course immediately after leaving school. After successfully completing it, he progressed onto the Level 2 the following year. However, he withdrew after a couple of weeks because it was *"boring"*. It was at this stage that his mother expressed some concerns that, like his auntie and cousins, he could potentially fall into a cycle of long-term unemployment. Inheriting his parents' work ethic, these were sentiments that George shared. Therefore, he conveyed determination that he will not under any circumstances follow in auntie's and cousins' footsteps.

George's short-term career ambitions included progression onto the Level 2 bricklaying full-time course upon successful completion of the Level 1. He then hoped to secure an apprenticeship within the same occupational area. In the longer-term, if he could convince Stacey of the merits of it, he aspired to move to Australia for the higher standard of living. George also hoped to marry her and eventually have children together. He envisaged himself taking an active role in their care, but believed Stacey should take primary responsibility for it. However, George predicted an equal division in terms of household chores as this arrangement was already in place.

Narrative 10: Ian

Ian, aged 22, was undertaking an advanced apprenticeship in fabrication and welding. As well as the commitments of his full-time job, he was required to undertake day release at a training centre and study in his own time.

Although Ian's parents have since divorced, he recounted having a solid upbringing on a farm in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Through attending a school in a rural community, Ian considered his educational experiences were markedly better than those of his peers in Hull. Namely, these differences were

accounted for by a dearth of the following in his school (which he had heard were all commonplace in the city's schools): a high degree of disruptive behaviour, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and frequent police interventions because of student involvement in criminal activities.

Ian described himself as *"Mr Average"*. Reasonably well-behaved, he, nonetheless, loathed school finding most lessons to be irrelevant and boring. Despite this disinterest, and with the goal of securing a place on an apprenticeship programme, he worked extremely hard in his GCSEs to achieve B and C grades. Initially after leaving school, Ian fulfilled this aspiration by following in his stepfather's footsteps as an apprentice in mechanical fitting. However, he never finished this:

> *"Cus the money was crap. So um, I just sacked it off"*.

At this point, with a car to pay for, he took the first job available as a labourer. By *"showing interest"*, though, he was offered his advanced apprenticeship. Eventually through further hard work, Ian had become one of the main fabricators on the shop floor. There are some aspects of undertaking this role that Ian particularly enjoyed. Inclusive of these elements were the camaraderie of the shop floor, particularly the ubiquitous banter that he described as *"just general piss-taking"* about operatives' work. Ian conceded that to endure it, especially the persistent offensive comments, requires a certain degree of toughness or *"manning-up"*. With any sign of weakness immediately seized upon, he offered the following advice to trainees, in dealing with the banter, when first entering the construction sector:

> *"Never rise to it. Just laugh it off and then go home and cry"*.

Salary was the one aspect of the job Ian remained unhappy with. Having not received a pay rise for over 3 years, morale amongst his colleagues, on the shop floor had hit rock bottom. It was only the apprenticeship, and the opportunities this training may afford in the future, which made him remain with his employer. In fact, this dissatisfaction had motivated Ian to undertake extra

study with the aim of an earlier completion of his training programme. By extension, realising this goal would bring forward the date when he would be ready to seek alternative employment opportunities. As Ian did not have any familial ties (i.e. a partner and children) he was happy to leave the area in search of work if the financial incentive was attractive enough to warrant it.

When not at work, Ian indulged in his hobbies of game shooting and building racing cars. He explained how a considerable amount of the money he earned, including the frequent overtime he undertook, funded these interests. Ian was emphatic in stating that these recreational pursuits were preferential to going around town *"pissing it up"* and *"pissing his hard earned wages up the wall"* as many of his friends did. That said, he did struggle to resist the pressure to consume vast quantities of alcohol when occasionally engaging in social drinking. In these circumstances, like his friends, he invariably ended up with a chronic hangover.

Looking to the future, Ian aspired to be self-employed either through running his own business or contracting. In terms of relationships, he was single, but wanted to meet a long-term partner. Expressing a preference for cohabitation, he dismissed marriage as a *"bit of paper"*. He would like to have children one day but only when he reaches a certain level of financial stability. Finally, although hypothetical at this stage, Ian raised no objections to assuming the role of a house husband and primary caregiver. The only proviso he stipulated was that his partner should have a better (read higher waged) job.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have introduced 10 of the 114 participants, 8 men and 2 women. Taking the male participants first. A commonality expressed was the desire to follow the same conformist trajectories, in both their private and professional lives, as their fathers had previously taken. Some men were estranged from their biological fathers, but they still aspired to these traditional pathways with stepfathers and other male relatives often being their role models. One significant deviation from their fathers' scripts of masculinities, though, was a disregard for marriage. With a high prevalence of divorce

amongst their parents, matrimony was dismissed as just *"a bit of paper"* (Edward, aged 19, IT) by many.

An exception clearly is Josh. The estrangement from his father held deeper ramifications beyond not wishing to marry. Josh was still struggling with shame, anger and frustration regarding his father's physical assault on him. Although he has managed to channel these emotions towards a military career, his mental health issues looked set to jeopardise these plans. Josh was anxious about the future and how he will turn out as an adult. Driven by a fear of being like his father he stated, categorically, he did not want to have children.

Ben and Carl also did not wish to be 'like dad' albeit for different reasons. Firstly, Ben has commenced the transition from *rough'* to *respectable* working-class. With the encouragement of his girlfriend, the markers and steps for achieving his desired conventional life looked to be in place. Likewise, Carl was attempting to make a similar journey to Ben via seeking to secure what is proving to be an elusive apprenticeship. Aside from a paucity of suitable training programmes, his dearth of suitable qualifications, low self-esteem and lack of confidence were additional obstacles he faced. In terms of the latter, in the process Wacquant (2007:67) defined as "blemish of place" (see Chapter 6 for a further discussion), Carl (aged 18 Joinery) strongly believed that being bought up on a notorious and *"rough"* Hull council estate will always count against him.

These narratives also strongly suggest that many of these young men were acting out conformist, heterosexual and working-class masculinities (see Chapter 6 where this argument will be developed). These frequently laddish performativities were necessarily contingent on homophobia and misogyny. Sean was a target because of his sexuality, and still carried with him the scars of the homophobic school bullying he endured. Although having escaped from the perpetrators since leaving school, he still felt it necessary to have a self-imposed curfew when it came to his social life. As will be discussed in the following chapter, the prevalence of homohysteria still made it difficult for him to befriend any straight male friends.

The impact of laddism on women is also highlighted by Susan's and Kayleigh's narratives. Both have been subjected to misogyny. Susan's narrative shows how women are blamed and penalised for men's predatory behaviour. For example, this is clearly illustrated through her enforced segregation by tutors who had withdrawn her away from male colleagues into another workshop. Kayleigh's narrative shows how self-imposed isolation was necessary to avoid unwanted attention in social situations. Her lived experiences also illuminate how perceptions of women can shift from respectable to being a slag merely through choosing a traditionally masculinised career.

Nevertheless, there are a minority of men who openly rejected the laddism (or at least elements of it) intrinsic to the prevailing scripts of conformist masculinities. George, for instance, loathed the laddish culture he encountered amongst his peers and tutors on his construction course. Edward, in embracing more old-fashioned values, deemed overt sexualisation and objectification of women abhorrent when he encountered these in his daily interactions. Both of these men, though, were passive in their resistance to their more dominant male peers and did not actively challenge them. Although there was a plurality of masculine performativities amongst the participants, the working-class laddish scripts remained dominant. These themes will now be explored, thematically, in the following chapter.

Chapter 6

Peacocks Displaying their Feathers

Working-Class Masculinities in Hull

"The lads for example, wear t-shirts in the depth of winter to show how tough or hard they are. They are very influenced by working-class ideas of what it is to be a man, to be tough, physically muscular and to do jobs like a trade. I think how they see themselves is a northern thing" (Debbie, Careers Officer).

'Beer, Banter and Birds': One of the Lads

Having set out the methodology, theoretical framing and introducing participants through a selection of narratives, I now turn attention to the empirical stages of the research. Consequently, the focus of this chapter shifts to data analysis and the central theme of how masculinities are interpreted, understood and performed within a localised context. As stated in Chapter 1, application of Beasley's revisionist taxonomy of hegemonic masculinity is used for framing the research findings.

The findings suggest that rather than a singular construction, a plurality of working-class masculine performativities emerged from the narratives of the research participants. Integral to this discussion will be how spatial dimensions impact on, define, shape and constrain the performativities of these masculinities. For example, in what participants described as *"the fishing mentality"*, I explore how this now defunct industry coupled with the insularity of Hull still impacts on the masculinities of participants.

How these performativities are enacted and embodied is discussed below. For example, the discourse of compulsory heterosexuality (Rich, 1980; Jeffreys,

1990) coupled with high homohysteria (including avoidance of any behaviours where a man may be misconstrued as being gay) is explored. Intersections with laddism is another key area. Unlike the variant appropriated by the middle-classes, I will argue that working-class laddish masculinities in Hull are derived from both the above fishing mentality and induction into industry specific cultures. The mechanisms in place for ensuring that these are effectively policed and reinforced are reflected upon throughout the chapter.

The 'Russian Doll' City

In fully understanding the formation and performance of local young masculinities, an analysis of the impact of geographical location forms the first crucial ingredient. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, this is in line with the arguments of Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) and Beasley (2008) that the application of hegemonic and sub-hegemonic masculinities is delimited by time and space. These identities, in other words, may not only vary internationally across the world, but also between communities and localities within the same country (Rotundo, 1993; McDowell, 2004). With recognition of the pivotal role of geography in the expression of masculinities, the spotlight falls on the interplay between local, regional and global stages (Beasley, 2008a). Aside from the role in the formation of localised masculinities, it would seem that the geographical location and positioning of Hull also influences residents to lead spatially circumscribed neighbourhood-based lives (McDowell, 2000a, 2002; Featherstone, 2012; Rhodes, 2012). One of the key professionals, Debbie, a careers officer, thus describes the city in the following way: *"It's in a bubble given its geographical location."* Concurring with this view, Frank (Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) opines: *"Hull? It's very insular as a town."*

Such spatially circumscribed lives emerge in the research findings of numerous studies that have focused on young men (see Westwood, 1990; Callaghan, 1992; Baumann, 1996; Pearce, 1996; Taylor et al., 1996; O'Byrne, 1997; Watt, 1998; McDowell, 2014). More generally, strong identification with the local area is frequently prevalent amongst working-class young adults (Ball et al., 2000; Charlesworth, 2000) especially those with fewer academic qualifications

(Roberts, 1995). In conjunction, depressed aspirations have been found to correlate with living in socially and economically deprived areas (Furlong et al., 1996). Examples of areas particularly affected include northern industrial towns (McDowell, 2004), seaside resorts with their patterns of seasonal employment/unemployment (Clisby, 2009) and the South Wales Valleys (with deindustrialisation in these areas mirroring that in Northern England) (Russell et al, 2016). These findings are in line with the situation in Hull, with it being the third most deprived local authority district in England (DCLG, 2016). Moreover, concerns have been raised over the examination performance, notably, in terms of the Level 2 benchmark of achievement i.e. 5 A*-Cs (including English and Maths) at the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). As discussed in Chapter 5, the numbers achieving these qualifications in Hull is approximately 12% and 9% below national and regional standards respectively (ONS, 2015c). Compounding this situation, as in all local authorities across England and Wales, is that boys consistently underperform compared to girls in the attainment of academic credentials (ONS, 2015c; Stats Wales, 2015).

Emerging themes indicate that rather insularity forming a homogenous pattern across the city, there are further pockets demarcating geographical areas and communities within it. Hull can, therefore, be compared to a matryoshka or Russian doll. Comprising these ostensibly multi-layered aspects are three tiers starting at the city-wide level (as described by Frank and Debbie above). Secondly, there is the division of East and West Hull each with their own rugby teams Kingston Rovers and Hull FC respectively (also see Chapter 4). The River Hull, to all intent and purposes, serves as a geographical marker between the two halves. Finally, at the smallest scale is an estates culture. As will be argued below, in the latter two instances, this insularity appears to extend to the existence of a gang rivalry between different and sometimes opposing residential areas. Given the contextual basis for this chapter is exploring masculinities, it is important to consider how geography (i.e. differences between spaces) potentially impacts on how they are performed.

The Fishing Mentality: Living at the 'End of the Line'

As I discussed in Chapter 4, for many years the economy of Hull was reliant on the deep sea fishing and shipping industries (Avery, 2008). A commonality shared with other fishing ports such as Grimsby and Fleetwood is that the geographical location of Hull, a precondition for the previous success of the industry, has been described as being 'at the end of the line'. Consequently, it has remained remote from other major cities and wider economic transformations (Mitchell & Tate, 1997; Centre for Cities, 2012; Featherstone, 2012). In reality, though, Hull's fishing industry (as with Grimsby and Fleetwood) was a close knit, closed off community clustered around Hessle Road and St Andrew's Dock (Tunstall, 1972; Thompson, 1989; Gill, 2003). Effectively cut off from the rest of the city, this stand-aloneness arguably constitutes yet another matryoshka doll or layer of insularity (Mitchell & Tate, 1997).

Interestingly, participants' narratives suggest that this maritime culture and heritage continues to have a powerful and far-reaching impact on the city (Thompson, 1989). Contextually, this is where the fishing industry had declined precipitously 40 years ago as a consequence of the Anglo-Icelandic wars (1975-6). Nevertheless, this prolonged influence is still perceptible in terms of gender performativities informed by what participants describe as the *"fishing mentality"* (Frank, Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery). Notably, this narrative refers to the laddish, sub-hegemonic and conformist variant of masculinity that emerges through many participants' lived experiences (see below). With many of the young men training in the trades, this or a similar identity remains closely aligned with work in that it is deeply enmeshed in the cultural fabric of these industries.

Such a powerful relationship between industry, space and identity is a commonality shared with other northern cities. For instance, in Sunderland shipbuilding has traditionally been synonymous with 'men's work' and masculinity. However, the rise of the professional criminal, or as Winlow (2001) typifies this phenomenon 'Badfellas Masculinity', became a new form of gender expression when the above orthodox pathway was no longer available to

young men with the demise of the industry. In a similar fashion, McDowell (2004) highlights how Sheffield's former steel industry played a comparable role in the formation of working-class masculine identities. With the deindustrialisation of the 1970s and 1980s, her participants had few academic credentials coupled with unrealistic aspirations to follow previous generations into traditionally 'macho' occupations. Therefore, reliance on the long-standing working-class trajectory of leaving school to enter semi-skilled jobs (as described by Willis (1977) in *Learning to Labour*) had left these men with what McDowell (2002:39) coined "redundant masculinities".

Within the local careers and training sectors, concurring with the above findings, there seems to be a widespread belief that Hull's socio-geographical history continues to impact on young people's educational and employment aspirations. Frank (Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery), for example, maintained that there is a direct connection between the fishing industry, working-class masculinities, laddish dispositions and the proposed insularity. His view was that the city still has:

> *"A fishing mentality that will take years to get out of the town's system".*

It would seem that this notion of a fishing mentality, as described by Frank, encapsulates the relationship between space, insularity and how these conditions could lead to narrowed horizons (Featherstone, 2012). As a Careers Officer delivering information, advice and guidance in a city centre based college campus, Debbie worked with students from all geographical areas of Hull. In this professional capacity, she regularly encountered evidence of how the above insularity is apparent in the attitudes and outlook of her teenage clients. Ultimately, Debbie believed that they are leading spatially circumscribed lives (McDowell, 2004; Clisby, 2009) or as she put it:

> *""Living life in a bubble. Young people do not seem to be much affected by what is happening in the country. They don't seem to listen to the news. I recently did a group work and mentioned that Hull has the highest youth*

unemployment in the country. But even this didn't seem
to register. They want to stay locally. They don't seem to
venture further afield; they want to stay with the
familiar. They don't want to feel like strangers in a
strange environment (Debbie, Careers Officer).

Frank (Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) perhaps offered a more extreme example of this tendency to look inward or what is known colloquially as 'the end of the line syndrome' (Mitchell & Tate, 1997; Fourteen to Nineteen Partnership, 2010). When accompanying students on a visit to Hull's City Hall, he pointed out a portrait of the Queen and asked one of them who she was:

"Do you know what his answer was? Fucked if I know!
That's exactly what he said to me. It's like who's that? I
don't know. Some tart."

Countering this argument to some extent, however, was the fact that several of the male participants relayed their aspirations to emigrate. For instance, Australia and New Zealand were popular choices of destination. The underlying rationale behind this generally longer-term goal was the perceived higher standard of living such a move would facilitate. A cautionary note in interpreting these findings, though, was that this invariably vague future planning draws heavily on the life experiences of their parents and/or tutors at college. Moreover, this ambition was mostly raised by those training for careers within the trades (the only exception in fact was Josh who was undertaking a uniform services preparation course). In this way, these 'borrowed' aspirations form an intrinsic part of their limited horizons as opposed to their own carefully formulated planning (Hancock, 2012).

Furthermore, the research was undertaken against the backdrop of a recession and the consequential contraction of the construction industry (Rhodes, 2012; Moulds, 2012). Tutors, therefore, frequently highlight employment opportunities abroad in order to enhance the recruitment of prospective students, and, simultaneously, safeguard the retention of those already on their courses. Trevor (Centre Manager), in drawing on his own career trajectory,

described how he commanded much more respect as a construction worker in New Zealand (when he lived and worked there) compared to in the UK. These experiences align to a wider prevailing issue in this country of academic pathways being held in much higher esteem than their vocational counterparts (Taylor, 1992; Keys et al., 1998; Hemsley-Brown, 1999; Foskett & Hemsley-Brown, 2001; Foskett et al., 2008).

Interestingly, none of the lads expressed a desire to relocate to a different region of the country in seeking betterment of their standard of living. It could be that the more prosaic move within the UK did not hold the same romanticism or ultimate unattainability as a move abroad. Another potential explanation for this can be pinpointed within Debbie's observations, made from the standpoint of her professional role as a careers officer. With narrowed horizons, constrained by spatially circumscribed lives, the teenagers she regularly worked with appeared to remain uninterested in national or regional issues affecting other geographical areas of the country. The interpretation can then be feasibly applied, that participants believed that the rest of the country shares many similarities to Hull. For example, for the duration of the fieldwork, in January to April 2012, Hull ranked as holding the highest unemployment rates in the country (Spereall, 2012). With a recession on-going, the misconception may have been held that this dearth of job opportunities parallels national trends. Therefore, realising a higher standard of living necessitates emigration in order to secure a *"decent job"* (George, aged 19, Bricklaying).

A further caveat is that all participants were either economically active or working towards it via their apprenticeships or attending full-time college courses. Collectively, these pathways were perceived as instrumental in the realisation of career goals. Perhaps different conclusions regarding this notion of the 'end of the line syndrome' may have been reached if the sample had differed i.e. it included young women and men who were unemployed or from families where unemployment is the norm (McQuaid & Bond, 2004a, 2007). For instance, George (aged 19, Bricklaying Level 1) described how his auntie and cousins were all in this situation. However, according to him, they have emphatically stated their determination never to work and were contend to remain living on their estate in Hull. In this regard, Furlong et al.'s (1996)

findings that expectations and aspirations become depressed as a consequence of living in socially and economically deprived areas are supported.

East versus West: A City Divided

In line with the above matryoshka doll imagery, the next proposed level down after the city-wide insularity includes the River Hull forming a geographical line of demarcation:

> *"The city has an East West divide with a taxi driver once*
> *commenting to me that you need a passport to go across*
> *the River into East Hull"* (Kevin, Operations Manager,
> Motor Mechanics).

Some of the participants contend that this theorised division is indicative of long-standing rivalries between residents from opposing areas. Joe (aged 17, Engineering), who has lived from birth onwards in East Hull, identities this situation as the main reason underpinning why he has not enjoyed more affable professional relationships with both the teachers at school and the tutors on his current course:

> *"Yeah most of 'em from [name of institution attended] are*
> *from [name of area in West Hull] and all that so when*
> *you try speaking to 'em they were just stuck up with yer."*

A dissenting voice to this standpoint, however, comes from Gary (aged 25, Engineering):

> *"It is a lot of nonsense if you ask me. Well, I am East Hull*
> *through and through. I have been there all my life until 3*
> *or 4 years ago. I have lived in East Hull and seen*
> *everything and anything if you know what I mean. West*
> *Hull is the same. You can't say that's it better or that's it*
> *worse. At the minute it's really quiet. Yeah, you get the*

> *odd scroungers. The people you don't want to be near, but*
> *you get that wherever you live. East Hull is just the same*
> *as West Hull in my opinion."*

However, Gary acknowledged that not everyone shared his views and the above divide is real in some people's eyes. He stated that this is markedly pronounced amongst teenagers, the stage of the life cycle where peer pressure is arguably at its most intense (Gilligan, 2002). Moreover, O' Connor (2004) maintains that this coincides with the period when identification with peer group sub-cultures (and by extension 'gangs') reaches its peak (see below). Gary elucidated on his own experiences in this regard:

> *"Yeah West Hull people say East Hull scumbags and what*
> *not. And East Hull people say oh snobs and that type of*
> *thing. I was like that when I was younger. I used to*
> *think West Hull? Why would you want to go up there?*
> *But now I would rather be down there because it's quiet"*
> (Gary, aged 25, Engineering).

The 'Estates Culture'

At the next level of this multi-layering of insularity is a proposed 'estates culture' prevailing amongst Hull's council house residential areas including Orchard Park, Bransholme, Greatfield and Bilton Grange. Initially these estates were developed as part of the regeneration programme aimed at rebuilding the city in the aftermath of the Second World War and the devastation caused by air raid bombings (see Chapter 4 for a more in-depth discussion). More recently, though, some of these areas have developed notoriety for being so-called "rough areas" (Carl, aged 18, Catering) or 'sink estates[25]. As such, they have suffered from what Wacquant (2007:69) describes as "heightened territorial stigmatization". Here, Jack (aged 18, Joinery) summarises what the local estates culture is from his perspective:

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[25] A 'sink estate' is a British council housing estate characterised by high levels of economic and social deprivation (Tunstall & Coulter, 2006).

*"You have druggies. People who don't do nowt. People
who get pregnant early, things like that. That's how I see
estates."*

In other words, they have become the breeding ground and place of exile for "urban outcasts" (Wacquant, 2008:169). A nationally pilloried underclass (Le Grand, 2010), the inhabitants of Hull's estates are referred dismissively, by participants, as *chavs* (Nayak, 2006). I contend, below, that this sub-culture intersects with gender identity to form a localised variant of protest masculinity (Connell, 2000; Harland et al., 2005).

When it comes to considerations of 'space', Wacquant (2007, 2008) identifies these areas as being an integral part of the new phenomenon of "advanced marginality". Rhodes (2012:684) further explains the concept:

*"Drawing on the case studies of Chicago's Black Belt and
the 'Red Belt' of Paris, Wacquant argues that this
phenomenon is characterised by a 'dualization of the
social and physical structure of the metropolis that has
consigned large sections of the unskilled labour force to
economic redundancy and social marginality' (2008:24).
For him, this new form of marginality has three
distinguishing features; firstly, rising unemployment and
instability leads to 'deproletarianisation and the diffusion
of labour precariousness', secondly, increasing numbers
of people experience 'relegation to decaying
neighbourhoods' as public and private resources
'diminish' and competition for scarce resources increases;
thirdly, residence in 'a degraded and degrading
neighbourhood' is accompanied by 'heightened
stigmatization' (Wacquant, 2007; 2008)."*

Other stigmatized neighbourhoods or "blemish of place'" (Wacquant, 2007:67) have been the focus of media attention, notably, two television programmes.

The first of these is the BBC Panorama's 'Trouble on the Estate' (2012) based on the Shadsworth Estate in Blackburn, Lancashire. Concurring with Jack's perceptions above, the emerging themes during the four months of filming the documentary include third or fourth generational unemployment, lawlessness and moral degeneracy (Rhodes, 2012). More recently and with closer geographical proximity to Hull, Channel 4's observational series *Skint* focuses on the Westcliff Estate in Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire. Participating residents were selected from one of three groups, the long-term unemployed, those who had never worked, or, alternatively, were growing up with the expectation that they would never earn their own living via paid employment (Hatherley, 2012). Essentially, key emerging themes of the Shadworth Estate documentary were replicated.

A caveat here, though, is that the presented themes and findings from both documentaries have been much critiqued. These assessments have been particularly at the editing stage, where detractors contend that television viewers are left with a skewed and biased portrayal of life on the estates. One significant charge is that by targeting specific residents (such as the unemployed groups described above) widely held stereotypical assumptions about estates are produced, reproduced and reinforced. In other words, social issues are characterised as permeating through them. Broken homes, high unemployment, teenage pregnancy, widespread substance misuse[26] and teenage gangs (with some members already destined for prison) are all presented as commonplace. In failing to highlight the positive aspects of estate life, the residents likened the programme to an episode of the fictional television series *Shameless* rather than accurate depiction of estate life (Hatherley, 2012).

Despite these objections, my research suggests the insularity of the estates cultures continued to have a detrimental impact on the aspirational horizons of its residents (Furlong et al., 1996), in similar ways to those portrayed by the above programmes. These adverse ramifications were especially for those unemployed or otherwise not engaged in training or education. Lacking in financial resources, their geographical immobility intensifies:

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[26] This substance misuse includes both excessive alcohol consumption and drug-taking.

>*"They don't go off the estate. It's basically that is where they live, and they don't go out at weekends. They stay on the estate. It's a shame really"* (Tracy, Learning Mentor).

Bates et al., (1984) depicts young people in such circumstances (as per the title of their book) as 'schooling for the dole'. Some participants believe that this is particularly so in families where intergenerational unemployment is commonplace:

>*"It's the way the parents are. That's what I honestly think. Because there are a lot of kids near me and their parents are just the same as them. They don't work and they are just scroungers basically"* (Gary, aged 25, Engineering).

Such spatially circumscribed lives and by extension depressed aspirations, were frequently encountered by key professionals in the course of performing their duties. For instance, Samantha (Placement Officer, Catering) undertook outreach recruitment programmes on the estates in order to attract candidates for catering apprenticeship placements. Despite the fact that there are a large number of vacancies available, she had not been able to attract any interest in them. Trevor (Centre Manager) also experiences similar issues. His construction centre has actually been under threat of closure due to a significant drop in recruitment of school leavers to the programmes on offer:

>*"This is surprising because of the location of the centre amidst many council houses in [name of estate]. We have taken recruitment into our own hands and have sent out over 4,000 leaflets. I am surprised that more people from council houses have not tried to enrol on the courses. They are unemployed. Their parents are unemployed. But still they do not want to do the courses. They are just not interested in getting a job."*

The participants generally attributed the reason for this worklessness as being the welfare benefits they receive. Without many *"quals"* or academic credentials, remaining unemployed albeit as a *"scrounger"* (Gary, aged 25, Engineering), it would seem, was a much more inviting proposition than the alternative of low or unskilled and monotonous work for little or no extra recompense:

> *"We've got so much unemployment around the City or around the country. The people we have- their parents don't work. Or a lot of the parents don't work, and they see that as normal. That's normal life. So they see their selves as don't needing to work"* (Derek, Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery).

'Lads will be Lads': Exploring Masculinities

Having considered the pivotal role that both space and issues of insularity assume, I now turn attention to masculine performativities within this localised context. Connell (2005) contends that masculinity and femininity are socially and actively constructed rather than merely received. Accordingly, different ways of performing masculinity will be explored including how the above geographical parameters potentially shape, influence and reinforce the emerging spectrum of gender identities.

In congruence with the arguments of Connell and Messerschmdit (2005) and Beasley (2008a; 2008b) a strong sense of entrenched localised conformist and hegemonic masculinity grounded in the understandings and narratives of participants emerges from my analysis. It forms part of a wider working-class culture and context:

> *"The young people are proud of their working-class status"* (Debbie, Careers Officer).

Through making this assertion that a version of working-class masculinity is the dominant hegemonic form, it counters the findings of previous research. According to Connell (2005) hegemonic masculinity is the most honoured variant out of a plurality of socially constructed gender identities (see Chapter 3). Being the most culturally idealised, it has consistently been regarded as the preserve of the middle or professional classes (Beasley, 2008a; Connell, 2005). In retaining this superior positioning or vantage point, it is necessary to exclude or suppress working-class men, gay, effeminate or unassertive heterosexual identities, women and those from ethnic minorities (Harland et al., 2005; Robinson, 2008a; Phipps & Young, 2013, 2015).

Hull has been generally ascribed as a working-class city (Avery, 2008), so the predominating emergence of the conformist and laddish script amongst participants' narratives is consistent with this premise (Laberge & Albert, 1999). Moreover, the proposed insularity of the city provides the optimum conditions for working-class masculinities to be fostered and upheld in a dominant form (Beasley, 2008a). In support of this conjecture, Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (2012) have maintained that marginalized masculinities, depending on context, may also be hegemonic. The question then is does the emerging dominant variant here constitute hegemonic masculinity or a marginalized protest variation of masculinity- as working-class masculinity has previously been situated? (Harland et al., 2005; Connell, 2000).

Beasley (2008a) provides a useful framework in seeking to unravel this conundrum. To recapitulate the arguments discussed in Chapter 3, Beasley (2008a, 2008b) suggests that a conceptual demarcation is made between 'supra'-hegemonic (aligning with global masculinities) and 'sub'-hegemonic (which otherwise, could represent more localised or national identities). These plural hegemonic identities can also co-exist within the same local space albeit their relationship will in all likelihood be hierarchical with one assuming a dominant position over the other (Beasley, 2008a).

Both Messerschmidt (2008) and Howson (2008), however, challenge and heavily critique Beasley's theoretical conceptual analysis. Messerschmidt (2008) for instance, argues that the two proposed 'sub' and 'supra' hegemonic

versions have already been addressed within Connell's (2005) work on local, regional and global [hegemonic] masculinities. Of relevance here, local hegemonic masculinities are argued to derive from the interrelationships of immediate communities and familial influence. In agreement with Beasley (2008b), I maintain that both her work and Connell's could usefully be integrated to further develop theoretical analyses of masculinities. Accordingly, while applied with caution, use of 'sub' and 'supra' hegemonic masculinities provide useful organising principles for analysing and interpreting my research findings. This is noticeably so when it comes to considering the interplay between hegemonic masculinities at global, national, regional and local levels (Beasley, 2008b).

In applying this theoretical framing to my research, I thus argue that the dominant emerging form of masculinity within the narratives of the young men constitutes a 'sub'-hegemonic version. With access and reference to global masculinities being limited, within the conditions of insularity and the participants subsequent narrowed horizons, the prevailing laddish, working-class dominant form of masculinity appears to thrive. One cautionary note in advancing this proposition is that 74% of those taking part in life history interviews were undertaking engineering, motor vehicle or construction-related apprenticeships or full-time college courses. As will be discussed in Chapter 8, within the male space of these professions, a culturally idealised laddish hyper macho form of working-class masculinity is deeply ingrained and prevalent (Cockburn, 1983; Collinson, 1988). With the above comparatively large proportion of the overall sample training in the trades, the wider findings (i.e. the emergence of a sub-hegemonic working-class masculinity) could be skewed. However, my interpretations and conclusions will reflect upon and account for this potential bias.

A Regime of Compulsory Heterosexuality

Defining and governing this sub-hegemonic gender identity (and other subordinate identities) is 'proven' or compulsory heterosexuality (Jeffreys, 1990). In other words, close interconnections between hegemonic masculinities

and being 'straight' are integral to the lived experiences of participants (Mac an Ghaill 1996; Robinson 2007). Connell (2000) maintains that any prevailing plurality of masculinities are organised according to hierarchies of heterosexuality (Bush et al., 2012). As such, these heterosexual matrices (Butler, 1995) are premised on "flight from the feminine" (Kimmel, 2009: 48). Misogyny (to be discussed further below) and homohysteria, defined as the social anxiety of being perceived as being gay (Anderson, 2011; Bush et al., 2012), were central to and policed participants' laddish scripts of masculinities. Nick (aged 18, Catering), for example, worried that his behaviours and actions could in no way be misconstrued as homosexual:

> *"Thinking I am gay [...] it's wrong for them to assume*
> *that I am gay."*

In cultural moments of high homohysteria (Bush et al., 2012), this fear becomes most pronounced. Within this discourse of heteronormativity, compulsory homophobia is deployed in order to detract the stigmatisation of being homosexualised i.e. labelled as gay (Anderson, 2008; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012; Lawler, 2012). By contrast, when homohysteria diminishes plural masculinities become more egalitarian, and fewer stereotypical attributes and behaviours are attributed to homosexuality (Anderson, 2005; McCormack & Anderson, 2010). The policing mechanism of compulsory homophobia, therefore, becomes increasingly redundant. In supporting the argument that low homohysteria is becoming the norm in a number of contexts, Anderson (2009) identifies a variety of key factors. Numbered amongst these are legislative frameworks. For example, the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 equalised the age of consent for male homosexual activities to that of heterosexuals and lesbians i.e. 16. There has also been the introduction of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 and Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013. Other important contributions have been the strength of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA) politics along with progressively more positive and gay friendly attitudes evident within broader British culture (Weeks, 2007; Anderson, 2009; McCormack & Anderson, 2010; McCormack, 2011). Despite these advancements, it is acknowledged that the extent of homohysteria and homophobia can be context specific:

*"There is a complex web of variables that help determine
the levels of homophobia of any given local culture: race,
class and religious affiliation are important variables.
Thus declining homophobia is an even, yet steady social
process"* (Bush et al., 2012: 116).

In spite of the above progress, according to participants, a high level of homohysteria prevailed in the spaces they inhibited- whether that be, for example, at college, on the shop floor, on a night out or on the football pitch. Evidence of this fear of being perceived as gay is variously through avoidance of homosocial tactility or emotional intimacy, homophobic verbal jibes and regular engagement in misogyny discourse, particularly, the sexual objectification of women (See Chapter 8 for examples of these as an integral part of the cultural fabric of the trades). Ultimately to transgress (for instance, either through abstaining from the latter two or engaging in the former) threatens a man's publicly perceived heterosexual and laddish identity (Anderson et al., 2012). While McCormack and Anderson (2010) found pro-gay attitudes in a sixth form setting amongst similarly aged young men to those in my study, the authors acknowledge that this was an environment that was both privileged and middle-class. As such, considering the working-class sample my research is based on, the contrasting findings may well be accounted for by class differentials.

Certainly, the participants' life aspirational life trajectories, from within their regime of compulsory heterosexuality, would support this contention. A commonality shared by most of the lads, as McDowell (2000 a, 2001, 2004) also establishes in her working-class cohort, was the desire for a classed orthodox lifestyle. Inclusive of this trajectory is a serious monogamous heterosexual relationship, *"kids and a nice house"* (Ben, aged 22, Fabrication and Welding). In part way to achieving this ambition, several of the men had already settled down with their girlfriends, and ascribed a perceived permanency to their relationships. Peter (aged 17, Engineering), for instance, declared his girlfriend as *"the one"*. These relationships tended to be marked by a degree of intensity, with the couples in question spending the majority of their time in each other's company. Frequently, the seriousness of these bonds was at the expense of their friendship networks. For some, these personal

circumstances were viewed as a positive choice and an investment in their futures:

> *"Yeah cus I have a girlfriend and I have been with her for about a year and a half now. I don't really go out drinking that often like a man would do. I would rather stay in on a Friday night and watch a film with her, or something like that. My mates are all like 'get out and don't be gay' and this and that because I don't go out drinking. But it doesn't bother me. I would rather be sat in with my girlfriend. The way I see it is that I am not going to be spending the rest of my life in town [...] so I am planning my future"* (Alex, aged 19, Bricklaying).

Not everyone agreed with these sentiments however. Adam suggested that this intensity often led to frustrations and tensions with his girlfriend of a few months:

> *"I have to spend time with her as well. As much as I don't want to. I have to. I know it sounds daft when people say I want to spend time with my girlfriend. No I don't. She gets on my nerves. I can't spend more than a day with her before we start arguing"* (Adam, aged 17, Motor Mechanics).

Building upon the foundations of the orthodox aspirations of having or wanting a serious heterosexual relationship, most of the participants also expressed the desire to be a father one day. In fact, only a small minority were vehemently opposed to the idea. This reluctance was either on the grounds of a general dislike of children (for example see the narrative of Edward, Chapter 5) or because of their own anxieties regarding what type of parent they conceivably would be. In the latter case, this apprehension was always based on their own experiences of what their own fathers had been like as the narrative of Josh, discussed in Chapter 5, exemplified.

In terms of the other participants, one was already a father while two others had come close, but their girlfriends had miscarried. However, for those aspiring to parenthood the general consensus was that the optimum time to do so is at a comparatively young stage i.e. their early to mid-twenties. Lawson & Mace (2011), as anthropologists, offer a potential explanation for this point of view. They argue that the working-classes do not acquire any intrinsic reward from delaying parenthood because the success (or otherwise) of their offspring derives from wider societal factors. For example, as Furlong et al., (1996) contend deprivation and poverty can suppress aspirations (see Chapter 4). Middle-class children, on the other hand, derive benefits from a wealth of economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital (Graham, 2014). For instance, Lareau (2011) contends that middle-class parents encourage their children in a regime of concerted cultivation i.e. educational and extracurricular activities. By doing so, the purpose is to profit them later in their adult personal and professional lives.

Given many working-class children do not enjoy or are not offered such advantages, men and women from these backgrounds frequently plan their families early (Lawson & Mace, 2011). Returning to a recurring theme, the participants drew heavily on parental aspirations and achievements in defining their own goals within the parameters of the insularity and relatively limited horizons described above. In making the hypothetical plan to procreate early, similarly, they aspired to mirror their parents' life trajectories in this regard too.

Thinking ahead in terms of childcare arrangements (although for most participants this was again hypothetical at this stage), there is the general recognition that women would wish to continue their careers rather than forgo them in order to take on the role of full-time homemaker and caregiver (Bradley & Dermott, 2006). The young men attested to a willingness to *"help out"* (Stefan, aged 16, Bricklaying) with childcare and other domestic arrangements. As with the findings of previous international and national research, though, these duties were ultimately still perceived as the primary responsibility of women (see Warde & Hetherington, 1993; Anderson et al., 1994; Baxter, 1998; Sullivan, 2000; Loftus & Andriot, 2012).

Simultaneously, there is some awareness that women may wish to achieve their own career-related success (such as promotion, professional development etc.). Overarching this acknowledgement, from the men's perspectives, the major advantage in terms of a dual-earning family regime (Lewis, 1992, 1997) was the resultant monetary gain and the higher standard of living this would engender. Underlying this standpoint, though, were chauvinistic and dismissive attitudes to 'women's work'. These viewpoints are particularly prevalent where work is on a part-time basis and regarded as a component wage (Siltanen, 1994). The following brief exchange between Jake (aged 16, Joinery) and myself provides an example of this outlook:

> **Lucy:** *What about your mum's job?*
> **Jake:** *Dinner lady [Jake laughs]*
> **Lucy:** *Why are you laughing?*
> **Jake**: *Dunno. It doesn't even seem like a job really. I just don't see the point. It just don't seem like a proper job.*

Deviating from their fathers' trajectories, there was, with anti-marriage sentiments frequently expressed, considerable reticence towards the conventional route of matrimony. While an estimated 42% of marriages in England and Wales end in divorce (ONS, 2015a), the participants' attitudes were largely based on their own experiences. Many of them have been bought up by lone parents. Nationally, 25% of families constitute single parent households (ONS, 2015b). In Hull, this figure is significantly higher at 37% (Turner, 2013). For some of the participants, this situation involved total estrangement from one parent- usually their fathers. These experiences, in turn, seemed to shape and impact on their expectations of marriage:

> *"Yeah I just don't know why you can't just stay partners. It's just a lot of money for a certificate saying that you're together when most people get divorced these days"*
> (Edward, aged 19, IT).

The other alternative to settling down at a young age was to engage in sexually promiscuous behaviour, or at least carry a strong desire to do so. In these

circumstances, the number of conquests was the defining factor in terms of validating sexual prowess (Lees,1986; Holland et al., 1998). Walter (2010) interviewed a group of "ladettes'[27] and found that they, too, favoured more transient relationships with men. Interestingly, the research suggests a complete reversal of traditional roles. It was the women who were found to be actively seeking out one night stands and complaining that it is men who are seeking more longer-term relationships.

These findings do not marry, though, with the laddish culture and subsequent male sexual predatory behaviour evident in my research. Rather, an entrenched double standard was still very much in operation. Consistent with research from the 1970s and 1980s (see Smith 1978 and Lees 1986 respectively), males engaging in sexual promiscuity (as per their sub-hegemonic conformist masculine performativities) were still regarded as a 'bit of a lad'. Conversely, a woman participating in similar transient relationships was still labelled as a *"slag", "tart"* (Kayleigh, aged 18, Catering) and other similar but equally misogynist pejoratives. Clearly, women's behaviour is being policed in this way, with promiscuous 'straight' sexual activity being perceived as both masculine and hegemonic (Bush et al., 2012). As a subordinate gender identity, women must be deterred from partaking in what is essentially a heterosexual male validating tool (Connell, 2000). Kayleigh (aged 18, Catering) recounted how a young woman has to police her own behaviour to avoid acquiring a reputation as an *"easy lass"*. More specifically, she attributed this social pressure to being the major underlying reason behind why she did not pursue a career in Engineering. Primarily, this borne out of a fear of being labelled:

> *"A slag. You're seen as only caring for one thing when lasses talk to lads [...] Yeah it is like if you go into town with a whole group of people, and most of them are lads. That's it. You will just be called a slag".*

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[27] Ladettes like their male counterparts lads, are defined in terms of their hedonistic tendencies including excessive alcohol consumption, partying and transitory sexual relationships (Day et al., 2004; Jackson 2006a, Jackson 2006b; Jackson & Tinker, 2007).

While lads clearly had more freedom in this regard, it was still, nevertheless, important for them to engage in and prove compulsory heterosexuality even within the scope of serious relationships. In the latter situation, a man sharing the intimate details of *"what he did with his lass last night"* (Susan, aged 17, Joinery) when interacting with *"the lads"* (i.e. his peer group) served to affirm, reinforce and validate his heterosexual status (Wood, 1984; Collinson, 1988; Bradley, 2013). In Chapter 8, this theme will be returned to. Specially, these [heterosexual] verification practices were integral to banter or 'lads' talk'- a discourse deeply ingrained within the cultural fabric of the trades.

'Man-Up!' Policing the Parameters of Masculinities

The colloquial terminology and concept of 'man-up' (or occasionally 'step-up') appeared to facilitate and promote the performativity of working-class masculinities that have been discussed thus far. Derived from homophobic and misogynist foundations, it serves as a surveillance regime through which dominant masculinities were promoted and upheld in their vantage positions (Smith, 2007; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012). Simultaneously, 'other' i.e. subordinate identities are subjugated by this process and stratified lower within the hierarchy of masculinities (Connell, 2000; Bush et al., 2012). The regulation, policing, direction and control of contextually gendered normative adult ascriptions ensured the continuation of this pecking order (Martino, 1999). For instance, in enforcing hegemonic or sub-hegemonic masculinities, 'man-up' drew on stereotypical notions of what it is 'to be a man' and how to act in accordance with the above gendered constructions. As highlighted above, these included avoidance of homosocial tactility and emotional intimacy but actively displaying and engaging in compulsory heterosexuality (Anderson et al., 2012).

Both the young men and women were guardians of masculinity and gendered identities more generally i.e. they were both involved in reinforcing and policing this process of boundary regulation (McCormack & Anderson, 2010). Compulsory heterosexuality has already been established amongst the rigidly applied stereotypical ideals that underpinned the above 'sub'-hegemonic

working-class hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2005; Beasley, 2008b). The vociferous deployment of a rich vocabulary of homophobic abuse (Connell, 2002; McCormack & Anderson, 2010) served to police transgressive deviations from these socially approved heterosexual behaviours (Harland et al., 2005; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012). Moreover, these homophobic pejoratives or epithets were intrinsic to the lads' usage of 'man-up' when censuring, punishing or controlling any behaviour construed as being feminine (Epstein & Johnson, 1998; Mac an Ghaill, 1999; Beattie, 2004).

The effectiveness of this strategy can perhaps be measured through the compulsion of men to modify their behaviour (or at least attempt to) in order to comply and conform to the above rigidly constructed gender stereotypes (Harland et al., 2005). For instance, a career in hairdressing was an option most interviewees believed that a straight man would never seriously contemplate. From the male participants' standpoints, at least, the industry was closely interlinked with stereotypic notions of male homosexuality (Simpson, 2005; Lupton, 2006; Hancock, 2012, see also Chapter 7). Edward offers his thoughts on this point:

> *"I don't know that a real man would do that. I guess gay people [...] I don't really mind doing it cus they are more feminine than actual proper men"* (Edward, aged 19, IT).

Likewise, Jack (aged 18, Joinery) expresses similar sentiments:

> *"It's like an alpha male wouldn't be interested in hairdressing. It doesn't seem like that person would do that. It's like look at him, the big poofter. Yeah, I think that is what he would think people would think of him."*

These findings that straight men are ascribed 'real' or 'proper' men status whereas gay men (as a subordinated identity) are not align with Kimmel's (1994) contention that hegemonic masculinity is heterosexual masculinity. As with previous research, where a boy is labelled as 'acting gay' the perception held is that he displays or performs similar characteristics to those regularly

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denigrated in women (Epstein, 1997). Thereby, from the participants' perspectives only gay men would conceivably transgress [heterosexual] social norms to enter hairdressing.

It has already been established that many of the men regularly referred to other males using homophobic pejoratives for example, *"big poofter"* (Jack, aged 18, Joinery). However, many were insistent that corresponding to wider societal changes (McCormack & Anderson, 2010); homosexuality is now socially acceptable in their peer groups. Furthermore, it was permissible for straight men, without fear of jeopardising their masculinity, to openly admit to having friends who were gay, whilst, simultaneously, defending them from homophobic abuse:

> *"There are always going to be them people who like see someone in the street who is clearly gay and they will shout at them or whatever. But I don't like it cus, as I say, one of my friends is gay and he is fine. He is just; I don't know he is alright [...] There's nowt wrong with it"* (Tom, aged 17, Engineering).

Only a small minority of the men in fact were actually forthright in their outright disapproval of homosexuality. Despite this apparently increasing acceptance, homophobic bullying appears to continue to prevail. For instance, Sean (aged 16, Business Admin) relays how he was repeatedly subjected to verbal abuse whilst at school, with the teachers sometimes complicit in these exchanges (see Chapter 5 for a more detailed account of his experiences). One of the immediate impacts of this on-going abuse was that he *"twagged"* (i.e. refrained from going to school) through feigning sickness. Eventually these absences led to considerable underachievement in his GCSEs, which is a commonality amongst young men and women who are subjected to homophobic bullying (Espelage et al., 2008; Akhtar, 2011). Sean also continued to suffer from longer-term consequences of the bullying after leaving school. Numbered amongst these was a self-imposed curfew. For fear of who he would meet, including the perpetrators of the bullying, he would not stay out late *"in*

town". Inevitably, such restrictions placed considerable limitations on his social life.

Research (see Anderson, 2008, 2009; Anderson et al., 2012; McCormack 2011,2012; McCormack & Anderson, 2010) maintains that progress has been made in reducing homophobia within schools. However, with high homophobia prevalent within the participants' narratives, 'othering' gay, effeminate or unassertive heterosexual identities (Robinson, 2008a), was a powerful mechanism for upholding the prevailing sub-hegemonic working-class masculinity. As I will discuss in Chapter 7, reliance on this surveillance regime increased in contexts where young men's masculinities were precarious. Principally, this fragility arose because as yet they had not been in a position to validate their masculinities via the traditional route of paid employment (a key marker in the successful transition to the adult and conformist identities they aspired to).

'Fit, Muscular and Macho': Men and Body Image

Aside from prescribed socially acceptable macho behaviours and attributes, many participants also aspired to a hegemonic muscular physique steeped in stereotypical assumptions as to what embodied physically idealised masculinity should constitute (Connell, 2000; Gill et al, 2005). A number of factors appeared to underpin this desire to be *"hench"* (Stefan, aged 16, Bricklaying). Firstly, as will be elaborated below, involvement in traditionally macho sports such as football and rugby require a certain level of physical fitness (Anderson, 2008; 2011). Alternatively, for those men who were training in the trades these professions provide a check in this regard. Derek (Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) maintained that technological advancements, including the introduction of new machinery, consigned *"hard labour"* to the past. However, these jobs in the trades still retain some strenuous and manually demanding tasks such as heavy lifting. With an increased self-awareness of their own degrees of general unfitness, many interviewees subscribed to gym membership. Further motivating factors underlying these fitness regimes were the linked

concerns of being overweight or by contrast, *"scrawny"* (Damien, aged 16, Joinery).

Gill et al (2005) suggests that normative masculine performativities have become increasingly embodied in a *"visual culture"* (39) whereby the male body has shifted from almost invisibility to hypervisibility. Body modifications such as becoming *"hench"* (Stefan, aged 16, Bricklaying) through gym workouts, tattoos and body piercings are all means of actively constructing and policing the physical manifestations of their masculine identities (Simpson, 2012). Bradley (2013:170-1) explains further:

> "In an interesting development, it seems that body hatred is now a growing phenomenon among men, perhaps encouraged by prevalent social panics in Western societies about obesity. A recent report carried out by the Succeed Foundation and the Centre for Appearance Research at the University of West of England suggested that men were even more body conscious than women (Simpson, 2012), though I would treat this claim with some scepticism! The survey found men to be most discontented with their 'beer bellies' and lack of muscularity in their upper bodies. Like women, men are taking to diets and pills in order to achieve the desired 'hot' appearance."

With the economic downtown precipitating uncertainties about their futures, focusing on their bodies and levels of physical fitness provided my participants with an outlet to define their masculinities. However, it was the discourse of the 'fit body' that strongly affected Sean (aged 16, Business Administration). Previous research suggests that openly gay men, like Sean, experience more body dissatisfaction than their heterosexual counterparts (Silberstein et al., 1989; Morrison et al., 2004; McArdle & Hill, 2009). Sean endured a dual burden, though, in believing he was equally judged for his sexuality and self-perceived obesity. The unhappiness generated from years of homophobic abuse coupled with the associated poor self-image this entailed led to a vicious circle of *"comfort eating"*. A subsequent increase in weight reinforced and intensified

his negative body image and confidence levels including his attractiveness to other men and hopes of finding a boyfriend.

For heterosexual men in the sample, particularly, contradictory messages prevailed around grooming and paying attention to their appearance. Consequently, many contended that this was a difficult path to negotiate. On the one hand, the desire to develop a muscular physique can be achieved through regular exercise and/or gym membership. Taking this a step further, famous metrosexuals[28], like the footballer David Beckham, promote positive imagery around men taking care of their appearances within the media and advertising (Coad, 2008).

Gill et al (2005), however, found that many men resolutely reject and police any form of vanity. Likewise, most participants were fearful of contravening the covert rules governing the visual manifestations of the prevailing 'sub' hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 2002; McCormack & Anderson, 2010). To do so, as with other behaviours, would be to risk rejection by the peer group. Too much attention to personal grooming (such as hairstyling) with its connotations of femininity (as the discussion above on male hairdressers would suggest) was to be steadfastly avoided. As Adam (aged 17, Motor Mechanics) stated, David Beckham is a much admired footballer and can *"get away with being a poofter"*. Similarly, metrosexuality, though, is not permissible for *"Hull working-class lads"* (Adam, aged 17, Motor Mechanics). Rather, to safeguard their masculinities, lads on construction-related courses and apprenticeships played up the fact that they do not mind *"getting their hands dirty"* (Jack, aged 18, Joinery). On a more extreme level, working in the trades as Ethan (aged 16, Bricklaying) put it *"busts your hands"*. The implication here is that while being 'hench' was desirable (for its perceived hypermasculine attributes) rejecting vanity (for its perceived femininity) was equally integral to their masculine performativities.

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[28] A metrosexual man has a heterosexual sexual orientation but likes to devote money and time to his appearance (Coad, 2008).

'One of the Lads': Masculinity in the Peer Group

There is a conscious awareness amongst the men that masculinity, acted out differently contingent on context or space, is both transitory and performance driven (Butler, 1995; Robinson et al., 2011; Robinson & Hockey, 2011). Jack (aged 18, Joinery), for instance, acknowledged that his behaviour changed depending on whom he is was interacting with:

> *"...not so much to please them as to interact with them.*
> *Like socialise with them a bit more."*

A conscious performativity then, seems to define the behaviour of the lads. In many of the young men's experiences, masculinity became more exaggerated with friendship groups or peers:

> *"Yeah it is like I tend to 'act' more like a man around my*
> *friends'* (Jack, aged 18, Joinery).

Grace (aged 18, Business Admin) on the other hand, was not so impressed by this performance:

> *"When they are together, they try and out lad each other*
> *and it's stupid* (Grace, aged 18, Business Admin).

This exaggerated type of behaviour is in line with what can be described as 'laddish behaviour', a performance that is common to and has been transmitted down through the generations. Academic research has supported this contention, with Willis's (1977) seminal ethnography *Learning to Labour* being noteworthy in this regard. In summary, as part of an oppositional culture to the values of the education system, teachers and conformist students (who the lads referred to as the *'ear 'oles'*), Willis's participants, *'the lads'*, performed a working-class laddish variant of masculinity. In rejecting the false promise of a future via educational success, they opted for activities steeped in excitement and more instant or immediate gratification (Willis, 1977). Simultaneously, this

affirmed their highly non-conformist sense of masculinity, what Connell (2005) later identified as a form of protest masculinity.

McDowell's (2004) research carried out two decades after Willis's also found a comparable 'laddish' culture amongst the men she sampled in the transition from school into the workplace. In common with Willis (1977), she focuses on participants who were poorly educated, leaving compulsory schooling with few academic credentials. One major difference exists between the two studies though. Willis's participants had a fairly smooth transition into work whereas many of McDowell's struggled in this regard.

While there has been a resurgence of laddism, as discussed in Chapter 1, I argue that there is one notable difference from my participants and those of McDowell and Willis. That is, the new wave of laddism and accompanying misogyny and homophobic discourse, tends to be largely appropriated by middle-class men. Therefore, it is my contention that the laddish behaviour evident within this research, notably in terms of its antecedents, differs from the above wider variant. My findings are both classed and context specific with regards to space i.e. the participants were predominantly working-class and influenced culturally by Hull's unique fishing heritage. Furthermore, with a large proportion of the cohort training in the trades, these industries' cultures (especially banter which was a commonality shared by all of these included in the study) has continued to be intergenerationally transmitted from tutors to students (Collinson, 1988). Therefore, in framing the research it is important to understand how prolific the nature and scope of laddism has continued to be. Simultaneously, it is crucial to understand the variant of 'laddish' masculinity (as evident in this study) that is intricately linked to working-class identities rather than enmesh it within one appropriated largely by the middle-classes. (Phipps, 2014a, 2014b, 2016; Phipps & Young, 2013, 2015a; 2015b).

'Lass Watching': Performing Masculinity with Women

When it comes to attracting a potential partner (either for a transitory sexual encounter or longer-term permanent relationship), the participants described

themselves as 'manning-up' in the sense of acting more like men and appearing to be *"grown-up"* (Leo, aged 17, Engineering). This is an oppositional stance to the one discussed above where they attempted to act in a laddish way in order to impress their male counterparts. In relationships, a commonality is that the participants acted more sensitively. Jack (aged 18, Joinery) explained that his *"real self"* was somewhere in between the laddish act he performed for his friends and the sensitivity he displayed with his girlfriend:

> *"If you are with your girlfriend, for example, you are
> more sensitive. Whereas if you are with your friends, you
> are more testosterone fuelled."*

While romantic love can be compatible with hegemonic masculinity (Redman, 2001; Allen, 2007), Laurence (aged 18, Customer Services) maintained that lads can behave too sensitively and performativities are policed accordingly by men and women alike. He illustrates this point by drawing on the behaviour of some of the characters in the television show *The Inbetweeners*:

> *"When Jay [one of the central characters in the show] is
> with his girlfriend, yeah, that is way too sensitive. Like
> when his dad says find out and he calls her every 15
> minutes that is way too. And a bit like Simon and Carly
> [another two central characters], he is like a bit too
> sensitive over her".*

The Real Life Inbetweeners: Plurality of Masculinities

Having considered the relationships between space and the transitional nature of masculinities within them, further differences between and the complexities of the participants' gender performativities will now be considered. Although the young men who took part in the study were all working-class, the research findings highlight the heterogeneity of their scripts of masculinities. For instance, participants' masculinities appear to crosscut various mixed gendered youth subcultures (O'Connor, 2004; Young, 2012). With a well-established

literature charting their post-war history (see Shildrick, 2006), these identities are all defined through a range of well-established symbolic resources and apparel i.e. dress, leisure practices and musical tastes (Le Grand, 2010; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012).

The occurrence of these intersections were especially pronounced whilst the lads were still in compulsory education. Some of these youth groupings waned after leaving school but others extended, beyond this time frame, into the next phase of the participants' lives (i.e. the late teenage years) and/or throughout adulthood (O'Connor, 2004). Examples from the participants' narratives include *moshers* and *emos*[29]. Such longevity in these subcultures appeared to be prevalent for two distinct reasons. Firstly, although classed [i.e. working-class] groupings, membership was ultimately based on lifestyle choices. Frequently, too, there was an intergenerational transmission of these identities in families. Consequently, the theme of mirroring of parents and other relatives continues to be threaded throughout their choices and aspirations:

> *"My nanna was a rocker, my step-dad was rocker, my*
> *mum too and then there is me so [...] I have been*
> *influenced by my parents who are big into the rock scene"*
> (Neil, aged 19, Motor Mechanics).

Alternatively, other identities appeared to have evolved by default because of the participants' backgrounds. Invariably these performativities derived from living in predominantly stigmatised socially and economically deprived areas (Wacquant, 2007, 2008; Rhodes, 2012) such as the estates discussed above. Such remoteness provided the optimum conditions for a protest variant of masculinity, *chavs*, to emerge (Nayak, 2006; Wray, 2006; Garner, 2007; Le Grand, 2010). With females also part of this wider underclass it has, moreover, been grounded internationally in various cultures (Rhodes, 2012). For example, in Australia *bogans* are labelled and derided in similar ways to *chavs* (Pini &

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[29] For the lads who ascribed themselves to be *moshers* and *emos,* they often followed in family traditions in doing so. Membership of these sub-groups predominantly centred on the style of dress adopted (long hair, heavy rock t-shirts and predominantly black clothes) and musical preferences.

Previte, 2013) while in America *white trash* has ubiquitously been applied in a derogatory fashion (Hartigan, 1997; Hartigan, 2005).

However, participants, as members of the respectable working-class, did not regard themselves as *chavs*. Rather, they shared what is generally deemed to be middle-class disgust (see Jones, 2012; Lawler, 2012) for what they perceive as essentially an underclass. By antithetically positioning them in this way, they can validate their own work ethic (even though this has yet to be tested via full-time employment), and, simultaneously, validate their own respectability.

In understanding *chav* masculinity, Ben (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding) described below his own experiences. The school he attended had a catchment area predominantly from the large estate he lived on. Although *chavs* are usually understood in terms of performing protest masculinity, in this institution they assumed the dominant position of 'cool' or popular students. Sean (aged 16, Business Admin) suggests that at his school, unassertive heterosexual straight men, average boys (see below), *moshers*, *emos* and gay men were excluded from integrating with and were dominated by the *"cool chavvy kids"*. As Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (2012) suggest, marginalised identities can sometimes be hegemonic depending on context. In this scenario, placement at the top of the hierarchy of masculinity (Connell, 2000) was assured through physical aggression, or, at least, the threat of it.

> *"No I was a little shit at school [...] I was in with all the*
> *cool lads, the chavs. I was getting into trouble with the*
> *police all round my end [...] just drinking on the street*
> *corner and terrorising shops- outside shops sort of thing.*
> *Nowt major. I have been arrested when I was erm I think*
> *I was only 14 for shoplifting. Only like pens and stuff. So*
> *I got a criminal record [...] I was always fighting so. I*
> *have lost a couple of mates through it as well, so that's*
> *what put me to stop doing it and stuff. I don't know if you*
> *have heard of him but [name of murder victim] he got*
> *stabbed. My mate he's been taking drugs since he was*

like young and he hung himself a couple of years ago"
(Ben, aged 22, Fabrication and Welding).

However, this 'top dog' positioning over the wider peer group (as in school) seems to have been relatively short-lived lasting only until compulsory education was over. From there on in, it appeared to be confined to the estates (Wacquant, 2008). Within this context, the high-risk hypermasculine activities this variant of masculinity gives rise to (O'Connor, 2004; Harland et al., 2005) frequently can lead to imprisonment or as Ben indicated, more extreme and fatal consequences.

Carl (aged 18, Catering) came from both an estate and a family where intergenerational unemployment was the norm- a key defining factor in being typified as a *chav*. In common with Ben where his friends' deaths proved cathartic in implementing a change to his lifestyle, Carl (aged 18, Catering) was desperate too to avoid becoming another member of the 'disconnected youth' (Macdonald & Marsh, 2001: 376). He was therefore anxious to eschew the pathway that both his family and friends had taken. In the latter case, his former peer group (mirroring the two documentaries discussed above) remained economically inactive, engaging in high risk behaviours such as regular drugs misuse and *"shagging the easy and tarty chavettes"*. Furthermore, their activities sometimes include engaging in criminal activity via the black market. Invariably, these interactions were usually on a petty level (as Ben described in the quote above), rather than organised crime in the 'Badfellas Masculinity' mould (Winlow, 2001).

Opposed to this route of becoming a *"toerag"*, Carl aspired to be recognised as a member of the 'respectable working class' (Nayak, 2006), a social positioning he perceived to be only attainable through leaving his housing estate. Drawing on the strong links between masculinity and work, the second prerequisite (as highlighted above) for achieving this respectability was to become economically active (Simpson, 2005). From this starting point, he was eager to acquire other orthodox markers of this classed identity i.e. marriage, having children and buying a house (Le Grand, 2010). In this regard, Carl's narrative provides an example of how socially and economically deprived areas do not have to automatically lead to depressed aspirations. However, his background was still

affecting his career choices as he believed himself negatively stereotyped because of the background he was from and had already relinquished a career in hospitality. Moreover, he was in danger of forfeiting a higher level plumbing course because of his reluctance to take two buses to the training provider offering it (see Chapter 5). As will be discussed in Chapter 9, one recommendation for future research would be to base a study exploring life and career aspirations in one of Hull's estates (Featherstone, 2012). In this way, these themes could be explored in more depth.

In line with the theme of insularity, according to several of the lads, *chavs* had a tendency to congregate and socialise in groups as opposed to individually (Jones, 2012, 2014). Neil (aged 19, Motor Mechanics) provides an insight:

> *"That happens a lot you get yer [name of one estate]*
> *chavs and people from like [name of a second estate] and*
> *they fight".*

For some participants, this situation appeared to perpetuate neighbourhood-based lives through fear of leaving the estate they had grown up on (Featherstone, 2012). This extended beyond just seeking employment opportunities to other aspects of life, including pursuing personal and leisure-based activities. Carl (aged 18, Catering) relayed his anxieties when trying to meet potential girlfriends outside the boundaries of his estate:

> *"There are a few sensible ones [girls] but they don't hang*
> *out there [on the estates]. I don't have the confidence to*
> *go where they hang out and mix with who they hang out*
> *with […] I am worried about the lads that hang out with*
> *them. They might jump me if I ventured off* [name of the
> estate]."

Young men are most of risk of personal crime than then female counterparts or any other age group (Duncan & Fishwick, 2016). Of course, women do instigate and are involved in brawls too, especially alcohol fuelled ones. Kerry (aged 17, Health and Social Care) had frequently observed such incidents:

"We went into [name of bar] and there was like a couple of lasses in there and they were starting an argument with someone else and like took it outside and there was glasses being smashed…" (Kerry aged 17, Health and Social Care).

However, the frequency of such interactions, according to participants was still much less than men engaging in fighting (either individually or as part of a gang).

Meeting Mr Average

Although this chapter has highlighted the insularity of Hull, there was one example where outside influences, in the form of the media, impacted on the experiences of the men. As previously touched upon, this was in the form of the TV series and film *The Inbetweeners* (see Chapter 2 for a synopsis of the programme). Despite the show essentially being fictional and comedic, for the teenage lads it, nevertheless, offered them role models that they otherwise might not have had access to. Importantly, it affirmed the acceptability of being an ordinary or average man as opposed to aspiring to be one of the cool ones. In essence, *Mr Average* (argued to be another subordinate variant of masculinity), was afforded more flexibility when it came to conforming to socially restricted gender stereotypes (Harland et al., 2005) that were integral to the culturally idealised 'sub'-hegemonic identity described above (Beasley, 2008 a; 2008b). As explored further in the next chapter, though, there were constraints on how far behaviours could realistically be transgressed (Anderson, 2008).

A Night Out on the Town: Masculinity and Leisure

"It has been argued that with deindustrialisation when the work is removed, beer and football are the only remnants of working-class culture" (Howe, 2000 cited in Nayak 2006).

Leisure is also important in terms of shaping identities (Willcott & Griffin, 1996; Messerschmidt, 2000; Smith, 2007). For the participants, these activities were both gendered and grounded in traditionally working-class pursuits. With fewer opportunities to validate masculinity through hard labour, leisure and hobbies have provided opportunities to assert and display machismo prowess or gain masculine credit in alternative arenas (Willcott & Griffin, 1996; Messerschmidt, 2000; Smith, 2007). Consequently, emphasis was placed on activities such as going out *"around town"* (Matthew, aged 18 Business Admin), indulging in excessive alcohol consumption, recreational drug use, *"pulling the lasses"* (Paul aged, 17, Motor Mechanics) and becoming embroiled in physical confrontations. In the latter case, this was often to improve positioning in the hierarchy of masculinity (Bush et al., 2012). For others like Josh (aged 16, Preparation for the Uniformed Services) it also served as an outlet for the tension and unresolved anger he felt towards his father (see Chapter 5).

With respect to alcohol consumption, Landrine et al., (1988:705) contend "drunkenness may be an aspect of the concept of masculinity". It was also an important part of the social lives of young men (Harnett et al., 2000). Matthew (aged 18, Business Admin) explains his reasons for drinking alcohol:

> *"It's more going to the actual pub than drinking itself as daft as it sounds."*

According to Frank (Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) these recreational patterns of going to the pub or out *"around town"* and *"getting pissed"* were grounded in the culture of the old fishing industry which successive generations (including the participants) have continued to be socialised into:

> *"Going out on a Saturday night for a fight that is what we have been bought up on isn't it? It's a fishing mentality. It will take years to get that out of the town's system."*

Nayak (2006) chronicles how, historically, lads' initiation into the drinking culture was an integral part of the rites of passage into both manual work and working-men's clubs. Although this had largely disappeared in Hull, traces

could still be evidenced with the intergenerational transmission of heavy alcohol consumption still being an integral part of the culture of the trades (Collinson, 1988).

De Visser & Smith (2007) found that excessive alcohol consumption is still linked to masculinity and the ability to validate it. In macho sports, such as football and rugby, a laddish drinking culture co-exists (Anderson, 2008). Even by itself, drinking competence which entails *"taking your drink like a man"* (Nick, aged 18, Catering) is still a crucial ingredient for my participants in proving they have successfully transitioned from childhood to being a lad.

According to participants, it is possible that the "fishing mentality" influenced these patterns to some degree. Nayak (2006) for instance, found that the North-East industrial heritage was integral to the drinking culture prevalent amongst the working-class youth who participated in his study. However, on a wider level 'a night out on the town' and its associated activities characterise wider working-class leisure activities (Kaminer & Dixon, 1995; Willcott & Griffin, 1996). The prevalence of these can perhaps be explained on a number of levels. Firstly, there is a shortage of alternative leisure activities available on a limited budget. Although Hull is competing for the City of Culture in 2017, cultural activities still remain limited, especially, for working class young people. There are, for instance, two theatres based in the centre of Hull and numerous cinemas located in various geographical locations across Hull. However, both remain expensive past times for those on a training or college allowance. It is also true that new venues are opening all the time, such as the opening of the 'Fantasy Lap Dancing Bar' in 2013 (Campbell 2015). While perhaps popular amongst laddish men (Phipps, 2013, 2015), it would be difficult to include this as an example of the city's attempts to improve the cultural credibility of the city. As a caveat to this, Poppy Morgan an award winning actress in the Adult Film Industry was featured in the promotional materials for the successful Hull City of Culture 2017 bid. While organisers claimed her inclusion celebrated the cultural diversity of the city, the extensive national media coverage and general reaction of pundits suggested otherwise (Burton, 2013).

However, not every man wished to engage in all the ascribed sub-hegemonic practices described above. For those I identified as *Mr Average*, some freely admitted that they did not indulge in alcohol. However, they still faced social sanctions because of it:

> *"I don't drink. I can't stand it. I don't see why people do.*
> *But that's my opinion. They go 'why don't you drink?'*
> *They say just like a joke 'are you gay?' or somemat stupid*
> *like that. I mean I just don't like it"* (Tom, aged, 16,
> Engineering).

However, it is not just alcohol that has close links with masculinity. Recreational drug usage was also a commonality amongst participants. Adam (aged 17, Motor Mechanics) confirmed that this is prevalent amongst his age group:

> *"Some will go out fighting and some will go and do what I*
> *do- sit on my arse and smoke it. Yeah there will be lots of*
> *kids like that of my age."*

While these patterns perhaps reflect the increasing availability and accessibility of drugs (De Visser & Smith, 2007), Stephen (aged 18, Motor Mechanics) offered his views on why he thought teenagers combined excessive alcohol consumption and recreational drug-taking:

> *"What it is with young people now is that they see older*
> *people drink and smoke weed so they think oh we will do*
> *it to make ourselves look older. You are just going to ruin*
> *your life by the time you are thirty if you carry on every*
> *day. That's how I see it. Everyone has started doing*
> *MCAT now too."*

Peer pressure to drink or experiment with drugs was also another key factor in explaining its usage amongst participants. As established above, teenagers do not want to appear different (Gilligan, 2002) so may succumb in order to fit in:

> *"Erm I think if there's a big group of yer erm and*
> *everyone else is drinking or doing drugs. I think there's a*
> *bit of pressure on you to know like drink or do drugs as*
> *well so you're not excluded from the group"* (Jake, aged
> 16, Joinery).

'Real Men's Sport' and Masculinity

As discussed previously, Hull has a high profile sporting culture and heritage
with two rugby teams and a football team that was promoted to the premiership
in September 2013. Sporting contexts are well known for the way in which
orthodox or hegemonic ideals of masculinity are produced, reproduced and
reinforced (Anderson, 2008). This is reflected in the narratives of the young
men, with most involved in it either as an amateur player or spectator:

> *"I think Hull is a very sport-orientated city and just about*
> *every male you talk to plays sport or in some way is*
> *involved in sport"* (Jack, aged 18, Joinery).

This interest in sport is further evidenced via the questionnaire given to learners
at the business administration training centre (see Chapters 2). The analysis of
this data suggests that 68% of the male respondents identified sport among
their hobbies and interests. Out of these, 42% specifically identified football.
Other popular sports included rugby, ice hockey, boxing and mountain biking.
The role of school as an agent of gendering is crucial, with sporting
opportunities forming an integral part of extra-curricular activities (Tischler &
McCaughtry, 2011). Dan (aged 18, Painting and Decorating) explained how, like
a lot of the lads, his interest was nurtured in this way:

> *"I mean I played a lot like when I was at school and like*
> *but I joined a team maybe about 3 or 4 years ago. About*
> *4 years ago and I have been playing ever since."*

For many, at some point this participation extended to the fantasy of wishing to turn their interest in football into a professional career (Hancock, 2012; Bradley, 2013). Many males had considered becoming professional sportsmen (especially footballers). (Furlong & Biggart, 1999). However, by young adulthood the realisation was arrived at that this is unlikely to happen:

> *"I have always played football so it would be alright if I could get professional with football but that ain't going to happen […] I have played semi-professional but like everyone wants to play football when they are a kid but it is like a million and one chance isn't it?"* (Richard, aged 16, Engineering).

On a more general level, this seemingly widespread prevailing interest in sport appeared to fulfil two functions. Firstly, it seems to be a training ground for performing masculinity in that it presented opportunities for men to engage in the socially desirable hegemonic masculine behaviours and attributes described above (Anderson, 2011). The masculine credit gained can then be transferred to other spaces (such as the workshop or shop floor), especially, when interacting and conversing with other lads. Secondly, with less availability of macho manual employment, it provided a much needed context validation of their fragile masculinities (Hancock, 2012).

In optimising both of the above processes, when choosing a sport (even traditionally macho ones), a commonality is to initially attempt to locate any masculinised components within it and then accentuate them. Again this could maximise the opportunities for gaining masculine credit and thus validating gender identities (De Visser & Smith, 2007). For instance, Stefan (aged 16, Bricklaying) relayed how he enjoyed ice hockey because it is physically challenging and tests players' ability to *"man-up"*. One recognised way of doing so was to engage in legitimate or legal aggression (Anderson, 2008). Physical contact in this way was perceived as being positive as it falls within the rules of the game. George (aged 19, Bricklaying) described the attraction of it when playing rugby:

> *"Erm I just like the physical side of it and like games and just the excitement and stuff. The tackles and things like that. I like getting in and tackling people and being a bit rough."*

As macho sports require masculine attributes in order to be a *"bit rough"*(Stefan, aged 16, Bricklaying), this at the same time can police masculinities through making it an excluding regime (Anderson, 2011). Therefore, any perceived weakness or femininity is weeded out, including by self-selection:

> *"I was erm too small to play rugby. I was too scared"*
> (Rob, aged 19, Joinery).

Even where the chosen sport is not a traditionally male one, ways are found to spotlight the masculine components within it (Tischler & McCaughtry, 2011). For example, Ethan (aged 16, Bricklaying) stated that he enjoyed ice skating. However, he was very eager to place emphasis on the speed at which he skates and the special enjoyment he derived from novice skaters through being able to *"...scare them shitless."*

Conclusions

In this chapter it has been argued, through Beasley's (2008a; 2008b) revisionist taxonomy of hegemonic masculinity that a sub-hegemonic conformist masculinity emerges. The conditions of Hull with its social insularity and relative geographical remoteness perhaps provide the ideal conditions in which a working-class form of masculinity (in what is self-ascribed as a working-class town) could assume a dominant position. Grounded in this emerging identity, were the influence of Hull's now defunct fishing industry (and accompanying fishing mentality) which appear to have been intergenerationally transmitted from grandfather, to father and to son in a city, as described above, where many lead spatially-circumscribed lives. This chapter has also set out some of the traditional albeit stereotypical notions that constitutes this gender expression.

At this juncture of their lives, free from the constraints of adulthood responsibility, they could still engage in laddish behaviours such as heavy alcohol consumption, substance misuse, promiscuity and macho sports. Each of these provide opportunities for men to acquire masculine credit and validate their own conformist performativities. At this juncture, these outlets are especially important as participants have not, as yet, had the opportunity to use the conduit of paid work to do so. With masculinity being a contextual configuration, laddism comes to the fore when they are with men of their own age (where 'not losing face' and the acquisition of masculine credit is most important). Recognising a degree of performativity to their actions, though, they behave more sensitively with women as they perceive that is what women want and *"success with them"* (Jack, aged 18, Joinery) is contingent upon it. It is only when they are with their family members that they can be their 'true' selves.

Underlying this temporal phase of adolescent laddism are more orthodox aspirations. I, maintain that this finding is not surprising given the central importance of intergenerational transmission described above. Aspiring to be 'just like dad' (or sometimes like their step-father or other male relatives), they described strong work ethics and some aspired to work along their fathers in family businesses. Many were also seeking entry into traditionally masculinised careers. For at least some young men though, these career aspirations looked to be a remote possibility. Orthodoxy is also evidential in their desire to be 'just like dad' in their domestic arrangements too. In assuming the role of breadwinner, they imagine a future where they can settle down with a partner, have children, buy a home while providing a good standard of living for them. One difference from their fathers, however, is that they do not wish to marry dismissing it as a *"bit of paper"* (Edward, aged 19, IT).

Other gender expressions are also evidential. The disgust participants expressed regarding *chavs* suggests that other men in their protest are eschewing work and engaging in high risk hypermasculine behaviours. Unfortunately, men in this position were not included in the study (but see recommendations for further study in Chapter 9). However, *chavs,* as a version

of protest masculinity, provides a yardstick for participants to affirm their own respectability.

As a halfway house between the two identities described above is *Mr Average*. Stepping away from the influence of the locale, the acceptability of being an average lad has been influenced via the TV and film series *The Inbetweeners*. Nevertheless, as with the sub-hegemonic variant, it was grounded in homophobia and misogyny and many were training or working in masculinised industries actively engaging in the culture of these industries (see Chapter 8). Finally, while many men expressed the view that homosexuality was much more socially acceptable, via his narrative, this was not the experience of Sean (the only openly gay man in the sample). The lived experiences of homophobic school bullying within the city were discussed, along with the longer-term consequences of it. Clearly, although attitudes may be changing, it can still be difficult for an openly young gay man living in Hull as he negotiates his way to manhood.

Chapter 7

Get a trade son, then you will always have a job
Men, Masculinity and Work

> "A job therefore traditionally provided the holder with a
> ready-made adult identity and the role of breadwinner
> (Bernard, 1995). Work also provided stable rites of
> passage into the male adult world…" (Hancock, 2012:394).

Getting a Job: Achieving Working-Class Respectability

Having focused on masculine performativities in the last chapter, I now move the discussion on to consider how these scripts impact on the participants' career choices. Historically, there has always been a strong link between men, masculinity and work in the formation of personal identities (Tolson, 1977; Grotevant & Thorbecke, 1982; Morgan, 1992; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003; Connell, 2005; Goodwin & O'Connell, 2005; Harland et al., 2005; Lupton, 2006; Nayak, 2006; Hancock, 2012). Primarily, these interrelationships have been evidenced through the persistence of the 'breadwinner ideology' from the early industrial epoch onwards (Connell, 1987; Bernard, 1995).

Integral to this regime, a man was expected to assume the role of primary wage earner (or 'breadwinner') in providing financially for both his wife and children. Some theorists (see Lewis, 1992, 1997; Crompton, 1999) argue that this model has become outmoded. Rather, a pattern of economic activity more aligned to a 'dual-earning' family has become increasingly more prevalent (Lewis, 1992). Nevertheless, in my research, financial independence along with the ability to eventually provide for their families were key defining aspects in achievement of the men's masculine identities. Simultaneously, as an esteemed credential amongst participants, engagement in paid work was also essential in order to appropriate working-class respectability (Nayak, 2006). Many of the young

men had never worked and were undertaking full-time courses. Others were undertaking apprenticeships (with a training allowance) but there was no guarantee that they would be taken on afterwards. With these fragile and unstable work identities, validation of masculinities was consequently derived at the expense of others. Defined as "flight from the feminine" (Kimmel, 2009:48), men's performativities were demarcated by distancing themselves from women and gay men via ridicule and degradation. Moreover, the demonization of *chavs* (Nayak, 2006; Le Grand, 2010) for their perceived worklessness also offered further reaffirmation of masculinities.

Supporting further this interpretive analysis of the interrelationships between participants, their masculine identities, career aspirations and training pathways, this chapter is divided into three sections. In Part I, retrospective insights including key relationships with teachers and peers is explored. Other aspects of the career decision-making process such as work experience, careers education and academic credentials is also considered. Moving to Part II, the impact of 'informal' networks such as parental, wider familial, peer and media influences is reflected upon. A focus on how these mechanisms serve to perpetuate gendered expectations, goals and subsequent trajectories is also be included. All of these factors, given coverage in both Parts I and II, are key because as Hancock (2012:401) maintains:

> "School and outside social influences combine to produce
> in some boys a clear sense of what it means to be a man
> and what are appropriate career options."

In the final section, the young men's imagined futures and aspirations is considered. Contextually, the impact of the recession, on-going at the time of the research, is discussed. Notably, the lack of employment openings within the gendered and classed local labour market will be highlighted. I will argue that the consequential impact for some participants was entrapment within a 'cycle of education'. The realisation of their aspirations, including entry into their preferred occupational area, appeared to be increasingly precarious.

Part I Retrospective Insights

Returning to the Classroom

School experiences formed one of the key defining components underpinning and contributing towards the career choices of participants (Hancock, 2012). There are a myriad of reasons underlying this particular influence. Firstly, as discussed previously in Chapter 6, the culture of schools promoted the formation of masculine performativities intersected with class, ethnicity and a diverse range of youth sub-cultures (O'Connor, 2004; Young, 2012). Within these frameworks, most of the male participants disengaged, in varying degrees, from what they regarded to be feminised academic learning processes (Mac an Ghaill, 1994; Martino, 1999). For instance, in trying to be 'cool' or popular, some participants became enmeshed in a script of protest masculinity integral to the wider *chav* sub-culture (see Chapter 6). Essentially, an anti-establishment performativity, any commitment to the attainment of academic qualifications was eschewed in favour of high risk 'macho' behaviours and activities (Willis, 1977; Connell, 2000; Harland et al., 2005). By doing so, masculinity was validated, and positioning as one of the 'cool lads' was assured (see Chapter 6). Subsequently, the young men's efforts, abilities and achievements (or more accurately lack of) during their school years had later ramifications in terms of (un) employment or training opportunities open to them.

One of the Lads': Choosing Stereotypical GCSE Options

From the participants' lived experiences, the selection of year 10 and 11 GCSE subject choices and other qualification pathways were predominantly along the lines of traditional or stereotypic boys' subjects such as Physical Education (P.E.), Physics and Chemistry (Stables, 1990; Colley et al., 1994a; Colley et al., 1994b; Francis, 2000; Brown, 2001; Colley & Comber, 2003; Blenkinsop et al., 2006; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). Contextually, this was despite the fact that

since the 1990s, gender bias in option choices[30] has become much less rigid than in previous decades (Colley, 1998; Radford, 1998). Highlighted in Chapter 3, this argument has been countered, somewhat, through changing subject boundaries under the national curriculum that conceal gender differences to a certain extent. As a result, both sexes appear to study similar GCSE subjects (Batho, 2009). However, an in-depth analysis suggests that where there are choices, albeit restricted ones, the majority of participants still opted for stereotypically male options. Research has suggested similar demarcations are also apparent in choice of A level courses (DCLG, 2006). Males continue to opt for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects while females elect for biological science and arts-based subjects (Bell et al, 2005; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014).

Particularly noteworthy in this regard is where vocational pathways such as Young Apprenticeships[31] or BTECS are followed. Without exception, the participants were undertaking these either in motor mechanics or the construction trades. Moreover, the older lads (not the 15 year olds who were still undertaking them) also progressed onto an apprenticeship either in the same field or at least a related one. These findings are reflective of those of Furlong and Biggart (1999), who maintain that gendered and stereotypic norms of appropriate career trajectories are entrenched by aged 13. Patterns of gender streaming are more marked in apprenticeships than more academic pathways (Fuller et al., 2005a). For example, only 8% of hairdressing and 2% of childcare apprentices are men. On the other hand, less than 1% of plumbers are women (Fuller et al., 2005a, 2005b; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014).

Adherence to these stereotypical trajectories, it would seem, is at least in part based on the fear of the consequences of gender role violation (Anderson, 2008). In other words, transgressing these rigidly policed gender boundaries

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[30] GCSE options are where teenagers are presented with the opportunity to make choices on the subjects they take forward for qualification study. However, there is invariably restrictions frequently in place. For instance, timetabling constraints may preclude a student from a specific combination of subjects.

[31] Young apprenticeships form an integral part of years 10 and 11 school option choices. The 8 participants in this study attend their training provider one day a week to study for their vocational Level 2 BTEC in Motor Vehicle (Maintenance and Repair). Core GCSEs and their other option subjects are timetabled, at school, for the remaining weekdays.

brings with it the likelihood of facing social censure and ridicule (Simpson, 2005; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012). Having the rules of masculinity enforced through gendering, from a very early age, boys face intense pressure to repudiate the feminine (Gilligan, 2002). It is through this adherence to these rigidly enforced identities that the seeds of stereotypic career choices are planted and nourished (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). During the career decision-making process, evidence of this influence is in boys' tendencies to emphatically reject feminised occupations as viable options (Furlong & Biggart, 1999; Kingston, 2005). Hayes (1986:92) offers a further explanation:

> "Through sex role socialisation, boys learn that men and women have different abilities, interests and aptitudes that dictate different jobs for men and women which leads men to proscribe certain jobs which are perceived as women's work".

For the participants, it was principally hairdressing that held this connotation, and was overwhelmingly rejected as a suitable career choice by the largely heterosexual cohort. Underlying this standpoint, and intrinsic to young men's masculine performativities, was homophobia or fear of being perceived as gay (Anderson, 2011; Bush et al., 2012). Charlie (aged 15, Motor Mechanics) explained how there was a widely held assumption that the only boy in his year who had opted for hairdressing was gay:

> *"One lad picked hairdressing, but that is a different story. Personally I think he is gay [...] He's ditzy and a bit fussy. I don't know how to explain to that [points to tape recorder] because we've got to do hand movements [demonstrates] 'Oh don't do that, err stop it!' Flailing his arms about".*

Jack (aged 18, Joinery), expands on this association between sexuality, homohysteria and career (or course) choice stating:

> *"It's like an alpha male wouldn't be interested in*
> *hairdressing. It doesn't seem like that person would do*
> *that. It's like look at him, the big poofter. Yeah, I think*
> *that is what he would think people would think of him."*

Wise (2006) maintains that a major barrier in these circumstances is the reaction of peers. In her study, the young male interviewees talk of how it is not perceived to be "cool" (i.e. socially acceptable) to express an interest in a "lassie's job" (Wise, 2006: 23). Likewise, Fuller et al., (2005a) reports that male apprentices believed that they would find it four times more difficult to embark on a childcare apprenticeship compared to a traditionally male one. These themes will be returned to shortly below.

Out of the interviewees, only one of the young men (Paul, aged 17, Motor Mechanics) departed from selecting exclusively stereotypic male subjects by undertaking Food Technology as a GCSE option. Once regarded as a traditionally female subject, celebrity chefs such as Gordon Ramsey and Jamie Oliver have popularised catering as both a socially acceptable leisure activity and career for men to pursue (Babilonia, 2004). In other words, it has become an integral part of the comparatively recent but ever expanding gender flexible occupational areas (Hakim, 2000). Amongst my participants, too, it was also accepted to be suitable for either gender (although inferior to masculinised roles- see below). However, Paul had not been motivated by career aspirations in undertaking Food Technology as one of his GCSE options. Rather, he selected it on the grounds of being the least tedious subject out of the limited range of available alternatives:

> *"I did GCSE cooking [...] I had choice of history, art and*
> *cooking. So I ended up doing cooking because History*
> *was that boring".*

At the other end of the spectrum is Ben (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding). Through his performativity of protest masculinity and associated involvement in a counter school culture (see Chapter 6), he completely disengaged from the educational process. Although wishing to remain in the same lessons as friends

at school is shared goal for many young people (Blenkinsop et al., 2006), this desire formed Ben's only selection criteria for his GCSE options:

> *"No I just picked 'em with me mates. I just picked what they picked. Just cus I wanted to stay with them".*

Even at this early stage, his priorities were already firmly entrenched in maintaining his dominant hegemonic position in the school peer hierarchy as one of the *"cool kids"* (Ben, aged 22, Fabrication and Welding). As such, Ben had already commenced on a trajectory of high-risk macho behaviours including substance misuse and petty crime. For many of his contemporaries, this would ultimately lead to long-term unemployment. In a small number of cases, though, the consequences proved fatal (see Chapter 5).

'Jobs for the Lads': The Failings of Work Experience

Moving now to work experience, which Blenkinsop et al., (2006) suggest allows teenagers to 'try out' placements in different occupational areas. Theoretically at least, they are thus empowered to confirm or re-evaluate their career planning (Super et al., 1996; Hancock, 2012). However, the extent to which my participants were able to utilise work experience for these purposes appeared to be limited. Some did not partake in these opportunities at all because their schools had ceased offering them. Where a placement was undertaken, it was often not regarded as being especially insightful. Therefore, it was not deemed to have been supportive of the career decision-making process (Blenkinsop et al., 2006). Invariably, these circumstances arose because a student had not been proactive in arranging the work experience themselves. Dan (aged 18, Painting and Decorating) was himself in this position:

> *"I worked in the P.E. Department and was, like, sort of a teaching assistant. I didn't really do much teaching or anything like that. The majority of the time I was doing whatever in the P.E. Department. It wasn't really work experience".*

Dan, though, attributes the blame for this unsuccessful placement to himself:

> *"Erm School set it up. I was sort of a bit lazy cus I didn't*
> *find meself somemat. I left it until the last minute. The*
> *careers women had like a book of all the options I could*
> *have done. I saw the P.E. one, so I just did that cus I*
> *enjoy sport".*

Overall, as with option choices, the majority of the young men also selected gender stereotypical work experience placements. As illustrated in the Ofsted report 'Girls' Career Aspirations' (2011), this finding is a commonality with female students. Out of the 1,725 placements inspected in the Ofsted study, only 164 (9%) were non-stereotypical. For example, the popular areas for girls were retail, healthcare, office work, hair and beauty (Higgs, 2011). The report findings also confirmed those of an earlier project undertaken by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) in 2005. With a sample of 566 pupils, there was no female representation on engineering placements and only two males undertaking childcare ones.

Interestingly, the EOC also reported, in the same study, 70% of the girls expressed a willingness to consider traditionally male occupations. The only caveat they made was that these sectors offered progression opportunities (EOC, 2005). However, these views were contradicted, somewhat, in the more recent Ofsted report (2011). Only 17 girls (8%) out of the smaller sample of 200 were interested in science-related careers. Even fewer, 7 respondents (3%), wished to enter engineering (Higgs, 2011).

With homohysteria regulating masculine performativities, including the demarcation of sexual orientation, there were compelling reasons for male participants to delimit the type of work experience they were willing to engage in (Harland, 2000; Connell, 2005; Bush et al., 2012). Predominantly gendered placements, though, reinforces the funnelling of teenagers into socially approved career trajectories (Furlong & Biggart, 1999; Fevre, 2000; Holdsworth et al., 2007; Higgs, 2011; Mahadevan, 2011).

For a minority of participants, however, the placements proved to be a beneficial experience and fully supported their career planning. Dexter (aged 19, IT) had been considering a career in primary school teaching, which has traditionally been a feminised profession (Simpson, 2005, Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). He took advantage of the opportunity to 'try out' working with children, in a nursery, for his work experience placement:

> "I wanted to go into primary school teaching. I thought something like that, working with children, it would help and there was no teaching assistant ones left".

Despite this potential match to his tentative career aspirations, it was again a lack of planning, as with Dan above, which formed the deciding factor for him in opting for this childcare placement:

> "I was a very laidback student and I waited 'til the last minute to get my placement sorted out. So when it came to it, the only one that I saw working with children was the [name of nursery]."

Even so, there was an eventual positive outcome for Dexter, albeit perhaps not the one he anticipated, in terms of planning his future career. Through the 'hands on' nature of this work experience, he arrived at the conclusion that working with children was not a career path he intended to pursue:

> "And although the people there was nice I learnt that I am not too keen on pre-school children. I find them quite irritating! Throwing food around, shouting a lot, screaming, crying, cleaning up their mess after them, having to watch them in case they do anything silly like swallow Lego bricks. There was too much work involved in it. It was too frustrating."

While the process formed a useful conduit for Dexter, informing his decision-making, not everyone who undertook similar opportunities in feminised

occupations or those with more gender parity perceived them in the same light. Frequently these sectors were dismissed, subject to disparaging remarks or not taken seriously as a *"proper job"* (Jake, aged 16, Joinery). Alex (aged 19, Bricklaying), for example, was offered the opportunity to undertake a catering taster as an integral part of sampling a range of courses at a local education college:

> *"It's just cooking. No, it didn't inspire me. I only did the taster cus I wanted a burger! […] So I think my college taster was a bit of a waste."*

Such viewpoints are in line with the wider chauvinistic and dismissive attitudes typically expressed by the male participants about what has stereotypically been regarded as 'women's work' (Hakim, 2000; Simpson, 2005; Lupton, 2006). In fact, these remarks frequently extended to more gender flexible occupations. Carl (aged 18, Catering) explained how the engineering students at the training centre he attended, discerned that their course was superior to his. Consequently, they mocked its perceived lower ranking by persistently *"shouting things about shitty catering jobs"* (Carl, aged 18, Catering). Jake (aged 16, Joinery) similarly considered that his mother's role as a dinner lady does not qualify as a *"proper job"* (see Chapter 6). In part, the issue here was that his mother only works on a part-time basis, and as such only contributes a modest component wage (Siltanen, 1994) to the family income. Ultimately, regarding 'women's work' as steeped in these negative connotations served to bolster the men's fragile work identities, which for many were unestablished as yet with their entrapment in a circle of education (see below).

'You could spell FUDGE with my GCSE grades'

A wide variation in attainment was achieved by my male participants upon leaving school. For instance, at the top end, 33% of the young men interviewed gained 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C (including English and maths). For those accomplishing these higher classified qualifications, university could have potentially been an option. However, as will be discussed below, these men

tended to regard themselves as practically-orientated rather than academically inclined. Therefore, they elected to opt for more vocational routes. The young men also venerated the benefits of earning as opposed to undertaking a degree, struggling to find a job opening afterwards and being encumbered with student debt. Laurence (aged 19, Customer Services) gave his perspective:

> *"People have come out of college and I have got further*
> *than them. I didn't really see the point of it* [academic
> study]."

For those undertaking an engineering apprenticeship, the opportunity to attain a degree was potentially still open to them. Although taking many years to complete, progression to undergraduate study can be achieved through on-going day-release programmes. For Peter (aged 17, Engineering), if he eventually decided to pursue it, this route was preferable to going to university full-time because he is able to *"earn while I learn"*.

Not all of the young men are in this position, however, with 28% of interviewees only achieving passes at the lower end of the spectrum i.e. D-G grades. In describing this qualification range, an acronym was in common usage amongst the participants. As Laurence (aged 19, Customer Services) explains:

> *"Yeah you could spell FUDGE with my grades. You can*
> *literally do that with the grades I have got"*

Stephen (aged 19, Motor Mechanics) also achieved similar grades, but apportioned some of the responsibility for not reaching his academic potential to teaching staff:

> *"There were teachers who were, like, they didn't want to*
> *teach us anything. Then there were teachers who would*
> *teach us one day and the next day they wouldn't teach us.*
> *Stuff like that. I was trying my best but they wouldn't*
> *teach us or anything like that. After a bit you just like*
> *give up. There is no point."*

Callum (aged 17, Painting and Decorating) expressed similar sentiments from the standpoint of a protest variant of masculinity (Connell, 2000) he performed whilst still at school. He attributed the cycle of antagonism that characterised his relationships with some teachers as actually being initiated by and grounded in their rudeness to pupils. As Callum maintained that he was not being shown any respect in this regard, his approach was to retaliate accordingly:

> *"We was always told at school that we wouldn't ever achieve anything. I know people disagree and say it is your own fault you should have worked harder but when you're young, you just think well if they're saying that we're never going to amount to anything so why should we try? I'm one of them people who has always been taught to treat people as they treat you [...] So if someone was unpolite to me I would be unpolite to them. So they always took that as a bad trait, but the people I was good with I used to do real well in their lessons".*

Inevitably, this cycle of antagonism impacted adversely on academic achievements. It is men such as Stephen and Callum, within the wider cohort, who share commonalities with the male participants in both Willis's (1977) and McDowell's (2004) studies. Principally, this mirroring is evidenced through their respective rebellions against the education system. Their resistance detrimentally impacted on their attainment through leaving school with comparatively few (or no) academic credentials. That is, FUDGE grades circumscribed their range of employment openings (McDowell, 2004).

Qualification inflation[32] appeared to be one of the barriers they had to face and overcome. Progression to a higher level course (which, for example, in construction involved further tests and a prerequisite level of attainment) and securing an apprenticeship were both potential issues. With limited number of

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[32] Qualification or academic inflation refers to the situation where higher level qualifications are needed for jobs where previously lower ones were required. For instance, a degree has become the passport for some jobs that school leavers or those with A Levels, could have previously gained entry to (Morgan, 2013).

places, competition from applicants with higher academic credentials decreased their likelihood of success (Morgan, 2013). It seems, therefore, that men such as Stephen and Callum were the ones most likely set for a continuing cycle of education (see below).

'Copying stuff off the Board'

A commonality amongst the participants was a feeling of disengagement from academic learning processes:

> *"I'm not keen of sitting in a classroom or owt. I would rather be doing stuff rather than sitting there copying stuff off the board."* (Jack, aged 18, Joinery).

Hancock (2012) maintains that reading is 'taboo' for teenage men because of its perceived exclusivity as a feminine activity. Mac and Ghaill (1994) and Martino (1999) identify male peer pressure as both underpinning this prohibition and policing of it. Many of my participants described how *chavs* performed an anti-establishment counter-culture premised on rebelling against authority i.e. their teachers and wider school rules (as with Stephen and Callum discussed above). In common with the lads in both Willis's (1977) and McDowell's (2004) studies, a disinterest in academic learning was integral to this resistance. Working hard academically and 'cool' masculinities, within the context of school cultures, are simply deemed to be incompatible (see Epstein, 1998; Frosh et al., 2002; Jackson, 2006; Jackson & Dempster, 2009).

Even for those men who progress onto vocationally-based courses, such as the construction trades, there was a strong consensus of continuing to struggle in a similar way with so-called *"bolt on"* courses (Derek, Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery). These were compulsory functional skills courses in Maths, English and ICT that all students, including those on both apprenticeships and vocational courses, were required to undertake. The theoretical component that accompanies the 'hands-on' nature of their courses was also regarded as being equally burdensome. In both cases, the mode of learning (i.e. classroom-based)

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and the subject matter were viewed as unwelcomed obstacles that were mandatory requirements to be endured in order to achieve their *"qual"* (Derek, Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery).

Some of the participants acknowledged, while at school, they put a lot of effort into achieving good grades (i.e. 5 or more GCSEs, including English and Maths, at grade C or above) with a longer view of securing opportunities such as apprenticeships. With an intense dislike for academic learning, the following exchange with Ian (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding) illustrates this:

> **Ian:** *I hated school. I just found it hard. And it wasn't anything I was interested in. I didn't want to learn about English and poems and all this lot. I am not interested in that.*
> **Lucy:** *So how did you do in your exams?*
> **Ian:** *I did fairly well but that was just from revising and revising and revising.*
> **Lucy:** *So when you say fairly well, what's fairly well?*
> **Ian:** *Well I got a B in maths, mainly Bs and Cs I got.*
> **Lucy:** *You did very well, but you said you still found it hard?*
> **Ian:** *Probably the main part of it was that I wasn't interested in it.*

There can be costs, however, to being observed working hard at school. Men doing so can be pushed into subordinate variants of masculinity because of the association between academic study and femininity:

> "Those who visibly prioritise hard work are frequently labelled 'geeks', 'swots', or similar and are often bullied and othered" (Jackson & Dempster, 2009:342).

Hodgetts (2008:476) argues "to be a boy is to 'succeed without trying". In other words, if a young man seeks to safeguard his masculinity but gain academic credentials then he must be seen to do so via the valorised process "effortless

achievement" (Jackson & Dempster, 2009: 341). 'Cool' masculinities, then, appear to be totally incompatible with learning as Ben, Callum and Stephen all suggested. A different route, therefore, must be negotiated if a man wishes to succeed in his chosen career (Jackson & Dempster, 2009). While Ian (aged 22, Engineering) described himself as average as opposed to one of the more popular lads at school, he still managed to redeem some masculine credit through openly expressing his loathing for academic learning and subsequently pursuing a construction-related apprenticeship (Messerschmidt, 2000; Smith, 2007).

Another consequence of this disengagement from the academic process is the perception that study at the further and higher education levels necessarily paralleled that of their school experiences. In other words, it simply formed an extension of it (Jackson & Dempster, 2009). On this premise, despite achieving the required GCSE grades to do so, many participants made the decision not to continue with their academic education.

Jack (aged 19, Joinery) attended sixth form for a few weeks, but this served only as confirmation that an academic trajectory was not the right orientation for him to continue pursuing:

> *"I was doing 'A' Levels physics, biology and P.E. I lasted three weeks! I just didn't enjoy it at all […] I'm not keen of sitting in a classroom or owt. I thought it would be more 'hands-on', but it wasn't. For the first few weeks, it was just copying off the board and it did my head in"* (Jack, aged 18, Joinery).

Jack subsequently enrolled on his joinery apprenticeship which he considered matches his skills, interests and aptitudes to a much greater degree. As discussed below, the dominant form of working-class masculinity the participants performed, just as previous generations had done so before, was premised on the ability to 'craft or graft' in one of the trades. In the spatially and socially circumscribed worlds the participants were inhabiting in the 'Russian Doll city' (McDowell 2002; Featherstone, 2012; Rhodes, 2012),

traditional patterns of behaviours, or career choices, appeared to be less frequently questioned (Fuller et al., 2005a, 2005b; Kingston, 2005). Therefore, in this context, disengagement in academic learning is less likely to be challenged when a more 'hands on' employment trajectory was still viewed as the norm (McDowell, 2004; Lupton, 2006).

Part II: Career Planning

'My Own Man': Autonomy and Decision-making

In the transition to adulthood, as Peter (aged 17, Engineering) put it, *"being my own man"* was a crucial ingredient. Its perpetuation was predominantly through participants taking responsibility for their decision-making, including career-orientated or educational-based goals, aspirations and planning (Hancock, 2012). Both Walkerdine et al., (2001) and Reay (2004) argue that amongst working-class families, emotional well-being tends to be prioritised over academic and/or career success. In accordance, my interviewees frequently conveyed how their parents have not placed pressure on them to follow specific employment or training pathways. Rather they reported their happiness as the overriding parental concern, and were encouraged to make their own vocational decisions.

While happiness or emotional well-being may be overriding concerns (Walkerdine et al., 2001; Reay, 2004), parental aspirations for their sons, nevertheless, is still evidential within the participants' narratives. In concurrence with this finding, the British Youth Council (BYC), National Children's Bureau (NCB) and Young NCB survey (2009) reports that 63% of respondents surveyed identify parents as a major contributory factor in their vocational decision-making processes. Alex's mother (aged 19, Bricklaying) wanted her son to better himself through aspiring for him to embark on a career in one of the professions:

> *"My mum told him* [Alex's father] *to turn me away from being a bricklayer. Trying to get me into a bit of a high*

*profession. Just like something that was a bit more
highly regarded and a bit more well paid"* (Alex, aged 19,
Bricklaying).

There can be limitations, though, as to how far this influence extends. For instance, UK research indicates that 56% of teenagers whose parents are professionals wanted to follow similar trajectories. However, only 13% of respondents who parents work in semi-skilled occupations aspired to professional careers (Universities UK, 2007). Echoing the findings of McDowell (2004), however, participants pitched their career goals within the confines of narrow, conventional and working-class aspirations. Moreover, where direction was offered, arguably within the scope of their own narrowed horizons (Fuller et al., 2005a, 2005b; Kingston, 2005), parents tended to stress the importance of acquiring a skill or trade. Ian (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding), for example, summed up his mother's aspirations for him:

> *"I think it was always as long as it went into an
> apprenticeship trade where you get a qualification at the
> end of it [...] she wanted me to get a qualification in
> something, but what it was I don't think really mattered."*

Statistics in terms of the composition of traditionally masculinised industries provide supporting evidence to this contention. In construction and skilled trades, for instance, women account for only 10% and 8% of the total national workforce respectively (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014).

One of the participants, Neil (aged 19, Motor Mechanics), more readily acknowledged parental involvement in steering his vocational choices. When asked what attracted him, to a trade-based course, he responded jocularly:

> *"Having me mam shouting down my throat 'you need to
> do something constructive with your life' and I am like ok.
> And I am like right. She said 'if you don't buck your ideas
> up then you will be kicked out of the house'. Ok! I am*

> *going to find a trade. Forced! I need a lawyer I really*
> *do!"*

As agents of gendering, parents and other family members serve as a conduit or supporting mechanism in the transmission of gendered expectations and social norms (Jacobs, 1989; Wigfield, et al, 2002). With entrenched notions of what is considered appropriate 'men's work' (Hayes, 1986; Williams, 1993; Simpson, 2005), the young men could conceivably have been encouraged to follow (whether consciously or unconsciously) stereotypical educational and career trajectories. The subsequent impact of this gendering could be on both subjects selected for GCSE and later post-16 routes (vocational alongside academic ones) (Bell et al., 2005). Moreover, as already established above, this steering was within a wider context where traditional patterns are rarely challenged (Fuller et al., 2005b; Kingston, 2005).

Sometimes the pressure to conform to parental expectations can be notably intense. Wise (2006) highlights how Careers Scotland received complaints from parents after their teenage children had been the recipients of advice and guidance on non-traditional career routes. Hayes (1986) also confirms the presence of negative parental reactions concerning sons seeking to enter female-dominated professions. However, as the participants' parents have not taken part in this research, it is difficult to ascertain what their precise role is or has been in the decision-making process.

In stressing their autonomy in the decision-making process, the men were also keen to emphasise that this extended to the potential influence of their friendship networks and wider peer group. Despite these sentiments, both collectively appear to serve as guardians of masculinity (Frosh et al, 2002; Kimmel, 2009). As with transgressions from socially approved heterosexual behaviours, more generally, potential selection of gender atypical careers was policed via the vociferous deployment of homophobic abuse (Connell, 2002; Harland et al., 2005; McCormack & Anderson, 2010; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012; see also Chapter 6). Peer policing, then, appears to be a major contributory factor in why participants would not consider a wider range of choices- especially where feminised ones were concerned (Kimmel, 1994).

Interestingly and countering the above findings to some extent, in a hypothetical scenario presented through vignettes (see Chapter 2 for further details on how these were utilised) many of the participants suggested that they would be supportive of a friend who wished to undertake a gender atypical career. However, this is with the proviso that he should expect a high volume of *"ragging"* (i.e. aggressive bantering) (Laurence, aged 19, Customer Services) in taking this transgressive decision. Invariably, this discourse would centre on making persistent jibes about his sexual orientation (Anderson, 2008; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012; Lawler, 2012). Clearly to endure what at times is potentially harsh banter (see Chapter 8 for examples) one needs strength of character including self-assurance about one's sexuality (see Collinson, 1988). In itself, this required inner resilience could potentially preclude many men from following this course even if they had the inclination to do so (Walker & Baker, 1993).

There are occasions, though, where choosing stereotypically female roles is socially approved, for instance, where heterosexuality is promoted as the underlying reason for entry into feminised occupations. Primarily, this choice is championed as a decision that leads to the proliferation of interactions with the opposite sex (Hayes, 1986). Dexter (aged 19, IT) relayed an example of a lad in this position, who claimed that the only motivation behind his entry into the childcare sector is *"cus of the girls"*. Affirming his [hetero] sexuality, this chosen career trajectory was widely accepted amongst his peer group. As Morgan (2002) maintains, offering this explanation is an effective strategy for dealing with any challenges to a young man's sexuality. It simultaneously provided Dexter's friend with masculine credit, which he could otherwise have lost through entering a traditionally female profession without 'trading up' in this way (Willcott & Griffin, 1996; Messerschmidt, 2000; Smith, 2007). Nick (aged 18, Catering) argued that irrespective of this deployed strategy, childcare should be a role that men embrace both at work and within the home. His viewpoint is reflective of the fluidity of masculine scripts which are historically and temporally situated (Rotundo, 1993; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). In the 1990s, more empathetic performativities such as the 'New Man' and 'New Dad' emerged (Chapman & Rutherford, 1988). Integral to both of these identities, men were deemed as playing an active role in the upbringing of

their children and take on shared responsibility for household chores. Although largely rejected by men and women alike as replacements for more traditional masculine performativities, elements of these newer identities have seemingly converged into existing ones. For example, being a 'hands on' father is now much more socially acceptable within the frameworks of heterosexual masculinities (Christian, 1994; Hancock, 2012).

Amongst a minority of the young men, though, there was still some mixed feelings about what is now the more gender flexible area of childcare and its suitability as a career choice for men. As raised by other participants in previous research (see Bradley, 1993; Williams, 1993), Rob (aged 18, Joinery) suggested that if a lad intended to embark on an apprenticeship in nursery nursing he would have serious misgivings about whether he was a paedophile. At the very least, he deemed others would perceive it in this way. Without the currency of proven sexual prowess, as with Dexter's friend, Rob opined that if one of his *"mates"* is ever in this position then he would have to share these reservations with him.

Most participants, though, emphatically stated that there would be few exceptions where they themselves would be willing to follow a similar pathway. The most notable of these was circumstantial, and that they see no other alternative but to do so. Some young men, for instance, would transgress gender boundaries to undertake this type of work if their families were suffering from financial hardship. Justification for this decision was that it still affirms their masculinity, but through drawing heavily on and reworking one of its core elements that of breadwinner (Bernard, 1995; Connell, 1987, 1993):

> *"It depends how tight money is. If you have to provide*
> *than it is 'manning up' in a different way. You have to go*
> *and do something out of your comfort zone to provide for*
> *your life sort of thing"* (Alex, aged 19, Bricklaying).

The above discussion highlights how peer policing serves as a surveillance regime (Smith, 2007; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012), through steering young men into socially acceptable career trajectories. However, this process also

appears to extend to young women too. Theoretically, this can be understood as crucial for supporting hegemonic or sub-hegemonic masculinities and maintenance of their dominant or vantage position(s) (Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012). For example, Susan (aged 17, Joinery) recounted the pressure and bullying she experienced when first disclosing to her friends, and wider peer group, that she intended to undertake a joinery apprenticeship. Amongst the negativity this gave rise to, predominantly amongst other women, she was warned that her chances of success in the role were minimal because it was essentially 'men's work'.

> *"Like lots of girls I went to school with have commented*
> *on my choice. Just stereotyping. That was quite*
> *upsetting actually that they did that. [...] A few of them*
> *thought I must be a lesbian. Sounds stupid, but erm just*
> *basically telling me I can't do it cus it is a man's job"*
> (Susan, aged 17, Joinery).

'My Careers Officer Said...': Formal Guidance

As highlighted above, educational and vocational decisions seem to be made more through the reliance on informal networks, notably parental influence, as opposed to the role of more formal ones (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). Formal guidance networks, available to the participants, included the Connexions Careers Services and careers education programmes delivered by the educational institution they attended (Gothard, 2003; Blenkinsop, 2006; Ofsted, 2011). Many of the participants considered teachers to be generally unsupportive, including offering any constructive advice on their future career pathways. On the other hand, there was a greater divergence of opinion regarding the effectiveness of Connexions when the young men accessed their services. Very few participants actually mentioned the guidance received by the service as a contributory factor when expanding upon the underlying motivations behind their chosen pathways. A number of reasons, however, can be attributed to this perceived lack of support. For instance, the young men automatically assumed a role of autonomy in the decision-making process,

similarly to how they dismissed parental input, without giving sufficient credit to those who had actually helped them. Again, this highlights the importance of the recurring theme that perceived (rather than actual) independence is an intrinsic element of masculine performativities during this transition to adulthood (Tolson, 1977; Grotevant & Thorbecke, 1982; Morgan, 1992; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2003; Connell, 2005; Goodwin & O' Connor, 2005; Harland et al., 2005; Lupton, 2006; Nayak, 2006; Hancock, 2012).

As McQuaid and Bond (2004 a; 2007) also reports, there also appeared to be individual differences between schools in terms of the quality and quantity of the support provided by both Connexions and within career lessons. Overall, though, neither of these mechanisms has been identified as having markedly helped in the career decision-making process. Some men stated that they have not received any guidance, such as a Connexions year 11 interview, at all. For those who actually received guidance, many did not find the content of the session to be especially beneficial or effective. Others even went as far as to maintain that any interactions had been a complete waste of time:

> *"We had a careers adviser at school and to them I said I wanted to go into architecture. I think she handled it pretty badly because she didn't ask what type of architect work I wanted to do. It was go and do construction at college and that is all she really had to say."*

Concurring with this notion of their perceived (rather than actual) independence, a cautionary note in interpreting these findings, though, is that young people often underestimate the support they receive from the service (Blenkinsop et al., 2006; Wise, 2006). Where Connexions did receive praise was as a placement service and its matching of the participants to available courses or apprenticeships. Perhaps the issue raised of the limited careers education in schools, is evidenced through only a minority of participants being able to articulately express their motivations in selecting specific courses, apprenticeships or sectors. In other words, they were as Super et al., (1996) contends vocationally unsure. Debbie, in her capacity as a careers officer, offered her thoughts on why there was a dearth of decision-making informed by

professional guidance amongst teenagers in choosing their post-16 educational and career trajectories:

> *"Only a small minority are actually sure of what they really want to do. We are asking young people to make life decisions at a very young age and they feel pressurised into making a decision. When we interview young people in schools, they feel pressurised into coming up with a career idea before they come for a careers interview. It is kind of a social pressure; they want to be seen in a positive light [...] we spend the hour or so of the guidance interview discussing the career idea that has not been thought through or the young person does not really want to do."*

This is something that Tom (aged 17, Engineering) picked up on:

> *"When some people are asked why they come on this course they just go 'I don't know'. What I am meant to say to that!"*

It can be inferred, then, why the lads often wished to be 'like dad' and follow in their footsteps through entering the same or a related industry (notably in a trade). In this way, it can be interpreted as the default option:

> *"Young people often come up with career ideas based on what jobs their fathers and sometimes grandfathers did- like a trade. It is a cultural thing. Dad worked in this profession and so the son follows in his footsteps"*
> (Debbie, Careers Officer).

'Just Like Dad': Crafting and Grafting in a Trade

In line with the notion of choosing the default option, one of the main findings of the research is that by and large, the male participants express traditional career aspirations. Related to these orthodox ambitions, it is important to recognise that a class differential operates when it comes to the actual employment and educational trajectories selected (Lupton, 2006). Banks et al., (1992) confirms these findings whilst highlighting the importance of the types of work considered. Working-class men for example, are found to be seeking traditional openings similar to the lads in Willis's (1977) study. For my participants, in selecting one of the trades, they were taking steps in this perceived right direction. As will be discussed in Chapter 8, these included informal training into the industries' conformist scripts of masculinities (Collinson, 1988). However, a number of combined contextual factors meant that opportunities to continue with this route were becoming increasingly challenging. These circumstances included deindustrialisation from the 1970s onwards (English, 2014; see also Chapter 4), the proliferation of service sector employment (Irving, 2008) and the on-going recession at the time of the research. More specifically, intrinsic to the latter, was the contraction of the construction industry (Moulds, 2012).

There was an intergenerational and historic prevalence, however, of manual labour within many participants' families. Moreover, this pattern is a commonality shared in other towns, cities and regions such as the steel industry in Sheffield (McDowell, 2004) and between shipbuilding and the young men defined as 'Real Geordies' in Nayak's (2006) study. Locally, the historical and contemporary occupational composition of Hull is based on the heavily declined shipping and fishing industries (Neave & Neave, 2012; also see Chapter 4). As with the formation of masculine identities, it would seem that the culture and heritage of these industries (and the family involvement within them) affected the career aspirations of the young men:

> *"I think it has always been seen as a man's sort of job to*
> *build. It is like cave men isn't it? Like providing the*
> *shelter and things like that. I just think women want to*

be hairdressers and nurses and men want to build. I think it depends where you are from as well. In Hull the jobs have always been like working on the docks and that sort of thing and there aren't any academic trades in Hull as such. It has always been a fisherman's town sort of thing that's why, I think, round here that's what it is. Everybody's father, grandfather has worked on the docks. Whereas if you go to bigger towns like Manchester, there is, like, other businesses" (Alex, aged 19, Bricklaying).

Over and above parental aspirations, discussed above, the immediate families of the young men appeared to play pivotal roles in their career decision-making. Many were emulating their relatives (whether or not this is deliberately intentioned) but in a context, as established above, where traditional values are left largely unchallenged. Ian (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding), for instance, expounds on the motivations behind his chosen current career pathway:

"My granddad was a fabricator so that had a lot to do with it I think."

Moreover, there is also a similar family connection with the Mechanical Fitter apprenticeship he began when he initially left school:

"Me step-dad he was he's a mechanical fitter so that's probably where it has come from."

For Jack (aged 18, Joinery), networks of influence extended even further than his immediate family in fulfilling the same role albeit still within what Hodkinson et al., (1996) refers to as 'horizons of action'.

"My girlfriend's dad is a joiner himself and I wanted to get myself a trade and that is the first thing I thought of really."

Occasionally, this desire to follow in the footsteps of other family members arises from older generations wanting the young men to carry on the tradition of being employed in certain occupational areas. Fuller et al., (2005a) refers to this process as 'steering':

> *"I think he [my dad] wanted me to carry on what the*
> *family was doing cus all my uncles and that have always*
> *been in like the construction trade"* (Alex, aged 19,
> Bricklaying).

A confutation is thus presented as to the men's perceived autonomy in their vocational decision-making. Given this acknowledged role of the family in the process, as Wise (2006) suggests, choices are potentially based on outdated labour market information. A salient example is that a trade is believed to be a *"job for life"* (Jonny, aged 17, Bricklaying) despite the evidence to the contrary i.e. the on-going recession and consequential paucity of jobs available in the local economy (Gentleman, 2012; Turner, 2012).

Some of the participants' fathers were self-employed and already working in the construction or engineering sectors. However, due to the scarcity of work, they were unable to take on their sons. The latter, therefore, were attending college in order to acquire the skills in their chosen trade, and with the longer-term goal of working for or alongside their fathers. For these men, their courses were viewed as interim or back-up strategies until such a time it became financially viable for them to be employed within the family business.

Situations such as these draw attention to the young men's widely held belief that the contraction of job vacancies, arising through the recession, will eventually reverse. Their newly acquired skill sets, then, would lead to employment within the industry. Therefore, the participants were making these judgements on misinformed information about the local 'opportunity structure' (Roberts, 1977; Hancock, 2012) i.e. the range of available career openings in Hull and the surrounding realistically commutable areas.
Phillip (Bricklaying Tutor) suggested that this optimism still arose in spite of the fact tutors continuously reiterated to their students how unpropitious the

progression rates into apprenticeships or employment are. Frank (Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) provided his approximation of how many students succeed in finding an opening after his course:

> *"Now I would say about 10%. But if you go back 5, 10 years I reckon 80%. It's just the state of the industry as it is".*

In other words, approximately two students per year move into Joinery apprenticeships. These young men, then, found themselves in the same situation as those in McDowell's (2004) study. In other words, for both cohorts the traditional stable rites of passage from boyhood to manhood (via manual work) appeared to be increasingly unlikely (Bernard, 1995; Hancock, 2012). Moreover, McDowell's (2000b; 2002; 2004; 2014) contention that working-class masculine performativities, validated by traditional career trajectories, are becoming increasingly fragile or redundant (McDowell, 2002:39), is also reflective of the lived experiences of my participants too.

In attempting to counter the above low progression rates (whilst, concurrently, boosting retention) the tutors actively promoted the notion of transferable skills sets. Integral to this marketing exercise, was the pitch that students' employment prospects would be substantially enhanced via attaining additional qualifications in multi-trades. Specifically, this advantage was regarded in terms of the competitive edge these extra *"quals"* (Derek, Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) would provide in a context of qualification inflation (Morgan, 2013). In encouraging this lateral move across courses, the emerging theme of some students being trapped in a cycle of education, discussed throughout this chapter, was thus perpetuated and maintained.

For those who actually managed to find work (either pre, during or post their courses or apprenticeships), frequently this success was been through procuring these openings via either family contacts or other local networks. According to Trevor (Construction Centre Training Manager), increasing numbers of young men on apprenticeships routes were more reliant than ever on their fathers serving as gatekeepers to their successful entry into the construction industry.

The most advantageous scenario for an apprentice was having a father who was both self-employed and with a sufficient availability of work to take them on. Trevor, though, was not entirely convinced that this nepotistic arrangement necessarily equated to *the "best"* or *"right"* candidates enrolling on courses or training programmes. However, those in this situation believed that there a longer-term investment in it:

> *"I want to progress in and move my dad's company forward. He is getting older now and has never had a pension. So I want to provide for him. Obviously he has put me through this and it is skinting him every week having me and so I want to pay him back"* (Alex, aged 19, Bricklaying).

'I'm not a Chav': Working-Class Respectability

I now move the discussion on to consider the linkage between space, masculinities, the discourse of working-class respectability and career choices. The relatively high percentage of residents with few or no qualifications has often contributed to Hull's pariah image (Avery, 2008; see also Chapter 5). Samantha (Placement Officer), elaborates on these perceptions from her standpoint:

> *"Hull lacks the vibrancy and upbeat nature of other northern cities such as Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle. Everyone drags you down […] It has a low skills set and there is a lack of aspiration in education and careers."*

Contrasting with Samantha's views, however, a desire for career progression was a commonality across participants' narratives (see below). In fact, it could be inferred that this notion of a low skills set was more applicable to those adhering to the protest form of masculinity identified predominantly amongst those living on Hull's estates i.e. *chavs* (Wacquant, 2007, 2008; Featherstone,

2012; Rhodes, 2012). As previously discussed, according to participants, both complete disengagement from the academic process (resulting in no or low ranking qualifications such as FUDGE) and unemployment were two defining features of this variant of masculinity.

Supporting Hancock's (2012) research, a strong work ethic underpinned nearly all of the participants' working-class masculinities. In turn, the vehicle of paid work was pivotal to attaining [working-class] respectability (Nayak, 2006). For those men with low qualifications (such as FUDGE), this often made them more determined than ever in achieving their career goals and *"getting on"* (George, aged 19, Bricklaying). Running concurrently with these aspirations was a profound contempt for the unemployed. Several of the men used not being like *chavs* as a comparator for their own behaviours and aspirations:

> *"The parents don't work, so the kids don't work. It is like you see a lot of young kids getting pregnant and not working. They would rather have kids because they know they are going to get more money for it. They don't get penalised. Whereas those people who are working, we are working for them people who can't be bothered to go get a job and then we are getting penalised for working. As I say you are working you are paying for them to take the piss out of you basically. Which it feels like to those people who are working"* (Gary, aged 25, Engineering).

As the above quote from Gary demonstrates, *chavs* tended to be 'othered' (Le Grand, 2010) via what I term 'chav hate'. At school, they maintained a dominant or hegemonic positioning through fear-based tactics (Harland et al., 2005). However, after leaving compulsory education the situation transformed in to one of open loathing where their hypermasculine risk-taking and anti-establishment behaviours became openly despised and ridiculed. It seemed that through this 'othering', whereby *chavs* came to signify a subordinate or underclass form of masculinity, a further strategy evolved for the men in affirming their increasingly fragile but 'respectable' version of working-class

masculinities (McDowell, 2004; Nayak, 2006). The fact that many of the participants were struggling to get on the first rung of the career ladder, in terms of securing an all elusive apprenticeship, only accentuated this situation.

A caveat to this demarcation between working-class respectability and *chavs* was that movement between the two is, nevertheless, a possibility. Ben (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding) provides a good example of *"switching sides"* from being a self-proclaimed *chav* (at school) in a drive to what he perceived to be respectability. The triggers for this catharsis, however, were rather extreme circumstances. One of his friends was murdered in a gang fight while another hanged himself after engaging in years of chronic substance misuse and other 'high risk' behaviours. After partaking in similar activities himself, Ben felt grateful for the second chance he had been offered by his training centre. In turn, this opening had raised his aspirations in terms of achieving career success. A major driving factor underlying his newly acquired goals was to optimise his earning potential in order to maintain a good standard of living once he and his girlfriend started a family (as they planned to do shortly).

The Importance of Breadwinning

> *"So I was 16 and I was bringing home about 160 quid a*
> *week. It is a lot of money when you are only young"*
> (Ben, aged 22, Fabrication and Welding).

Integral to the wider context of gaining working-class respectability, Ben's situation, as described in the above quote, can also be understood in terms of what Bernard (1995) describes as the stable rites of passage from boyhood to manhood. In other words, the ability to earn money, through the conduit of paid employment, was regarded amongst the participants as one of the main markers of transitioning successfully into adult male life. For some, this transition has occurred relatively early with them already having taken on financial responsibility for their families. Laurence (aged 19, Customer Service), recounted how he stepped up by becoming the *"man of the house"* while his stepfather was serving a prison sentence. Inherent to this duty, was delaying or

forging his own career plans and prioritising finding a job that would enable him to financially support both his mother and younger brother. In a similar way, Alex (aged 19, Bricklaying) also disclosed that because of his personal circumstances, earning money was the major factor underpinning his decision to commence employment in the retail industry:

> *"I went and got a job in a jewellers just to get some*
> *money. I was living at home with me mam and cus she is*
> *by herself, it was quite hard having to keep me going and*
> *her going while I wasn't earning any money."*

The importance of earning money was also related to longer-term goals. A well-paid job was considered necessary in order to financially support a partner and a family. Although recognising the benefits of a dual-earning family (Lewis, 1992), and that female partners may want to pursue careers themselves, the goals of the men were, nevertheless, reminiscent of the old breadwinner ideology. These hypothetical domestic arrangements shared a similarity with the lads' career aspirations in so much as they were also moulded via their father's life choices. Again these plans, in a context of insularity, are perhaps in line with what the participants believed was achievable within their 'horizons of action' (Hodkinson et al., 1996; Rhodes, 2012).

Reflective of this discourse of breadwinning, all the young men held apprenticeships in higher esteem than the equivalent full-time courses. Again, the major reason cited for this elevated positioning was the waged component associated with it (Hancock, 2012). For those attending full-time courses, there was some monetary reward via EMA albeit a maximum of thirty pounds. Nevertheless, in 2012, this did not equate to anywhere near the salary received through undertaking an apprenticeship scheme. Dexter (aged 19, IT) explains how much he receives on his apprenticeship

> *"You get £ 2.60 an hour [...] some private companies they*
> *won't actually pay for yer day releases because it is*
> *[name of training centre] and this is working with [name*

*of organisation], they pay for yer day releases. So it ain't
so bad"* (Dexter, aged 19, IT).

Even for those participants on apprenticeship schemes, however, there was a
marked variance in the standard of placements offered by the training
providers. Frequently, these did not directly correspond to the courses the
participants are on. The implications, here, were that they were not in suitable
environments in which to develop, practise and utilise their newly acquired
skills sets:

> *"The placement I'm in at the moment is at the [name of
> organisation] and I'm with the [name of section within
> it]. It's all admin-based. Honestly we don't get much IT
> work"* (Jimmy, aged 19, IT).

Over and above their courses or apprenticeships, some participants were
working part-time to facilitate at least a degree of financial and personal
independence. For example, Dan (aged 18, Painting and Decorating) was
working for 8 hours a week in supermarket in order to save up for a car which
he believes will provide him with the freedom he desperately craves. However,
Dan's circumstances were the exception rather than the rule. Most of the young
men were completely lacking in work experience (relevant or otherwise) having
never held down a paid job. Therefore, it was extremely difficult for them to
secure employment, even on a part-time or temporary basis, within the highly
competitive local job market (Turner, 2012).

'A Token Man': Lads Doing Lasses Work

> *"It's like hairdressing or a beauty course. You wouldn't
> see many straight men doing one of those courses." (Sean
> aged 16, Business Administration).*

As the above quote suggests, the discussion now turns to those participants who
opted for either traditionally feminised occupations or quantitatively more

gender flexible ones. To reiterate, the division of labour continues to be robustly organised along horizontally segregated career trajectories (Charles, 2002; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). Some participants opine, as Gilligan (2002) maintains, that this differentiation between men and women can be accounted for by early socialisation processes i.e. their upbringing.

> *"A woman doing mechanics, it's a man's job. That's how it is, the way people have spoke about it. We have gone to a mechanic place to take the car and I have never seen a woman in it. Being a mechanic. Where if you do an admin or a childcare course, you might feel like it's a woman's course"* (Sean, aged 16, Business Administration).

Grace (aged 18, Business Admin) considered that business administration is perceived in a similar way to mechanics albeit as a woman's job rather than a man's:

> *"I think traditionally it developed from the whole secretary or receptionist role which was always really like a job a woman would do. And I think the whole business admin thing has sort of come out of that. And the preconception that it's a woman's role has come with the development of it. And people they just still think like that"* (Grace, aged 18, Business Administration).

Another issue cited is that the marketing materials and prospectuses for the training providers and colleges are presented in stereotypical formats. Sean (aged 16, Business Administration), for example, comments on a training centre that offered motor mechanics:

> *"[Name of training centre] do motoring courses. It looks like when you open it, it looks like a man's job. You wouldn't look at a leaflet and think it is a women's job. Being a mechanic."*

I carried out a brief content analysis of the training centre's recruitment literature. In total, there were 3 prospectuses, 4 posters and 2 leaflets for the 2011/2012 intake. The findings all supported Sean's impression of gender stereotyping. In fact, **94.3%** of images in the recruitment literature analysed for traditionally male courses were of men. These include both photographs of tutors and students. Only **5.7%** of the images were of women. As will be discussed in the following chapter, this gender imbalance mirrors the reality within the trade-based sectors. It would seem, though, that these images reinforce stereotypes and could potentially actively dissuade potential female applicants from applying for a course and/or apprenticeship.

Over and above these reasons, however, homohysteria has been a guiding contributory factor behind why the men were emphatically opposed to entering gender atypical careers (Anderson, 2011; Bush et al., 2012). Evidence for this is supplied by Ian (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding), when responding to the hypothetical scenario of applying for a job in a feminised sector. In his view, entering a feminised profession would inevitably raise questions about his sexual orientation, which troubles him:

> *"Probably wouldn't, well I say it wouldn't bother me, but it probably would."*

No male students were undertaking feminised courses at the training centres I carried out the research in during the entirety of time I spent in the field. Furthermore, there had only been two men in the previous year's cohort. One identified as gay and the other transgender. The latter transitioned from the male role during her hairdressing course. Again, perhaps in line with the overriding concern about being perceived as gay, other issues with feminised work, such as lower pay and status (Bradley, 1993; Williams, 1993 Kingston, 2005; Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014) were not referenced as disadvantages at all.

Taking another perspective, an impoverished occupational and labour market knowledge base from within which career decisions were reached could account for no acknowledgement of these issues (Gothard, 2003; Blenkinsop et al., 2006; Gothard, 2003; Wise, 2006). The notable exception amongst the whole

cohort was Sean, and his awareness of the relatively poor remuneration hairdressers receive. However, this was again within his 'horizons of actions' having both a mother and sister working within the industry (Hodkinson et al., 1996).

> *"Me sister and me mum are hairdressers [...] where my sister has been doing the job for two years and has gone no higher, I started in August and have gained an extra £600."* (Sean aged 16, Business Administration).

In fact, Sean's knowledge base regarding female-orientated occupations was arguably greater than his male counterparts because he is what Williams and Villemez (1993:64) typify as a *"seeker"*. In other words, he had actively sought out a profession where the majority of his colleagues are women. Sean's career orientation evolved, at least in part, from being the victim of long-term homophobic school bullying. As a direct consequence of this abuse, he encountered difficulties in forming trusting friendships with other men. He therefore preferred the company of women both socially and in the workplace as in his experience they were more accepting of his sexuality:

> *"When I did first start my dread was it all being men on the course. I wanted it to be all women on the course."*

For the heterosexual men on gender flexible courses, they appeared to actively seek out the masculinised components in the job, as the men in McDowell's (2004) study had did so previously. For instance, on the business administration courses the seeking out of what Crompton (1997) describes as gendered niches was conspicuously visible. Marie (Deputy Manager, Business Administration) explains:

> *"On the IT courses, the majority of students are men. It seems manlier to do the IT than to make the drinks and be on reception. On the Business Admin and Customer Services courses, the majority are girls with only a smattering of boys."*

In this way, the young men could justify their deviation from macho physically-based roles while, simultaneously, avoiding the *"role strain"* that men in Simpson's study (2005:367) experienced in pursuing their non-traditional careers.

Part III: The Future

Entrapped in a Cycle of Education

Another commonality was that some of the participants had become ensnared in a continuing cycle of education. The causal factor behind this predominantly lateral move between courses was the shortage of employment openings within the local opportunity structure. As Jack (aged 18, Joinery) comments:

> *"... There are not many jobs out there at the moment. So I think everyone is going to college and biding their time."*

The cycle invariably entailed a lateral rather than a vertical progression i.e. moving from across Level 1 courses. All of the men, in this situation, stated that this is in no way their preferred option. Derek (Carpentry and Joinery Joiner) elaborates on what this cycle of education actually entails:

> *"They are looking at continuing to a different trade associated in construction, bricklaying or plastering and that's for their own gain which I can't blame 'em. That's what they are realising, it's not going to be a short-term fix the employment. So whilst they're not working they may as well train and train and I say do somemat that you like and look more hands-on than academic. That's what I'd do."*

Although there was recognition from all quarters that this progression from one course to another is less than ideal, Derek (Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery)

suggests students will ultimately be advantaged due to their multi-skills set. He offers further clarification on this point:

> *"Employers these days, they want multi-skilled people,*
> *it's not just bricklaying and plastering and joinery now,*
> *they want someone who 'can you put a socket on?' 'Can*
> *you connect a water pipe?' They want you to do all the*
> *lot now. Cus it's all maintenance now"* (Derek, Carpentry
> and Joinery Tutor).

Getting On: The Desire for Career Progression

To reiterate, Hull has been dismissed in terms of its insularity, remoteness from other cities and its low skills set. Nevertheless, there are plenty of examples, as touched upon above, of participants' life and career aspirations. Initially influenced by their family or local networks to pursue a trade (which as argued above, appeared to be a default option) a handful of men elected to move into other occupational areas. Matthew (aged 18, Business Administration) was in this position with a desire to progress leading him to reconsider his original plans:

> *"I picked joinery. I found it ok, but there wasn't really a*
> *future in it to be honest. I just wanted to be something a*
> *bit better than that […] It is just, uhh, I didn't mind the*
> *work I was doing in joinery. But I think I prefer a bit*
> *more it sounds a bit snobbish, but a bit more skilled. A bit*
> *more better that I would enjoy so yeah […] I just think I*
> *know in some ways you can be in joinery and earn a lot*
> *more, but obviously there is a lot more jobs where you*
> *can obviously earn a lot more money than joinery. I*
> *know joinery you could start your own business and*
> *make a lot of money. But it's a lot better in business*
> *admin."*

Ben, on the other hand, was employed in an unskilled manual labouring job when he left school. Increasingly, though, he became disillusioned with and anxious to move on from this role as he could not see a future within this area of work. He was also motivated by a career change in order to achieve working-class respectability (Nayak, 2006; Le Grand, 2010), thus moving away from his previous identity as a self-ascribed *chav*. Ben hoped that this opportunity will go some way to rectifying the mistakes he has made in the past.

> *"Erm I was currently at [name of company]. Me dad was foreman there and I realised that I wasn't going anywhere, I was just stuck as a labourer. So I decided to go to [name of training centre] to see what they could offer me. So I came here and I have enjoyed it ever since. I did the NVQ 2 cus my GCSE grades weren't up to standard to go on to the NVQ 3. Erm so I worked for my NVQ 2 and passed it and then moved onto my NVQ 3 […] So I am lucky to get in this really cus I've had a second chance"* (Ben, aged 22, Fabrication and Welding).

In both of these cases, the participants recognised the importance of skills and retraining in order to achieve their goals. While money was still one of their main motivations, they were also driven by career success in its own right too. Within the more gender flexible sector Sean (aged 16, Business Administration) was working in, he was highly focused and has a clearly defined career progression route in mind. As with many other men in non-traditional fields (see Williams, 1993), he had already identified that he wished to move into a managerial position:

> *"My main aim is to try and go higher than this until I've got my NVQ Level 3. I'd love to be a team leader cus I think I'm better at telling someone else what to do."*

Conclusions

In this chapter, a clearly emerging theme is how much masculinity and work identities are closely interlinked. Such is the magnitude of this interconnecting relationship, one cannot be considered without the other. Applying Beasley's (2008a) revisionist taxonomy of hegemonic masculinity, a dominant sub-hegemonic and conformist masculinity emerged much influenced by the historical and contemporary occupational composition of Hull. It is the old manufacturing industries and the now decimated fishing industry that were still particularly influential in determining what is suitable work for men. With this 'hands-on', manual work being venerated and simultaneously utilised as a tool for validation of their masculine performativities, many of the male participants were pursuing careers in one of the trades. These vocational careers choices were supported by participants' families who held the [mis] perception that a trade is a 'job for life'.

A second familial contributory is that as in other areas of their lives (see Chapter 6) young men tended to see their fathers as role models in their working lives too. Therefore, in being 'like dad' they wish to follow in his footsteps in similar if not the same industries. Similarly, they imagined a future where financially they could assume the role of breadwinner and support their families (again, 'just like dad'). In a city I liken to a matryoshka doll because of its residents' spatially circumscribed neighbourhood-based lives (McDowell, 2000a, 2002; Featherstone, 2012; Rhodes, 2012) this desire to be like dad can be understood.

Underlying the fragility of many men's masculine identities was the fact that most have not been in position as yet to validate them through the conduit of full-time paid employment. With the economic downturn and contraction of the construction industry, for many this pathway did not look promising. Trapped in their own cycles of education, denigrating *chavs* and their worklessness provided a conduit for validating their own respectability. They may not be working as yet, but they have the work ethic in which to do so and have started on their career trajectories through undertaking either apprenticeships or full-time employment. Identification with their fathers and

their work success (such as starting their own business) reaffirms this standpoint and plans they formed.

The power of homohysteria forms another guiding factor in career choices and one that provides an explanation in terms of participants' reluctance to contemplate gender role violation i.e. follow a feminised career trajectory. Again with the fragility of their masculinities, intensified through their lack of being able to secure paid work, the ramifications (including ridicule or disapproval) of undertaking 'women's work' were to be steadfastly avoided by heterosexual participants.

The notable exception here is Sean, an openly gay man, who actively sought out a career trajectory where the majority of his colleagues/fellow students were either women or older men. Such was the heteronormative discourse premised on the "flight from the feminine" (Kimmel, 2009: 48) amongst his male [heterosexual] peers it has impacted considerably on his career choices. While he enjoyed his career in business administration immensely, the reason he gave behind entering this career area was avoidance of men and the homophobic abuse and epithets he believed encountering them would entail. Where participants had entered into a qualitatively gender-balanced vocational training (such as catering), they were still subjected to disparaging comments (especially from men on masculinised courses) and were perceived as losing masculine credit by doing so. The heterosexual lads who make the most successful transitions tended to enter gendered niches in these sectors where masculinised components of their roles can be emphasised.

It would seem that masculinities play a key role in the formation of career choices. However, this relationship was often one where restrictions were imposed on educational and employment trajectories. On the one hand, heterosexual young men would not enter traditionally feminised roles because of the penalties this transgression would have on their already fragile identities. Sean, as a gay man, on the other hand, policed his own behaviour to evade his male peers. As I will discuss in the next chapter, restrictions were not just evidential during the vocational decision-making process. For those young men who entered one of the trades, they had just begun a journey where their

career choices shapes, tests and delimits their employment-based working-class masculinities.

Chapter 8

Lads' Talk

The Role of Banter in Policing Masculinities

"The centre is such a macho and masculinised environment. It is almost as if each man is ostentatiously displaying his masculinity as a peacock would display his feathers" (Research Diary Extract, 24th January, 2012).

'Lads being Lads': Introducing Banter

Within the scope of Chapter 7 the rationale, underlying reasons and motivations for the young men in this study continuing to elect stereotypically macho educational and employment pathways was discussed. Requisite to this analysis, I specifically explored the relationship between working-class masculinities and career choices. Through gaining this understanding, an epoch of high homohysteria (i.e. the social fear of being perceived as homosexual) and flight from the feminine are identified as combined key factors underpinning these trajectories (Kimmel, 2009; Anderson, 2011; Bush et al., 2012). The saliency of these ingredients is evident when considered alongside the insularity of the locale (Giddens, 1984).

In this chapter, with a sizeable number of participants drawn from the trades, a more nuanced analysis of the relationship between working-class laddish culture and specific occupational pathways is undertaken. According to the lived experiences of the participants, there are potentially other hidden or covert factors that play inherent and forging roles in masculine performativities. One of the prevailing influences, in this regard, appears to be the aggressive albeit humorous discourse of banter. While many male operatives regarded it as the most enjoyable part of their work, its primary underlying purpose was as an

organising tool in the regulation of masculinities (Collinson, 1988; Smith, 2007; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012).

Emerging themes of the research suggest a plurality of ways in which to enact masculinities. Dominant amongst these generally, but particularly in the trades, were young men willing to embrace a traditional macho and laddish form of masculinity. Acculturated intergenerationally, this variant was reinforced and upheld in a position of power and dominance. The facilitation of this positioning was achieved via the darker side of banter, a humorous albeit aggressive discourse grounded in misogynistic and homophobic foundations. By its very nature, then, it mirrors the widespread homohysteria discussed above (Smith, 2007; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012). As a form of male camaraderie and bonding, this dialogue provided sexual validation to heterosexual men through the objectification and subjugation of women. Additionally, it actively denigrated transgressive deviations from the above regulated macho hegemonic acceptable behaviours. The principal tool in implementing this surveillance regime was the vociferous deployment of a rich vocabulary of homophobic abuse (Connell, 2002; Harland et al., 2005; McCormack & Anderson, 2010; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012). I, therefore, argue that the brutal regime of banter can create an 'invisible' barrier for women and some men wishing to enter what remains preserved as essentially masculinised, sexist and homophobic industries (Wright, 2013).

Focus then shifts to a closer examination of the experiences, perspectives and roles of women. The rationale underlying this analysis was to facilitate a deeper understanding of how banter, as an integral ingredient of the laddish cultural fabric of the trades, impacted on them. Regarding participants, this includes both women training to be actual operatives, or, alternatively, working in support roles. Numbered amongst these findings are its informal (and invisible) role in the exclusion of women (and some men) from these masculinised sectors.

'Having a Laff': Masculinity and Humour

"It's harmless fun, just general piss-taking"
(Ian, aged 22, Engineering).

Described variously as humour, joking or horseplay, the discourse of banter is a commonality shared across a wide range of occupational sectors and workplace settings, for example, in department stores (Bradney, 1957), hospitals (Coser, 1959), schools (Willis, 1977) and universities (Phipps, 2014a, 2014b; Phipps & Young, 2013, 2015a, 2015b) Phipps, 2016). More specifically, banter as an intrinsic part of laddish behaviour, more generally, has also prevailed for many years within masculinised occupations. The extent of this longevity is such that it has become deeply embedded within the cultural fabric of sectors such as engineering, motor mechanics and construction-related fields (for example, bricklaying, joinery, and painting and decorating). Previous research, dating back from the 1950s onwards, supports this contention. For instance, horseplay is a commonality on building sites (Riemer, 1979), industrial shop floors (Roy, 1959; Sykes, 1966; Palm, 1977; Willis, 1977; Burawoy, 1979; Pollert, 1981; Westwood, 1984; Hearn, 1985; Linstead, 1985a) and in coalmines (Pitt, 1979).

Findings from my research are no exception in this regard. The narratives of those working or training in the trades are rich in detail as to how humour pervaded through the daily fabric of their interactions with co-workers. From these participants' perspectives, including apprentices, college students and tutors alike, banter is essentially a situated discourse or humorous repartee that provides copious opportunities for 'having a laff'.

A cursory analysis, such as the above, may suggest that banter comprises of predominantly humorous exchanges. Historically, however, there has been an array of motivating factors underpinning it (Kimmel, 2009). The most frequently cited of these is that the discourse functions as a conduit to "let off stam" (Collinson, 1988: 182). Essentially, banter is enjoyed in order to dissipate the boredom and frustration that derives from the mundane nature of working patterns in the trades (Nayak, 2006). Frank (Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) explains what banter means to him:

"So it is abuse, really, to relieve the boredom. Because they are boring really aren't they? Construction jobs."

Other research also reports on the link between humour and routine work. For example, Roy (1959) chronicles how four machinists developed their own rituals of horseplay in order to stave off the on-going tedium arising from their working patterns. Aside from relieving the boredom, in environments with extreme and perilous working conditions, humour can also play a crucial role in alleviating tension and forming bonds. For instance, Pitt (1979:36) argues, in the context of the coalmines, that it countered "the darkness and the pressing nearness of danger and death". On a less extreme level, and where danger is subsequently less imperative, Collinson (1988) contends that banter can represent a form of collective resistance against management and the establishment more generally. In *Learning to Labour* (1977), this point is eloquently demonstrated by Paul Willis. Here, he enlarges upon how the lads' oppositional or counter school culture transfers to and mirrors the interactions on the shop floor (see Chapter 6). With 'having a laff' a principal component of these cultures, Linstead (1985b) maintains that the use of humour, in this way, works to create an informal world outside the scope of school authority, workplace management and organisational control.

Collinson (1988) suggests that banter provided the men in his study, working on the shop floor in a lorry-making factory, with a degree of independence and autonomy. This freedom was most striking in comparison to their colleagues in more restrictive office-based roles, where the application of formal work rules was rigidly enforced. For the young men in this study, rebellion against authority was inherent to some of their experiences. In both Stephen's (aged 19, Motor Mechanics) and Callum's (aged 17, Painting and Decorating) narratives, for example, this anti-establishment theme clearly emerges. Individually, each recounted how their strained and antagonistic relationships with teachers impacted adversely on their achievement of academic credentials.

Rebellion as collective resistance against management in the workplace, however, does not form a major theme in the research. Possibly, this is because most of the young men, including those attending full-time college courses,

were still within the very early stages of their careers. Therefore, it could be that they have not as yet reached the juncture where this desire for rebellion had become a presenting issue. In fact, there is only one participant, Ian (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding), who raised the issue of management at all. He had been working for 6 years and so was more established in his career. However, he still did not specifically identify banter as a tool of resistance (Linstead, 1985b). Rather, Ian's comments were related more generally to the existence of an oppositional relationship between supervisors and the men ('them' and 'us') on the shop floor. Existing strained relationships were further exacerbated by the on-going recession at the time of the fieldwork (Gentleman, 2012; Turner, 2012). Frequently, it was utilised as a 'threat' in order to control the demands of employees:

> *"They've got no loyalties to you. You know we haven't*
> *had a pay rise for like 3 years. The morale is down on the*
> *floor in the shop. I mean everybody asks for a pay rise,*
> *but they say if you don't like it you know where the door*
> *is"* (Ian, aged 22, Fabrication and Welding).

A further reason underlying the ubiquity of banter in the trades is one that will form the basis for discussion in the remainder of the chapter. Namely, co-workers *as a* "community of comedians" (Collinson, 1988:185) collectively creating and reinforcing social relations in all male environments. Manual work, especially where it entails hard, physical labour has traditionally been a central core in defining the essence of masculinity (Hancock, 2012). In line with this role, the research participants frequently expressed masculine pride about the occupations in which they are training. On a hidden level, and driven by an underlying but powerful pressure to conform, banter, though, played a pivotal gendering role (Kimmel, 2009; Wright, 2013). The nature and scope of this acculturation ensured, in the same way as previous generations of men have done so before them, that young male apprentices secure traditional working-class adult identities. Collinson (1988:183) expands on this proposition further:

> "The ability to produce a laugh is a defining characteristic
> of group membership. This working-class joking culture

establishes non-conformist, highly masculine, sense of
identity for its members, which celebrates practical work,
and ridicules passive unmanly mental work, both in school
and employment."

It is apparent, then, why the performativities of the participants in this study resembled an über-masculinity circa 1970s. Moreover, because of this intergenerational perpetuation, echoes of Collinson's (1988) findings on banter, from the late 1970s and early 1980s, were still evident within the lived experiences of my participants 30 years later.

In facilitating this intergenerationally transmitted and socially constructed masculine identity, banter served as a surveillance regime (Collinson, 1988; Smith, 2007; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012). Fundamentally, this aggressive albeit humorous discourse ensured that the young men (and tutors alike) conformed to, or 'manned up' to, the prescribed social norms of traditional working-class laddish masculinity and dignity (see Chapter 6). *"Stepping up"* (Becky, aged 16, Business Admin), in this way, was achieved by social censure of any transgressive deviations from the above status quo (Harland et al., 2005; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012). Moreover, most of the young men unquestionably subscribed to this 'informal training' and its complementary role to the more formal acquisition of construction-related skills sets. In fully embracing the culture of the industry, as Peter (aged 17 Engineering) puts it, banter was frequently described as the *"best part of the fucking job"*.

'Did you see the match last night?' Banter and Sport

Having explored the gendering role that banter can play, the discussion now turns to considering what constitutes the actual discourse. As previously discussed in Chapter 6, banter appears to be integral to the playing of macho sports such as football, rugby and ice hockey (Anderson, 2008, 2011). With Hull having a high profile sporting culture (Avery, 2008), many of the lads actually played in their leisure time:

"I think Hull is a very sport-orientated city and just about
every male you talk to plays sport, or in some way is
involved in sport" (Jack, aged 18, Joinery).

Within the context of the workplace, a shared interest in sport, either as a spectator or amateur player, was one of the crucial ingredients in conversing with other men. A lack of interest in sport could, potentially, seriously impair interactions with other men. For those who are not interested at all, either as a spectator or player, Rob (aged 18, Joinery) maintained that it is important to devise coping strategies. In ensuring that he was not perceived as transgressing too far from the socially approved norms of the group, i.e. he still fitted in, he remained quiet during these exchanges. However, Rob did compensate for this deficiency through gaining masculine credit in other ways (Willcott & Griffin, 1996; Messerschmidt, 2000; Smith, 2007). For instance, he was an active participant in discussing women and proving his [hetero] sexual masculine prowess (Watts, 2007). Namely, this validation was achieved through an on-going dialogue of establishing he had dated and, in his words, had *"done"* a large number of women.

The Weeding Out Process: The Darker Side of Banter

While banter encouraged a shared sense of traditional macho performativities, it also encompassed darker elements too. Essentially, this revolved around its role in "testing" or proving masculinity (Watts, 2007) whilst, simultaneously, 'weeding out' those considered to be unsuitable for the sector. In this respect, humorous discourse became a matter of the social survival of the fittest:

"The joking was based as much on the internal demands of
group conformity as on collective resistance. These
demands were embedded in specific rules that simulated
the 'laws' of natural selection. Social 'survival of the fittest'
was the underlying principle behind the pressure to be
able to give and take a joke, to laugh at oneself and expect

others to respond likewise to cutting remarks" (Collinson, 1988:187).

Inner strength to withstand the verbal violence, integral to banter, was a crucial ingredient in negotiating the path to successfully securing an adult working-class identity (Cockburn, 1983, 1991). In doing so, the following advice was dispensed by one of the men for a new recruit fighting for survival during his early days in the industry:

> *"Never rise to it. Just laugh it off and then go home and cry"* (Ian aged 22, Fabrication and Welding).

Perhaps illustrating the resilience of banter and its place woven into the cultural fabric of these masculinised industries, Ian's comments mirror the advice given by a participant in Collinson's (1988) study on shop-floor humour in a lorry producing factory. Interestingly and as briefly touched upon above, the fieldwork for Collinson's (1988) research was undertaken between 1979-1983 i.e. 30 years prior to the generation of data, in 2012, for my thesis.

A further dimension to this informal training was that a young apprentice entering the trades was often treated as the more experienced workers' *"bitch"* (Michael, Bricklaying tutor). Ultimately, when joining the profession, this role translated into the male apprentice being the butt of his co-workers endless bantering, practical jokes and initiation ceremonies. As will be discussed below, the few women entering the profession were treated rather differently. For the young men, however, the above informal training received, and the pleasure the older workers derived from it, was widely accepted within the culture of the trades as recompense for the passing on of a skills set. Furthermore, through an apprentice proving that they could take the banter, in this way, their passport and successful transition to manhood (i.e. how to act and react) was assured (Connell, 2000; Anderson, 2011). Collinson (1988: 189) expounds on this contention:

> "The lads had to 'take it' in order to survive on the shop
> floor. Having graduated through these degradation

ceremonies, they would be recognised as mature men worthy of participating fully in the shop floor culture and banter. That is, if they could also 'take' the daily practical jokes for which their lack of knowledge made them ideal victims."

'Having a laff', then, was the main means of testing and displaying the individual's inner strength (Hancock, 2012). While one underlying goal of banter is to bring down those individuals who Fletcher (1974:158) regards as being "too big for their boots", the discourse, by its very nature, is invariably uncompromising, harsh and aggressive (Watts, 2007). Therefore, it was deemed that only *"real men"* are able to withstand or *"take it"* (Frank, Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery). The criticisms or witticisms, which comprise the joking, could take a number of different forms. For instance, one particular area was the critique of the trainees' work. Stefan (aged 18, Joinery) provided the following example frequently used in *"ragging"* (or *"winding up"*) another student: *"You're a really crap bricklayer mate."*

Physical appearance was also another commonly targeted area for banter, especially where a young man is perceived as caring too much about his appearance. Examples of transgressions included: clothing (anything strikingly flamboyant), wearing too much aftershave or hair gel. In such cases, according to participants such as Alan and Phillip (both Joinery tutors), these attributes were ascribed as being stereotypically feminine behaviours (Connell, 2005). Therefore, within the parameters of the above surveillance regime, such transgressions deserved to be mocked and ridiculed (Collinson, 1988; Smith, 2007; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012).

Another aspect of physical appearance that frequently provokes criticisms and witticisms were distinguishing facial or bodily features. Sobriquets, when applied in this way, were often exaggerated and stereotypic in nature (Collinson, 1988). Will's (aged 18, Engineering) colleagues for example, derived his nickname on the basis of what they identified to be his protruding lips:

> *"They take the piss out of my lip cus apparently I am like Bubba Gump, you know, like out of Forest Gump. It's just childish".*

In being overtly dismissive of this sobriquet, referring to it as childish, Will demonstrated his resilience in the face of this insult to his physical appearance. In this sense, the way he handled it (i.e. that he could 'take it') bolstered his masculinity in the process (Connell, 2005). However, not everyone can withstand the aggressive, cruel and hurtful discourse in the same way as Will did. This is the case in point with Ben (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding), who was ridiculed about his premature hair loss:

> *"Like people give me banter about losing my hair at an early age [...] I am only young and I have lost it. That's why I shave it off. So you can't notice as much."*

Ben admitted during the course of the interview that he cannot take the banter and is upset by the on-going and persistent jokes about his hair loss. In turn, this fuelled the existing insecurity he felt about his physical appearance. However, for the other lads, this was essentially just part of the fun of the cruel process. Returning to the regime of testing masculinity, Ben would fail in this regard because he displayed sensitivity. As another participant Jack (aged 18, Joinery) puts it: *"like you have to take it on the chin and get on with it".* In other words, *"real men"* (read heterosexual) should be able to take banter *"like a man"* (Frank, Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery).

Taking it on the chin, or variously 'stepping up' or 'manning up', entailed not deviating from stereotypical macho masculine ideals prevalent within the trades (Wright, 2013). As discussed in Chapter 6, expressions of certain emotions such as crying were perceived to be transgressive behaviours, and, therefore, liable to be penalised through social sanctions (McCormack & Anderson, 2010). Ben, for example, explained how he was *"ripped into"* (a particularly aggressive form of banter) in reacting sensitively to his hair loss. On the contrary, other emotions, such as anger and physical aggression, were permissible and even encouraged on occasions as demonstrations of masculine prowess (Watts, 2007). For

instance, through fighting other men with a reputation, and thereby possessing greater masculine credit (Willcott & Griffin, 1996; Messerschmidt, 2000; Smith, 2007), a young man could improve his positioning in the localised hierarchy of masculinities if he was to be triumphant (Bush et al., 2012; also see Chapter 6). Therefore, participants were clearly able to express emotions as long as they are the right ones.

On a wider level the surveillance, regulation and maintenance of the socially approved macho, stereotypical social norms were key tasks performed through the repertoire of humorous exchanges (Collinson, 1988). In essence, banter entailed the denigration of behaviour associated with other subordinate identities. Specifically, these were woman, gay men and, on occasion, effeminate or unassertive heterosexual identities (Robinson, 2008a). With an entrenched dichotomy between 'real' versus gay men, the principal approach in carrying out this policing was via the deployment of a rich vocabulary of homophobic abuse (Connell, 2002; Harland et al., 2005; McCormack & Anderson, 2010; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012). For example, derogatory terminology used by the participants in regulating transgressions included *"poof", "pansy", "wuss"* and *"fairy"* (Leo, aged 17, Engineering).

Within this discourse of heteronormativity, the participants collectively surmised openly gay men would struggle within the industry, especially, if they display what are widely accepted to be stereotypically feminine characteristics and behaviours (Connell, 2005). Alternatively, Rob (aged 18, Joinery), was of the opinion that an 'out' man with macho attributes and interests may fair better. However, he would still be excluded from a key ingredient of banter i.e. the sexual objectification of women (see the discussion below) to which many of the heterosexual men in the study spent a significant amount of time engaging in (Henwood, 1998; Denissen & Saguy, 2014). In this respect, they would lose much masculine credit (Willcott & Griffin, 1996; Messerschmidt, 2000). To lie or cover up their sexuality, though, would be severely punished or reprimanded through aggressive bantering i.e. *"ragging"* (Stefan, aged 18, Joinery). While they could remain quiet as a coping strategy, in a similar way to what Rob enacted when his fellow students were discussing sports, the sexual objectification of other males would again be severely penalised through social

sanctions. With the ingrained nature of homophobia within the industry's culture, perpetuated by their own fears of being unmasked as less than macho men, the scapegoating of others can perhaps be understood (Smith, 2007; Kimmel, 2009; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012).

The presence of a regime of homophobia in the sectors is reflective of its approach to the equality and diversity agenda. Although many organisations now have policies in place to address these areas and eradicate discrimination, the construction industry has dragged its heels in this respect. For instance, when sector specific equality guidelines were recently introduced in 2011, with coverage of ethnicity, gender, age and disability, their remit was not extended to sexual orientation (Peters & Allison, 2011; Wright, 2013). In a list produced on an annual basis by Stonewall, detailing the top 100 gay-friendly organisations, it did not feature any built environments companies at all (Constructing Equality, 2012b). Moreover, Stonewall's Diversity Champions programme[33] did not include an engineering firm until 2012 (Constructing Equality, 2012a). As of 2016, out of the 600 companies, there are now 3 manufacturing and construction companies and 7 property built environment ones (Stonewall, 2016a). None of these, however, are listed in Stonewall's Top 100 employers (2016) (Stonewall 2016b).

Banter or Bullying?

Delving deeper into the dark side of banter, its function of surveillance, regulation and maintenance frequently had a predatory aspect. Similar to previous generations, the young men were skilled at identifying and attacking their weakest or most vulnerable colleagues (Collinson, 1988). While the targets of this abuse may become upset but elect to carry on working in their chosen sector, as per Ben with his premature hair loss discussed above, others could not withstand it. On this theme, some of the young men maintained that the demarcation between banter and bullying was nebulous. Both, for example, are persistent and ongoing (Olweus, 2010; Cuadrado-Gordillo, 2012).

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[33] This programme includes 600 UK-based organisations with the shared goal of improving the working environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) work colleagues.

During the fieldwork, Susan (aged 17, Joinery), described how a male student had recently been discovered in the toilets crying during breaks (in the morning and afternoon) and at lunchtime. The reason, according to Susan, was because he simply could not cope with the persistent criticisms aimed at him. His work was continuously targeted, including having endless jokes made about it at his expense. He also became a scapegoat. The more he reacted, the more the banter was aimed at him. However, rather than questioning the prevailing culture of the construction industry, the blame was squarely apportioned to the young man by tutors and students alike. His lack of psychological resistance to withstand it was cited as the causal factor underlying this scapegoating. For men to successfully integrate into the trades, it seems to be as much about proving their masculinity as it is about demonstrating competency in the job (Cockburn, 1983; Connell, 2000; Hancock, 2012).

Blue Talk I: Cussing

Having discussed the darker side of banter, the discussion now moves on to consider the last remaining element of it, namely 'blue talk'. Uninhabited 'macho' swearing, as research has found previously, is ingrained within the cultural fabric of the trades (see Pitt, 1979; Cockburn, 1983). There can be a recognised degree of performativity to this discourse, though, with several of the participants openly admitting that they had started swearing much more profusely since commencing their respective apprenticeships. For example, Will (aged 18, Engineering) comments:

> *"I am really common now, using slang and cussing all the time."*

However, this is both a gender and context specific (i.e. the workshop, shop floor or building site) phenomenon. In a performance of cultural chivalry, many of the lads remarked that they deliberately refrained from swearing in front of *"ladies"* (Leo, aged 17, Engineering). As I describe below, this is evidenced when some of the lads in their interviews informed me that, out of respect, they are *"watching their language"* (Will, aged 18, Engineering) in my presence. A

caveat here, as the quotes from transcripts testify, this refraining was by no means something all of the young men engaged in! With that said, many of the men who uttered profanities asked my permission first. The same rule regarding abstaining from swearing also applied in the presence of women working within the sector albeit in support roles.

Echoing previous research (for example, Pitt, 1979; Cockburn, 1983), this behaviour suggests sharp contrasts between the men's behaviours on the shop floor and in other contexts (such as the home). As discussed in Chapter 6, this research is premised on the fact that there is a recognised performativity to masculinity dependent upon whom a man is interacting with. Therefore, it is both necessarily transient and context specific (Butler, 1995; Robinson, 2008a; Robinson et al., 2011; Robinson & Hockey, 2011). As Ian (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding) alluded to in his comment about never rising to banter but going home and crying, survival in the construction industry appeared to be reliant on a successful performance (Connell, 2000).

As part of this of this performativity, it was widely accepted that 'real' men should engage in uninhibited swearing. In tracing the origins of this discourse, Collinson (1988) argues that it is bound up in the socially constructed masculine identity of the shop floor. Traditionally premised on resistance against management, the men in Collinson's (1988) study, working on the shop floor in a lorry-making factory, were free from the constraints of formality derived from office-based rules. They could be their true selves, part of which was using forbidden language (unlike the managers and other colleagues who were office-based).

Interestingly, for women who entered the trades as trainee operatives, these rules of masculinity also appeared to apply to them too. They performed an exaggerated form of 'manning-up' i.e. swearing profusely and thereby showing their willingness to integrate within the prevailing culture. For example, Susan (aged 17, Joinery) described her language as being *"atrocious"* since joining the construction sector:

> *"Sometimes it's like to join in with banter, I've got to sort*
> *of erm, I don't know, just make jokes that I wouldn't*
> *necessarily make with my own friends or family. And I*
> *do find I swear a lot more. I'm a bit more boisterous*
> *around them, just to fit in a little bit."*

The desire of 'fitting in', as described by Susan above, underlines why she started swearing more much profusely. Bagilhole (2002) suggests that women seek to minimise differences between themselves and men in order to achieve acceptance. Accomplishment of this goal can be through a variety of techniques. Numbered among these is the careful selection of the clothes they dressed in for work (McDowell, 1997). Alternatively, as Susan performed, behaving more boisterously or laddish is another identified approach.

Blue Talk II: 'How Many Lasses Have You Done?'

In addition to uninhabited swearing, blue talk also encapsulates a high degree of heightened sexualised content as previous construction-related research demonstrates (Papp, 2006; Wright, 2013). Proving male sexual prowess was very much a preoccupation and ubiquitous topic amongst the participants. Invariably, this drive to repeatedly affirm their virility manifests itself through the discussion of women in both sexually graphic and demeaning ways. For the young men, the main targets for this type of discourse were their girlfriends if in long-term relationships, or, alternatively, women they had been involved with on a more casual basis. In the latter case, particularly, Paul (aged 17, Motor Mechanics) opines that the above preoccupation amongst his colleagues, at least, was along the lines of *"how many lasses they had done"*.

One of the participants, Ian (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding), however, was quite insistent that this discourse is not offensive to women. His rationale was that the banter is actually aimed at the lad rather than his girlfriend and/or previous partner(s). Such exchanges were therefore dismissed simply as "harmless fun" (Ian, aged 22, Fabrication and Welding) despite the fact that intimate details were being revealed about these women in a public sphere and

without their prior knowledge or consent. Susan (aged 17, Joinery) overhearing similar conversations to these, described the content of such exchanges as vile, offensive and disgusting. She added:

> *"If their girlfriends could hear what they were saying!*
> *They would dump them or probably cut it off!* [the men's genitalia]."

On the shop floor, workshop or building site more direct interactions with women, rather than just discussing them within the confines of the peer group, are inevitably a common occurrence. In evidence of this, the young men provided instances where women's sexuality and sexual orientation automatically become the focal point upon their entry of what are deemed to be essentially 'male spaces' (Henwood, 1998; Denissen & Saguy, 2014). For many operatives, the key question centres on how 'fit' these women were. Dependent on this assessment, like the stereotypical reaction of builders when a woman passes a building site, the participants described how it would be common for her to be subjected to a number of sexist comments and behaviours. These include wolf-whistling, collectively stopping work and overtly staring (see below for my experiences of this) and calling out sexual innuendos about her (either amongst themselves or directly at the woman herself). Furthermore, these performances are in keeping with the notion that this discourse provides sexual validation to [heterosexual] men through the objectification of women whilst, simultaneously, maintaining boundaries of male space (Cockburn, 1983; Papp, 2006).

For those women actually working in the construction industry, determination of their sexuality and sexual orientation becomes of paramount importance (Wright, 2013). Papp (2006) carried out research on US building sites in order to reconnoitre this process. She maintains that construction operatives place women on a 'bitch-dyke-whore' taxonomy depending on how they respond to a number of 'ManSpot' questions put to them. Inclusive of these are whether the woman in question is gay, in a serious relationship or actively seeking a male partner. On the basis of their answers, she is deemed as falling into one of three categories. The epithet 'bitch' is given to women either in an established

heterosexual relationship, or, alternatively, for those perceived as feminists with a specific agenda for being in the industry. A 'whore' is heterosexual, unattached and therefore sexually available. Finally, based on sexual orientation, either actual or perceived, there are 'lesbians'. Categorisation in this way is important because:

> "By positioning women as 'exceptional' or having an ulterior motive for being in construction, the essentially masculine nature of the job is maintained. Women cannot be seen to do the same job as men without threatening ideologies of masculinity associated with construction work" (Wright, 2013: 833).

Dark, Dingy and Dirty Places: Women at the Margins

The proportionately few women entering the trades, then, are essentially problematized. As a minority within male-dominated industries, sexuality and sexual orientation are key considerations. Lesbians, being perceived as unnatural women, may be more accepted as they are less likely to contravene the rigidly policed gender order (Papp, 2006). Albeit in different ways to their heterosexual counterparts, they are still, however, likely to experience prejudice and sexism from their male colleagues (Wright, 2013). Straight women are subjugated and controlled through the heightened sexual interest that men direct at them. Such intense interest can rapidly evolve into sexual harassment (DiTomaso, 1989; Collinson & Collinson, 1996; Hearn & Parkin, 2001; Watts, 2007). Susan (aged 17, Joinery) recognised that she was perceived as a threat. Fragility of masculinity is pivotal to this danger that woman pose. Firstly, her ability to take on what has traditionally been perceived as a 'man's job' (and a centrally defining ingredient of working-class masculinity) was potentially threatening, especially, with so few of these opportunities readily available (McDowell, 2004; Hancock, 2012). More specifically, Susan's presence endangered the industry's macho culture and conformist masculine performativities. Consequently, her male colleagues attempted to exert power through the misogynist comments directed at her and about her.

> *"Sometimes I think they are quite intimidated cus some of them make comments. [...] But a lot of the jokes they do make is cus it's sort of like unusual and they are a bit scared that a woman's coming in and taking the job"* (Susan, aged 17, Joinery).

A number of challenges, then, are created for women. The tutors (along with a handful of students) acknowledged that the few women undertaking training in one of the trades (usually one or two per year on the courses the participants were recruited from) were more focused, set more clearly defined goals, and performed better at the theoretical work than their male counterparts. A caveat to these findings, however, was that written work, especially coursework, tended to be perceived as inferior, boring and feminised by male participants (Arnot et al., 1996; Epstein, 1998; Delamont, 2000; McDowell, 2002). In comparison with masculinised manual work, where these men place much emphasis on *"being good with my hands"* (Stefan, aged 16, Bricklaying), this derision was even more pronounced.

When it came to the practical side of the job, integral to the prevailing sexual objectification of women, their bodies were also problematized (Henwood, 1998; Denissen & Saguy, 2014). In highlighting the outsider status of women, comments, especially with sexual connotations, were frequently exchanged amongst men on the shop floor (Cockburn, 1991; McDowell, 1997). Frank (Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) expressed his belief that the construction industry was not the appropriate environment for a woman to work in. While openly admitting during the course of the interview to being a sexist, he actually questioned, on a practical level, whether a woman is physically equipped to do the job, particularly, *"if she has big knockers"* (i.e. large breasts). He joked during our exchange that she could easily incur an injury:

> *"But you know, if she is a well-endowed lady, she can't be going up and down up all day. Her back would go. I'm being sexist here, but what I am saying is that a lot of women who do come into construction are erm flat-chested."*

Frank defended these misogynist remarks by stating that the vast majority of the women coming into the profession, via his course, proved to be a nightmare. In supporting this statement, he provided one specific example of a girl who had started on the course wearing jeans and a sweatshirt although, as the banter became more sexualised and personalised towards her, graduated to more provocative attire. Frank again joked that in her low cut tops and short shirts:

> *"Some of the lads had nearly sawed their fucking fingers off with her tits, legs and arse on display."*

Moreover, as she allegedly slept with all of the lads attending the course, at least according to Frank, he said that this had made conducting his sessions a near impossibility. However, the responsibility for overt heterosexualised interactions was firmly attributed to this student for her provocative behaviour. Any part the lads may have played in it, including engaging in predatory behaviour, was not accounted for when blame was being attributed. Pringle's (1989) findings, that women are perceived as responsible for the sexual behaviour of men whilst, simultaneously, being labelled as unprofessional for revealing too much flesh, are thus confirmed. In addition, women are frequently and cynically viewed as entering the industry purely in order to ensnare a male partner (Cockburn, 1983). Incidentally, the girl, discussed above, left the course before its completion and transferred to a childcare one. In Frank's view, this new career orientation is what she should have rightfully done so in the first place. Clearly these attitudes, especially when verbalised by a tutor, can potentially serve as a barrier leading to women not pursuing or aborting their plans for a career in the construction industry.

Susan (aged 17, Joinery) agreed that banter frequently goes too far, something that she has experienced when it has been aimed directly at her. However, she expressed, stoically, that *"it's just lads being lads"*. Consequently, Susan believed that there is simply no room for sensitivity in the construction industry. Remaining quiet and *"taking it"* developed into her adopted coping strategy. Disclosing her true feelings, of the extent to which she was upset by the conduct of her male colleagues and peers, was simply not an option.

Despite women like Susan finding coping strategies to deal with the misogyny and sexism, she was, nevertheless, still deemed to be troublesome. Tracy (Learning Mentor), who professionally supported her, described Susan as a *"needy girl"* who has become "too involved" with the lads via the sexualised nature of the banter. Pringle (1989) argues that women are frequently made accountable for men's sexual behaviour and any subsequent overt heterosexualised workplace interactions. It would seem that the training centre shared this perspective. Their response to the above situation was to isolate what they perceive to be the root cause of the problem i.e. Susan. She consequently was removed from the main workshop and was expected to complete all of her training in a separate one. Such segregation was not just restricted to college days. In point of fact, it extended to the workplace where she spent 4 out of the 5 working days[34]. Although not forced to work alone, nonetheless, she was invariably paired with older men (i.e. aged 40 plus) in order to minimise the 'risks' of her becoming too involved with any younger male operatives she encountered on a day-to day basis in a workplace setting.

Even some of the females working in support roles (i.e. they were not employed as operatives) faced similar challenges. Melissa, who works as a placement officer, had been taken to one side by her male manager and asked to refrain from wearing skirts. He suggested that the sight of her stockinged legs (Melissa felt the assumption was wrongly made that she was, at the time, wearing stockings and suspenders) was provoking the lads:

> *"Mike asked me, said it would be better if I didn't wear skirts, high heels and stockings at work- as if! He said I should wear trousers. The students would have less to get excited about on the [shop] floor".*

Therefore, in exercising 'control' over her, Melissa's male manager explained that it would be preferable if she was to wear trousers at all times when in the training centre (see McDowell, 1997 regarding the apportioning of blame to women for their style of dress). Despite recent steps to improve equality and

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34 With the remaining one day spent at the training centre.

diversity within the industry (Peters & Allison, 2011), this incident illustrates that ingrained misogynist practices are still prevalent and hard to reverse.

These episodes of misogyny were not just confined directly to those working in the industry i.e. either those women employed as operatives or in supporting roles. For instance, in one training provider, there were a small number of girls on traditionally female-dominated courses (such as Childcare, Health and Social Care) although they were still outnumbered by the lads on construction-related ones. In this establishment, the Common Room formed the main arena for socialising during breaks and lunchtimes. As a laddish and masculinised space, rife with banter, according to Kayleigh (aged 18, Catering) women were continuously *"pestered for sex and dates"* upon entering it. Such an environment appeared to marginalise the women students in that they are forced to spend their recreational periods, away from the predatory behaviour of the men in the Common Room, in the college's corridors or classrooms.

The success of this sexist regime was frequently acknowledged. Some of the lads freely admitted, that even with targeted recruitment drives, the banter would probably continue to actively serve as a deterrent to women entering the industry. For Ben (aged 22, Fabrication and Welding), the discourse was more of an obstacle than the job itself *"because the men are pervs"*. During the economic downturn, when jobs in construction are scare (Turner, 2012), this misogynist regime can be a particularly useful device. The banter, it would seem, helped ensure that the dearth of remaining employment opportunities remain predominantly 'lads' jobs'.

Conclusions

After considering the relationship between masculinities and career choice in the last chapter, the discussion here has focused on how these gender identities are played out within the trades (engineering, motor mechanics and construction). A laddish discourse of masculinity was ingrained within the cultural fabric of the trades, intergenerationally acculturated and introduced by tutors on training courses. Banter formed a key organising tool in the

regulation of these performativities. The primary mechanism in achieving this purpose was its darker side. That is, banter can essentially be a harsh and aggressive discourse that penalises any transgressions from idealised macho behaviours (Collinson, 1988; Smith, 2007; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 2012).

While men enacting subordinate identities were undertaking their training in the trades, they were all openly heterosexual. With a prevailing heterosexist regime of working-class laddism, these sectors constituted a particularly hostile environment for gay men and lesbians. Homophobia and homohysteria, defining features of the cultural fabric of these industries, were regulated and maintained by a vociferous vocabulary of [homophobic] abuse policing transgressions (Anderson, 2011; Bush et al., 2012; Connell, 2002; Harland et al., 2005; McCormack & Anderson, 2010; Haywood and Mac an Ghaill, 2012). With the brutality of this regime, sensitive men, too, were deemed unsuitable for the industry. As discussed above, failure to 'take it' was placed squarely on their shoulders. This attribution of blame to the target of the discourse still prevailed even in circumstances where the banter progressed to bullying. With that said, the boundaries between the two were, at times, nearly impossible to differentiate. Extending this debarment, women were viewed as problematic and consequently subjected to misogyny. With heightened sexual interest from men, their sexual orientation and relationship status was placed on a 'bitch-dyke-whore' taxonomy (Papp, 2006). Lesbians, being regarded as 'unnatural women', may be permitted some acceptance in the industry. Sexual harassment, though, was a commonality for heterosexual women irrespective of whether they are employed as operatives or in other support roles within the sector. Underlining and simultaneously providing justification for these [mis] behaviours, was the fact that women are apportioned the blame for men's sexual predatory overtures.

As a female researcher (an 'outsider') I am managed with courtesy or old-fashioned chivalry. An explanation for this partly rested on the fact that I was perceived, according to several of the young men, as an "older lady" (Will, aged 18, Engineering). Overall, I am fortunate enough to accumulate a dataset of rich and diverse lived experiences. On a few occasions, however, I have been subjected to the persistent sexual harassment that the women interviewed

discussed as enduring. In my case, the two incidences are clearly attributable to a power strategy, as opposed to sexual attraction, in order to 'put me back in place'. I also engaged, paralleling participants, in my own version of performativity (i.e. being more conciliatory, laughing at their jokes which I did not find funny etc.) Rather than deliberately deploying this tactic, though, it is premised on my need to compensate for how uncomfortable I felt when I was being sexually evaluated or otherwise confronted with power battles (for example, as described with Simon above).

From both the lived experiences of the participants and my own experiences, it would seem that the trades, with customary discourses of heteronormativity and homohysteria, remain essentially sexist and homophobic industries. The overarching laddish culture, that has been transmitted from generation to generation, largely facilitates this status quo. These consequential communities of comedians, through maintaining an informal brutal regime of aggressive bantering, grounded in misogyny and homophobia, ensures the continuance of the sectors as highly masculinised ones. That is, only those who successfully pass the 'test' of conforming to macho masculinities (or at least find coping strategies to survive) are able to forge a career within these trades.

Chapter 9

Conclusions

Man-Made Masculinities: The Ill-Fitting Uniform

> "...the pressure to conform is so powerful a centripetal force that it minimises differences, pushing guys into a homogenous, ill-fitting uniform" (Kimmel, 2009:54).

Behind the Mask of Masculinity

I opened this thesis with comments from Teresa May's, now Prime Minister, expressing concern that the white, working-class are often left behind in British society. Although her subsequent plans for the reintroduction of grammar schools in increasing their social mobility (which incidentally I do not agree with) are not included in my analysis, her concerns that the white British working class are disadvantaged have been echoed through my professional life and in my doctoral research. It was a situation I encountered on a day-to-day basis working as a careers officer and my subsequent doctoral research has focused on the particular issues faced by young, white working class me in Hull. Framed within a feminist and sociological gender analysis, my research has gone behind the mask of masculinity to seek to understand what barriers and constraints this group of young men face in relation to career choice.

Living spatially circumscribed lives, my participants' masculinity was particularly tenuous at this juncture of their lives when they were seeking to train and enter the workforce. Aspiring to be 'like dad' they aspired to emulate their fathers' orthodox life and career trajectories. However, many were struggling to negotiate the rites of passage to manhood through being unable to secure an increasingly elusive apprenticeship or full-time paid employment. In an attempt to further validate what were increasingly fragile masculinities, laddish behaviours were engaged in. Although, I have argued that this particular performativity of masculinity is different from the one recently

emerging amongst middle-class men, it is still grounded in and premised on misogynistic and homophobic discourse. For my participants, at least, they were key in demarcating their own sub-hegemonic variant of masculinity. Finally, the fluidity of masculinity is commented upon including its historical variance and ever-changing contextual configurations as young interact and perform with different people (Robinson & Hockey, 2011).

Limiting Working-Class Career Aspirations

As I discuss in Chapter 1, the antecedents for my interest in this academic inquiry began 14 years ago when I was training and subsequently working as a careers guidance practitioner. Anecdotally, there were occasions where my working-class clients appeared disadvantaged in their employment trajectories and future prospects. Generally, men are viewed as in an advantageous position, compared to women, in the horizontally and vertically segregated workforce (Clisby & Holdsworth, 2014). However, it is also widely recognised that masculinity is not a homogenous or singular construction (Alsop et al., 2002; Connell, 2005; Beasley, 2008a; 2008b; Robinson & Hockey, 2011). In other words, intersectionality i.e. similarities and differences within genders as well as between males and females (Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004) has been a crucial to the arguments made in this research. Gender, for instance, is 'classed' with not all men sharing the same privileges and powers. Hence intersections of gender and class account to some extent for the conflict between the statistical superiority of middle-class males in the workplace and the experiences of the working-class men in this study. The former, for example, are disproportionately represented at the top of the occupational hierarchy in senior, corporate and executive positions (Fawcett, 2014). Conversely, many of my participants were undertaking full-time courses in the traditionally masculinised construction trades. Pursuing these career goals ultimately meant that many of them were trapped in a cycle of continuing education (i.e. a lateral rather than vertical progression across courses) due to the concurrent recession

and subsequent contraction of the construction industry[35] (Moulds, 2012; Rhodes, 2012).

For some, entrapment in this cycle of education was around the issue of not having the requisite academic credentials. With qualification inflation, the prize of an apprenticeship (which the participants perceived as the gateway to a career in their chosen trade or field) was elusive. Unlike the lads in *Learning to Labour,* qualifications are now mandatory in order to progress in traditional industries such as plumbing and engineering. Being considered "good with your hands" (Derek, Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) is no longer sufficient for securing entry into one of the trades. Recognising these entry requirements, some had applied themselves at school to achieve the stipulated GCSE grades despite the fact they loathed academic-related subjects.

Part of the issue here is that the participants rejected academic learning as feminised and boring. This was particularly among the frequently self-defined *chavs* who held the dominant positioning in some of Hull schools (particularly those closely associated with the estates). Again, sharing similarities with the lads in Paul Willis's study, they eschewed academic learning in favour of *"having a laff"* (Andrew, aged 16, Joinery). For other complicit identities (particularly those who I refer to as *Mr Average)* as followers, they were often more interested in taking the instant gratification of the entertainment on offer rather than applying themselves academically. In so doing, though, such men have jeopardized their futures further over and beyond the limited chances that were already available. They were the ones most likely to find themselves entrapped in a cycle of education (moving from one Level 1 course to another) because they lacked the necessary academic credentials (i.e. GCSE grades) to progress onto an elusive apprenticeship.

The rejection of academic study as feminised extended to those with the credentials to continue on this educational trajectory. University remained a remote possibility. Rather, men such as Jack (aged 18, Joinery) eschewed further and higher education in favour of *"working with my hands"* within one of the trades. On a prosaic level the fees of going to university were often stated

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[35] Ongoing at the time of the recession during the fieldwork (January-April 2012).

as a deterrent. However, on a more covert level the desire to undertake an apprenticeship or paid employment, in validating their fragile masculine performativities, appeared to be another motivating force (see the discussion below).

There were other reasons as to why some participants underachieved in their examinations. Sean (aged 16, Business Administration) for example (see Chapters 5 and 6) endured many years of homophobic bullying and as consequence *"twagged"* school in order to escape it. Despite only receiving a handful of academic credentials, he still manged to find a position he really enjoyed, a temporary administrative role. There are two caveats here. Firstly, Sean delimited the scope of his educational and career aspirations in order to avoid and minimise his interactions with male peers. Inclusive of these were not continuing in full-time education. Opportunities such as retaking his GCSEs were therefore forsaken. Secondly, he was still extremely concerned about this future as his administrative post was a fixed-term contract covering maternity leave and there was a great deal of uncertainty around what would happen once it ended.

Many of the other participants also narrowed their options albeit to masculinised industries. Potentially more plentiful opportunities in traditionally feminised or gender flexible occupational sectors were rejected with misogynist and homophobic epithets being assigned to those undertaking them. Rather than being viewed in isolation, the complexity of the vocational decision-making process is such that it is closely enmeshed with gender identity and socially prescribed normative behaviours (Gothard, 2003; Simpson, 2005; Kimmel, 2009; Hancock, 2012). The implications of choosing 'women's work' (Hayes, 1986) have far-reaching consequences over and above fulfilling career aspirations. Using Beasley's (2008) revisionist taxonomy of hegemonic masculinity, I have sought to develop a more nuanced understanding of these interconnections between masculinities and career choices. Particularly, I have been interested in exploring the constraints masculinities place on men entering feminised work, but also the power of masculinised professions to validate, define and police masculinities.

The Fishing Mentality: Macho and Working-Class

The proceeding chapters have traced the historical trajectories and set the cultural framing of masculinities within the localised context of Hull. In echoes the former industry, the narrative of a *"fishing mentality"* (Frank, Tutor, Carpentry and Joinery) has been identified as underpinning sub-hegemonic performativities. Similarities between the men employed on the trawlers and also, the participants in Paul Willis's *Learning to Labour* are evidential. As discussed in Chapter 4, these standpoints are in line with the notion that urban daily rhythms and localised social practices echo those of dead industries and ways of life (Allen, 1999). By extension, there was seepage of these into local consciousness and the constructions and reconstructions of gender identities (see below) (Taylor et al., 1996).

Drawing together perspectives and accounts from the lived experiences of participants, the fishing mentality appeared to comprise of two distinct aspects. In its heyday, there was a degree of remoteness between the fishing community and the rest of the city. In continuance of these spatially circumscribed lives, participants reported that it extended to the collective consciousness of Hull residents. As Featherstone (2012) and English (2014) comment, Hull has been depicted as possessing a self-ascribed stand-aloneness, with discourses of deprivation and marginalisation integral to this social and economic deprivation. Colloquially, this has been referred to as 'the end of the line syndrome' (Mitchell & Tate, 1997; Fourteen to Nineteen Partnership, 2010). Included here are dislocated relations to the neighbouring East Riding and wider Yorkshire region (English, 2014).   By inference, this insularity extends to both national and global stages. Internally, within the city boundaries, spatially circumscribed lives were also conspicuous. For example, participants described an 'estates culture' and ensuing gang rivalries evolving from it (see Chapter 6).

Rather than solely attributable to the fishing mentality, such spatially circumscribed lives are not a phenomenon unique to Hull. Similar findings have emerged in a myriad of studies that have focused on young men (Westwood, 1990; Callaghan, 1992; Baumann, 1996; Pearce, 1996; Taylor et al., 1996; O'Byrne, 1997; Watt, 1998). McDowell (2004) for instance, found that

working-class male participants residing in Sheffield and Cambridge never ventured far from their spatially defined territories. Strong identification with the local area is more marked amongst working-class young adults (Charlesworth, 2000; Bell et al., 2005), especially, for those with few academic qualifications and/or credentials (Roberts, 1995). In conjunction with this spatially circumscribed living, depressed aspirations have been found to correlate with living in socially and economically deprived areas. Resonating with the circumstances of many residents in Hull, the city is the third most deprived local authority district in England (DCLG, 2016).

Echoes of the Fisherman: Boys Learning to be Men

Supported by the above stand-aloneness, a second aspect of the fishing mentality was performativity of a variant of a traditional working-class script of masculinity. Comprising this identity were conformist and stereotypical normative constructions of appropriate behaviour, which share similarities with those 'acted out' by men working in the now defunct fishing industry. In this sector, a significant degree of macho bravado was prized, with it arguably being the toughest and most dangerous of the lost industries (Mitchell & Tate, 1997). Evidence for this was provided by high mortality rates, with more injuries and deaths being sustained than in other 'risky' industries such as coal mining (Schilling, 1966). Such machismo work roles validated the masculine performativities of the fisherman.

That echoes or reconstructions of the so-called fishing mentality were grounded within the participants' orthodox scripts can be understood by situating them within Beasley's (2008) revisionist taxonomy of hegemonic masculinity. Although critiqued (see chapter 3), this framework, nevertheless, has provided clarity when presenting and interpreting my research findings on localised typologies.

Working-class masculinity, as aspired and performed by the young men, is usually aligned with a protest variant (Connell, 2005). Hull, as I describe in Chapter 4, has traditionally and continues to be regarded as a working-class city

(to which many of the participants attest) (Avery, 2012). With the demise of the fishing industry in the 1970s and continued deindustrialisation, it has suffered many years of economic and social deprivation. Hull City Council is also one of the local authorities most affected by cuts to public services through the austerity measures introduced by the Coalition Government (2010-2015) and continuing under the present Conservative one (Bridge, 2012; Young, 2014; BBC News, 2016). Ostensibly, a protest variant of masculinity would seem to align with these spatial considerations.

Countering this conclusion, though, is the demarcation made by the participants between their own 'respectable' variant of working-class masculinity and those of the *chavs*. During school, especially at those affiliated to Hull's housing estates, *chavs* frequently maintained the dominant hierarchical positioning via threat, fear, bullying and intimidation. However, at the post-compulsory schooling stage and from the late teens onwards, there is an apparent shift in these hierarchical relations. While still lacking in access to middle-class power and privilege, participants demonise *chavs* for their hypermasculine, high risk machismo behaviours. The *chavettes* (i.e. female *chavs*), on the other hand, are derided for their sexual promiscuity being likened to prostitutes (Neil, aged 19, Motor Mechanics). Furthermore, the cultural identity marker of dress is despised and ridiculed for males and females alike.

It is, though, their unemployment and perceived lack of motivation to work that their *chav hate* was targeted most at. One of the main ways in which the rites of passage to manhood was traditionally confirmed is through paid employment or an apprenticeship, especially, in masculinised industries. Most participants had not been able to achieve this ambition in uncertain times i.e. high youth unemployment and a dearth of apprenticeship opportunities. Consequently, they were entrapped in a cycle of education with their performativities at risk of being "redundant masculinities" (McDowell, 2002:39). While usually argued to be middle-class disgust of the working-classes, my participants adopt *chav hate* to validate their fragile 'respectable' masculinities in their struggle to negotiate their passage to manhood. In this way, this finding highlights the heterogeneity of the working-classes and the differences within classes as well as between them.

So, are my participants performing Connell's (2005) protest variant of masculinity, or, alternatively, a sub-hegemonic masculinity as per Beasley's (2008a) framework? In the locale, were other hierarchical gender identities organised around and subjugated by their conformed performativities? Alternatively, in the absence of any real sense of power (such as financial independence and wealth) were their conformist identities essentially a form of protest? In addressing this question, part of the issue is that many of my sample were recruited from the trades. Potentially, it could be that the emerging dominant typology mirrors the one deeply embedded within the culture fabric of these traditional masculinised sectors. Broadening out of the cohort to include men undertaking other pathways beyond vocational training would help towards resolving this question. For instance, the inclusion of working-class boys undertaking academic pathways such as A levels or degrees would have been insightful. Moreover, I did not include any young men who were unemployed or were engaging in hypermasculine and criminal behaviours. In defining these young males as *chavs,* I rely exclusively on participants' accounts. Given that it is these men (and women) who were being used as a vehicle for affirming respectability, it would be telling, in understanding working-class masculinities, to include their lived experiences (see Research Recommendation 1 below).

In the absence of the above accounts, the emerging conformist masculinity, I argue, does align with a sub-hegemonic variant. Firstly, a locale characterised by its insularity, by extension is also removed from regional, national and global masculinities. With Hull being ascribed as a working-class city, performativities which reflect this cultural context can be envisaged as assuming the pivotal role of localised or sub-hegemonic masculinities. Integral to this disconnectedness, they seek to emulate their fathers to successfully transition to male adulthood.

Another rationale for arguing that these orthodox performativities are sub-hegemonic is that both Beasley (2008) and Shaw (2015) argue that these scripts can be a powerful legitimatizing tool in validating masculinities. Indeed, the laddish qualities appropriated by middle-class men in UK universities provides an example of this process (Phipps, 2014a, 2014b; Phipps & Young, 2013, 2015a, 2015b Phipps & Young 2013, 2015).

For the participants, too, this legitimating role assumed increasing importance. I return now to my second research question, through which I have sought to explore the role of vocational choices in defining and validating gender identities. The research findings suggest that for many of the young men, career pathways played a pivotal role in validating their masculinities. One commonality the young men shared was to be 'like dad'. That is, they frequently identified their fathers as role models and wished to emulate his orthodox life trajectories. Usually, this goal entailed following in the same or similar career pathway as him, notably within the trades. Ideally, for some this included following into his footsteps into the family business. Opportunities for this plan were not always available with the economic downturn and contraction of the construction industries. In turn, they were not able to move forward in the rites of passage (i.e. through paid employment) to manhood.

Consequently, for those entrapped in an ensuing cycle of education, other aspects of the laddish working-class scripts they sought to emulate and perform assumed increasing importance. Ubiquitous in masculinised spaces such as macho sports (for example, rugby), during male bonding (such social drinking) and in the trades, banter or 'lads' talk' was the main conduit for these validating discourses of misogyny, homophobia and *chav hate*. In other words, demonising and subjugating these other identities provided the young men with masculine credit or capital, in order to bolster their fragile masculinities. In this discourse of compulsory heterosexuality (Rich, 1980), by sexually objectifying women, including their girlfriends, the participants could demonstrate they were successfully *"manning up"* (Nick, aged 19, Catering) in their transition to full manhood. The participants may not have secured an apprenticeship but could still legitimatize their masculinity through their heterosexual sexual prowess.

The finding that homohysteria, integral to sub-hegemonic performativities, was rife amongst participants is understandable in these circumstances. It is in stark contrast to the pro-gay attitudes (and by extension intolerance to homophobic ones) of the young men interviewed by McCormack (2012) and McCormack and Anderson (2010). While the participants in my research acknowledged that being gay is much more socially acceptable, the homophobia

that defined and was integral to banter clearly suggests otherwise. Furthermore, we saw the homophobic bullying endured by Sean (aged 16, Business Admin). So what is underpinning this apparent confliction? In explaining their own contrasting findings, McCormack and Anderson (2010) acknowledge that their research was undertaken in a privileged and middle-class context. As such the opposing themes could potentially be explained by class differentials considering the working-class sample my participants are drawn from. However, fragility of the young men's masculinities due to their insecurities about progressing in their careers is another key factor underpinning this heightened homohysteria and homophobia. By 'othering' gay men and demarcating themselves from them, they achieved masculine credit and bolstered their own heterosexual credentials.

In developing a more nuanced understanding of the gendering role that working-class masculinities have in shaping educational and career aspirations (research question 1) it becomes apparent why feminised work was actively avoided. With work still very much a key defining factor in sub-hegemonic masculinity, undertaking 'women's work' would seriously undermine their already tenuous identities. Of course, some participants were training in gender flexible vocational areas. Sean (aged 16, Business Admin) was content with his post in business administration. Partly, this is because it offers him respite from his male peers and increased interactions with women and older workers (who he perceives are both more accepting of his sexuality). Not everyone is in this position though. Carl (aged 18, Catering) was experiencing 'role strain' (Simpson, 2005) on his catering course. Largely, this discomfort arose from dismissive comments made by his peers. His lack of success with women (and thus acquisition of legitimatizing masculinise kudos) compacted this problem. He was, therefore, seeking to revert back to plumbing in which he previously undertook a course.

On the other hand, Laurence (aged 18, Customer Services), found a solution to any conflict through the identification of a gender niche (Crompton, 1997; Lupton, 2000) in his chosen occupational area. He totally realigned the nature and scope of his customer services course describing how he will excel in delivering an aggressive style of sales pitch. Possession of this skills set will be

essential in the highly pressurised, competitive and commission-based cold-calling roles he envisaged himself entering. Laurence also maintained that women would struggle in these highly pressurised environments and are better suited to reception and office-based roles (incidentally the types of jobs his course is preparing him for).

By contrast, for those men undertaking preparation for the uniformed services courses, socialisation into machismo (especially masculine stoicism and toughness under pressure) were regarded as a core aspect of their training (Papp, 2006). Underpinning this 'preparation' was eradication of the wrong (read stereotypically feminine) emotions, thereby equipping them with the tools to be effective *"war and killing machines"* (Brian, Preparation for the Uniformed Services Tutor). Interesting, for those on this trajectory, they were less likely to need to call on the above legimatizing tools, such as sexual objectification of women, for validation of their masculinities.

More than one way of doing masculinities?

As Robinson and Hockey (2011) contend, and as I discuss in Chapter 6, there is a recognised fluidity to typologies of masculinities differing *"within persons"* (Spector-Mersel, 2006: 68) as well as across temporal and spatial dimensions. Nevertheless, the young men's performativities are predominantly more static than fluid. There are a number of factors underpinning this research finding. Firstly, are the aspirations of the lads to actively be 'like dad' through emulating their fathers' orthodox and working-class scripts of masculinities. In addition to career aspirations, the majority of the participants, for example, made the assumption that they would take on the role of breadwinner. In their imagined futures, they described themselves as financially supporting their partner and children. Even for those who are estranged from their fathers, they still aspired to this conventional lifestyle.

In conjunction with this desire, the insularity of the locale facilitates the intergenerational transmission of the *fishing mentality* steering socially prescribed heteronormative behaviours. Similarly, tutors are actively socialising

their students into laddish behaviours particularly through the tool of banter. When recounting their induction into it, I felt that the participants were engaging in a performativity that would not have been out of place circa 1970s. In addressing research question 3- how contemporary laddism intersects with prevailing hierarchies of young, white and working-class masculinities- this process provides us with the key in answering it. Although sharing similarities with the laddish culture in universities, it is different in that it has remained on-going albeit within the closed walls of masculinised spaces.

As commented on in Chapter 8, the culture of the trades and ensuing masculine performativities has remained static. Such a perception can be understood, however, when banter (with intrinsic misogyny and homophobia) is used as a mechanism for ensuring trades such as the construction industry remain preserved as heterosexist masculinised ones. In doing so, invisible barriers to women, gay and less assertive straight men continue to prevail. Susan (aged 17, Joinery) may have been undertaking her training in joinery, but she had been segregated and effectively punished for her interference in the active construction and reconstruction of the young men's masculinities. Finally, as commented above, with the men insecure about their lack of apprenticeship or paid work, they eagerly embrace banter as a legitimating tool in upholding/validating their fragile and outmoded fragile sub-hegemonic masculinities.

Aspects of fluidity, though, have seeped into the local context. Even those men aspiring to conformist scripts of masculinity did deviate in one respect. Unlike dad, marriage was often a bête noire and dismissed as a *"bit of paper"*. Interestingly, this perspective was not only taken by those whose parents are separated but also those whose parents were still married. In the latter case, for example, Edward (aged 19, IT) quotes the divorce statistics and the likelihood of the marriage ending.

For othered heterosexual men, there was a reprieve from the strict normative standards of behaviour and sometimes 'culture of cruelty' (Kindlon et al., 2000) that the above sub-hegemonic variant entails. *Mr Average,* as influenced by *The Inbetweeners* television and films (as opposed to the fishing industry) acknowledged that he did not possess sufficient masculine credit to perform the

dominant conformist masculinity. Rather than feeling inferior because of this positioning within the local hierarchies of masculinities, the series actually validated his identity. As a performance of complicit heterosexual masculinity, though, these men were still required to engage in some sub-hegemonic behaviours to ensure their behaviours did not transgress too far from socially normative ones. Ultimately, in many ways *Mr Average* is a watered down version of the sub-hegemonic typology.

As a recognised performance on the *front stage* (Goffman, 1959;1974), success is dependent on varying it from one context to another. Within the male peer group assuming an exaggerated laddish persona facilitates male bonding and accrual of masculine credit. Examples include bragging about sexual conquest or taking vast qualities of alcohol *"like a man"* (Nick, aged 18, Catering). Conversely, when they were with their girlfriend being more 'sensitive' was recognised as necessary behaviour, albeit a behaviour that was simultaneously policed - as women (girlfriends) are guardians of masculinity too and do not want their men to appear 'too sensitive'. This sensitivity is nevertheless also a recognised performance. Many of the young men state that their true selves fall somewhere between these two performativities: the laddish and the sensitive enactments. As Goffman (1974) would state, it was only when in the *back stage* i.e. alone or with their family that they could truly be themselves.

Fluidity or seepage from dominant scripts may be socially acceptable where masculine credit can be built up in other ways. As with the fisherman on trawlers, participation in heavy and excessive alcohol consumption constituted a form of male bonding sustaining and supporting scripts of sub-hegemonic masculinity (both in terms of 'testing' and 'proving' their endurance to 'take it'). Questions were inevitably raised about men refraining from social drinking. For instance, abstinence is frequently accompanied by accusations of homosexuality. Therefore, many men overcame their initial ambivalence to alcohol, frequently because there was a deficiency of 'credit' in other areas of their lives. For example, a man may opt for a career in a gender-balanced or traditionally female-dominated occupational area, especially within the context of increasingly consumer-driven labour markets. In either of these instances, such transgressions from the macho masculine script would by many have been deemed as feminine (albeit to varying degrees) and therefore 'unmanly'.

Demonstrating 'drinking competence' on the other hand, appeared to ensure the accrual of considerable masculine credit thus balancing out to some extent the above contraventions. Matthew (aged 18, Business Administration) for example, described how he only drank alcohol for the 'male bonding' this facilitated. He admitted that he did not actually enjoy it or like the taste. While Matthew managed to *"get by"* with only consuming a *"few drinks"* in his particular circle of friends, drinking competence for many entailed *"taking your drink like a man"* (Nick, aged 18, Catering).

In this final section of the chapter, I offer a number of recommendations for future research. These include two ethnographies, one exploring the estates culture in more depth and the other set on the shop floor in the construction industry. Finally, an extension of this study to explore masculinities across the Yorkshire and Humber region is also suggested. In doing so, this would mirror the *Breakthrough* research on women in the Yorkshire and Humber region (Holdsworth et al, 2007), which was one of the inspirations behind this PhD.

'Life on the Edge': Research Recommendation 1

As discussed in Chapter 6, an academic and research-based ethnography of Hull's proposed estates culture would offer the perspectives of those living in these communities. In this thesis, participants closely align these spaces with *chavs* and offer their perspectives, via the lens of *chav hate,* on the latter's hypermasculine behaviours and unemployment status. Based on one of the estates, I wish to explore these and other emerging themes of the research through the narratives of residents. Two of my participants already have provided insights into their experiences of growing up on two different estates. Their lived experiences suggest that, with advanced marginality (Wacquant, 2007, 2008; Rhodes, 2012), these areas have become stigmatized neighbourhoods or to coin Wacquant's (2007) terminology 'blemish of place'. For example, Carl (aged 18, Catering) believes that the notoriety of the estate he grew up with precluded him from undertaking jobs, especially, where case handling is involved. As an 'urban outcast' (Rhodes, 2012) Ben (aged 22,

Engineering) recounts his former experiences as an estate gang member which included a myriad of anti-social, risk-taking and hypermasculine behaviours.

Aside from only two participants (both of which were anxious to escape the estate), another potential limitation of the methodological approach deployed in this thesis is that the participants' narratives are communicated in a face-to-face interviewing situation. Rather, through an ethnography and on-going observation of and interactions with residents would be more informative in fully capturing the essence of the theoretical proposition of an estates culture. Sampling would be broadened from primarily young men and would include the collation of intergenerational perspectives. Achievement of this aim would be through engagement with families as opposed to individually selecting participants.

Out on the Shop Floor: Seething Sexism

Research Recommendation 2

In chapter 8, banter was argued to be deeply ingrained within the laddish cultural fabric of the trade-based industries. To optimise understanding of this aggressive humorous discourse, grounded in misogyny and homophobia, an ethnography based within the industry is recommended. I would argue that the presence of female researcher working as an operative would offer a unique lens through which to carry out the research. In advocating this suggestion, the critique could be advanced that a male researcher (as for example in Collinson's (1988) research in the components division of a lorry producing factory) would integrate more successfully in the cultural fabric of the construction industry. Chapter 8 certainly explored some of the difficulties Susan encountered. A female researcher, nevertheless, could detail in her field notes relationships with individual men including whether she was uniformly sexually objectified (and harassed) or if she managed to form friendships with any of them. Alternatively, how she reacted to the banter and any subsequent changes she made to her behaviour i.e. guyification (Kimmel, 2009) would also be another interesting area to explore. Overall, she would be able to provide her

perspective on what it means to be a woman working and/or training in a traditionally male-dominated industry where a sexist regime (circa 197Os) is still rife.

Breakthrough Part II: Men's Gendered Experiences in Yorkshire

Research Recommendation 3

Finally, in addition to the two ethnographies described above, the, outcomes of this doctoral research project highlights the importance of further comparative studies of men's gendered experiences in the Yorkshire and Humber region through the life course. In complementing the *Breakthrough* project (that was so instrumental to the development of my thesis) this would entail widening the geographical scope from a case study of Hull to other cities and rural areas within the county boundaries. Moreover, rather than focusing on young masculinities, men at various junctures of the lifespan would be encouraged to take part. Thus it is envisaged that this would capture intergenerational changes and differences in performativity across the life span. As with this thesis, one aspect would be to consider perspectives on professional roles, attitudes to work, breadwinning and unemployment. In recognition though of the shift from a culture of production and manufacturing (especially relevant to Yorkshire towns and cities) to one of consumption, retail and tourism, the impact on men personally (for example, self-esteem, confidence, self-perception in line with breadwinner ideologies etc.) would also form a crucial element of this research proposal.

Final Conclusions

The title of my thesis is 'New Lad or Just like Dad?' It seems that for my working-class participants they were by and large emulating their fathers. With one or two exceptions (such as not wishing to marry which they shy away from

due to parental breakdown), they share the same orthodox career and life aspirations. They were conformist in their aspirations to adhere to mainstream social norms of acceptable masculinity.

The challenge for these young men, however, is the same rites of passage to manhood their fathers enjoyed were not necessarily open to them. For those who overcame their dislike of academic study and applied themselves the future looks to be the most positive. It is those entrapped within a cycle of education who may need to reconsider their career aspirations as the openings they aspire to may not become readily available.

The fragility of their masculinities, through their lack of validation via securing paid employment or an apprenticeship, means that they seek other conduits to construct and reconstruct their masculinities. *Chav hate* provides reinforces their standpoint of their work ethnic (although as yet untested) equipping them with the respectability of their fathers and step-fathers. Laddish behaviours, grounded in misogyny and homophobia, similarly offer them further avenues for accrual of masculine credit. Unlike the variant appropriated by middle-class men, there is an intergenerational element to my participants' way of 'doing lad'. Although influenced in part by the media (i.e. *The Inbetweeners)* in the lads spatially circumscribed lives they are predominantly acculturated into it by older men but mainly their tutors.

Several contributions to the research literature have been made within this doctoral thesis. My academic journey commenced with wishing to determine some of the constraints working-class men encounter in their career choices. Contributing to the careers guidance literature, I offer a more nuanced understanding of their resistance to embark on gender atypical vocational trajectories. Careers officers have often been attributed the blame for steering teenagers into gender stereotypic choices. However, what is happening here is much more profound. Echoing previous generations, the participants were attempting to achieve the rites of passage to manhood via securing a socially approved apprenticeship. The trades are idealised in this respect. Some men may find gendered niches in gender flexible occupational areas where they can

validate their masculinities to varying degrees of success. Nevertheless, unless these young men find other ways of doing masculinity instead of the fragile, intergenerationally transmitted and static script they are currently aspiring too, their career options remain limited. At worst, after finding themselves entrapped in a cycle of education they may ultimately end up schooling or training for the dole (Bates et al, 1984).

In terms of the masculinities literature, performativities have often been characterised by their fluidity changing over temporal and spatial dimensions. My findings contrast with this evolving pattern significantly. Rather, the young men's scripts are comparatively static in that they are attempting to emulate not only their father's orthodox lifestyles, but those of previous generations too. Hinged on the fishing mentality, they are seeking to do masculinities that are not longer fit for purpose in the current job market. Their performativities of this fragile variant mean that not only do they find themselves entrapped in a cycle of education (as described above) but also in cycle of desperately finding new ways of validating their own sub-hegemonic performance.

Banter, with its misogynistic and homophobic discourse, was eagerly embraced as a means of accruing masculine credit in lieu of paid work. *Chav hate,* as a new legitimatising mechanism may affirm their respectability albeit on the fragile premise that they wish to work rather than that are *actually* undertaking an apprenticeship or in paid work. On this note, the research also contributes to the whiteness literature. That is, what is traditionally a middle-class disgust is being implemented by working-class men themselves to demarcate strivers (i.e. the participants) from skivers (i.e. the *chavs*) (Gary, aged 25, Engineering).

Finally, the research spotlights the similarities between the laddish behaviours evidenced on universities campuses and those performed by my working-class participants. Misogyny and homophobia are integral to both and provide ways of legitimatising masculinities where the position of both sets men are increasingly precarious. A distinct difference is that laddism is intergenerationally transmitted from tutors, fathers and older men to my participants. It may have been carried out covertly behind the closed doors of the construction industry, rugby pitch or male peer groups, but it has always

prevailed. However, without a job or an apprenticeship, these traditional regimes have assumed a much greater importance in validating masculinities. Along with *chav hate,* it appears that these legitimatizing tools are precariously keeping the young men's fragile scripts at the pinnacle of localised gender hierarchical arrangements. However, without the conduit of paid work, theirs could still become, as McDowell (2002:39) coins it, "redundant masculinities".

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