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Sheffield Hallam University
Award of Doctorate in Education

Contexts of Cultural Capital in Collaborative Practice in Further Education

Robert Patrick Baker

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
of Sheffield Hallam University for the degree of Doctorate in Education

May 2012

You said it my good knight! There ought to be laws to protect the body of acquired knowledge.

Take one of our good pupils, for example, modest and diligent; from his earliest grammar classes he's kept a little notebook full of phrases. After hanging on the lips of his teachers for twenty years, he's managed to build up an intellectual stock in trade; doesn't it belong to him as if it were a house, or money?

Paul Claudel (1929), *Le soulier de satin (The Satin Slipper)*,
Act III, Scene ii.

Abstract

This study explores ownership and manifestations of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984) demonstrated by a sample of lecturers in the UK Further Education ('FE') sector and the influence this has on cross-college collaborative practice. The research was conducted at three colleges in the English Midlands in 2010-11 employing a *researcher-as-bricoleur* approach (Kincheloe 2002). Knowledge explaining inhibitor or activator mechanisms involved in collaborative working is essential if the sector is to gain from the opportunities of innovative problem solving afforded by communities of practice (Wenger et al. 2002). The significance of this knowledge is amplified when considered against the background of efficiency pressures resulting from funding cuts to FE proposed in the Government's 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review.

The study found the types and magnitude of lecturers' cultural capital and the patterns of its deployment should act, in the main, as enablers for collaborative practice. Despite their middle-class professional status lecturers tend to exhibit popularist to middlebrow cultural affinities. The minority of practitioners who possessed 'highbrow' cultural capital tend to classify as cultural omnivores rather than exhibiting traits solely associated with univores (Peterson 1992, Peterson and Kern 1996). Few lines of cultural cleavage were found, with one notable exception. There was evidence of antipathy resulting from dislocations of capital owned by lecturers delivering Higher Education programmes in the FE environment and their predominantly FE line managers and FE lecturer colleagues. The asset value of cultural capital is depressed in comparison to more valuable 'organisational knowledge' capitals, for example an understanding of college bureaucratic practice and procedure. Deployment of high cultural capital where it might be exchanged for status tends to be suppressed. There was evidence of strong enthusiasm for collaboration, possibly due to the tolerance of the cultural omnivore (Erickson 1996), but *Homo Actificivm*[1] is encountering significant obstacles to cross-college working: physical isolationism, the *précarité* of job insecurity (Bourdieu 1998a), and restrictions imposed by inter-departmental competition within college.

The thesis argues that to promote innovative collaborative practice Further Education colleges should rebalance the emphasis in their accommodation strategies to give more of an equal weighting to staff provision as they do for students. In the light of the findings, wherever possible, colleges should consider enlarging staffrooms and providing additional cost-efficient informal social network spaces for their staff organised around the optimum 'Dunbar number' (Dunbar 1992) in order to catalyse 'community'.

---

[1] The lecturer 'species' Homo Artificium is contrived from the study's results. Its name, etymologically from the Latin 'artificium', encompasses the notion of skill, ability and opportunity. It attempts to encapsulate FE's *raison d'être* that of the UK's "Lifelong Learning and Skills Sector". The characteristics of the species are dissimilar to a distant relative, Homo Academicus, postulated by Bourdieu (1984b) following his research into the cultural capital possessed by Parisian university academics [pun intended]. My interpretation of Homo Artificium is depicted on the bookmark.

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Of course no piece of research can ever be completed without the contribution of those colleagues who freely took time out of busy schedules to complete surveys and

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It becomes apparent throughout doctoral study that the researcher needs understanding and support from his immediate family to somehow legitimise the seclusion of many hours of work spent planning, negotiating, interviewing, thinking, analysing, drafting and redrafting, most of it pervading family time. I will be forever in the debt of Carole, Alexis, Adam, Penny and Craig - for the time I diverted to this project was really *their* time.

The shortcomings in what follows are, of course, singularly my responsibility.

Gateford
July 2012

Chapter One

FOUNDATIONS

> To be able to see and describe the world as it is, you have to be ready to be always dealing with things that are complicated, confused, impure, and uncertain, all of which runs counter to the usual idea of intellectual rigour (Bourdieu et al. 1991, p 259).

1.1 A vignette - shenanigans in the Valedown staffroom

One of the twin triggers for the study was a seemingly innocuous event. I was lecturing in computing science and business at Valedown College in 2007 when tensions in working relations surfaced after the installation of a cross-discipline lesson observation regime[2]. Valedown's relatively small size in comparison to other 'general' FE colleges (it had fewer than 1000 full-time students) and its need to improve on its long-held 'barely satisfactory' Ofsted grade[3] had catalysed a series of organisational rationalisations and restructures between 2000 and 2007. The latest in 2007, shortly before I joined the college, placed the Computing Science Department functionally responsible to the head of the Hair, Beauty and Complementary Therapies School ('HBCT'). When the restructure was announced the four computing science lecturers began to raise concerns centred on what they considered to be "less well qualified hairdressers" carrying out their lesson observations, arguing that the HBCT programme

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[2] There is a requirement in FE for a lecturer to be observed in a formal teaching session annually as part of a college's quality monitoring and continuous improvement procedure. Notice is given of impending observation but the session to be observed is selected at random by the observation team. The lesson observation grade awarded is recorded on the lecturer's personnel record.

[3] Ofsted inspectors make judgements in lesson observations, college provision and management on a four point scale (1 = outstanding, 2 = good, 3 = satisfactory, 4 = inadequate). The same scale is generally used in college initiated observations.

managers - the observers - would have difficulty understanding the high technical content of the computing science lessons. Subsequently, one of the computing science lecturers was graded a '4' ("inadequate" on the Ofsted scale). A raft of special measures was invoked as a result, including his mandatory attendance at peer teaching and learning remedial workshops, eventual re-observation, and forfeit of his entitlement to an annual pay increment. Antipathy in the department heightened when it became clear that colleagues from HBCT would be delivering the remedial peer-support sessions. Three weeks after this 'inadequate' grade observation, another of my computing colleagues, V17, was planning some form of reprisal. Attempting to highlight deficiencies in the observation regime and point up the claimed asymmetry of 'knowledge' between observer and observed, he insisted his observation due to take place that week be video recorded. In the lesson, he intentionally misinformed his BTEC National Diploma students on certain technical computing points intending to challenge the objectivity and robustness of the observation grade awarded by his HBCT Programme Manager observer and hence the validity of the entire observation process. The trick worked. The observer did not pick up on his 'errors'. After the observation debrief and a short but heated altercation, my colleague went back to his students, apologising profusely, to correct the 'errors' so not to disadvantage their learning.

Over lunch immediately following this latest incident there was, perhaps unsurprisingly, collegiate-style staff-room banter: *"What does she know? Nice-looker, but at the end-of-the-day she's only a hairdresser!"* In the same exchange V17 claimed some kind of distinction from his hairdresser-observer who he misled, producing and waiving a receipt from his wallet for a recent restaurant meal for himself and his wife for £96 (2007 prices) as evidence of his haute cuisine tastes (and accompanying propensity to spend) and a token of "the difference in culture".

I finished off my pre-packed prawn mayonnaise sandwich and went to class ruminating on the morning's events.

Two months or so afterwards, tensions turned into overt resistance to the attempted migration of 'exemplar' working practices from the HBCT section, around the time I left for my new lecturing post at Riverford, a move unconnected with happenings at Valedown.

1.2 Career contrasts and the intellectual puzzle

The introductory chapter continues by depicting the study's intellectual puzzle that emerged from two apparently unrelated phenomena, the Valedown incident and a stark contrast I experienced when I changed career and moved into Further Education in 2000. It progresses by tracking my thinking from the intellectual puzzle into the framing of the research questions. A brief exposition of the relevance of the study's two meta-analytical frameworks follows. Knowledge gleaned from the project's pilot study in 2009 significant in informing the research is then introduced before the chapter ends signposting the content of the remainder of the thesis.

The project then was triggered by an intellectual curiosity bridging between the staffroom remarks regarding the graded observation sessions at Valedown and a contrast I drew between my eight years in academia and my twenty years previous manufacturing sector experience: the rarity of practitioner-inspired collaborative problem solving forums at the college's operational level. To develop the contrast: the three FE colleges where I had worked between 2000 and 2008 all had cross-college working groups but invariably these came into existence driven by senior management initiatives. The paucity of empowered communities[4] was surprising given that I was now lecturing at an 'outstanding' Ofsted grade one college, Riverford in the English Midlands, where I co-ordinate Foundation and Bachelor's Degree programmes. Previously I had worked at Hillstown College in the north of England, graded 'good', grade 'two'. Trading on my first career experiences I began to conjecture that empowered employees sharing a passion for certain aspects of practice, coalescing in 'communities' working collaboratively might, in part at least, have contributed to these colleges' success. This clearly was not the case. This situation was in stark contrast to my first career experience in middle-management with a FTSE 100-listed private sector manufacturing company. Here, many 'difficult' operational problems, particularly

[4] For brevity I use *community* and *community of practice* interchangeably. However a community of practice is distinct from the more general notion of community. In Brown and Duguid's eyes it is not necessarily contiguous, well-ordered or well-defined; it is not particularly harmonious or community minded; and it is not something that can be created by organisational fiat (Brown and Duguid 1992) or that respects organisational boundaries (Orr 1991).

The term 'community of practice' has been redefined since Lave and Wenger's (1991) original use of the term to describe 'situated learning' of apprentices. The thesis uses Wenger et al.'s (2002) concept of communities of practice as unorthodox knowledge creation mechanisms "to create, expand and exchange knowledge and to develop individual capabilities" (2002, p42).

those embracing quality improvement and cost reduction, were resolved in 'communities of practice' - informally organised, non-managerially directed, empowered collaborative teams. Defined by their co-proponents Lave and Wenger as "a set of relations among persons, activity and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice", communities of practice are formed when "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger, McDermott and Synder 2002, p 115, also Lave and Wenger 1991, Wenger 1998). Their term implies:

> "participation in an activity system about which the participants share understandings concerning what they are doing and what it means in their lives and in their communities" (Wenger, McDermott and Synder 2002, p115).

Wenger lays down three dimensions to the concept of community: "mutual engagement", "a joint enterprise" and a "shared repertoire" between its members (Wenger 1998, p73). Through a Habermasian lens (1987) discerning the inter-subjective social world, communities of practice foster both a pragmatic approach and provide a nexus: both an adaptive system and a response mechanism to deal with complexity and dynamism through which proto-solutions of complex problems, such as those that surface in managing educational practice, its cost and quality, emerge through physical or virtual forums in which participants coalesce their ideas.

In the middle part of my private sector career I witnessed the evolution of process technologies ('TQM', 'JIT' and 'ZD', for instance[5]) and its effect on organisational thinking. Fordist authoritative-benevolent management styles of the 1970s (McGregor 1960) were dispelled and superseded with the employee-empowered 'Japan-ised' organisational cultures of the 1990s. The transition involved seeding the notion of the company as a 'learning organisation' (Senge 1990, Senge, Kleiner et al. 1994, Argyris, 1994) in attempts to kick-start the production and reification of Gibbons et al.'s "mode 2" knowledge, knowledge that is co-constructed, context-driven and interdisciplinary rather than "mode 1" knowledge, the discipline based and investigator-initiated knowledge that concentrates on 'task' and not 'process' (Gibbons et al. 1994). Enterprise-wide communities of practice were pivotal in achieving this fundamental

[5] 'Total Quality Management', 'Just-in-Time' manufacturing, 'Zero-defects' (Ishikawa 1985, Ohno 1988).

interdisciplinarity. This interdisciplinarity led, in turn, to a significant change in working practices - practices that were, in part, attempts to win over employees' "hearts and minds" through collaborative practice in envisaged "workplaces of the future" (Thompson and Warhurst 1998, p1).

This discrepancy between what I had experienced and what I was witnessing in college appeared to be echoed in the early reading I undertook around the time of the project's inception. A large part of the 'professional' Further Education discourse, as opposed to the pedagogical discourse, I found focused on aspects of managerialist-professional tensions. Relatively little considers the newer organisational forms and philosophies in the education context; forms and philosophies that had sprung up in non-education sectors as a result of strategies to restructure, downsize and outsource, tactics that responded to contingent macro-economic shocks and crises. Indeed when I checked Ofsted's parallel reports *"Why colleges succeed"* and *"Why colleges fail"* compiled from evidence drawn from 349 FE college and specialist institution inspections from 2001 onwards, the phrase "community of practice" was entirely absent. The word "community" only appears in reference to a college's immediate catchment area - "their community" - and in the sense of "community provision" (Ofsted 2004).

Given the almost labyrinthine organisational complexity of FE, the centrality of its tacit knowledge in quality improvement, and the non-routine nature of many of its problems (as I establish later in the thesis), empowered practitioners working in ideal-type communities of practice, similar to those I had witnessed previously, seemed an entirely appropriate problem-resolving mechanism. Avis argues similarly, but from an FE policy perspective, the need for "localism" through devolvement and empowerment to change the form of FE governance:

> "As a result of the complexity of systems it is necessary to devolve power downwards to practitioners, communities and other stakeholders to make interventions at a local level" (Avis 2009, p 644).

Moreover, the need for innovative problem-solving mechanisms, and by implication this research's significance, is amplified when viewed in the context of proposed cuts in grant funding to FE colleges post 2011-12 aimed at reducing the UK's fiscal deficit. As the Minister for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, John Hayes, relayed in a speech at Hackney College in July 2010 launching consultation on the proposed cuts,

"Spending more isn't essential if you are prepared to spend more wisely". Confirming the need for innovative thinking Hayes proposed "FE can deliver more and save money by challenging 'orthodox assumptions'" (Hayes 2010).

1.3 Theoretical underpinning

In 2007 at the start of my Ed.D. programme as I trawled for interesting and context-important research opportunities the complexity of FE within which I had worked for seven years began to unravel. The rich and diverse amalgam of its provision, its students, and its teaching staff became increasingly apparent[6]. Paradoxically, perhaps, in the case of the latter I found most occupational classification schemes ignore the diversity of the backgrounds of FE teaching staff and conflate the occupation of 'college lecturer' as a middle-class profession.[7] This homogeneous classification appears to mask and belie the spectrum of the histories, experience, knowledge and education of its practitioners, a raw nerve in the Computing Science department at Valedown. Lecturers are employed in the sector for their diversity of expertise in delivering programmes of study as dissimilar as the 'NVQ in industrial cleaning and support services' and a 'B.Sc. (Hons.) in Computing Science'. Disconcordant with the situation I was seeing in FE, the composition of communities in my previous company, in its 'quality circles' and 'tiger teams' for instance, would encompass an equivalently diverse spread of backgrounds and status. Senior executives would share their passion and join in spontaneous collaborative ventures with staff volunteers from many levels of the organisation and from most, if not all, of its business departments. This, at a time when 'single status' principles with privileges levelled across hierarchical 'rank' were being redefined by the new Japanese manufacturing plants in the UK (Oliver and Wilkinson 1992).

I began to link the two phenomena - the shenanigans at Valedown and the paucity of communities in FE - to conjecture that the incidence of practitioners coming together to work effectively together might be influenced by the similarities and differences in capitals, particularly cultural capital, that practitioners possess and deploy in the social

6 It is common for colleges to deliver qualifications from QCF 'entry level' to bachelor's honours level, and from the overtly academic (e.g. 'A' level mathematics) to the overtly vocational (e.g. bricklaying) to students from the age of 14 to retired senior citizens.

7 For example the 'International Standard Classification of Occupations' (ISCO-88).

space of the FE field. Instrumental in illuminating this inkling was the work of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002). Applying Bourdieu's work as a meta-theoretical perspective *a priori* was to guide my attempt at understanding events and phenomena. Low level theory, for example the finding that capitals *other* than the cultural type are significant in positioning the agent in the structure of the FE field, was built *a posteriori* grounded in data analysis (Glaser and Strauss 1967). The starting point for any attempted theoretic unification was, to use Bourdieu's phrase, the recognition of an "ontological complicity" in facets of the intellectual puzzle (1982, p 47). Once the puzzle was explicitly framed by the research questions, Bourdieu's ethereal conceptual framework of capital-habitus-field became a central tenet of the analysis of the bridge between the study's trigger event and my observation. In his conceptual schema, lecturers as social agents, Bourdieu reminds us, possess various forms and magnitudes of capital: economic (assets); cultural (culturally valued and authorised taste and patterns of consumption, knowledge, awards, skills and education); social (networks of influence and support) and symbolic (power, prestige, recognition). Operating within a system of exchange, these capitals position the agent's status in the 'field'. Incongruities between the types and magnitude of an agent's capital and resultant position and status within the field appeared commonplace in FE. High-level qualifications (B.A., B.Sc. etc.) constitute valuable elements of, in Bourdieuian terminology, objectified cultural capital granting symbolic capital, but did not in every case, it appears, guarantee career progression or referent prestige between colleagues. My computer science colleagues at Valedown appeared typical. I became interested in digging a little deeper into possible theoretical linkages between the diversity of practitioners' habituses (Mauss 1934, Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) - the individual structures characterised by acquired schemata, dispositions and tastes operating beneath the level of rational calculation and choice - and the fact that these may somehow influence the incidence of collaborative working. Could antipathy between lecturers, of the type illustrated to the hairdresser observer, I conjectured, be somehow related to their respective culinary tastes? Could the symbolism of a lecturer's hospitality and catering background, for instance, deter her from working alongside a sociologist, or a bricklayer or a mathematician?

I turn now to introduce a Bourdieuian perspective briefly in order to explain my initial ideas a little further. Habitus, Bourdieu explains, is a property of the agent: a "structured

and structuring structure", "structured" by one's past and present circumstances (upbringing, cultural and educational experiences giving rise to dispositions that generate perceptions, appreciations and practices) and "structuring" in the way that the habitus shapes one's present and future practices (1994, p170). There is more interlocking. Practice, Bourdieu advances, results from relations between the habitus, the agent's position in the field, situated by capital possessed and the impacts of its deployment, and the current state of play in the dynamic social arena - the 'field' (Bourdieu 1986). Durable, mutable and oriented towards the practical, the habitus thus conditions the lecturer to feel as if he is a free agent, but his everyday decisions are based on assumptions about dispositions: the predictable character, behaviour and attitudes of others. Critically though there are no explicit rules dictating such practice: the logic of practice incorporates rational thinking with "regulated improvisations" resulting from the unconscious taking in of rules, values and dispositions (Bourdieu 1977, p78). Behaviour is "regulated without being the product of obedience to rules" (Bourdieu 1994, p65). These regularities are evident across the social world: why, as Willis (1977) puts it, working class kids get working class jobs, why middle-class readers tend to enjoy middlebrow literature, and perhaps why some practitioners from some Further Education disciplines and curriculum areas shun others. Social practices are thus characterised by regularities that bring together both objective social structure and subjective personal experiences:

> "the dialectic of the internalization of externality and the externalisation of internality" (Bourdieu 1977, p22).

My train of thought was suggesting that manifestations of cultural capital in practice and an individual's cultural affinities and dispositions might bring about regularities that inhibit or promote social closure and collaboration. A further small, but as it turned out later, significant premise embedded in Bourdieu's work, was that the distribution and subsequent exchange of cultural capital might condition the probability of social contact by linkages in status and through proximities in social space.

1.4 Translating the thinking into research questions

I conducted a pilot study in 2009 testing a Bourdieuien analysis of the contexts of cultural capital in a small sample of lecturers *(n=7)*. A purposive sampling frame (Patton 1990, Kuzel 1999) was used to select participants from three colleges on two

criteria - curriculum area and known vocational career history - allowing as broad dispersion as possible given the pilot study's scale constraints. Participants here included two lecturers with bachelor's degrees who had switched into teaching after 7-10 year long careers in other sectors, one from the legal profession, the other an ex-RAF officer. The sample also included a post-graduate 'career' academic, and two vocational lecturers, one who had served a long career in logistics management and another who had pursued a Civil Service career before to teaching ICT. The pilot study revealed several interesting polarities in the deployment and exploitation of cultural capital and, in retrospect, gave inklings into a cultural homogeneity within the sample but because of its scope its findings could not be treated as statistically significant. Work in the pilot study did however inform the final research design and consolidated four principal aims for the main study. These were:

Aim (1): to determine the types and relative magnitudes of lecturers' cultural capital.

Aim (2): to explore lecturers' attitudes to collaborative 'cross-college' working.

Aim (3): to investigate any relationship between cultural capital held and deployed and attitude to collaborative working.

Aim (4): based on the investigations for (1), (2) and (3), to suggest how effective collaborative working might be promoted.

Translating my initial thinking, through these aims, to formulate research questions brought explicit framing, additional clarity and heightened focus to the project. In the process linguistic precision[8] and logical sequencing of the research questions in a deterministic order, that is determining the existence of an entity, whether material or phenomenal, the *'what?'*; before attempting to determine its attributes, the *'how?'*; and any possible 'causal'[9] chain of effects, was a critical step. At the end of the pilot study in the autumn of 2009 four research questions remained:

RQ1 What are the manifestations of practitioners' cultural capital?

RQ2 How do these differ, if at all, across practitioners from different subject areas?

RQ3 What is the significance of the volume and type of cultural capital displayed by practitioners in group formation processes and collaborative working cultures?

RQ4 Based on the findings, what are the implications for promoting a greater degree of productive collaborative working?

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[8] Interestingly Bourdieu identified *linguistic precision* as a culturally distinguishing characteristic.

[9] The study takes Bunge's (1996) delimitation of the natural science and sociological interpretations of 'causality'. See Chapter Three.

Informed by two strands, those of the practical work done in the pilot, and another theoretical component. Searle's work on the philosophy of fact (Searle 1995), I began to appreciate further the "ontological complicity" within these research questions (Bourdieu *ibid.*). There were epistemically objective elements, for example, cultural capital objectified both in credentials and qualifications, and capital embodied in consumption patterns and taste. There were elements, too, of the subjective: descriptions of aesthetic taste, and interpretation of the values of vocational experience, and attitudes to collaboration. Then there were ontologically subjective facets that were epistemologically objective, demarcations of cultural taste in the membership of collaborative groups, for instance. It was here that Searle's 1995 work describing a hierarchical taxonomy of fact, separating the "bare bones" of the ontology (Searle 1995, p5) and disaggregating the epistemologically objective from the epistemologically subjective, was to appear an apposite framework on which to scaffold the study's design and methodology. Searle's work was to become the study's second organising meta-theoretical framework.

Using this disaggregation, I considered that work in securing *Aim (1)* would use quantitative and qualitative techniques to detect embodied, objectified and institutionalised cultural capitals (Bourdieu 1984a) and open up interesting triangulation possibilities through to Bourdieu's seminal ethnographic study in France (1973-1984), his study of Parisian academia (1988) and to more recent studies in the UK, for instance, Bennett et al (2009)[10]. The investigative processes pursuing *Aim (2)* would centre on quantitative and qualitative data. *Aim (3)*, too, would use a mixture of methods. Advancing recommendations, *Aim (4),* the results of which would be conditional on predecessor findings, would draw on the study's primary data twinned with secondary data in an, as yet, unknown area. Recognition of this complex mix of ontological facets in the research terrain began to consolidate my thinking in the direction of a *researcher-as bricoleur* investigative approach.

[10] And in future work, to the 'BBC Lab UK' study being carried out by Savage and his team at the University of York concurrently. This work is described in Chapter Two. BBC Lab UK suggests that "preliminary results from this experiment will be made available later in 2011, in a special television documentary and online at BBC Lab UK. The full findings will be published in a suitable peer-reviewed journal." http://www.bbc.co.uk/labuk/articles/class/faq.html, accessed 21 December 2011.
The findings were not available in late December 2011.

The fieldwork for the main study was carried out in 2010 and 2011 at three general FE colleges in the English Midlands using an eclectic mix of quantitative survey *(n=71)* and qualitative methods - the *bricolage.* Data from the mix's components were analysed concurrently. Throughout the work I was aware of my natural bias towards positivism. I trained in the natural sciences but involvement in tandem projects with my Ed.D. tutors running parallel to my doctoral studies, the first using videonarrative to narrate its journey (reported on in Taylor et al., 2011)[11], and the second, a Bourdieuian analysis of its trajectory led by my Supervisor, I found increasingly I had traded an insistence on the rigour of logical positivism for an entanglement with multiple realities, multiple perspectives and recognition of the mutability of 'truth'[12]. I resisted strenuously on my research journey what Kierkegaard (1846) defines as *"ressentiment"*, that is a particular sense of hostility directed at that which one identifies as the cause of one's frustration (Poole 1993), a concept paralleled by Bourdieu:

> "Isn't the root of my revolt [...] and the rhetorical vibration of my adjectives when I describe Giscard d'Estaing[13] playing tennis, the fact that deep down I envy what he is?" (1992, p212).

Substituting "College Principal" for the name of the French President, "managerialism" for "tennis", I arrive at a restatement that, in some small measure, might be taken as identifying part of my position. Following Holstein and Gubrium's (2008) advice, I have attempted to 'analytically bracket' that position and my natural biases and resisted, I hope strenuously, the encroachment of these in the thesis. Following Medawar (1963) and Polanyi's (1967) stand on the 'myth of objectivity' in research, I provide a personally-completed survey instrument at Annexe A in the format completed by the research participants. I have desisted from analysis of its data instead inviting the reader to interpret these without my further elaboration and use the data to colour the attempted objectivity of my findings and conclusions.

[11] My epistemological shift from positivism to encompass interpretivism is relevant to this thesis. A copy of this paper published in the July 2011 *International Journal of Research & Method in Education* is attached.

[12] At this point I drop the scare quotes around the word 'truth', having hinted at difficulties of the notion of its immutability. The thesis' perspective for this concept aligns with the pragmatic theory of truth; the utility of accepting it, exactitude not being a virtue (James 1907, p222).

[13] Coincidentally, Bourdieu included an image of d'Estaing in *Distinction* (1984) when dealing with *The Habitus and the Space of Life-Styles*, part II ch. 3, p210.

1.5 Signposts to the remainder of the thesis

To paraphrase Hammersley (1995, p96), my obligation to you, the reader, is to present "certain critical components": the study's focus; the investigated case; the methods employed; the main claims made; the evidence to support them and the conclusions drawn. Ignoring Medawar's (1963) advice dissuading researchers from writing up in a neat and logical format and thus misrepresenting the messiness of real research, I have decided to formally structure the thesis in six chapters and appendices. I refer though to the messy, disorderly nature of the research, in both the processes of thought and the iterations between the project's stages, *en passant,* at appropriate points in the text. I oscillated frequently but productively in the analytical process between the inductive and the deductive. Like Dewey's householder returning home to find the house ransacked, and inducing "Could it be burglars?" and further deducing: "I'd better check the silver" - Dewey's "double movement of reflection" - I vacillated between the particular and universal (Dewey 1910, p79-82). This is perhaps reflected in the thesis discussions.

The remainder of the thesis comprises five chapters. Chapter Two *"A realist view of the literature"* (Greener 2011, p33) takes Pawson's approach attempting to build theory about what the existing literature says, adding value by synthesis, whilst hopefully providing a rigorous treatment (Pawson and Tilley 1997, Pawson 2005, 2006). The review was assembled through a series of iterations as data analysis led first to tentative, then progressively firmer findings. After setting the research in the context of the FE field, the chapter works outwards from an outline of Bourdieu's structural-constructivist schema. It then follows an argumentation thread from 'capital' to 'collaboration'. Definition and genesis of the terminology and constructs of the study's meta-analytical frameworks are addressed. Issues of importance both for the current and medium term relevance of this piece of research are considered here.

The research methodology, the study's design, and practicalities of its methods of enquiry form the bulk of Chapter Three, *"Methodology, design and method"*. Its structural thread is aligned to a central tenet of the research, that of Grix's "directional relationship" schema (Grix 2001, p180), in which ontological aspects of the domain inculcate epistemological considerations, and these, in turn, decide detail of the study's method. This chapter summarises the study's methodological standpoint and justifies

the case for its bi-paradigmatic, eclectic *'researcher-as-bricoleur'* approach. The study's organising epistemological standpoint, founded on Bourdieu's social ontology and complemented by Searle's philosophical work on taxonomy of fact and the agent's construction of social reality (Searle 1995) are discussed in context. Discussion in the methodology section is intended to de-normalise this context and interpret the domain's complexities and ambiguities. Important ethical implications of the study are considered here. The study's design principles, both in its emergent and final adopted forms, are explained and warranted. The chapter progresses to outline the detail of the method before outlining the schemes of data analysis. It finishes by considering issues of validity, reliability and triangulation.

In orthodox accounts findings are presented, analysed and then discussed, but because of their rich interconnectedness here, I interweave the three as an amalgamation of both quantitative and qualitative data. Chapter Four, *"Lecturers' cultural capital: manifestations and differences"* discusses the study's findings in relation to the magnitude and type of embodied, objectified, and institutionalised cultural capitals possessed and deployed by the FE lecturers in the sample. It addresses RQ1 and RQ2.

Chapter Five, *"A fence or a bridge? The significance of the cultural capital pattern for collaborative practice"*, presents and reviews the data on attitudes to, and the practicalities of collaboration. The chapter progresses by examining links to the findings from RQ1 and RQ2 and the significance of the manifestations for collaborative practice answering RQ3. Informed by these findings and drawing on sociometry research to give appropriate theoretical purchase, in particular Granovetter (1973), Chwe (1999) and Lin (2001), Chapter Five concludes by suggesting mechanisms to improve collaborative practice. It responds to RQ4.

After a brief summary of the main findings in the final chapter, Chapter Six, "*Conclusions, evaluations and plans for the future*", I provide an evaluation of the project as a whole highlighting several methodological innovations. My development as a researcher during its course is discussed. The chapter ends with plans for further research.

1.6 Notes on terminology and style

Further Education colleges and external organisations are given contrived titles. A letter and a random number code for research participants e.g. 'R43' for 'Riverford College respondent 43'. Significant others who were not participants but who were referred to in interviews are similarly anonymised. Unless referencing a respondent, or in the case where it is significant to the findings, I use the personal pronouns 'he' and 'she' randomly with the intention of reducing any gender bias.

The thesis leans heavily on substantial quoted verbatim passages extracted from the transcripts in the hope of reporting the richness of interview data and affording the reader similar intensive and exhaustive interpretation to that which I had.

The field of Further Education has a semantic set that is, at times, impenetrable to those from other sectors and disciplines. To ameliorate this, I include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms at the end of the thesis.

Footnotes are employed to signpost tangential ideas and additional sources that although interesting, would otherwise interrupt the flow of the main argument. Effort has been made to keep these to a minimum.

1.7 Coda

Returning to the chapter's epigraph, the context of cultural capital in Further Education I argue in subsequent chapters is "complicated, confused, impure and uncertain". Valedown College, the context triggering the research, appeared typical of the sector. I have attempted in the thesis to "deal with these things".

The next chapter, Chapter Two, sets the contexts for the study and provides a 'realist' view of the literature (Greener 2011, p33). Taking Pawson and his collaborator's approach it builds theory about what the existing literature says, and rather than discriminating between papers on the grounds of scientific quality it assesses the literature on what it might add to the emerging explanation in the different social contexts (Pawson and Tilley 1997, Pawson et al. 2005, Pawson 2006).

Chapter Two

A REALIST VIEW OF THE LITERATURE

"[(Habitus) (Capital)] + Field = Practice"
(Bourdieu 1984a, p101).

"Practice is the result of various habitual schemas and dispositions (habitus), combined with resources (capital), being activated by certain structured social conditions (field) which they, in turn, belong to and variously reproduce and modify" (Crossley 2001, p96).

2.1 Preamble: a realist view of reviewing

An alternative to the systematic review process that is more applicable in the field of social policy research or research for evidence-based practice is offered by Pawson (Pawson 2006a, 2006b, Pawson and Tilly 1997) what Greener (2011, p33) labels a 'realist review'. Greener advocates that reviews of complex interventions should satisfy a triad of aims: they need to address contexts, mechanisms and outcomes instead of trying to judge studies in the literature purely in terms of their scientific validity and the highest quality empirical evidence (Greener 2011). This appraisal then, uses a comparative approach between material, both theoretic and empirical, the criterion for its inclusion is when a potential contribution to the prime research is noticed (Greener 2011, p33). The review contains several classic texts that although clearly not at the current margin of the subject are necessarily important for its fundamentals.

The chapter starts out by setting the research in the context of the Further Education sector and explaining the rationale for the study. Meta-theories used in the analysis are

then introduced. Broadly following the origin of the topic through its nascent theory and associated research, the remainder of the chapter works outwards from an outline of Bourdieu's genetic-structuralist schema. Definitions and genesis of the terminology and constructs of the study's major meta-analytical framework, the 'thinking tools' of Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), are provided and contextualised in the FE domain. Alternatives and oppositional standpoints are then examined and an argument constructed for the complementarity of the meta-theoretical approaches used. The thread subsequently follows the theme from 'capital' to 'collaboration'. Here, aspects of past and current research in social stratification as defined by agents' possession and deployment of cultural capital are considered. When early results from the study in 2010 indicated increasing evidence of the lecturers' cultural variety and omnivorousness (Peterson 1992) the course of the review took a significant diversion to examine literature on cultural speciation. The section *"On the inhabitants of cultural savannahs"* discusses this redirection. Schemes of lecturers' class and status identity in the contexts of collaborative practice are considered before the investigative resolution, prompted by early findings, is increased to focus specifically on research on the cultural omnivore. Later parts examine research in group and community-of-practice formation and its relevance to Argyris and Schon's 'learning organisation' (1978). The ontological and epistemological groundings for the research topic are expounded before conclusions are drawn.

Clearly such a structure tries to separate material. Thomas advocates the need for a "recursive plan" in social science research (2009, p15) and this became evident early in the review process. After initial trawls using systematic breadth-first search protocols (subject searches, key-word identification, stemming etc.) deeper incursions into the literature called for an increasingly narrative and intuitive plan. Adding to the complexity, the review's foci would adjust as data were analysed progressively and themes, ideas and interim results emerged.

Perhaps explaining in part the structural frame of this chapter, my experience of the literature review was, to borrow a biological analogy, a self-organising process of autopoiesis[14]. Some classification, though, was necessary, as Mennell (1974), recalling Schutz, supports: "we cope with an excess of information by arranging its disorder into schemes of meaning" (Ribbins and Gunter 2002, p89).

I make further excursions and explorations into the literature throughout the thesis to elucidate significant points in the track of the uncovering of the findings, particularly in Chapters Five and Six.

2.2 The FE context: complication, confusion, impurity and uncertainty

Further Education, the UK's post-compulsory education and training (PCET) or 'lifelong learning' sector, positioned as it is between the schools and higher education sectors occupies a "confusing and ambivalent position" (Avis 2009, p633). It has been pejoratively described as "the neglected middle child" (Foster 2005, p48); a "Cinderella" (Baker 1989); and "not school and not university" (Kennedy 1997, p1). "Within government", Foster continues (*ibid*, p viii), its "disadvantaged 'middle child' experience of FE between schools and HE needs to be repaired." Robson (1998, p591) and Spenceley (2006, p289) note that as the sector's provision has expanded so its character and the demands placed on it have become more complex, compounded at the strategic level where FE has been under five different funding agencies in the last 10 years; interfacing with a "plethora of national and local agencies, bodies and institutions", where complexity has resulted from "policy laid on policy and organisation laid on organisation" (Orr 2009, p480).

Whilst successive governments have largely neglected FE (Lucas 2004), Orr (2009) suggests that scrutiny and control of colleges and staff was apparent in New Labour's Workforce Strategy for the Further Education System in England, 2007-2012 (LLUK 2008): "whatever else you could say about Labour's educational policies there is no

[14] "In biological systems self-organization is a process in which pattern at the global level of a system emerges solely from numerous interactions among the lower-level components of the system. Moreover, the rules specifying interactions among the system's components are executed using only local information, without reference to the global pattern." (Camazine et al., 2003, p8).

shortage of them" (Ball 2008, p86). The sector has coped with endemic confusion arising from these successive political juxtapositions and curricular interventions.

It has seen strategic realignment interventions in the last decade from Tomlinson, Foster, Leitch and Browne. The sector, too, has been impacted by statute, for instance The Further and Higher Education Acts 1992 that led to college's incorporation in 1993. The contingent effects of alternating few and many policy initiatives over time have left its mark on the sector's complexity. In a stark realisation Coffield et al. researching the impact of policy in FE viewed their schematic of the sector's organisational linkages as looking more like "the internal wiring of an advanced computer than the outline of a 'streamlined', coherent sector" (Coffield et al. 2008, p15). It is no surprise that the independent professional body for FE lecturers, the Institute for Learning ('IfL'), lists 250 acronyms used in the sector on their website noting that the list is probably not "comprehensive" (IfL 2008).

The sector, formed as a result of the 1944 Education Act that placed a mandatory responsibility on Local Education Authorities to provide 14 year old school leavers with 'vocational, physical and practical training', developed day release institutions delivering vocational education to the employed and apprentices. Now though, as autonomous institutions incorporated by Act of Parliament, FE colleges have the freedom to innovate and respond flexibly to the needs of individuals, business and communities.

The significantly heterogeneous sector employs nearly a quarter of a million staff, just over 60% of them female, in 347 Further Education colleges. Roughly half the staff complement, about 128 000, are teaching staff, the remainder are teaching support staff or staff who support administratively. Its workforce age profile is skewed to the older end and this has not changed significantly over time (LSIS 2011)[15]. This could mean, alternatively of course, that during the next few years, a relatively large part of the workforce may go into retirement but this is by no means certain, as the default retirement age has been abolished. The sector educated over 3.3 million students in

[15] The average age of teaching staff in the 2009-2010 SIR dataset was 45 years, compared with the average for all college staff of 44 years. Over a quarter of teaching staff were in the 50 to 59 age group, and just 2.5 per cent of teaching staff were aged below 25.

2010/11, over one million of them on a full-time basis. Perhaps at a peak, college income in 2010/11 totalled £7.7 billion. It could be argued that although FE operates within a pseudo-market system buffered most of the time from short-term economic perturbations, it is nevertheless subject to macro-economic influences. One example is a college's annual response, within the scope of funding constraints, to match their curriculum offer to local employment-market need. On a longer planning horizon, FE colleges have to align their strategic position to socio-economic forces such as those envisaged by Foster (2005) and Leitch's (2006) road-maps for the necessary skills to contribute to the UK's economic future, and currently the seismic shocks resulting from the Browne Report into HE (BIS 2010). In 2012 FE like most of the public sector lies at a watershed - its future shape beginning to be determined by the Comprehensive Spending Review of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government. In December 2011 BIS published *New Challenges, New Chances* the Government's plans for FE from 2013/14. Once again accent is shifted. This time to a system to emphasise the importance of higher level vocational education at level four and above, to reduce the bureaucracy of apprenticeships, to promote 'Global UK FE', to increase the quality of advice and guidance given to the learner and to introduce FE loans for some. In addition there have been changes to *Ofsted's* Common Inspection Framework centralising the importance of teaching and learning, and an independent review of professionalism in Further Education announced on 2nd February 2012 – the 'Lingfield Review'. FE's Strategic change that is likely to be compounded by the effects of any further elongation of the 2007-2012 economic down-turn.

The sector's 'impurity' is compounded by a relatively recent extension to its range of provision. Over the last decade this has been extended to undergraduate programmes introduced as a result of the Dearing Report's recommendation to erode FE/HE boundaries, charging colleges with a mission to promote wider participation in HE (NICE 1997). Foundation degrees, designed to bridge the vocational-academic divide, were introduced building on the academic advancement of the universities with vocational training offered by colleges (Stanton 2009). In 2007-08 113,000 students undertook HEFCE-funded HE programmes in FE colleges[16]. This broad range of provision is reflected in the capabilities of its tutors. Unlike the UK's primary,

[16] Over half of all Foundation Degree students are taught in colleges (AoC 2011).

secondary and higher education sectors, it is not uncommon for a lecturer to deliver at four or more NQF levels[17].

To expand a previous point: students' ages can span sixty years, from 14 year old vocational GCSE learners to retirees engaging in 'university of the third age' (U3A) programmes. Indeed over 105,000 college students in 2010/11 were over sixty years of age. Ethnic minorities make up 20% of students in colleges, compared with 13% of the general population. Once referred to as the handmaiden of industry because of its conjunction with manufacturing (Ainley and Bailey 1997), the sector now delivers more 'academic' subjects in tandem with its vocational offer, one-third of A-level students aged 16 to 18 now studies in FE[18]. When I started my Ed.D. in 2007/8 compared to the 135,000 construction and built environment students (a 'traditional' offer), there were 343,000 studying ICT; 230,000 enrolled on arts, media and publishing programmes; over 105,000 studying sciences, including mathematics; and 35,000 undertaking history, philosophy and theology programmes. A correspondingly diverse range of lecturers' specialisms and their credentials supports this rich amalgam of provision: where apprentice-trained hairdressing practitioners and post-graduate chartered aeronautical engineers are brought together in the one institution. As I was about to embark on the research project, reflecting on FE's endemic complexity arising from political and structural forces, confusion from a lack of specificity, 'impurity' from the breadth of its provision and the amalgam of backgrounds, skill-sets and qualifications of its practitioners, Bourdieu's words of Chapter One's epigraph resonated saliently:

> "To be able to see and describe the world as it is, you have to be ready to be always dealing with things that are complicated, confused, impure, uncertain, all of which runs counter to the usual idea of intellectual rigour" (Bourdieu et al. 1991, p 259).

The paucity of research in Further Education (Elliott 1996, Ainley and Bailey 1997) may well contribute to its inferior 'Cinderella' status (Goodrham 2006). Nevertheless, the terrain of FE is fertile for research of this type, and stated objectively, I believe this particular work to be the first of its kind. This work is relevant for a number of reasons operating on a number of planes. First, knowledge created about patterns of collaboration is a significant area in its own right. Second and relevant to the Valedown

[17] In one case in the study a practitioner reported teaching at six different levels, from L2 to L7.
[18] The most commonly studied A-level is English (AoC 2011).

vignette, these patterns when viewed as part of 'soft' human systems, may well illuminate detail of the systems' 'emergent properties' (Checkland 1981) that surface in unpredictable fashion as tensions in FE's interpersonal relationships. Third, it may provide an insight into the complexity of underlying social mechanisms in FE practice. Finally, but no less important, it seizes opportunities in an economic downturn to sustain, and hopefully improve, delivery quality and the experience of the learner through a better understanding of collaborative innovation. Methodologically, it was planned to extrapolate Bourdieu's findings of cultural capital in the HE Academy and examine features in FE that may be in common with, or distinct from, Bourdieu's signature concept of the French university 'being' *Homo Academicus* (Bourdieu 1984b), albeit in different temporal and physical contexts. In this way it was planned to add to knowledge of the exchange mechanisms of capital in wider education practice. Organisational behaviour ('OB') analysts, and social scientists interested in hybrid analytical constructs particularly the convergences of cultural capital theory with group, systems and network theory may also find interest in the work.

The rationale for the research is predicated on three premises. First, and traceable back to early neo-classical economics, is the axiom that innovation is critical in giving the organisation operational advantage in economic downturns (Kondratiev 1928, Schumpeter 1939). Knowledge and its manifestation - intellectual capital - are now more than ever, important to all organisations. Supplanting modernity's 'factors of production', land, buildings, materials etc. as key (for example Hanson 1961), intellectual capital, leveraged into organisational advantage now in high-modernity (Giddens 1990), is instrumental for colleges if they are to compete for talent, catalyse innovation, improve quality and strive for excellence (Argyris and Schon 1978, Senge 1990, Quinn 1992, Hamel and Prahalad 1994, Garvin 2000, O'Donnell et al. 2002). The second premise is the primacy of organisational learning, encapsulated in enterprise-wide innovation cultures, in resolving endemic college problems where other options have failed, for example, in a situation of deteriorating industrial relations or when cost-reducing efficiencies are pivotal (Argyris 1991, Brown and Duguid 1991, Nonaka and Takeuchi 1995). The third premise, that self-sustaining communities of practice present ideal-type catalysts to innovative problem resolution, follows from Lave and Wenger's claims (1991). Innovation in community is 'organised' but in heterodox ways. The challenge to Minister Hayes' "orthodox assumptions" *(ibid.)* requires, I argue, a variety of Feyerabend's epistemological anarchism (1993), that is, a

sharp disjuncture from past thinking. Traditional problems, those divided up under the separate viewpoints and validities of truths, and normative rightness, required separate specialisms and specialists for solution. But given the inability of formal routines to deal with the dynamic evolutionary pace, expanse and overlap of projected organisational change, not only in FE, it seems infeasible that senior management can hold a monopoly on problem solving capability.

It is important to make links from this sequence of premises to the current context of efficiency and performativity pressures about to be triggered by expected grant funding cuts and reductions in college budgets. Researchers at the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) have calculated that overall public spending on UK education will fall by 14.4% in real terms between 2010-11 and 2014-15. In Further Education the Treasury's 2010 Spending Review intends that the "balance of funding will be shifted from the taxpayer towards individuals and employers who benefit" (2010, Sect. 2.58 p53). BIS, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, is reducing its overall budget for further education for over 18s by 25% over four years. Level 3 learners over 24 will be asked to pay fees backed by an income-contingent government loan. The measures according to *The Guardian* signal the largest cut in education spending over any four-year period since the 1950s (*The Guardian* 24 October 2011). The Times Education Supplement reported colleges face up to 80,000 job losses with up to 800,000 student places lost between 2010 and 2015 (*TES* 24 September 2010). Pre-emptively the Association of Colleges (AoC) briefed principals in 2010 alerting them to the Government's modelling cuts of 25% and 40% in real terms over four years for its adult skills budget. The AoC expects real-terms cuts to the 16-18 budget of between 10% and 25%. Prior to the publishing of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), and possibly in preparation for it, the Government's "Skills for Sustainable Growth" consultation was launched during the course of this research in July 2010: its aim to identify key priorities for skills education and to build an internationally competitive skills base for the UK by "decluttering the [funding] landscape" (BIS 2010, p15). Asking college principals, employers and training organisations "fundamental" questions about where public investment is most important; how the skills system can be simplified; and how it, and others, can better support investment in the sector, it seeks to road-map how the quality of the learner experience can be maintained, or improved, in an environment calling for reductions in staff headcount and cost-bases (BIS 2010). In this perceived turbulence for FE (and HE in FE) post-2012, it appears

that the forms of organisational knowledge required that will differentiate providers contributing to their success, is largely, in Kantian terms, *a posteriori* knowledge. It will necessitate understanding to be continually reworked from the tacit, collectivist, pluralist and pragmatic, a learning environment ideally suited to the community of practice.

2.3 Meta-theoretical perspectives: Bourdieu's and Searle's work

Two meta-theoretical frameworks were employed to disaggregate the intellectual puzzle and help understand the data and explain events: in the major role, the work of the French anthropologist and sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002), and in a less prominent but epistemically important function that of the American philosopher John R. Searle (1932-). Following Glaser and Strauss' (1967) bifurcation of theory application, meta-theory was used *a priori* to clarify the methodology and guide attempts to understanding phenomena. Lower level theories, on the other hand, were generated grounded in the findings *a posteriori*, for example, one of the study's hypotheses that alternate capitals, other than cultural, are significant in positioning the lecturer's status in the FE field.

The starting point for the attempted unification of the meta-theoretical approaches was, to use Bourdieu's phrase, the recognition of a certain "ontological complicity" in facets of the intellectual puzzle (Bourdieu 1982, p47 in Grenfell 2008, p52). We have seen already in relation to the research questions the application of Searle's framework in disaggregating the epistemologically objective from the subjective. I argue that this disaggregation complements the Bourdieuian schema's transcendence of the dichotomies and dialectics of structure and agency. Furthermore, Searle's explanation of how and why agents construct social reality in the way they do – Searle's individual and collective 'intentionality' - complements the interlocking nature of Bourdieu's main "thinking tools" of capital, habitus and field when lensed onto lecturers' practice in the way that individuals construct dispositions, albeit at the level of unconsciousness, that condition their actions (Bourdieu and Waquant, 1992). Key academic commentators appear to confirm Bourdieu's and this study's position on social construction, for instance Webb et al.,

> "researchers must understand epistemology and construction. that is the notion that objects of research exist, for researchers only within the framework of their hypothesis" (2002, p65).

2.3.1 Bourdieu's genetic-structuralist schema: definitions and genesis of the terminology

Bourdieu's work is one of a number of theoretical efforts that attempt to integrate macro-level theories dealing with the structures and institutions of society with micro-level theories of everyday life (Ritzer 2003). The schema, 'genetic structuralism', has the appearance of a type of structural-consensus theory where behaviour is learned, that is 'socialized', yet it bridges to elements of structural-conflict theory in the way that it recognises the unequal distribution of advantage (capital) and, through it, the mechanisms of subversion and resistance. Similar theoretical endeavours include 'social exchange theory' with its twin centralities of power and dependence and the rationality of the rewards and costs of social interaction (Homans 1958, Gouldner 1960, Blau 1964, Cook and Emerson 1978), and structuration theory (Giddens 1984) focussing on the inseparable duality and balancing of structure and agency: social structures make social action possible, and at the same time that social action creates those very structures. Providing a major alternative to structuration theory and a resolution of its bipolar oppositional standpoints is Bourdieu's representation that bridges the polarity of subjectivism (the individual) and objectivism (society) founding the perspective of the constructivist, or to some, genetic structuralism. Bourdieu, rejecting sociology's preoccupation with bipolar oppositions and adopting the aphorism of Karl Krauss: "Between two evils, I refuse to choose the lesser" (*Le Monde,* 14th January 1992), conflates then polarised subjectivist-objectivist accounts and the associated dichotomies of structure-agency, theory-research and the idiographic-nomothetic (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p34-35). For Bourdieu structure and practice are linked by a generative logic that explains agents' practice in terms of the specific socio-cultural contexts in which they occur.

Ushered in by the work of Gouldner (1972) Bourdieu's reflexive sociological perspective diverges significantly from those of his predecessors: from the grand narrative of Marx that holds that all society progresses through the dialectic of class struggle (Marx 1867); the functioning and behavioural explanations of Freudian psychology (Freud 1901, 1920, 1930); from the binary opposites of structuralism (Levi-

Strauss 1962); and from the deep-structures of structural anthropology and Sartre's existentialist philosophy (1943, 1946), the view that human beings are fundamentally free to act as they please; and, akin to Sartre, Heidegger's "authentic being", the *Dasein* - the "self which has taken hold of its own way" (Heidegger 1962, p165). The advance that Bourdieu provides results from his merging the individual's need to constantly act out of self-interest with the regularities of practice (*sans* rules) arising from the historical and cultural production of individual practices. Lecturers, for example in the research context, may unconsciously balance their inclination to become involved in collaborative practice against a backdrop of unwritten college and colleague value systems with a desire to raise their personal profile by doing so.

Methodologically, this transcendence of dualist theoretic or empirical sociology opens up the use of multi-methods research, allowing the blending of quantitative and qualitative work. Grenfell and James (1998, p155) who note the diffuse nature of Bourdieu's schema: "[Bourdieu's] on-going method is shaped by all three disciplines: philosophical; anthropological; sociological" offer some clarity, "it may be best to understand Bourdieu's mission to be that of a social anthropologist: explaining the processes of groups, cultures and systems within, primarily, French society". Bourdieu's paradigm facilitates connections between different social spheres: the sociology of education, sociology of politics, sociology of mass media, and so on, and allows propositions to be made of how each sphere connects with, and affects, the others. Furthermore, and importantly, its application as a meta-theoretical approach encourages "reflexivity" in the sociology of sociology, examining as it progresses how social forces shape the ways in which sociologists see things. From the standpoint of my attempt to become the 'researcher-as-outsider' such reflexivity has been important.

To summarise: the properties of the agent's position in the structure then leaves an imprint on the agent's 'state', or in Bourdieuian terms - the 'habitus', which in turn leave a fingerprint on practice. The principle, as Grenfell and James note, affords an epistemological and methodological "third way" since Bourdieu combines

> "both a philosophical perspective and practical methodology which have attempted to establish an alternative to the extremes of post-modernist subjectivity and positivist objectivity" (1998b, p1-2),

with the sociological goal of uncovering

> "the most deeply buried structures of the different social worlds that make up the social universe, as well as the 'mechanisms' that tend to ensure their reproduction or transformation" (Bourdieu 1997a, p1).

The appeal of this framework, with its interpenetration of theory and empiricism incorporating theoretical concepts that are "polymorphic, supple and adaptive, rather than defined, calibrated and used rigidly" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p23), was to feature highly in my embryonic thinking in 2008 as I began to develop a bricolage as the methodological approach.

Taking Hart's advice (Hart 1998, p14-30) it would be productive at this stage of the review to define and track the genesis of the topic's terminology: Bourdieu's thinking tools of 'habitus', 'capital' (and one species in particular, 'cultural capital'), 'field', 'social space', 'hysteresis', 'conatus' and 'symbolic violence'.
The transcendence of the dualisms of pre-Bourdieuian social research is accomplished through a linked subset of three more well-used concepts: the interplay between agency (practice) and structure (via capital and field) through the process of habitus. The linkages are encapsulated in Bourdieu's 'equation' (Bourdieu 1984a, p101), the chapter's epigraph:

[(Habitus) (Capital)] + Field = Practice

Within this positivist-style representation that Bourdieu interestingly adopts, Crossley succinctly identifies the intended argument:

> "practice is the result of various habitual schemas and dispositions (habitus), combined with resources (capital), being activated by certain structured social conditions (field) which they, in turn, belong to and variously reproduce and modify" (2001, p96)

locating, as Fowler (1997, p17) suggests, "the role of objective structures in setting limits to agent's choice of goals as well as blinkering their perceptions of reality".

At the thesis' core is the notion of cultural capital and as such primacy must be given to it here, but for clarity in review, I track the three concepts in Bourdieu's 'formula' in the order: first habitus, then field, and finally capital. The concept of habitus, introduced

by Aristotle[19], is perceptible in an anthropological context as 'craft', that is, highly developed body actions mainly implanted in childhood, for instance our posture, the way we walk, sit, and eat - embodied aspects of a given culture (Mauss 1934, Elias 1978, 1982). For Bourdieu, habitus is the "acquired system of generative dispositions" (Bourdieu 1977, p95), the "structured and structuring structure" of social agents engendering "the unconscious forgetting of history which history itself produces by incorporating objective structures" (1977, p78-9). It is 'structured' by one's past and the present and is 'structuring' in that it shapes the agent's perceptions, moulding their social practices and actions of the present and future and objectifying the social structures at the level of individual subjectivity. The "structure" is made up of a durable, non-constant system of "dispositions which generate perceptions, appreciations and practices" (1990, p53). Habitus is thus relational to the field with which it interfaces and is not simply attributes of an agent's background. The outcome of the sedimentation of past experiences, habitus thus forms the "conceptual pivot of Bourdieu's theoretical synthesis" (Seidman 1998, p154). Although the habitus is mutable, there is evidence for the dynamical stability of certain tastes over time. Smith (1995, in Lazardo 2006) reports musical tastes developed in early youth being stable over lifetimes. Dumais (2002) similarly evidences stability for other cultural dispositions present in early adolescence. Interestingly Searle (1995) identifies a parallel concept to habitus. Defining it as 'background', "the set of non-intentional or pre-intentional capacities that enable intentional states of function" (Searle 1995, p129), he sees it as the causal structures operating at the neurophysiological level. In Searle's "simplest argument for the background thesis" (p129) he offers an exemplar. Our ability to discern interpretations of language and hence to make sense of the world is brought to bear to manoeuvre and shift the literal constancy of the verb "cut" in selecting the most appropriate tool - lawnmower, knife or shears - when we hear one of three speech utterances - "cut the grass!", "cut the cake!", or "cut the cloth!"

Bourdieu's topological metaphor of the 'field' gives us the social space in which interactions, transactions and events occur (Bourdieu 2005) and enables us to

[19] For Aristotle 'hexis' (translated into the Latin *habitus*) can be of both knowledge as well as what we call moral character. Both intellectual and moral virtues are hexis or habitus, but related to reason in different ways. In Aristotle's words, "one subdivision [intellectual virtue] having it in the strict sense and in itself, the other [moral virtue] having a tendency to obey [reason] as one does its father."
[Aristotle (c. 350BCE). *Nicomachean Ethics*. I:13]

"anatomise the horizontal conflicts that pit agents and institutions concentrating the disparate powers at play" (Wacquant 2007, p3). For Bourdieu, a field lies along a continuum between

> "autonomy and heteronomy, defined in terms of the degree to which a field can generate its own problems rather than receiving them in a ready-made fashion from outside" (1997, p112).

One might argue that the FE field exhibits both of the continuum's extremes. At the field's autonomous pole is the altruism of education-for-its-own-sake whereas heteronymously the field is defined by the pressures and discourse of business and market mechanisms. Within the field, the series of institutions, rules, rituals, conventions, categories, appointments, designations and titles and so on constituting the objective hierarchy produces and authorises certain discourses and activities, and discredits others: what can, and cannot, be said and done. It can be further argued that FE lecturers live in multiple synchronic fields that are in permanent flux, constituted of interactions between institutions, rules and practices. Constituted by consensus, in some cases unspoken consensus, the doxic attitude, "what is essential goes without saying because it comes without saying" (Bourdieu 1977b, p165-167), fields are also shaped by, or form out of, the conflict that emerges when groups or individuals attempt to define what constitutes capital within that field and how it is to be distributed. Dominant agent or dominant coalition power designates the field's 'authentic' or legitimate capital, for instance the legitimation of what might constitute 'art' is made by the 'gatekeeper', perhaps a well-respected art critic, whose edicts become sacrosanct and legitimising. On the study's terrain, the sub-field of 'FE pedagogy', what may be classified as a legitimate teaching style during a classroom observation, may be defined and reified by the college's teaching and learning policy and enacted through the lesson observer. Indeed challenge to the legitimated teaching styles migrated from hairdressing to the Computing Department at Valedown may, in part, have been due to the reification of 'best' practice by the hairdressers (their manager was Head of School) and have, in part, accounted for V17's antics I described in the introductory vignette. To continue this linkage back to the original stimulus for the research, the position the lecturer takes in the FE sub-field of informal, or referent, power - how good he is perceived as being at his job - thus not only depends on his position in the field situated by the type and magnitude of capitals possessed, but by a certain legitimacy that his confederates may or may not afford to his capital.

Bourdieu borrows one of his thinking tools from the Greek - *doxa* - literally 'opinion', as opposed to its antithesis, 'episteme' or knowledge. Within a field the doxa takes the form of a misrecognised unconditional allegiance to the 'rules of the game', collective 'shared beliefs' on the part of agents with a similar habitus. Doxa is, to use Dawkins' poignant phrase "the anaesthetic of familiarity" (1998, p1-14), that is, what goes as taken for granted lies beyond any notion of enquiry. The doxic attitude thus underpins symbolic power by its acquiescence. It is the cornerstone of any field since it determines the stability of the objective social structures through the way these are reproduced and reproduce themselves in the habitus. Hence from the doxa, orthodoxy can be defined as where the doxa is thought arbitrary but accepted in practice. Its corollary, heterodoxy - the break-with-tradition - in its ideal type, is exemplified by challenges to the doxic attitude from agents or groups, for instance, well-endowed with cultural capital but low economic capital. Heterodoxy often remains mediated by the ruling doxa. Indeed, I argue in the discussion of the findings in Chapters Four and Five that the prevalence and permeation of the doxic attitude in FE might be a factor in limiting the exchange value of cultural capital.

When habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, the agent is like a "fish in water": the fish like the agent does not feel the weight of the water and they take the world about themselves for granted. As Bourdieu and Wacquant explain

> "it is because this world has produced me, because it has produced the categories of thought that I apply to it, that it appears to me as self-evident" (1992, p127-128).

Williams (1995, p582) is laconic:

> "Most of us, most of the time, take our social world for granted; we do not think about what we do because, quite simply, we do not have to".

But field and habitus may become asynchronous, mismatched to the needs of the agent in the field. A 'time lag' of correction ensues: Bourdieu's 'hysteresis'. Bourdieu writes of the concept of hysteresis with its meaning borrowed form the natural sciences, the term encapsulating 'deficiency' or 'lagging behind'. The hysteresis effect occurs when the habitus keeps running but stops working, that is when it stops producing its habitual, taken-for-granted effects but continues to do its usual thing. This gap between the habitus's 'efforts' and the habitus's 'effects' opens up when the larger context within which the habitus operates shifts in a way the habitus has not had to deal with before.

A hysteretic model thus explains disruptions and mutations in social reproduction. A theme that emerged from the research, again developed later, is this untimely clash of habitus and field. The dissonance felt by new lecturers joining FE fresh from university when they encounter FE's means-end rationality - the 'new' public sector managerialism in FE (Gunn 1988, Gleeson and Shain 1999, Avis 2011) - is typical. Here the habitus still 'ticks over' but is incongruent with the situation the newly-recruited lecturers find themselves in. To develop this example: dissent with FE's field of power and aspects of its increasing commoditisation of education, its productive efficiency in the framework of consumerism and the disciplines of the market (Pollitt 1990) may account, at least initially, for these aspects of practitioners' insecurity in their role, a point I pick up on in analysing R54's data later. However when the lecturer's habitus becomes tuned, subconsciously, to the structuring effects of the FE field, practice takes on a practical logic: a "feel for the game" (Bourdieu 1990a, p61). Restated conceptually in Bourdieuian terms, "the logic of practice lies in being logical to the point at which being logical would cease being practical" (Bourdieu 1990a, p79). The concept of hysteresis was to prove useful in analysis of other data, in particular those from R54 and R21. The 'game' the study was to discover was not 'the game of education' but more a game of 'organisational knowledge'.

The study's kernel concept, cultural capital, according to Robbins (2005) is the summation of the prized cultural practices sustaining forms of privilege that enables privileged groups to distinguish their culture as superior to those of lower status. Emphasising both materiality and symbolic representation, Bourdieu (1984a) suggests that agents possess varying degrees of four different forms of capital: economic (income, financial assets, and material possessions); cultural (knowledge, skills and education); social (relationships and networks of influence and support); and symbolic (power, prestige, recognition). These capitals position the agent in the field (viz. the 'HE within FE' field). Taken together these capitals present themselves as rare and worthy of being sought after in a particular social formation (Harker et al. 1990). Cultural capital exists in various forms. Objectified cultural capital, for instance, can have symbolic value existing materially and represented in artefacts: the media tutor's art collection, the construction tutor's state-of-the-art gadget, or the computing science lecturer's set of specialised programs. In embodied form cultural capital manifests in predispositions or propensities for lifestyle choices in consumption, body language and dress (a theme that emerges in R8's and V2's data). In a third form it can be a

"collective social fact" (Searle 1995, p121) socially constructed and 'institutionalised', the conferment of a recognised teaching qualification - the award in 'Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector' ('PTTLS') - for example.

Symbolic capital, immaterial 'untouchables' that shape culturally significant attributes (prestige, status and authority) works in tandem with cultural capital. Along with culturally valued taste and consumption patterns, symbolic capital acts as a social relation within a system of exchange. Valuations of cultural capital are normally restricted within a field but overlap can occur and certain capitals may be attractive in other fields. The ability to discern artistic style, the short broken brush strokes of mixed and pure unmixed colours of an original French Impressionist painting from that of a copy is valuable in the field of art investment as well as in the classroom.

Cultural capital is not immutable nor is it universally accepted. In different circumstances and a different chronology, a given type and weight could be viewed unconstructively. In the past, acute linguistic precision, 'Received Pronunciation', the Queen's English, once revered as legitimate cultural capital that fifty years ago might have augured well for a lecturer's promotion prospects, may not be the most acceptable way now of conversing with a disaffected level 2 plastering cohort.

Agents can gamble with cultural capital to improve their position in the field. For the newly appointed lecturer, to borrow participant R43's neologism - the "*nouveaux academic*" - attempts at deploying cultural capital to increase her promotion prospects are perhaps natural but it is an uphill struggle. Bourdieu warns the cultural reproduction of the elite social games is not fair:

> "without being, strictly speaking, rigged, the competition resembles a handicap race that has lasted for generations" (2000, p214-215).

Hence, agents tend to restrict expectations to what cultural capital they are likely to achieve imposed by field position, class, and background. Those with less attenuate their ambitions, as Bourdieu notes "the subjective hope of profit tends to be adjusted to the objective probability of profit" (2000, p216).

The discussion now turns to two other of Bourdieu's 'thinking tools', the tandem constructs of misrecognition and symbolic violence. These are essentially forms of forgetting occurring when the agent engaged in practice:

> "knows the world too well, without objectifying distance, taking it for granted, precisely because he is caught up in it; he inhabits it like a garment...he feels at home in the world because the world is also in him, in the form of the habitus" (Bourdieu 2000, p142-3).

This is Bourdieu's key to the function of symbolic violence: "the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity" (1992, p167). Of all forms of "hidden persuasion", the most implacable is the one exerted, quite simply, by the order of things (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p172). Used most potently by Bourdieu in explanation (1984a, 1990b, 1992), symbolic violence refers to the imposition of cultural systems without connecting these practices to "the power relations which are at their source" (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990, p41). The construct is supported by Eagleton:

> "we become conscious agents only by virtue of a certain determinate lack, repression or omission, which no amount of critical self-reflection could repair (1994, p213 in Webb et al. 2002, p15)".

Misrecognition of symbolic violence may provide insights into why practitioners may succumb to joining collaborative initiatives, intent on acting in a principled manner 'for the field' and its (mainly managerialist) values - "joining a group will be good for my personal college profile". In another instantiation, unthinking commitment to the logic, values, and capital of a field resulting from symbolic violence, for instance in the way that initiatives meant to promote the inexorable 'rise' in FE qualification standards are accepted without question, may give rise to another of Bourdieu's concepts, 'illusio' - the lecturer's unstated investment in the playing of the game.

Lecturers arguing their professional motivation to be altruistic in the face of the FE's de-professionalisation pressures (Huberman and Grounauer 1993, Jaques 2004) instantiate another Bourdieuian concept, that of inalienable culture. In preserving the 'pure' esoteric erudite qualities of the field they are at what Bourdieu defines as the field's 'autonomous pole'. As I conjectured earlier, diametrically opposing this altruism is the field's 'heteronymous pole', formed from the encroachment and overlap of the values of the market.

The final analytical tool applied to the thematic constructions extracted from the data was Bourdieu's 'conatus'. Illustrated best by analogy to its historical scientific meaning, 'inertia', the idea *in situ* was taken to relate to life, or more specifically, career

'trajectory'. It manifests in R54's sentiment, the conatus driving the need to be employed in a professional vocation when she says

"I do that because I don't want to lose my job".

2.3.2 Bourdieuian approaches in FE research

As I have indicated there appears a paucity of work on cultural capital and its deployment in the FE sector. Much volume, as we shall see, is concerned with cultural capital and its relevance to class and cultural division in the wider UK population in large scale studies (for example Le Roux et al. 2008); in consumption patterns, in housing for instance (Silva and Wright 2009); in inter-generational transmission and cultural reproduction (De Graff et al. 2000); in relation to academic performance in comprehensive education (Sullivan 2001) and in on-line learning communities and the social construction of knowledge made possible by information and communications technologies (Avis and Fisher 2006).

There is however noteworthy literature that takes a Bourdieuian approach to research in the FE sector. Perhaps the most significant study in currency, scale, and duration terms is the 'Transforming Learning Cultures in Further Education Project' (TLC), a four year study carried out between 2001 and 2005. Part of the ESRC's Teaching and Learning Research Programme ('TLRP'), it "relied heavily" on a Bourdieuian analytical frame (Peim and Hodkinson 2007, p396). In their paper *'The culture of learning and the learning of culture'* James and Bloomer (2001) outlining the project's aims note that Bourdieu's theoretical approach would "provide methodological focus without a premature 'closing down' of analytical possibilities", arguing that

> "the habituses of both learners and teachers will be important to an understanding of learning sites and activities and of what happens (or does not happen) within them" (2001, p1).

The project would, according to James and Bloomer,

> "examine the ways in which students and tutors interact with each other, centring upon the actual learning activities undertaken. But it will also examine wider aspects of interaction, in settings beyond those formally designated for learning" (2001, p8).

Ambitiously, it was to triangulate across four FE colleges and 17 different sites to

> "illuminate features that are common across most or all of them, the nature of any differences between them, and the reasons for such similarities and differences" (James and Bloomer 2001, p8).

The longitudinal study identified pressures under which FE was working at the time whilst proposing multi-level approaches to improving learning. Recognising common traits of the FE lecturer population, one of the project's conclusions was that

> "if the huge reservoir of tutor experience, altruism and professionalism were recognised and supported, improvements in learning would follow" (ESRC, n.d.).

Reflecting on the TLC project's cultural perspectives, Gleeson and James (2007) are in general agreement and conscious of "an interest in interdisciplinarity, [and] an awareness of the potential utility of the work of Bourdieu" (2007, p453). The worth of Bourdieu's 'theory-as-method' is demonstrated in another facet of the TLC project, this time by Postlethwaite and Maull (2007). Reporting students' perceptions of their learning cultures, Postlethwaite and Maull's analysis uses habitus and field as 'thinking tools' in the form of a structural model scaffolding their particular qualitative data collection method:

> "using the range of conceptual tools provided by Bourdieu, and the relational thinking that lies at their heart, was that understanding should first be sought at the level of the [learning] site" (Postlethwaite and Maull 2007, p433).

Examples of the effect of the habitus are described in the work, for example tutors' dispositions towards the view of 'engineering' promoted by a particular Electronics and Telecommunications National Certificate course, but little data is made available of the compositions of participants' capital. In a separate piece of research aimed at providing a richer understanding of how vocational education and training operates through its social and cultural practices, Colley et al. (2003) recognise "official accounts [of learning in vocational education and training] fail to acknowledge the relationship between learning and identity" (2003, p1). They too draw on Bourdieu's 'thinking tools' in describing the 'vocational habitus' of the FE learner.

Aiming to address claimed key weaknesses in situated learning theoretical writing through a Bourdieuian approach, Hodkinson, Biesta and James (2007) draw extensively on, and trace the evolutionary trajectory - through Cassirer and Lewin - of Bourdieu's concept of field. Their analysis at "several scales, including the individual, local and

institutional" (2007, p422) aligns with Colley et al. in discussing the learner's "cultural becoming, through participation in several different overlapping fields and learning cultures, over time" (2007, p425). Hardy and Lingard (2008) and later Rizvi and Lingard (2010) bring together the concepts of habitus and field to identify and separate fields of policy and practice. They recognise a clash between the competing, different logics of practice between the policy-producing state that they see as enforcing a "monopoly of the universal" by producing policy that demands universal applicability and the FE lecturer's professional individual pedagogical practice

Indeed findings from the TLC Project forewarn of the difficulties in implementing any of the thesis' recommendations. From their formulation of a typology of tutor interventions, James and Wahlberg (2007) argue the individual FE tutor's capacity to make a positive impact on the quality of learning, an "intervention for improvement", is "overestimated" (2007, p478). Compounding this lack of capacity is an identification that good practice in FE is "often portrayed as simple, simply adopted and transferable", whereas they emphasise the need to approach improvement "in relation to a sophisticated cultural perspective" (2007, p474).

2.3.3 The complementarity of Searle's 'background' and Bourdieu's 'habitus'

Searle and Bourdieu approach their respective theoretical positions from opposite direction: Searle from the philosophic, transferring empirical phenomenon *into* the philosophy of mind and Bourdieu from the empirical, his aim firmly to dissociate the concept of the social agent *from* the philosophy of mind. As Gebauer, one of the very few commentators on the complementarity of the two bodies of work notes,

> "Bourdieu does not 'dream the dream of many philosophers' that is to distinguish the mental foundation of all social acts independent from human practice, *fundamentum inconcussum*[20], upon which the cognition of society can be built" (Gebauer 2000, p76).

It was to be the juxtaposition of these oppositional postures, that Gebauer recognised, in data analysis that brought heightened clarity in the sense that they allowed an

[20] The *fundamentum inconcussum*, an unshakable foundation, the steadfast grounding and first principle for true knowledge: the notion that there must be a ground, a basis, which is indubitable (cf. Descartes' definition of the essence of man as 'thinking' and thought as *fundamentum inconcussum*).

oscillation between the theoretic and the empirical, and between the specific and the general.

At the centre of the two bodies of work are the coincident concepts of background and habitus. As we have seen Searle's (1983) idea of background facilitates linguistic interpretation: the imperative "cut the grass!" links to an implicit functionality - with a lawnmower, not a knife. Background allows us perceptual interpretation in the context of collaboration. We see things as certain sorts of things: I see and hear four humans from different college departments seated around a table taking about embedding 'sustainability' in their respective curricula. Searle's background not only interprets, it also structures consciousness. In this way I see the four people as a research group community of practice. Furthermore I perceive how things will proceed when I offer my contribution to the community of practice. Similar to the habitus, Searle argues for the agent's motivational dispositions, and those of others, conditioning the structure of our experiences "the background facilitates us for certain kinds of readiness" and "disposes me to certain sorts of behaviour" (1995, p136). Typically I would not expect the College Principal to walk unannounced into a meeting of our community group and I might gesture to an empathetic colleague when another member monopolises the meeting for ten minutes with their reflections of last night's BBC2 Prom, but I certainly would not poor scorn on it, and so on. As a related alternate to habitus, background provided a cogent concept through which I would probe the data.

My multi-methodological choice was further bolstered by Searle's proposition of subjectivity as a "rock-bottom element of reality" (1992, p95) and a recognition that

> "over the whole of an [Searle's] academic lifetime sterility has come from a persistent failure to come to terms with the fact that ontology of the mental is an irreducibly first-person ontology" (1992, p95).

Although this scheme offered a rationale it seemed to bring with it contradictions for the agent's choices. Searle, unlike Bourdieu, argues against the unnaturalness of rational action theory in decision making (1992 p139). To take a specific example from the project, a macro-economic policy decision to reduce the UK's fiscal deficit by cutting FE's budget seems to some perfectly rational action, but it seems incongruous that rational action theory, operating at a micro-level, should dictate that my colleague would have mentally solved mathematical equations to get to a higher indifference

curve [21] when he made his menu choice of *haute cuisine* and confidently displayed the £96 bill for it in Valedown's staffroom.

2.3.4 Bourdieu's work: criticisms and alternates

Bourdieu's perspective is not without criticism. There are oppositional standpoints from a meta-theoretical perspective. For Giddens' all human action is performed within the context of a pre-existing social structure that is governed by a set of norms and/or laws which are distinct from those of other social structures: "social practices ordered across space and time" (1986, p2). According to Giddens all human action is at least partly predetermined based on the varying contextual rules under which it occurs. The result of these assertions of individual freedom leaves an unresolved oscillation between determinism and voluntarism. For Archer (1982), the implication of voluntarism is objectionable: "the systematic underplaying of constraints artificially inflates the degrees of freedom for action" (Archer 2010 [1982], p234 [464]).

Much critical literature attacks Bourdieu's work on several levels: its ephemeral nature, inherent determinism, and that it may be considered ahistorical in character. Its ephemeral nature concerns Prior: "the concept [of field] has an almost chameleon-like quality in that it can mean all things to all people: determined and determining, structured and structuring, strong and weak, modern and postmodern, promoting reproduction and change, Marxist and Weberian" (Prior 2000, p144). Furthermore the perspective's malleability in terms of its broad application, for instance in education, (Reay et al. 2001); social policy (Peillon 1998); creative fields such as art (Bourdieu 1996, 1997); literature, (Pinto 1996); television and journalism (Bourdieu 1998c) may have swayed Tooley and Darby into concluding, erroneously I argue, that its overuse in education research is mere "adulation of the great thinkers" (1998, p56-57). Universality, I argue has many attractions. If it were possible to draw comparisons

[21] In microeconomic theory, an indifference curve is a graph showing different bundles of goods between which a consumer is *indifferent.* That is, at each point on the curve, the consumer has no preference for one bundle over another. One can equivalently refer to each point on the indifference curve as rendering the same level of utility (satisfaction) for the consumer. Utility is then a device to represent preferences rather than something from which preferences come. The main use of indifference curves is in the representation of potentially observable demand patterns for individual consumers over commodity bundles (Lipsey 1975).

between the social sciences with the natural sciences, the physicists' pursuit for a 'Theory of Everything', even though it has not been realised and may never will, the quest has spawned much progress in understanding and contributed much to knowledge, as did James Clerk Maxwell's unification of the fundamental forces of electricity and magnetism in the 1860s.

Then there are critical issues of epistemological detail. First, Bourdieu postulates that embodied cultural capital is a consciously acquired property passively inherited: tastes in music, art, food, furniture, aesthetic disposition, linguistic precision and so on, differentiate 'low' and 'high' capital (1990, p114). Yet the 'cultureness' of the attribute itself is predicated on forms of cultural legitimacy and this, to the critics, is insecure. Second the interdependency of capitals across homogenous social space is challengeable - high cultural capital in the music field, for example, may not in all cases predispose high capital in the world of art or in gastronomy and so on. Indeed unbridled pursuit of a specific interest in one field maybe so dominant and exclude all others. A third concern is that his work ignores the impact of gender and ethnicity (and their links to indigenous 'culture'). Furthermore, a fallacy with the work's temporal nature is levelled when attempts are made to extrapolate *Distinction,* citing the more fluid cultural boundaries that may now exist, less restricting than what Bourdieu finds in his world of assured cultural legitimacy in 1960s France. Much of the post-*Distinction* research I review in subsequent sections addresses these concerns.

2.4 Linkages between cultural capital and social stratification

A useful starting point here is the seminal work on cultural capital and elective affinities of taste, Bourdieu's ethnographic *magnum opus* "Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste" (Bourdieu 1984a). In it Bourdieu showed class and culture, when both vertically ranked in mutually reinforcing ways, to precipitate 'distinction'. Following an analysis of data collected from 1,217 respondents living in Paris, Lille and a small provincial town between 1963 and 1968, the work claims a correspondence between social stratification and cultural consumption across a number of fields, those of the arts, music, food, and dress (Bourdieu 1984a). Using newly developed mathematical techniques, for example Benzécri's (1980) multiple correspondence analysis (MCA), Bourdieu was able to show social space represented as a 4-dimensional

map[22]. Subsumed within this 4D space, Bourdieu argues that a 2-dimensional "space of lifestyles" limited to twinned economic and cultural capitals is key to understanding the social world, implying that social relations are anchored by these two capitals (1984a, p169-225). Erickson (1996, p218) though notes a problem in the mappings resulting from Bourdieu's neglect of a third form of capital: initially identified by him as "social capital, a capital of social connections, honourability and respectability" (Bourdieu 1984a, p122). To pick up Erickson's point, collaborative working particularly in the formation of communities of practice, clearly involves social connections (Granovetter 1995, Lin 1982). These connections can be made inside and outside of work as Erickson (1991, 1996) clearly showed in research establishing the linkage between cultural capital and social ties in a Canadian private sector security company, a thread I return to review later. To return to the circumstances of this research, Bourdieu's watershed investigation provided initial ideas for the research's methodology, indications for operationalisation of its variables, and a foundation for its method.

Independently both Shils (1961) and later Gans (1975) develop *a priori* groupings of cultural consumption and stratify the population in terms of "taste publics", groups who consume, typically exclusively, from a given category: whether "refined, mediocre, and brutal" (Shils) or "high, upper-middle, lower-middle, low and quasi-folk" (Gans 1975, in Hughes and Peterson 1983, p459). It is not all consumption *preference* though. Extending Shils and Gans' earlier work, Bourdieu's model posits that high status groups abstain from and actively dislike the cultural consumption patterns of those in lower status positions. Indeed, as well as explaining the possibilities of social stratification, Bourdieu's model places emphasis on these likes and dislikes in aesthetic and taste patterns serving to reproduce existing class structures. In his scheme dominant groups exclude dominated groups from societal resources by highlighting differences in cultural competencies. This exclusion leads to the monopolisation of resources by elites, a phenomenon similar to that described by Weber as "social closure" (Weber 1978, p342).

[22] Although this is not diagrammatically reproducible in our 3D Euclidian world geometry, it is common in contemporary mathematics to theorise multi-dimensional spaces - certainly more than four. In the positivist domain cosmologists and string theorists currently envision the existence of 10 or 11 dimensions necessary to develop equations to unify gravity and the quantum mechanical world. A polymath, Bourdieu was influenced by these new ideas.

A second key work of Bourdieu's, *Homo Academicus* (1984b), was to clarify and consolidate initial ideas for this research. It later provided limited but indispensable triangulation of its findings. In this work Bourdieu analyses the mechanisms of institutional reproduction and of the defence and destruction of personal career reputations in Parisian universities during the period leading up to the student riots of 1968. At a time of momentous change in the Academy, perhaps not on a par with the changes in line for FE, Bourdieu recognises

> "the most ancient traditions of the corps still survive while we see the signs of forthcoming transformations, in particular all the effects of the morphological changes in the student population and the teaching body" (1984b, p39).

Homo Academicus provides statistical analyses of oppositional forms of cultural capital in the different faculties giving insight into the ways academic elites react to changes and pressures on issues relating to the prestige of their academic discipline and to the genetics of renewal and reproduction, for instance professorial succession strategies, in the faculty. In the 1960s' Academy Bourdieu finds the dominant professional faculties, those of law and medicine, wielded power to dictate how French universities should operate subordinating the faculties in the natural sciences. The natural scientists, he finds, were richer in cultural capital but relatively poor in relation to economic and social capitals. This dynamic had a certain resonance with the origins of my research. Furthermore, Bourdieu finds career progression was related to objective positions and lived interactions in the French academy. Admitting difficulties in *Homo Academicus* with latent variable operationalisation and methodology, and deviating from a mixed methodological approach but retaining a theoretic-empiricist stance, Bourdieu operationalised cultural capital through interpretation of university records on publication activity, both legitimate and in the popular media, familial background and schooling, and academic discipline. Disappointingly for my research there appeared to be little similar secondary material in the FE field. Research publication, although growing remains thin, and personal information in the public domain that might proxy for suitable research variables is restricted mainly to the College Principal and Vice-Principal level. Unlike Parisian professors, few FE lecturers reach the exalted position of being included in *'Who's Who?'* It implied that I had to devise alternative schemes to operationalise the terrain's variables.

Underlining its universality, application of Bourdieu's model is international. It has been adopted and adapted to elucidate the relations of social space, class constitution and power in several countries over current and retrospective periods spanning several centuries. Four recent studies are worthy of note, concerning Portugal, Norway, the United States, and post-Soviet societies. Pereira (2005) replicates the investigative thrust and findings of *Distinction* by uncovering the tight fit between social position, cultural consumption, and sociability in the stratified neighbourhoods in the city of Porto; Lareau (2003) documents how the sharp class and ethnic differences of child-rearing practices on America's East coast perpetuates existing structures of inequality; and Eyal, Szelenyi and Townsley (1998) extend and test Bourdieu's model of capital conversion and the field of power to delineate the emergence of a new ruling class in the countries of the former Soviet bloc after the fall of communism. In a fourth, Rosenlund (2000) reveals the growing weight of the composition (as distinct from the volume) of capital as prime determinant of life chances and lifestyles in the Norwegian city of Stavanger in the wake of the oil boom and shows how the deep differentiation between the public and private sectors stamps the street-level feel of the city as well as the class structure of the country. Given Bourdieu's clear international appeal, we must unfortunately return to the UK.

The UK contemporary equivalent of *Distinction*, Bennett et al.'s ESRC sponsored work *Culture, Class, Distinction* (2009) claims the first systematic assessment of Bourdieuian principles applied to social differentiation processes across the English Channel. Seeking to probe how far Bourdieu's findings of relationships between cultural tastes and class position might apply in Britain, clearly a different temporal and political context, their work assumes *prima facie*, that much has changed since *Distinction.* The authors cite homogenising effects on culture as a result of globalisation and the Internet. The work "takes account of wide-ranging perspectives from which Bourdieu's work has been extended and/or critically engaged with" (Bennett et al. 2009, frontispiece). Their results show a clearly identifiable space of social lifestyles in the UK today but its structure and characteristics differ from those identified by Bourdieu. They suggest four axes of differentiation: first between those who engage in cultural activities and those who are disengaged from them. Second, established versus contemporary taste maps, they claim, not onto Bourdieu's hedonistic versus aesthetic distinction of the dominant class, but onto age difference. Third, they find gender to be a distinction:

women tending to prefer 'inwardly-oriented' person-centred practices and tastes (romantic films, soaps etc.), men preferring fact-based or outwardly-oriented practices (documentaries, sports etc.) - a point I return to in the discussion of the findings in relation to RQ1. Fourth, they identify a weak disjunction between 'voracious' consumers (especially of high culture) and the more moderate consumer. The study is also interesting for its methodological approach. It argues for an emphasis of descriptive over variable-centred methods yet the bias in its reporting leans the other way. Much reporting centres on the use of mathematical factor and geometric data analyses, presented in *Distinction*-style clustered responses in geometric space superimposed over socio-demographic variables on a space of lifestyles. Atkinson, too, (2009) is uncomfortable with several features of the research, particularly this imbalance between the quantitative and qualitative elements,

> "The qualitative material is often used very briefly losing the rich illumination of everyday life that Bourdieu provided through vivid description and vignettes" [... and] "the subtle ways in which the same practice or taste can be read or rationalised" (Atkinson 2009, p836).

Gifted with an opportunity for a study of much reduced scale, I attempted to address this 'shortcoming' by rebalancing the two main research techniques and their reporting giving more equal prominence to both.

Much work on capital and social stratification is constructed from the re-analysis of secondary data from national surveys. One such is Le Roux et al.'s (2008, *ibid.*) study. With its base data drawn from the Cultural Capital and Social Exclusion study (Bennett et al. 2005), it examines the relationship between social class membership and cultural participation and taste.

Following Peterson and Simkus' (1992) lead in identifying 'cultural omnivores' in the US population - people who graze across several cultural strata - Bennett, Savage, De Silva, Gayo-Cal, Wright and Warde, arguably the UK's leading researchers in the field, individually and collectively, entered the omnivore debate in 2007. Typical of their methodological approach, Warde's study (Warde et al. 2007) using latent class analysis, heeds Bellavance et al. (2004) and Zavisca's (2005) position on the usefulness of delimited survey data, in the first case, to extract omnivore interview candidates and, in the second, the primacy of interview data in its exploration. This funnelling technique

has some resonance with this study's methodology although I only became aware of that *ex post facto* after developing further parts of the bricolage. Interestingly though in the context of convergent development, Warde et al. claim as recently as five years ago (2007) that their study is the "first to probe the distribution of cultural capital using, in an integrated way, both qualitative and quantitative methodologies" (Warde et al. 2007, p144). Warde et al. though give little emphasis to epistemological consideration, a point I have sought to address here. Their work does however widen out definitions of Erickson's cultural omnivore to include volume omnivorousness (people simply doing and liking *more* things than others) and compositional omnivorousness (people who exhibit a given *pattern* of cultural preference). If we assume that FE lecturers can be considered middle-class professionals[23], an assumption substantiated by several socio-economic status ('SES') classifications, then one of Warde's conclusions is very relevant to the method of the enquiry: "the professionals among our interviewees most closely approximate to Peterson's initial model", they are "open to everything", "condemn little" and

> "are competent in the application of what Bourdieu deemed a 'disinterested' orientation towards art, critically evaluating it apparently 'in its own terms' and for its own sake" (Warde et al., 2007, p159).

I explore alignment with Warde et al.'s findings and their sub-species of omnivore in the treatment of the findings in Chapters Four and Five. More recently Oxford University's 2008 paper, *"High Art: are you an omnivore or paucivore?"* confirming the lack of cultural extremities finds from its survey-based analysis little evidence for the existence of a cultural elite, suggesting that certain individuals who fit this description, are "too few to figure" (NAICS 611310, 2008). The *TES* summarises

> "[the paper] has blown the whistle on the patronising idea that high art is for posh types in opera hats while the proles prefer mass entertainment. "We find little evidence for the existence of a cultural elite," it says. "There are certain individuals who fit this description, but they are too few to figure in any survey-based analysis." " (*TES*, 11 May 2008),

and gleefully announces in the same article:

> "So goodbye forever to the idea of tastes being stratified by social class. It comes - ironically - more from the left than the right, with populist politicians (and some teachers) so determined to be "relevant" that they assume anyone on less than £50k needs everything translating into

[23] This area is reviewed in the section on "Class, status and collaborative working" later in this chapter.

references to Big Brother and that all black boys love rap" (*TES*, 11 May 2008).

Serendipitously, as I was in the middle of analysing the data in the Spring of 2011, I became aware of the *'BBC Lab-UK Class Survey'*, the first interactive national web survey into combined economic, social and cultural capitals owned by the UK population. Devised by Savage and Devine at the University of York its intent is, in their words, to answer the question "is society still divided in the ways it used to be?" It promises that "your data will help sociologists discover whether class is still important in 21st century Britain." Emphasising that single variable indices may be outdated, "some sociologists have come to see classification by occupation as too simplistic", its results are due to be published late 2011 (BBC, 2011)[24]. Needless to say, I contributed to the web-survey enthusiastically and made contact with Prof. Mike Savage the same day briefly explaining my research. My contact was well received (Annexe B). I intend to triangulate across to its results in my future research work.

Figure 1: The 'BBC Lab-UK Class Survey' homepage, April 2011.

[24] BBC Lab UK suggests that "preliminary results from this experiment will be made available later in 2011, in a special television documentary and online at BBC Lab UK. The full findings will be published in a suitable peer-reviewed journal." http://www.bbc.co.uk/labuk/articles/class/faq.html, accessed 8 January 2012. The findings were not available in mid January 2012.

2.4.1 Mappings of cultural capital to social stratification - three arguments

After several iterations of data analysis in the Spring of 2011, it became apparent that the patterning of cultural tastes across the sample of lecturers appeared diffuse. As a consequence the literature review turned to a more finite examination of aspects of mappings of social stratification to cultural capital and other structures of an agent's consumption pattern. I outline these below.

Analysing affinities for the visual arts in England, Chan and Goldthorpe (2007) identify three different arguments in terms of the linkages between social stratification and cultural consumption. First, they identify the homology argument. In its simplest form this argument claims no more than that social stratification and cultural stratification map closely onto each other. Individuals in higher social strata are those who prefer and predominantly consume 'high' or 'elite' culture, and individuals in lower social strata are those who prefer and predominantly consume 'popular' or 'mass' culture. Various intermediate positions are also recognised. A similar restatement of the argument on these lines is provided by Gans (1999). Second, they identify the individualisation argument as a direct contradiction of the homology argument. In present day economically advanced societies they conjecture differences in cultural taste and consumption and indeed in lifestyles generally, are losing their grounding in social stratification and are becoming more a matter of individual 'self-realisation'. Their third argument, the omnivore-univore argument, is important for the interpretation of the data in relation to the first three research questions, RQ1, RQ2 and RQ3. It relates more specifically to cultural consumption than to lifestyles in general. Its substance can perhaps be traced back to the findings of empirical research as early as that of Wilensky (1964) who reports that highly educated persons in the US had rarely any strong aversion to 'mass' culture and indeed often enjoyed it, at least in some forms. However, the present-day terms "omnivore" and "univore" originate with Peterson and Simkus (1992). Their broad hypothesis is that in modern society the homology argument is outmoded, not because cultural consumption has lost all grounding in social stratification, but because a new relationship is emerging. Rather than cultural stratification mapping straightforwardly onto social stratification, the cultural consumption of individuals in higher social strata differs from that of individuals in lower strata chiefly in that it is greater and much wider in its range - comprising not

only more 'highbrow' culture but in fact more of many wider cultural forms. Peterson and Simkus' findings were to prove analytically useful in the study.

2.4.2 Inhabitants of the cultural savannahs: univores, omnivores and paucivores

It was important given the study's early findings of the patterning of lecturers' capital profiles to pursue further the omnivore-univore-paucivore thesis. As we have seen, recent research has called into question the exclusive homology argument of Bourdieu, the idea of the interdependency of capital affinities over social space. High cultural capital in the music field, for example, may not in all cases incline high capital in the world of art, or in gastronomy and so on. Finding that there is no one taste profile that advantaged people share, where good taste is broad taste and not distinct highbrow tastes, Peterson presents his argument for the rise of a middle-class 'cultural omnivore'. Peterson's thesis suggests that high-status people do not limit their tastes to the highbrow, but instead graze in many cultural fields and on many genres (Peterson 1992, 2005; Peterson and Kern 1996). Conceptualising an anomaly first revealed in Simkus' large scale studies in the US, Peterson and Simkus' (1992) pyramidal model, in its first representation, describes the underlying structures of musical taste. The omnivores at the apex of the pyramid display elite taste and status through an appreciation of "the aesthetics of every distinctive form along with an appreciation of the high arts" (Peterson and Simkus 1992, p169). Positioned at the bottom of the pyramid are the 'univores' who tend to "be actively involved in one, or at best just a few, alternate aesthetic traditions" (p170). 'Paucivores', the culturally disengaged, are excluded from the model altogether. The omnivore is capable of switching positions to suit. Halle (1993) again shows cultural appreciation transcending boundaries and, with the possibility of middlebrow cultural appreciation for fine art, seems to confirm Peterson's anomaly - a point relevant to the study's findings. Tampubolon (2010) however adds those claiming statuses through such a wide spectrum of taste are expected to be able to distinguish laudable examples of each genre according to the standards of judgement that are unique to it. The omnivore thesis thus differs substantially from the form of aesthetic competence delineated in Bourdieu's account of French lifestyles, and this newer 'cosmopolitan' orientation is clearly conditional upon indicators of social class such as education, and therefore prone to function as a form of cultural capital *per se*. Indeed Bryson (1992) goes so far as to dub it multi-cultural capital. Much of the

significant body of literature on this subject is based on secondary research extrapolating existing survey data, for instance DiMaggio (1996) from art gallery visit data, Emmison 2003, and López and Álvarez (2004) from performing arts attendances.

In a significant shift in the 1990s researchers turn to focus on 'dislikes' rather than 'likes'. Bryson (1996) in the United States and Wilk (1997) in Belize typify this antagonistic approach allowing further investigation of controversial culture items. Bryson (1996) examines patterning of the American population's musical dislikes from 1993 US General Social Survey data culminating in her seminal *"Anything but heavy metal"* paper introducing the 'cultural hostility' thesis. Bryson writes powerfully of cultural cleavage:

> "Individuals use cultural taste to reinforce symbolic boundaries between themselves and categories of people they dislike" (1996, p885),

showing that although omnivores are culturally tolerant they are not appreciative of everything. To shun, when it becomes significant to do so, is not beyond the omnivore. Wilk (1997) identifies asymmetry of likes and dislikes. Knowing what an individual likes, according to Wilk, does not adequately predict what they would dislike. Only from a joint pattern of both likes and dislikes, asymmetrically ordered, can Wilk identify social boundaries. This asymmetry was to inform the study's analysis of lecturer's preference for décor where two questions on the quantitative survey instrument invited respondents to show first their likes and then their dislikes for a range of furnishings and interior styling.

The study's survey and interviews interrogated culinary taste. Here Warde and Martens' (1999) and Warde, Martens and Olsen's (1999) works were pertinent. Interested in patterns in restaurant activity, they find that high status people demonstrate a broad range of tastes and a wide knowledge of culinary practices and products. This knowledge is incorporated in, and symbolised by, high cultural capital resulting in a source of status. In his interview R29, a mathematician in the Skills-for-Life department at Riverford, was to illustrate Warde, Martens and Olsen's conclusions as he enthusiastically related details of his and his neighbours' "Round the World Food Club" (Chapter Four).

As a backdrop to the study's context the literature notes interesting differences in the incidence of omnivorousness across national cultures. López-Sintas and Garcia-Álvarez (2006) find that omnivores constitute less than 2% of Spain's population whereas in the same period in Flanders, Stichele and Laermans (2006) find they form 28% of the north Belgian population. Modifying previous literature, Tampubolon's (2010) UK study finds "a significant proportion of omnivores in the English population" (2010, p3). His other findings, though, in social class modifying consumption, and in that omnivores "perceive cultures to be hierarchical and this is especially evident among the avid omnivores" (2010, p3) appear to contradict those of Chan and Goldthorpe earlier (2007, 2009).

In a remarkable twist, omnivorousness can itself define cultural status (Savage et al. 2005, Van Eijck and Van Oosterhout 2005 and Van Eijck and Bargeman 2004). Collectively this thesis inverts the snobbishness of the high capital univore such that omnivorousness itself becomes a marker of distinction - the new 'cool'.

2.5 Class, status, and collaborative working

Here the arguments and implications for applying neo-Weberian stratification to the data are reviewed. Oppositional Marxist and neo-Marxist schemes (Rose and O'Reilly 1997, ONS 1998) and those of Wright (1979, 1985, 1996) are considered, however Blackburn, Prandy and Stewart's (1996) "Cambridge Alternative" schema is advanced as the most appropriate in context. Bourdieu is sure: acquisition of cultural capital advertises class prestige, entitling chapter one of *Homo Academicus* "The Aristocracy of Culture" (Bourdieu 1984b). Status according to Walkerdine et al. gets into peoples' heads:

> "Class is not something that is simply produced economically. It is performed, marked, written on minds and bodies. We can spot it a mile off" (2001, p18).

Kernel to this study is the lecturer's possession of cultural capital, but this accounts for only one of the four forms of capital identified by Bourdieu. Aspects of two others, social capital and symbolic capital, are integral to the interpretation of the data in the context of practitioner collaboration. The argument for collapsing and, in the main, neglecting the remaining one, the economic capital dimension, was predicated on an assumed equivalence of economic assets across FE lecturers. This strategy helped set

the study boundary. To substantiate my reasoning here: the majority of the FE colleges adopt the Association of Colleges' ('AoC') recommendations on pay and conditions - its 'harmonised salary scale'. Thus the postgraduate aeronautical engineering lecturer (respondent V2 was one) is on the same pay scale as his apprentice-indentured NVQ trowel trades lecturer counterpart.[25] Inevitably, of course, there are the relative rich and poor in the lecturer population (a feature identified by R8 as "spiky profiles", Chapter Four) nevertheless I argue a Marxist analytical perspective would be misaligned here. Few, if any, lecturers are owners of the means of production (Marx 1867) and therefore cannot be considered bourgeoisie. In this light, Weber's three-component theory of stratification (1946) - wealth/power/prestige - and its precepts that status identified by honour and prestige attached to agents' styles of life gives rise to power differences; that class occurs in the labour market; and that the processes of gaining work and its consequential rewards lead to prestige - appeared more appropriate. Important here is Weber's notion that each class, or sub-class, is defined by its relationships with others. A second strand of the argument for subsuming economic capital as a factor is an argument based on class homogeneity in the profession: FE lecturers, irrespective of teaching specialism, are classified as middle class (the 1998 ONS scheme classifies lecturers as *"1.2 Higher Professionals"* within the "service [middle] class"). As a gradational concept, Blackburn et al.'s scheme stratifies in terms of "how much they have of whatever is considered crucial - power, income, status or whatever" (Roberts 2001, p38). Congruent with Bourdieuian habitus, the Blackburn and Cambridge Group argue, as Roberts writes

> "how people respond in given positions will always depend, at least in part, on where they are coming from, and where they believe they are heading" (2001, p39).[26]

Erik Olin Wright is equally explicit, "class counts". He advances the existence of a continuum of class practices, from the mundane, "a worker selling labor" to the extra-ordinary, "participating in a strike" (Wright 1997, p192). Extrapolating Wright's notion then, we may conjecture that an instantiation of a 'class practice' might be a manifest in

[25] There is less than £4000 difference nationally in the average salaries of lecturers across curriculum areas. Humanities and science lecturers average £31977 p.a., hair and beauty lecturers £28151 (LSIS, 2009-10).

[26] The Cambridge Group's use of network contacts, with each respondent invited to give the occupations of four friends as well as their own, led to another facet of the bricolage analysis - that of identifying 'preferred collaborative departments", Annexe U. Although not investigated extensively in the thesis, it opens up avenues for further research discussed in Chapter Six.

the willingness, or otherwise, to collaborate. After deciding to exclude economism-based class stratification, a refined path through the appropriate literature was possible.

Roberts again provides a kernel argument for the study's stratification perspective:

> "people tend to associate with others of the *same class at work*, in their neighbourhoods, and so they also tend to marry one another" (Roberts 2001, p9, my italics)[27].

Interestingly elsewhere in the literature, Savage et al. advance an asset-based realist theory of the middle class based on the ownership of three types of assets: property; bureaucracy; and culture (Savage et al. 1992). They argue for property and culture as more secure bases for middle-class positions than organisation-based assets. This premise runs counter to findings in the thesis, a point I explore further in Chapter Four.

2.6 Omnivorousness and collaboration in Further Education

This section critically appraises knowledge of the formation of small groups in relation to Bourdieu's tenet that agents possessing similar capitals are more likely to share social space and hence reinforce their habituses through the shared experience. Differences in the cultural capital of FE practitioners and whether they contribute to an inhibitor effect in collaborative working is one of the prime research themes of the study. The influence of the degree of diversity is a contested area. One school argues diversity through the presence of a greater number of individual perspectives to be a source of organisational innovation and creativity (Wiersema and Bantel 1992, Watson et al. 1993). However, the lack of homogeneity as an inhibitor to group coalescence is found by others: for instance Harrison et al. (1998), Lau and Murnigan (1998), and Tsui et al. (1995). Shapiro (2000) warns that far from promoting homogeneity in employee groups as Humphries and Rubery (1995), Northcraft (1993), and Cassell (1996) do, promotion of teamwork and use of staff experience and creativity frequently highlights the diversity between staff urging that unless organisations take explicit consideration of the differences that exist between employees in terms of their needs and aspirations, they will have difficulty in meeting key corporate improvement objectives. With such polarised views and the lack of clarity in this area organisations in general and in particular FE, I argue, have been slow to develop an awareness of their capabilities to

[27] Personally I would not advocate FE as a marriage bureau, but Roberts' initial point is pertinent.

manage 'non-protected characteristics' diversity[28], those stemming from 'background' or habitus, in a positive way.

An argument outside elemental compositions of groups is that of Brown (1988) who interprets two key ideas from Lewin's force field theory crucial to the group formation process, those of interdependence of fate, and task interdependence (Lewin, 1943):

> "Groups come into being in a psychological sense not because their members necessarily are similar to one another (although they may be); rather, a group exists when people in it realize their fate depends on the fate of the group as a whole" Brown (1988, p28).

Brown finds that interdependence of fate can be a fairly weak form of affiliation in many groups. A more significant factor is where there is interdependence in the goals of group members. In other words, if the group's task is such that members of the group are dependent on each other for its achievement then a more powerful dynamic is created. Rupert Brown's ideas augur well for a community of practice where task interdependence is engendered through, for example, the discrete curriculum specialisms of its members.

In relation to cultural capital Frow (1995) however argues against a collapsing of a group's various social experiences into a single group 'experience' arguing for a dominant field logic. Webb et al. siding with Frow suggest that

> "The adolescent rock guitarist, the 'cultivated' lover of opera, and the *avant garde* writer have very little in common in terms of social origins or aesthetic tastes beyond their shared membership of a field of cultural production" (2002, p148).

The subjectivity, complexity and inter-related nature of the area is demonstrated and further compounded by Coleman's (1988) introduction of yet another capital into the discourse, human capital, to explain the individual's attraction to social coalitions through their desire to succeed and learn. Enhancement of this particular capital is "predicated on individuals being part of networks of influence held together by rational and reciprocal arrangements of trust and obligation" (1988, p17).

In the field of social network formation where aspects of mathematics are conflated with sociology, Granovetter (1973) proposes that 'weak' ties between acquaintances,

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[28] As defined by the Equality Act 2010 applying in England, Wales and Scotland.

colleagues from other college schools for instance, allow a greater diffuse dispersal of knowledge and ideas to reach populations inaccessible through the more intense 'strong' ties of intimate relationships. We can assume that organised teams in FE colleges, subject area teams for instance, will continue to meet and carry out their business. If we utilise Granovetter's metric of tie 'strength' being a linear combination of the factors of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (or mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterise each tie, then intra-departmental ties may indeed be considered strong ones. This weak/strong tie polarity when coupled with the practitioners' cultural capital is of relevance to the operation of inter-personal mechanisms in the lecturers' 'catchment area'. This notion is supported in the literature. Erickson (1996) drawing on her study of Canadian security industry workers, suggests that the increased diversity of taste shown by security managers, as opposed to their subordinates, enables an enhanced level of personal communication in the workplace in an instrumental rather than expressive orientation. On a culturally-explicit level Erickson's study provides evidence of a relationship between cultural consumption and weak inter-personal ties. Under this regime, initiation of a high status interaction to someone distant in social space would either be seen as communication failure or a ritual show of determination. Erickson is at pains, too, to point out that highbrow culture is a useless "waste of time" (Erickson 1996, p246). For coordination purposes popular culture is more useful. Long (2003, in Lizardo 2006) goes one stage further. Her study of women's reading groups finds a mutually constitutive dynamic between cultural taste and social connections that not only reinforces connections but evidences the development of longer-term friendships from initial acquaintances. Long reports that consistent with the claim that connects the consumption of aesthetic products and sociability, she finds that reading group members

> "tend to press books into service for the meanings that they transmit and the conversations they generate (Long 2003, p73)."

However, Long's social connection mechanism may act, Ostrower (1998) proposes, through an intercessor process. Ostrower finds high status cohesion resulting not from the commonality as a result of abstract shared knowledge but conceives the knowledge as an intermediary step to the functioning and operation of organisational and network meetings and events that, in turn, lead to opportunities to form close contacts.

If we relate these findings above to the FE domain it means that although innovation occurs through subject area teams, there appears strong and recent evidence that capturing practice from nucleations of disparate yet passionate practitioners - contacts through weak ties between joiners, computer scientists and beauticians for instance - will lead to greater innovative benefit.

2.7 Communities of practice

I now turn to review literature on communities of practice ('CoPs'). The concept is in flux and it is therefore important to clarify the thesis' use of the term positioned within its evolutionary trajectory. Boylan (2010) separates three "distinct though related" formulations of the concept as being:

> "[...] a conceptual tool for understanding learning, a model of the social formations and forms in which learning takes place, and an advocated way to organise learning" (Boylan 2010, p62).

Building originally on Lave's (1988) work on learning by situational immersion, Lave and Wenger co-proposed the term to describe the community (of fellow apprentices, journeymen, experienced practitioners and so on) acting as a living curriculum in apprenticeship learning. The term evolved concurrently in Brown and Duguid's (1991) work that builds a parallel concept empirically from examination of workplace practices of informal groups of medical practitioners. The scope of these early formulations was restricted to the notion of understanding "situated learning", that is learning through practice and participation (Lave and Wenger 1991). Lave and Wenger (1991), perhaps indicative of forthcoming redefinition, concede that "community of practice is largely an intuitive notion" admitting "central issues are only touched upon and need to be given more attention" (1991, p42). Indeed later, Wenger expands the concept into a social theory of learning and refines the definition taking into account a community where learning takes place driven by the pursuit of enterprises of all kinds and where the interaction "with each other and with the world tune[s] our relations with each other and with the world accordingly" (1998, p45). Later still, Wenger et al. (2002) differentiate communities of practice from orthodox organisational structures arguing the purpose of the former to be esoteric knowledge creation: "to create, expand, and exchange knowledge, and to develop individual capabilities", reasoning that membership is through "self-selection based on expertise or passion for a topic" (2002, p42).

Wenger, on his website, encapsulates this contemporary definition as:

> "[...] groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger 2012).

It is this delineation of the term that the thesis adopts: Boylan's "advocated way to organise learning" (2010, p62). The concept, as now defined, provides as Engeström notes, a "rich conceptual framework" that turns into a "toolkit for organizational design and knowledge management" (2007, p1). Three necessary features of a community of practice are identified. First, a necessary domain of collective competence; second, the interaction of members engaging in joint activities and discussions; and third that members of a community of practice are practitioners developing a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems - in short a shared practice (Wenger et al. 2002, Wenger 2012). The coalescence of such communities can emerge from aspects of the "passion, commitment and identification" of practitioners separated from the more mundane characteristics of the requirements of the lecturer's role (Wenger et al. 2002, p42).

The concept of communities of practice is omnipresent in the academic educational literature, and their benefit in education well documented. The literature's focus divides roughly between the professional and the pedagogical. The breath spans in the FE pedagogical context, Guile and Young (1999), Evans et al. (2002); in apprenticeships and work-based learning, Fuller and Unwin (2003, 2004); in relation to students' professional development, McArdle and Ackland (2007); on using ICT to engage virtual communities in schools and colleges (Hargreaves 2003, Avis and Fisher 2006); and in unraveling the complexity in participation in formal and informal learning situations in school mathematics classes (Boylan 2010).

In vocational education and training, community of practice theory is applied by Avis and Bathmaker (2005) to examine the effect of trainee lecturers' teaching placement on the development of professional identity. Rather than identifying effective processes of increasing participation in existing communities of practice, as might be expected, a strong sense of marginalisation and alienation amongst trainees is observed. Here major transformations forcing considerable changes to the work of those teaching are seen to be responsible. Some of the FE literature appears tangential since the term is used in literal form by some researchers, for instance Le Gallais (2005) in an otherwise

appropriate project, to loosely describe a collective identity and categorisation - literally a group ('community') of practitioners in 'practice'. This misuse circumvents the richness of the principles of community formation and propagation with individuals identifying with shared values and ways of being and doing and removing the need to constantly question interaction (Schutz 1976, Viskovic and Robson 2001).

Research on communities of practice in secondary education includes Hodkinson and Hodkinson's (2003) case study examination considering the interrelationships between individual worker dispositions to learning, community of practice and wider organisational and policy contexts. Reverting to the 'situated learning' (1991) variant of the term and bridging the vocational student-teacher divide, Fuller et al.'s (2005) tandem studies considers how UK steel industry apprentices and secondary school teachers learn at work. Finding polarised experiences across the two groups they argue that Lave and Wenger's attempt to "stretch legitimate peripheral participation to cover all workplace learning is unconvincing" (2005, p65). Moreover, Fuller et al. insist Lave and Wenger tend to treat their learners as blank slates; their identities and biographies matter only as part of their new community of practice. Fuller et al. suggest more attention should be paid to the learner's beliefs, understandings, skills, and attitudes. This important finding is resonant with the investigative thrust of the thesis where the cultural capital of participants is examined. In Higher Education too the concept of community of practice is similarly pervasive, for example, in the Higher Education Academy's education theories on learning (HEA 2009).

In the professional domain, as opposed to the pedagogic, benefits of communities of practice supporting leadership in an Further Education college setting have been advanced by Jameson (2008). Indeed in the UK's other public sector professions, notably the NHS, the discourse is well-established and reified in professional medical practice (for example Gabbay et al. 2003). The recognition of the value of communities of practice to FE college operational performance is less well reported. Significantly, as I noted earlier, Ofsted's way-marker documents "*Why colleges succeed*" (Ofsted 2004) and "*Why colleges fail*" (Ofsted 2004) singularly fail to include the term "community of practice" in their forty-two pages of findings reviewing data from 307 college inspections - documents effectively road-maps for good practice.

The concept is not without critical appraisal. At the current stage of its evolution Handley et al. (2006) provide a general critique. Recognising that communities encompass the tacit dimension of knowledge, Handley et al. side with Resnick (1987) and Sfard (1998) to emphasise that context is vital to understanding, learning and practice - knowledge is not just 'acquired'. These scholars foreground aspects of potential conflict that belie any idealization of communities as cohesive and homogeneous social objects (Handley et al. 2006, p642-645). Identifying various issues within a community, first, of power relations between novices and influential practitioners; second of identity-construction by the practitioners; and third, definitional issues of 'participation', they argue that the literature in the main ignores conflict in CoPs. In contrast they note that divergence in organisational cultures is a well developed topic in mainstream organisational theory. This criticism when taken alongside Knorr Cetina's (1999) earlier work citing the ambiguity and interchangability of the terms 'practice' and 'participation', leaves the door open for accusations that participation does not entail equality nor respect. Hughes, Jewson and Unwin (2007) provide a critique on the a-historical nature of CoPs that purports to limit their range, incorrectly I would argue, in covering dynamic and emergent forms of work organisation - Engestrom's 'social mycorrhizae'. Billet, in the same volume, provides a stark warning that, taken to the limit, CoPs obscure the all-important learning potential of the individual human being.

In Chapter One I documented the important role CoPs played in my first career delivering organisational efficiency and innovative benefit. This finding appears well founded elsewhere and generalisable, bolstered by many, mainly private sector, studies especially from North America. Showcasing their advantages and providing persuasive evidence early in their text, Wenger et al. (2002) cite several blue-chip companies who have fostered communities of practice gaining significant organisation leverage in the process. Although the argument for communities of practice appears strong, there is a time-based caveat given the dynamics and turbulence of the operating environment. An organisation's zenith in excellence, profitability and market-leadership maybe short-lived, as Peters found (*ibid*)[29]. Given this caveat, it would be wrong to invest all

[29] The citing of exemplar companies is dangerous, as critics pointed out of those selected by Peters and Waterman's (*ibid.*) in their book *In Search of Excellence*. A point later confirmed by Peters. See "Tom Peter's True Confessions" at http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/53/peters.html?page=0%2C2 [on-line]

energies into communities of practice: communities of practice should be viewed as part of an organisation's 'cocktail of initiatives' aimed at continuous improvement and certainly not a panacea.

The closest approach to an ideal type community of practice I have witnessed in FE is the Subject Learning Coach (SLC) network formed in 2003 under the *'Success for All'* National Teaching and Learning Change Programme (DfES 2002). Intended to create a step-change improvement in quality in the way that priority subjects are delivered in FE it encouraged teachers, tutors, trainers and managers to re-examine their approaches to teaching and learning. Nine regional networks brought together college-nominated 'subject coaches' to engage with the reforming strategies and principles. A national training programme in coaching skills supported their work in change-catalysis back in College. I was offered and accepted a role of subject learning coach in March 2008.

2.8 The FE college as a 'learning organisation'

> "Sharing his perspective on knowledge as part of organizational life in a talk to students at Kellogg School of Management, Larry closed with a really great question to use when poking around in an organization trying to get a sense of its attitudes toward knowledge and learning: '*can you make a mistake around here?*' "
>
> Recollections of a lecture given by Larry Prusak at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, Illinois, US, 4 Feb. 2008, recorded by McGee (2012).

The work group, as opposed to the ideal-type community of practice, as the college's orthodox collective problem-solving mechanism, I argue is outmoded. The work group was reified in the ethos of the classical school of management whose foundations were laid down by those who had solely managerial concerns for its outcomes (Taylor 1903, Fayol 1916). Though some of these classical foundations, for example the principle of the organisation as an 'entity' - a realist phenomenon capable of systematic investigation and description - and the primacy of efficiency, appear to converge with the contemporary focus on FE performativity. The FE college as a structural form, in particular the rationality and impersonality of its technical-rational bureaucracy, the "iron cage", orients the sociological perspective and owes much to Weber (1905). Employees other than managers are effectively 'designed out'. The study of individual behaviours within the organisation - the post-Classical human relations school of Mayo

(1949) - only took hold some years later. These later organisational theoretic positions have particular correspondence with community in that the psychological school endorses the 'social man' identified by Mayo. Much later scholars whose work when taken as a synthesis, the work of Schön (1983), Senge (1990), Wheatley (1992) and Argyris (1994), evidence a further paradigm shift in organisational theory. The equivalent of an 'epistemological break', this more recent work reintegrates societal issues within the organisational context into the concept of the learning organisation. In parallel, an epoch of management approaches linked to systems theory (Forrester 1961, 1968, Checkland 1981, Wheatley 1999) consolidate the fracture and acknowledge a further methodological branch embracing the emergence of the 'new' disciplines of chaos and complexity theory as serious management science, whilst at the same time emphasising the need for a break from positivism. Wheatley comments:

> "But when we encounter life's processes for change, we enter a new world. We move from billiard balls banging into one another to effect change, to networks that change because of information they find meaningful. We stop dealing with mass and work with energy. We discard mechanistic practices, and learn from the behaviour of living systems" (Wheatley, 1999: iv).

For FE's management the implications are profound as Schein identifies:

> "the degree to which work performance depended not on the individual alone, but on the network of social relationships within which he operated" (Schein 1970, p34).

Burrell and Morgan (1979, p131) whilst somewhat tempering this notion accept the existence of "social man" but prefer to emphasise the theoretical approach rather than praxis. Communities of practice thus appear intertwined with the concept of the 'learning organisation'.

Although it is not clear how many FE colleges would claim to be an ideal-type 'learning organisation' concurrent with the same organisation *providing* learning, the implications of being one in relation to innovation are clear. For Senge (1990) learning organisations are

> "organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together" (Senge 1990, p3).

Senge reasons that in situations of rapid change [cf. now] only those that are flexible, adaptive and productive will excel. For this to happen, he argues, organizations need to "discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels" (*ibid*, p4),

insisting that Hebbian 'adaptive learning' (e.g. Hebb 1949, Kolb 1984) must be joined by 'generative learning' (Lichtenstein and Jones 2000) leading to "learning that enhances our capacity to create" (Senge 1990, p14).

Critics of the organizational learning model emphasise the significance of the organisation's historic developmental trajectory. For instance Glasmeier et al. (1998) critique the model's validity and applicability arguing that, amongst other factors, information absorption is critical and that an organisation's ability to absorb new information is a function of its previous experiences with similar types of information. Furthermore, they construct a case for learning to be history-dependent arguing that organisations act on the basis of historical precedent: doing what they know best, 'sticking to the knitting' as Peters and Waterman advise (1982, p292-305). Reinforcing this antagonistic perspective, in their review of individual and social aspects of learning Salomon and Perkins make the point:

> "If organizations can learn, this does not mean that they learn very well. A strong theme in the literature on organizational learning is the weakness of the learning system involved. The learning of the collective suffers from a startling range of limitations [...] some of these are equally characteristic of solo and collective learning entities. For instance, rare high-stakes events - marriage decisions in an individual or major shifts of direction in a business - are difficult learning targets because they do not occur often to disambiguate the lessons of experience, and because by the time they occur again circumstances may have changed substantially" (1998, p17).

If this were to be the case, then any community to emerge would clearly face an uphill struggle. But even with this oppositional slant sanctifying precedent, the attraction of the learning organisation is appealing. I argue it is doubtful whether in the dynamism of the 21st Century organisations can possibly have previously encountered Glasmeier's similar 'information types'. Doing what an organisation does best and knowing what it knows best are not the same. The organisation may indeed stick with its market leading product, its core competency, but the knowledge needed to enhance and transform the organisation in the face of contingent pressures will come from many new directions. Lewin confirms this need for a holistic approach insisting the organisation be viewed as a 'construct' (Lewin 1943, 1997). In Lewin's scheme agents' behaviour is determined by the totality of an individual's situation (which he, too, coincidentally defines as a 'field'): "the totality of coexisting facts which are conceived of as mutually interdependent" (Lewin 1951, p240). This is reminiscent of Bourdieu's concept of

habitus when applied both individually and organisationally. For Lewin, contingent forces propel an individual's participation in a series of life spaces (such as the family, professional practice, collegiate working) and these participative acts are constructed under the influence of various force vectors (Lewin 1952). We can see how individual and organizational learning connect in the work of Argyris and Schön (1978, 1996), who suggest that each member of an organization "constructs his or her own representation or image of the theory-in-use of the whole" (1978, p16). This picture is enlarged by people continually working combinatorially to add pieces allowing a greater, but never complete, view of the whole. The holistic view, the jigsaw, then no matter how incomplete, cannot be achieved in any form without interdisciplinarity.

2.9 Ontological considerations

Throughout the project I have tried to be ontologically bold yet epistemologically cautious. Yet even in attempting to be compliant with my own principle, the ontological aspects of the research domain were difficult to pin down. I introduced in Chapter One, "*Foundations*", Searle's taxonomy of fact as a tool to help its disaggregation (Searle 1995). If we were to examine certain ontological considerations of the FE field we would find aspects that are both intrinsic to nature - in terms of objectified capital - the engineering lecturer's micrometer for instance, and, again using Searle's term 'observer-relative' in terms of the symbolism of its possession. The latter is socially constructed in the mind of its owner, "I was presented with this as a thank you for all my hard work when I left my engineering job at *TextileCo*", and in the minds of colleagues where the elevated prestige accrued by ownership of the artefact manifests as symbolic capital. The ontological complexity is compounded by the delineation of social facts: membership of a curriculum area for example, from the 'brute' fact of which staffroom we can be found in. We separate the college organisation chart from the geographical topology of signs on staff-room doors - the span is Searle's 'collective intentionality'. Generally accepted social facts become institutional facts - for instance the fact that we may need to address the fact of the college's current poor student retention. Moreover, these institutional facts have systematic relations among other institutional facts, for instance in the lecturer-student contractual relationship. Under the weight of this staggering meta-physical complexity Searle is reassuringly empathetic. Drawing on an example of bathtubs, "nothing more than enamel-covered iron concavities containing water", Searle finds the complex ontology, social reality - the

bathtub - simple, the simple ontology, hard (1995, p4). To exemplify this in context: it is indeed tempting to see the complex ontology of the FE college as 'simple', and take for granted - in Bourdieuian doxic fashion - its working practices and procedures and its social games of practitioner interaction, agreement and disagreement, and see them as 'simple'. Armed with Searle's force of abstraction I found analyses of the qualitative data using the method of constant comparison allowed glimpses of the underlying complexity of the social reality involved. An external behaviourist perspective would potentially miss these underlying structures that make social reality possible. Indeed without Searle's illumination it is possible to fail to spot cultural capital as being a collective institutional fact altogether. The kernel of the ontological grounds of the research then is the coming together of Searle's "collective intentionality". My role in a work group takes a certain form but am I doing it only because it is part of my employment's contractual obligation? Or is it that my attendance gives me a certain cachet amongst my colleagues? Or am I being altruistic? On a separate plane and remarkably, Searle's ontology requires that conflict to be the result of similar collective intentionality - we have to agree acceptable ways to differ, spar and argue. The antipathy shown at Valedown is an example. Opposition to the lesson observation procedure relied on (benignly accepted) symbolic violence exerted by the cross college observation regime. My colleague and his observer 'co-operated' in the observation session, even though my colleague's intent was to throw doubt on the robustness of the observation grade passed down.

2.10 Epistemological considerations

'Truth' in social research can be about correspondence to reality, pragmatism or perspective. The study's epistemological standpoint lies between that of the correspondence theory of truth in a realist ontology (for instance Moore 1910-11, ch.15 and Russell 1912, p129) and that of the American Pragmatist School of Peirce, James, and Dewey, Dewey's pragmatic theory of truth where 'something is true if it works for us'. Following Rorty (1999) and Rorty and Engel (2007) whose concerns are more about living our lives in an ethical manner and treating any grand claims to knowledge with irony; the question 'can it work?' is perhaps more important at this stage of the project than why it does.

Following on from the ontological discussion above, the required rigour in Searle's objectification of institutional fact appears aligned to Durkheim's aphorism

> "...our basic principle, that of the objectivity of social facts" (Durkheim 1895 [1982], p45, cited in Garfinkel and Rawls 2002, p2),

usually taken to mean that we should assume the objectivity of social facts as a principle of study (thus providing the basis of sociology as a science). I have attempted as *researcher-as-bricoleur* to heed the principle of ethnomethodological indifference, the policy of deliberate agnosticism towards the dictates, prejudices, methods and practices of sociological analysis as traditionally conceived. Guba and Lincoln (2005) insist that social research is best carried out like quantitative research embracing rigorous internal validity (method) and strong external validity (generalisability). I have attempted to adhere to their advice of describing what is found in as rigorous and transparent as way as possible.

From the philosophic, I progress to lay out briefly recent criticism of educational research to return and defend the thesis in the light of this raft of criticism in Chapter Six. The qualitative paradigm in education research developed throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s giving rise to a range of ethnographic and naturalist methodologies, including the postmodernist. However, a sustained attack in the 1990s lobbying against insufficient rigour, partisanship and irreproducibility (Hillage et al. 1998, Tooley and Darby 1998), might have sparked the 'quantitative turn'. Researchers were urged to return to quantitative methods, with experiments and randomized controlled trials seen as capable of producing sufficient 'hard' evidence (Fitz-Gibbon and Morris 1987, Oakley 1993, Boruch 1997, Fitz-Gibbon 2001). The research area has been the subject of qualitative study but only relatively recently (Carrabine and Longhurst 1999, Bennett et al., 2001, Bellavance, Myrtille and Ratte 2004, Fridman and Illivier 2004, Warde, Wright and Gayo-Cal 2007, Ollivier 2008). Importantly the research as a *bricolage* allows an eclectic mix of methodologies, the best of all possible worlds, a point I develop in the next chapter, Chapter Three.

2.11 Conclusion

Having built a review that addresses contexts, methods and outcomes and sidelining judgment of research purely in terms the quality of its empirical evidence, I am reminded of Bourdieu's surviving confederate, Loic Wacquant, who writes

> "Bourdieu has reformulated the classic problem of domination and inequality by questioning the ontological status of groups and by forging tools for disclosing how these come to be practically made and unmade in social life. The work of sociological deconstruction of the work of group-making has only begun" (Wacquant 2007, p5).

Chapter Three lays out the methodology, design and pragmatics that I used in the attempt for such a sociological deconstruction.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY, DESIGN AND METHOD

Epigraph 1
The second law of thermodynamics mathematically expressed: $dS/dt \geq 0$.

"The law that entropy always increases holds, I think, the supreme position among the laws of Nature. If someone points out to you that your pet theory of the universe is in disagreement with Maxwell's equations - then so much the worse for Maxwell's equations. If it is found to be contradicted by observation - well, these experimentalists do bungle things sometimes. But if your theory is found to be against the second law of thermodynamics I can give you no hope; there is nothing for it but to collapse in deepest humiliation"

> Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World* (1927, p74). Eddington's astronomical observations first validated Einstein's general theory of relativity.

Epigraph 2
"We feel that even when all possible scientific questions have been answered, the problems of life remain completely untouched"

> Ludwig Wittgenstein, philosopher and engineer, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus* (1921, S 6.52).

Epigraph 3
"When I find myself in the company of scientists, I feel like a shabby curate who has strayed by mistake into a drawing room full of dukes."

> W. H. Auden, English poet (1907-1973), *The Dyer's Hand* (1962, p27).

3.1 Chapter structure

This chapter is substantive for a reason. The importance of developing a detailed justification for the research's methodology is underscored by Kaplan (1973): its aim to

> "describe and analyse methods, throwing light on their limitations and resources, clarifying their suppositions and consequences, relating their potentialities to the twilight zone at the frontiers of knowledge" (Kaplan 1973, p93).

Kaplan's notion of the analysis of method is compounded by Walker's (1985) emphasis that the methods we choose [as researchers] are there to be tested, just as much as substantial hypothesis.

The chapter is structured in six sections. In the first, a case for the adopted methodology is justified building from a scrutiny of ontological considerations of the research area and the influence this had on the study epistemology. Arguments for the rejection of alternative methodologies are included here together with a note on the project's standpoint on 'truth' and causality. Principles of the study's design, both in its emergent and final adopted forms, are explained and warranted in the second section. Here the rationale for the inclusion of the survey instrument questions in relation to the research questions is explained. Ethical considerations are dealt with in the third. The fourth main section outlines the pragmatics of the study's method, for instance the distribution of the survey instrument, details of the sampling frame, and the criteria for selection of participants for interview. This section moves on to examine the design of the study's qualitative phase and justify its relationship to the quantitative element. Section five describes methods of data analysis and reasons for the choice is explained. In the final part, the discussion turns to issues of validity, reliability and triangulation.

3.2 The study's methodological perspective

3.2.1 Problems with mono-methodological enquiry

The epigraphs from Eddington (1927) and Wittgenstein (1921) paraphrase the dichotomy in mono-methodological enquiry. Taken together they introduce the twin difficulties I confronted as an education researcher: first the difficulty of establishing

facets of education's social truth[31] in comparison to realist 'facts' present under natural science law, and second, that of ensuring the most appropriate methodological choice to suit the ontological contexts. Eddington depicts the discovery, through positivism's rigorous application of the scientific method of observation and reason, of perhaps the closest approach yet to the immutability of knowledge: the phenomenon of ever-increasing entropy (disorder) and with it nature's unidirectional 'arrow of time'. In Epigraph 2, philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose original specialism, ironically, was the positivist discipline of engineering, admits the difficulty of achieving the necessary sociological clarity, the "problems of life", that remain after such an application of positivism's nomothetic objective approach (1921, S6.52). In combination, the epigraphs reinforce how the social world might differ from the world of inanimate physical phenomena - what Searle calls the "bare bones of our ontology" where "we live in a world made up entirely of physical particles in fields of force" (Searle 1995, p7).

Although the dominant paradigm in education, many criticisms are levelled at hermeneutical enquiry, Auden's "shabby curate" of education research (Epigraph 3, Auden 1962, p27). Interpretive paradigms may offer a means of attempting to understand individual and societal action but even then, as Wittgenstein admits, the complexity of the social domain and possibly the ultimate irresolvable and irreducible nature of it remain. Contemporarily, Berliner shows equivalent concern claiming "education research to be the hardest science of all" (2002, p1) suggesting that three conditions make it so: first the specificity and non-reproducible nature of the research context, second the "ubiquity of interaction" for example tutor(s)-tutor(s) interaction occurring on many planes and on many levels, and third what he calls the "decade by findings", the short half-life of the relevance of educational research in the face of rapid change, not only in the fluidity of individual human interactions but in the wider social environment. Although Berliner restricts his discussion of change singularly to change in the social environment citing the 1970s' feminist revolution, there are many more recent compounding influences in FE's socio-economic environment - record levels of youth unemployment, the cessation of Education Maintenance Allowance payments

[31] At this point I drop the scare quotes around the word 'truth', having asserted the difficulties of the notion of its immutability. As I outlined earlier the thesis's notion of truth is aligned with the pragmatic theory of truth; the utility of accepting it, exactitude not being a virtue (James 1907, p222).

('EMA'), threats to job security and so on. Both the political and the technical environments, too, serve to compound the problem.

In previous work carried out for the taught components of the Ed.D. in 2009, I conclude that there is little reason for accepting the absolute dominance of either positivism or anti-positivist paradigms based on epistemological strength. Rarely replacing each other by falsification in the Poppersian sense (Popper 1963), it remains difficult for either paradigm, I argue, if implemented mono-methodologically, to provide sufficient epistemological validity and robustness. Many criticisms levelled at positivism, notably the under-determination of theory by evidence - that is, all evidence of a certain type underdetermines which of several rival theories is correct (Duhem 1954) - the acceptance of the 'fit' of data to a hypothesis, and the problem of induction in theory generation, can be targeted equally at interpretive approaches. An argument therefore can be constructed for subsuming parts of the method of positivist enquiry within interpretive methodology such that knowledge is constructed as the outcome of competent and controlled enquiry (Dewey 1938), a point I will pick up on shortly.

3.2.2 Arguments for rejecting a positivist approach

There were several arguments for rejecting a purely positivist approach. We have seen from the literature review that much research is grounded in the rich texture of the agent's inter-subjective world. First and oppositionally, positivism backgrounds agency and denigrates human behaviour to the passive. Strong evidence for the contrary is seen in Randell and Brady's (1997) seminal paper on the range of lecturers' responses to increased managerialism[32] and de-professionalisation in the sector, from benign acceptance to strike action. These actions are inconsistent with positivism's unitary mechanistic and deterministic view. Second, under positivism the operationalisation of variables, for example the lecturer's 'creativity' or 'commitment' is at best problematic or at worst, invalid. Third, positivism seeks means-end causation and when applied to the social world the problem of underdetermination arises as outlined above (Phillips and Burbules 2002). Under positivist enquiry the researcher can know only that effect is

[32] McGrath, for example, lists practices in the managerialist approach including, "the practice of emphasising the manager's right to manage"; "the application of value for money principles"; "the extensive use of indicators to monitor and control staff activities" (2004, p22), giving rise to what Exworthy and Halford refer to as "latent structural and attitudinal contradictions between managerialism and professionalism" (2002, p25).

caused probabilistically. Little inkling is given as to the 'how' or the 'why' the effect may have occurred. As Sayer observes in the 'open system' of the social world

> "the same causal power can produce different outcomes according to how the conditions for closure are broken: for example, economic competition can prompt firms to restructure and innovate or close. Sometimes different causal mechanisms can produce the same result: for instance you can lose your job for a variety of reasons" (2000, p15).

In his work *Positivism and sociology: explaining social life* Halfpenny too is at pains to point out,

> "in the social sciences, when underlying causal mechanisms have been proposed as explanation, questions of their existence have been endlessly controversial" (1982, p35).

For these reasons and rejecting positivism's trap that interpretation of results suffers from the problem of the relativity of the light of reason - what is 'apparent' to one person is not necessarily apparent to another - I veered towards a post-positivistic methodology, and it is to that I know turn.

3.2.3 Towards an alternative: the case for a bricolage approach

As I have established, underpinning the methodological choice and subsequent analysis was the premise that I wanted to be ontologically bold yet epistemologically cautious. Here I drew on Bhaskar's (1979) observation that epistemology appears transitive, subject to the prevailing power dimensions in society, but ontology has some degree of intransitivity.

In pursuing an appropriate methodology, I was aware of my natural sciences background and biases this might induce, in particular Robson's (2002) caveat that the researcher's theoretical lens, in part, tends to decide the choice of methods. A research *bricolage* seemed a possibility given Denscombe's (2000, p3) advice that "there is no one right decision to take", and McGrath's assertion of the importance of the link between the selected methodology and the type of data collected:

> "[...] the nature of the research methodology adopted informs the choice of research methods and determines the type of data collected and how it is analysed [...] (2004, p82).

Smith's (1975) emphasis on the impact of the methodology on conclusions drew a warning:

> "No matter how *ex post facto* the conclusions drawn from the data, the methodological procedures followed will have a great effect on the theoretical or practical conclusions drawn from the data" (Smith 1975, p22).

A *bricolage* methodology would unify, albeit progressively, the quantitative with the qualitative, with one recursively and iteratively influencing the other. Recursivity's appeal was strong[33] and a *bricolage* appeared congruent with Bourdieu's reflexive sociology transcending the empiricist-constructionist and idiographic-nomothetic dichotomies of more orthodox, dated social research (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p34-35). The mixing of the theoretical and the empirical acting through theory construction, Bourdieu's conjoining of theory and practice, seemed to fit a model with an assemblage of investigative methods. Furthermore, divergence from mono-methodological enquiry would reduce the research, as Bourdieu and Wacquant argue, to a " '*rational endeavour*', and not a '*mystical quest*' " (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p218, my italics).

Etymologically from the French *"bricoleur"*, meaning 'jack-of-all-trades', the "researcher-as-bricoleur" (Denzin and Lincoln 2000, Kincheloe 2002, Kincheloe and Berry 2004) appeared apt given its mix of enquiry tools, its critical multi-faceted epistemology encompassing the range of the ontological objective-subjective duality I found in the pilot study. Introduced to British commercial market-researchers by Gordon (1999) the 'bricolage' refers to a deliberate pragmatic and eclectic mixing of qualitative methods to describe

> "a new direction in qualitative thinking both in the halls of academia and the market-places of business" (Gordon 1999, p303).

The term's entry into the research lexicon, thus conferring a degree of legitimacy, is recorded by Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p4) as "a pieced-together set of representations that is fitted to the specifics of a complex situation".

[33] I had become familiar with recursion when I encountered a need to divert and review literature relevant to the stream of results emerging from the phases of data analysis.

Figure 2: A bricolage, a kind of DIY store.

Image taken on the Left Bank in Paris in April 2011 as I retraced *in esse* Bourdieu's late academic career and visited his grave at Père Lachaise Cemetery in the capital.

In this instance I could probably stand accused of a certain homage to, and adulation of, the 'great thinkers' (Tooley and Darby 1998).

At the bricolage's methodological core are ideas of invention, innovation and assemblages of new tools and techniques perhaps singularly applicable to the research context. Within it, individual research paradigms comply with their own basic axioms guiding the research process and the way that the research is perceived and applied. Thus the reductionism of many nomological, mimetic research orientations is avoided. The researcher-as-bricoleur is therefore permitted a more sophisticated understanding of the complexity of knowledge production and the interrelated complexity of both researcher positionality and educational phenomena. Additionally, the sense of conflict in data is reduced as Glaser and Strauss are at pains to point out, pre-dating the emergence of the technique: "there is no fundamental clash between the purposes and capacities of qualitative and quantitative methods or data" (1967, p17).

To use an analogy that exemplifies the *researcher-as-bricoleur*: if I read a report on a soccer match, I seek both qualitative descriptive data – what a great game it was, who played well, how the crowd reacted, and so on, but I also require the following:

Dunstable 2	**Sheffield United 3**
(Scorers: Faulkner, 27 mins; Garland 90 mins.)	(Scorers: Wagstaff(2), 12, 14 mins; Currie, 89 mins.) Sent off: Woodward 47 mins.)

Attendance: 27, 808

In this crude analogy, the "qualitative data provides richness and colour; quantitative data provides structure" (Wellington 2000, p19): what Bryman (1992) argues as efficiency of getting to the 'structural' features of social life with the quantitative, while qualitative studies are usually stronger in terms of 'prosessual' aspects. If this duality were developed fully into a research bricolage, I might add into the mix player

interviews, conduct radio phone-ins, and examine fanzine secondary data and so on. The decision of what, and what not, to use is made at the time and is dependent on the point reached in the research.

A bricolage has other significant advantages: Flick (2002) supporting combinational methodological practices advocates their use as "a strategy that adds rigour, breadth, complexity and richness and depth to any enquiry" (Flick 2002, p229). Nelson et al. add their weight to such a flexible approach:

> "The choice of research practices depends upon the questions that are asked, and the questions depend on their context, what is available in the context and what the researcher can do in that setting" (1992, p2).

Moreover, philosophical support is provided by Feyerabend (1975) noting Butterfield's comments (1965, p65) that history is "full of accidents and conjectures and curious juxtaposition of events" asking

> "are we really to believe that the naïve and simple-minded rules which methodologists take as their guide are capable of accounting for such a 'maze of interactions'?" (Feyerabend 1975, p1).

My choice was made firmer noting that Gorard and Taylor (2004, p44) see its complementary "binocular" views providing degrees of triangulation, and with further reinforcement from Schatzman and Strauss' (1973) proposal that additional rigour in the sense of "methodological pragmatism" is fostered through such methodological dualism.

Moving from analogy and theory to practicality, I planned, initially, to use a combination of card-sort 'parlour games' as pre-interview trigger activities, attitudinal survey, interview content picking up interesting results, anomalies and extremes together with various positivist (for example, multiple component analysis and factor analysis) and interpretive analytical devices. The 'parlour games' pairing up, for instance, furniture items ('IKEA desk', 'Louis XVI chair' etc.) to lecturers, e.g. 'Ms. A.: Sports and Fitness lecturer' served a number of important functions, including introducing the study's focus at interview without overtly exposing the thrust of the questioning. Clearly though, this planned combinatorial mix was to be reviewed, in the spirit of bricolage, as the research would progress.

It was envisaged that the study's analysis, intentionally, would largely bracket out considerations of power and reproduction of the social structures of domination. Instead the study would focus on the factors that develop the lecturers' strategies adapted to the needs of the social worlds that they inhabit. As it turned out a small number of instances of Bourdieuian symbolic violence, where individual practitioners accept the arbitrariness of the natural social order and the legitimacy of the existing social structure, were pointed up. The resultant analytical approach would diverge somewhat from the bulk of Bourdieu's anthropological work where, in rejecting the primacy of economic factors, Bourdieu's focus was on cultural production and symbolic systems playing an important part in the field of power.

I was to find that multi-paradigmatic approaches came at a cost. The researcher must have greater breadth of knowledge of the paradigms, the skills implied in their application, and must be prepared to understand, combine and switch between pluralist epistemologies and their connected methodologies dependent on the ontological content under scrutiny. Notwithstanding the additional complexity, this greater breadth of skills, I argue, allows stronger research claims and greater impact - a principle affirmed by Gorard and Taylor (2004, p7) and the National Research Council (2002).

3.2.4 The standpoint on truth and causality

Veering away from the notion of truth being a 'correspondence to reality' in a realist ontology, the project's standpoint on truth is pragmatic, dismissing any grand claim to knowledge as irony. This is convergent with the ideas of the American pragmatist school and contemporarily with Rorty's position (1999). In the preface to *Philosophy and Social Hope*, Richard Rorty sets out his position, and that adopted by the study:

> "we cannot regard truth as a goal of inquiry. The purpose of inquiry is to achieve agreement among human beings about what to do, to bring consensus on the end to be achieved and the means to be used to achieve those ends. Inquiry that does not achieve co-ordination of behaviour is not inquiry but simply wordplay" (Rorty 1999, p. xxv).

Dewey's replacement of the expression 'warranted assertion' for 'truth', too, is persuasive. This substitution allows well-warranted beliefs to enable "competent enquiry" in the absence of absolute evidence (Dewey 1938). My intention was to describe what was found in a rigorous and transparent a way as possible aiming at compliance with Popper's "regulative ideal" (1972, p237), that is that the researcher

should seek beliefs generated by rigorous enquiry whilst accepting post-positivism's axiom that "knowledge is elusive and we might sometimes end up wrongly accepting some doctrine or finding as true when it is not" (Phillips and Burbules 2003, p3). The standpoint finds another convergence with Guba and Lincoln's (1994) constructivist paradigm of social reality existing independent of perceptions about it, a reality where research *in toto* is best carried out like quantitative research with rigorous internal validity (of method) and strong external validity (its generalisability).

In Chapters Four and Five inferences to causality are made on an assumption of the existence of causal chains. Like the student whose highly commended college 'A level' English essay is both a spur to her choice to read English at university and eventually pursuing a career as a creative writer, causation in the social world appears to be based on causal chains of actions that are likely to lead or shape or influence. Bunge (1996) points out the impossibility of social life in the absence of some form of causation:

> "Rational action and the rational discussion of it are among the features that distinguish society from nature, and consequently social science from natural science. However this distinction should not be overdone, for reason is impotent without causation" (Bunge 1996, p36).

Mindful of the difficulties of effecting change in organisations, it is in this vein that I propose recommendations in Chapter Six intended to influence and shape future practice through these causal chains.

3.2.5 Bourdieu and Searle: a methodological marriage made in philosophy and empiricism

The vignette Searle presents of a visit to a Parisian café in his work *"The Construction of Social Reality"* (Searle 1995, p3-4), his actions in ordering a drink, being served, the ignorance of the customer to the regulations of operating the café and so on, is a compelling illustration of the meta-physical complexity of the huge invisible ontology of ordinary social relations in the world. Lawson is in agreement, identifying the social ontology of the social domain as equally complex, "a cauldron of claims and counterclaims devoid of anything approaching consensus" (2004, p12).

For Searle it seems "simple but puzzling"; there are "objective facts that are facts only by human agreement" (1995, p1). Legitimising the authority to spend the college's

allocation of grant based funding, and the formal conferment of a lecturer's teaching qualifications are but two in FE. Searle distinguishes these 'mental institutional facts' from the 'brute facts' of his ontology: the world "of physical particles in fields of force" (1995, p7). Organisation of these entities into living systems, he argues, may evolve consciousness and with it "intentionality", the capacity of the organism to represent objects and states of affairs in the world to itself. In this vein then we may organise the methodology and begin to discern facets of the ontological terrain and prepare the ground for the application of Bourdieu's thinking tools. At the level of delivery practice FE lecturers may live in a world of brute facts, ontologically and epistemologically objective (the engineering lecturer reinforcing the importance of a knowledge of *Young's modulus* with a structural engineering cohort) and in a world of institutional facts (FE lecturers, say, digesting a report that their number who hold bachelors degrees are in the minority). Moreover, there exists in Searle's taxonomy observer-relative facts created as mental phenomena and therefore ontologically subjective, but this type of subjectivity does not preclude claims that observer-relative may be epistemically objective. The predicate that avid watchers of Stephen Fry's television programme *"QI"* are effective in collaborative working situations is one[34]. It is this separability that the study makes use of but it is not without problems. Given a possible separation of ontological parts, the fact remains that one epistemology is conjoined with others in terms of knowledge formation. This, the Duhem-Quine thesis (Curd et al. 1998, p302-319), holds that the myriad tenets of our belief system are inter-dependent - a hypothesis cannot be tested in isolation. Our personal knowledge, structured in the form of a web, is unsettled when any one belief is tested. When results from any one part of any paradigm lead to a contradiction in our knowledge web, we hold that at least one belief is false, but logic, according to Duhem-Quine does not tell us which one. Importantly this problem remains in the interpretation of the research findings. Its existence must be seen to reinforce the adoption of a standpoint of pragmatic truth and the rejection of grand narrative.

[34] In Chapter Four R54's affinity for television programmes in 'QI's genre is explained as a manifestation of his cultural capital.

3.2.6 Ontological facets of the research questions

When Searle's taxonomy of fact (1995, p121) was applied to the four research questions, they appeared to interrogate different ontological facets of the topic. Facets where an external-realist ontology was assumed, for instance in the type and number of proxies operationalising for a practitioner's cultural capital (the possession of artefacts: prized 'highbrow' texts, prestigious work-tools, and patterns of taste and consumption for instance) the intervention was planned to be predominantly nomothetic and the epistemology objectivist. In facets of the ontology that appeared subjective (for example the relativism of practitioners' beliefs, desire and intent in deployment of cultural capital to influence power relationships) interpretive methods were brought into the bricolage. These differences are now examined in more detail.

Research question 1, *"What are the manifestations of practitioners' cultural capital?"* addresses brute and socially constructed (institutional) facts in realist ontology. A lecturer may have a degree or be working towards one. A B.A.(Hons.) in Fine Arts may indeed confer high cultural capital on its holder, the lecturer in Interactive Media. The fact of its possession is a socially-constructed fact. The award is conferred by a (legitimised and legitimising) university on a student (who has reached a reified standard of knowledge) at a special ceremony - an accepted socially-constructed process stemming back to the Medieval. Like the quantification of an amount of money (itself a socially-constructed fact) the fact is epistemically objective. Research question two, RQ2 *"How do these differ, if at all, across practitioners from different subject areas?"* can be treated similarly since this calls for comparisons between different socially constructed areas on a terrain of institutional fact. In the same way that Searle suggests that the statement "earthquakes are bad for real estate prices" (1995, p12) these facts can be treated as epistemically objective. The use of quantitative techniques in the study was grounded on an additional assumption that certain variables in the research domain are operationalisable and objective. The intrinsic characteristic of a fact, according to Searle warrants quantification (1995, p13). Operationalisation of variables proxying for the latent variable 'institutionalised cultural capital' (e.g. a first degree) was treated in such a way.

When we consider RQ3 and RQ4, *"What is the significance of the volume and type of cultural capital displayed by practitioners in group formation processes and*

collaborative working cultures?" and *"Based on the findings, what are the implications in promoting a greater degree of productive collaborative working?"* there is, in both according to Searle, an implicit observer-relativeness and degrees of epistemological subjectivity. Possession of cultural capital therefore is capable of determination by means of a positivist epistemology but the axiology of its possession, deployment and exchange is part of relativist ontology. A sports lecturer, for instance, may appreciate street art to the extent that she acquires, appreciates and prizes her collection of original *Banksy's* - all epistemologically objective facts - but the mechanisms and effects of these manifestations of capital linked with her portfolio in the way that they impress, subjugate, annoy, or unsettle her colleagues in staff-room conversation is in the domain of the observer-relative. The symbolic value of her *Banksy's*, too, is 'observer relative'. It was planned the bricolage would veer off where necessary and become qualitative and hermeneutic in nature in order to accommodate such dissimilarity.

3.2.7 A post-positivist epistemology

Essentially post-positivist, the study's epistemological stance is based on Chicago interactionism and philosophical pragmatism. Here mutable knowledge (Dewey 1938) is constructed from the actions and interactions of self-reflective beings. In addition, and aligning to the triggers for the study, Dewey recognises that "all reflective enquiry starts from a problematic situation" (Dewey 1929, p136). More recently Gibbons (1994) and others supplement this epistemological base focussing on the nature and utility of interdisciplinary 'mode 2' - again knowledge produced as a result of social interaction. As such there is an affinity with Chicago pragmatism, as Avis points out:

> "Mode 2 knowledge rests comfortably with an interest in 'what works' and has become a significant current in the applied social sciences" (Avis 2006, p143).

Post-positivism recognizes that all observation is fallible, has error and that all theory is revisable. It is critical of our ability to know reality with certainty. Since under post-positivism all measurement is considered fallible the importance of multiple measures and observations is emphasised. Each may possess different types of error and there is a need to use triangulation across these multiple error-full sources to provide an enhanced understanding of reality. The paradigm recognises all observations to be theory-laden and that researchers are inherently biased by their cultural experiences,

world views, and so on. Post-positivism rejects the relativist idea of the incommensurability of different perspectives: the idea that we can never understand each other because we come from different experiences and cultures. Yet much is constructivist: we each construct our view of the world based on our perceptions of it. Post-positivism then unsettles any notion of absolute truth recognising that we cannot be 'positivist' in our claims to knowledge about behaviours and actions of humans, yet careful observation and measurement of objective reality may be capable of informing our understanding.

With the jigsaw of the Bourdieu-Searle-post-positivism pieces finally interlocking and the need for a *bricolage* clear, it was time in 2009 to close in and design the finer points of the study.

3.3 The study's design

Initially at least, the investigation was planned to follow the deterministic order of the research question sequence from RQ1 through to RQ4 - through the 'what?', the 'how?', and the 'why?'. In Brannen's nomenclature classifying the split, precedence and relative weights of the quantitative and qualitative phases of combined approaches, I decided the study, at least to start with, should adopt a 'QUANT > QUAL' path: one with equal weightings between the quantitative and qualitative phases with the former preceding the latter in chronology (Brannen 2005).

3.3.1 Design of the survey instrument

The 22 question quantitative survey instrument (Annexe A, page 204) prompted for a maximum 196 possible responses. The instrument was distributed in one of three ways: as an A4 booklet, an email attachment, or through an email containing a hyperlink to the form hosted on a college web-server. The link was included in a national circular communication in October 2010 when the Higher Education Academy featured a series of articles on research taking place in FE and I was invited to write and submit one.

The design principles of the survey instrument were to:

1. reduce respondent bias as much as possible, mindful of ethical considerations, by not declaring explicitly the intent of the questions unless this was explicitly

asked for. To declare that the study was probing 'capital', I decided, might bias in favour of an increased number of 'snobbish' responses[35];

2. limit 'respondent fatigue' (Moser and Kalton 1971) by limiting the survey's size to a maximum of 10 A4 pages and its completion time to about ten minutes without serious diminution of quality;
3. enable on-screen completion requiring the minimum possible keyboard key-set (electronic distribution was important in reducing distribution costs);
4. attend to question order, conditioning effects of pre-cursor questions, flow (Mosteller et al. 1949, Cantril 1944), and 'funnelling' (Kahn and Cantrell 1957);
5. allow a response via a different format to the one sent. Although the majority of surveys were emailed, hard-copy responses could be returned anonymously by normal mail.

A range of proto-questions developed was scrutinised. Each one was examined for relevance to one or more of the research questions, possible analytical methods and potential robustness of the subsequent result. Those that were eventually selected (Table1) were tightened linguistically and structurally and re-examined for possible unintelligibility, ambiguity, loadedness, and imprecision before final adoption.

The survey's on-screen Microsoft *Word* 'form' was designed compliant with well-documented human-computer interface ('HCI') principles of simplicity, consistency, and closure (e.g. Schneidermann 1987). To complete it, apart from two free-format input fields, a maximum of only twelve keys was needed. The form was 'locked' to prevent complications arising from users unintentionally modifying the format. Its 22 questions were organised in five sections.

Section one (Q1-Q5) asked questions about the respondent's curriculum area and specialisms, gender, Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF)[36] levels taught, and length of vocational career.

Section two comprised five questions (Q6-Q10) designed to illicit responses surrounding attitudes to, and involvement with, cross-college working. Question 6 (a

[35] I am reminded of the possible different responses to the question "how much do you earn?" depending on whether the Inland Revenue or a mortgage broker were asking.

[36] The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) is the national credit transfer system for qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

'Y/N') determined involvement in group working. Question 7 asked for the number of groups that a practitioner was involved with. Questions 8 and 9 probed detail of current collaborative partners and preferred curriculum area collaborator. Question 10 examined attitudes, enablers and inhibitors to collaboration using a 5 point symmetrical Likert scale (bipolar but with a central neutral option). Provision was made for "doesn't apply/don't knows".

Section three's two questions (Q11 and Q12) asked for curriculum specialism and sought attitudes towards the specialisms of others. Question 11 probed attitudes towards up-skilling (proxying for lower-higher order capital), towards pay equivalence (perceptions of self-worth), perceptions of equivalence, or otherwise, of a respondent's "background" (without definition), and attitudes towards FE's vocational-academic mix. Question 12's purpose was two-fold. It attempted to establish the respondent's range of objectified cultural capital: qualifications, educational background, indentures, and vocational experience and so on. Its second function assessed perception of the importance of this capital in successful lecturing practice. A 5 point symmetrical Likert scale, similar to Q10, was again employed.

Section four (one question, Q13) investigated recent and planned engagement in a number of highbrow, middlebrow, and popularist pastimes, entertainment, and social activities. The list of 32 options presented included several of Bourdieu's original categories in *Distinction* (1984a, p512-518) combined with a range drawn from the UK's 'Social Trends' survey (ONS 2007, ch.13). About half were fresh additions.

Section five comprised seven questions (Q14 to Q22). The first six explored preferences for tastes in music, art, food, interior décor, and film genre. Section five's final question, Q22, explored possession of the "Kantian aesthetic" (Kant 1790, ch.13). Twenty-one photographic subjects were listed including "*a sunset over the sea*" and "*a car crash*". One of four categorical responses ('beautiful', interesting', 'meaningless' or 'ugly') was invited for each subject. Possession of the Kantian aesthetic, an appreciation of the sublime, equivalent with beauty (contrast a thunderstorm and a sunset), is seen by Bourdieu as an attribute of legitimate capital. Reverting to Kantian philosophy briefly: Kant offers that beauty is not a property of an artwork or natural phenomenon, but is instead a consciousness of the pleasure which attends the 'free play' of the imagination and the understanding. Even though it appears that we are using

reason to decide that which is beautiful, Kant suggests the judgment is not a cognitive judgment, "and is consequently not logical, but aesthetical" (1790, §1). In such, reflective judgment judges whether something is beautiful, beauty is never experienced as a determinate thing.

When I released the survey instrument in early Autumn 2010 I took solace in the bricolage approach chosen and recalled Bourdieu's musings:

> "When endeavouring to grasp systems of tastes, a survey by closed questionnaire is never more than a second best, imposed by the need to obtain a large amount of comparable data on a sample large enough to be treated statistically. It leaves out everything to do with the modality of practices [...] and everything said here about classes or class fractions in fact applies *a fortiori*[37] " (Bourdieu 1984a, p506).

[37] In classical logic, "*a fortiori*" is a signal indicating an attempt to justify an inferential step by claiming that the point being proven follows from an even stronger claim or has been stated by means of an even stronger assertion.

Table 1: Survey questions and rationale for their inclusion

Question	*Data content*	*Question aim(s), rationale for its inclusion, and initial thoughts on factor correspondences.*	*Input type*
Q1	Main curriculum teaching area. 11 specific teaching areas listed plus one 'other' option. Respondents invited to select one option.	Included for demographics. Primary variable in correspondence analysis.	Single check box plus one free format box for 'other'.
Q2	Subject specialism. Respondents invited to input one. 3 examples given.	Intended as possible sub-classifier within main curriculum area. Informs the sample's breadth.	Free format input box.
Q3	Gender.	Demographics.	2 check boxes: M & F.
Q4	QCF teaching levels. 8 levels given (entry level L0 through L7 post-graduate). Respondents invited to select as many that apply.	Variable proxying for latent institutionalised cultural capital and breadth of practice.	Multiple choice check boxes.
Q5	Career path pre-FE.	Probed length of vocational career before lecturer joined FE.	6 options given from 'no vocational experience' to 'over 15 years'. A 'none of these apply' included.
Q6	Membership of cross-college working group(s).	Intended to gain data on prevalence of participation in cross college working.	Y/N option. If 'N' option given, respondent diverted to Q9, omitting Q7 & Q8.
Q7	Number of working groups served as a member.	To gain data on distribution of degree of involvement in collaborative practice.	Single numeric entry.
Q8	Curriculum area with which respondent has greatest collaboration.	Intended to inform networks of pre-existing relationships. Probes possibility of 'naturally occurring' collaborative factions.	Free format entry.
Q9	Preferred area for cross-college working.	Probes possibility of future collaborative factions.	Free format entry.

Q10	Respondents presented with 11 statements in 3 strands : 1. the efficacy of cross-college problem-solving and forecasts of its increased importance 2. personal apprehension in group working 3. remoteness of certain curriculum areas.	Intended to provide data on perceived advantages of and personal threats to collaboration. Statements were presented in a scrambled order such that the strands were less easy to detect and deter automatic 'carry over' from previous responses.	5 point symmetrical Likert nominal data scale with neutral option strongly agree-strongly disagree. Provision made for 'don't know/doesn't apply'.
Q11	Perceptions of own and colleagues' need for constancy of skills update, pay equivalence, equivalence or otherwise of backgrounds, and vocational/academic emphasis.	Intended to probe the respondent's attitude to the status of their specialism in relation to those of others.	5 point symmetrical Likert nominal data scale with neutral option strongly agree-strongly disagree. Provision made for 'don't know/doesn't apply'.
Q12	Respondent's institutionalised cultural capital (after Bourdieu) and perceptions of its relative importance (19 statements). 2 statements invited responses to the importance of objectified cultural capital.	Intended to quantify the frequency of possession of a number of credentials and the respondent's perception of their relative worth to their practice.	5 point symmetrical Likert nominal data scale with neutral option strongly agree-strongly disagree. Provision made for 'don't know/doesn't apply'.
Q13	32 activities and pastimes listed. Activities were randomised and included legitimate (highbrow), middlebrow and lowbrow. Respondents asked to confirm their past and future intended engagement.	Responses intended to inform aspects of respondents' embodied cultural capital.	2 lists of 32 single responses ('checked' indicated take-up, past or intended).
Q14	Ranked preferences (1-6) for highbrow, middlebrow and lowbrow music.	Responses intended to inform aspects of respondents' embodied cultural capital	6 check boxes inviting insertion of a ranking, 1 thro' 6. 'no-preference' / 'not interested' option included.

Q15	Ranked preferences (1-6) for highbrow, middlebrow and lowbrow art.	--as above --	6 check boxes inviting insertion of a rank, 1 thro' 6. 'no-preference' / 'not interested' option included.
Q16	Ranked preferences (1-6) for highbrow, middlebrow and lowbrow food.	--as above --	6 check boxes inviting insertion of a rank, 1 thro' 6. 'no-preference' / 'not interested' option included.
Q17	Preference for interior décor types. 12 types presented, respondent invited to choose 3.	--as above --	Check boxes.
Q18	Dislike of interior décor types. Same 12 types presented, respondent invited to choose 3.	--as above --	Check boxes.
Q19	Preference for genres of film. 16 genres presented, respondent invited to choose 3.	--as above --	Check boxes.
Q20	Dislike of film genres. 16 genres presented, respondent invited to choose 3.	--as above --	Check boxes.
Q21	Film actor, plot, or director: preference for interest	--as above --	Check boxes.
Q22	Aesthetic disposition: respondents categorised photographic subjects as 'beautiful', 'interesting, 'meaningless' or 'ugly'. 21 subjects presented.	Responses informed possible possession of the Kantian aesthetic as a proxy for high cultural capital.	Check box matrix, 21 x 4.
Invitation to participate at the project's interview stage.	Respondent's name and contact number. Brief details about interview duration and schedule given.	For follow up.	Free format.

3.3.2 The quantitative phase

The role of the quantitative phase was threefold. First, it was to gain deeper insight into the type and magnitude of capitals possessed that might influence the habitus, and in collaborative scenarios, the 'collective' habitus. Second, its data were used to select participants for the semi-structured interview phase. Third, the quantitative data allowed a form of binocular triangulation possibility through to the qualitative data.

3.3.3 Selection of participants for the qualitative phase

Twenty respondents offered to continue to the qualitative phase, about a quarter of those completing a survey form. Selection for this subsequent stage considered several factors with diversity of curriculum area the primary criterion. A broad range of specialisms were selected: from the traditional professional subjects of law, the academic humanities (sociology), the pure and applied sciences (aeronautical engineering, electrical engineering and mathematics), through to the more vocational disciplines of hair, beauty and complementary therapies and industrial cleaning. A second criterion considered interesting cases, outliers or anomalies identified by the quantitative analyses. Third, to accomplish a limited degree of geographical triangulation interviewees were selected from three colleges. Fourth, attempts were made to select a balance of gender, experience in FE, and NQF teaching levels in conjunction with the primary criteria. A series of iterative selection passes were made through the quantitative data. On the first pass eight male and three female colleagues were earmarked, on the second six male and six female (with no intention to equalise gender) and the final pass saw five male and four female interviewees selected. The gender ratio was sacrificed marginally to satisfy an increased range of curriculum area and specialism. Concurrent with the iterations to select the interview sub-set, the groups' cultural capital profiles were derived and scrutinised to ensure, as far as possible, a wide dispersion. Aspects of the cultural capital profile of the final interview group are shown in Plot 1.

Plot 1: Participants taken to the interview stage: three axes of capital (musical taste v. breadth of pastimes engaged v. institutionalised cultural capital)

It may ease interpretation of this 3D-plot, given the *trompe-l'oeil* effect, to view the darker lower panel as the 'top' surface of a 'floor'.

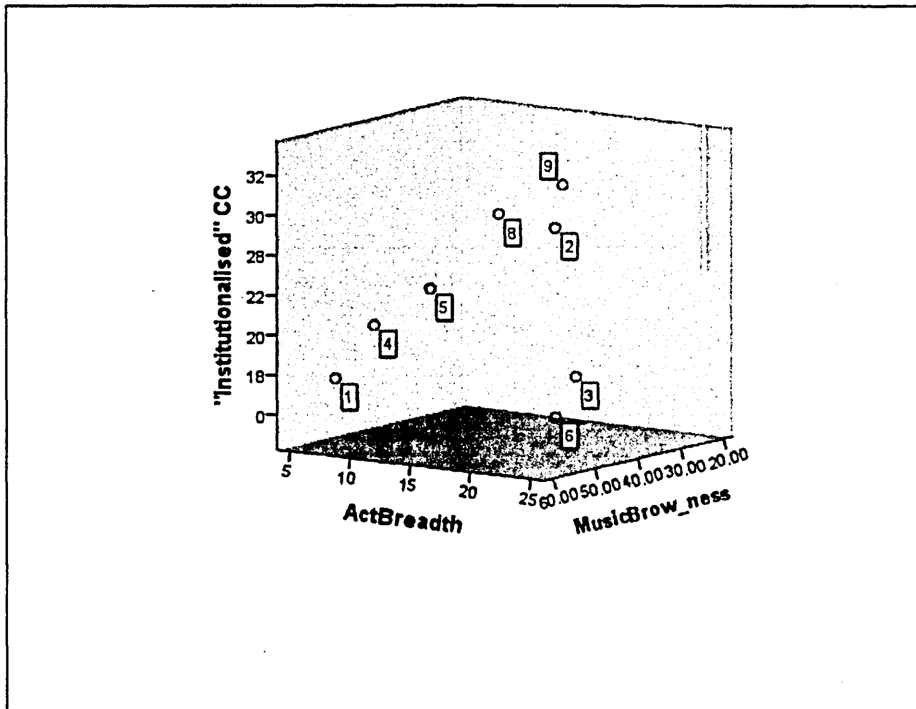

Table 2: Participants taken to the interview stage (specialism, occupational classification based on taught specialism, and gender)

		Acad./Voc. classification[38]	
R8	Electrical engineering	4	♂
R12	Cleaning	8	♀
R21	Law	1	♂
R29	Skills for life (mathematics)	3	♂
R39	Spa therapies	7	♀
R43	Sociology	1	♂
R54	ICT	3	♀
H5	Sport	6	♀
V2	Aeronautical engineering	2	♂

[38] See Appendix Z, page 240

3.3.4 The qualitative phase

Nine interview sessions were conducted. Using Riverford's school structure as a classification, eight schools in all were represented. Interviews took place at roughly weekly intervals allowing time for transcription and initial data analysis before the next one was conducted. Given that strains of cultural omnivorousness were to be detected in the quantitative results, the epistemological worth for the interview as an exploratory technique appears well grounded. As Warde et al. note (2007) the method offers an effective social scientific method for finding out how omnivores think and reason.

As another strand to the data analysis, a numeric academic-vocational classification, based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88, Appendix Z) was later applied. This classified lecturers in terms of their occupational specialism as if they were following that career and were not employed in FE. It was interesting, *post facto,* to appreciate the range of dispersion both of cultural capitals and ISCO-88 classification in the subset selected (Table 2). These two indices appear, at least in part, to reinforce the choice of the nine participants.

The semi-structured interviews were designed, *inter alia*, to probe the respondent's survey responses. A bespoke agenda was prepared before each session (a copy of V2's, showing annotated alterations made at the time of the interview responding to its trajectory and the interview interaction is given at Annexe C). The first three agendas in the interview series included prompts to myself indicating when I should remain silent in order to minimise undue interviewer influence and to bolster my confidence, and by a demonstration effect, that of the interviewee. Each interview session was organised to be as non-intrusive as possible, Consideration was given to session duration, timing, place, 'L'-shaped seating arrangement, number of questions, question sequence and flow, the linguistic and paralinguistic frame used (avoidance of eye contact, for instance), unobtrusiveness of the interview instruments, the digital audio recorder, the script etc. (Gillham 2000). The introduction to each interview was standard. I would explain why I had selected the participant and recapitulate the study's ethical framework particularly surrounding possible withdrawal of data and the measures taken to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. I explained that I would personally transcribe the digital audio file and no third-party would be involved. After this introduction, participants were invited to play the associations game - a variant of those 'played' by Bourdieu and confederates in *Distinction*'s studies (Bourdieu 1984a,

p546-559). Third and as a precursor to the semi-structured interview, a series of questions explored the association game results. Fourth, the respondent's completed survey form was re-presented and its responses discussed (in advance of the session I had scrutinised the responses in relation to the sample population's data, and identified 'extreme' responses, anomalous scorings, links to data clusters on multi-factor analysis correspondence plots, or just what appeared to be intuitively 'interesting' responses). Fifth, I posed questions exploring the respondent's interpretation of the field of power, the relationship of background to co-operation and so on. Gordon's advice (1999) appears to legitimise this intuitive process:

> "There is an overwhelming amount of information that threatens to drown us all unless we learn to trust our ability to search and use only the relevant bits and bytes. The search engine is called 'goodthinking' and combines rigorous analysis of the known with creative expeditions into the *unknown*, using intuition as the guide" [emphasis in original] (p304).

I was aware of potential problems. At interview Fontana and Frey (in Denzin and Lincoln 2005) point to unavoidably introduced non-neutrality giving rise to problems of reliability particularly from contextually-based responses. Although interviewing probably remains the best method of jointly constructing meaning from observable-reportable phenomena to generate working hypotheses, the important assumption is that in the shared natural attitude to real life, researcher and subject agree that they jointly 'see' the same thing (Schutz 1967). A further potential problem is the indexicality and typification of language used (Garfinkel 1967). In the pilot study, for instance, when subject HT28 says

> [HT28] "[…] obviously they don't have that same academic background […]"

the referent of "academic background" is ambiguous. The speech utterance could refer to any level of qualification awarded by any institution from primary school to university. To counter these issues I aimed to seek further clarification where necessary during the interview and afterwards when the transcript was prepared. I rejected finite conversational analysis with its greater focus on the linguistic precision of the pauses, intonation, emphasis, adjacency pairs and so on as too low-level analysis and on grounds as Heritage (1984) asserts:

> "[…] it is inconceivable that it could be recollected is such detail either by an ethnographer or by and actual participant. And, even if it could be recollected, it could not be heard again and again" (Heritage 1984, p236).

Sacks (1984) reiterates the difficulty of treating recollected sequences as fully persuasive evidence for analytic claims. My intent was to work 'top-down' and start with a broad shared-constructivist approach, jointly constructing meaning from the representation of experiences related. I decided to transcribe clean verbatim style that is with the 'ums' and 'arghs' removed.

Qualitative data analysis employed Glaser and Strauss' (1967) method of 'constant comparison'. Transcripts were analysed in the intervening weeks between scheduled interviews and was to continue for twelve months after the series was completed. This process looked for irregularities, paradoxes and contrasts as well as patterns, themes and regularities in the data (Delamont 1992). In this way the results from early data analysis was to inform significantly the type and direction of subsequent interview themes and tactics.

3.4 The study's ethical framework

The research was conducted in line with Sheffield Hallam University's ethics code and its overarching framework, the sixth revision of the Declaration of Helsinki (2008). Specifically, the Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC) six principles, articulated in their *Research Ethics Framework* (2005, p23-26), were incorporated. The study's compliance with these principles is outlined in this section.

ESRC Principle 1, "a commitment to research of the highest quality" is accepted and regarded as needing "little further elaboration" (ESRC 2005, p23). I was mindful throughout that the research should be designed and executed

> "in a way that the dignity and autonomy of research participants is protected and respected at all times" (ESRC 2005, p3).

In the spirit of quality improvement I would challenge my decisions on any intended future direction the study might take.

Compliance with Principle 2 was organised around 'informed consent', based on conducting research without deception. The ESRC guidelines dictate that the participants be given "as much information as possible about the research" to be able to make an informed decision. The framework allows for discretion in declaring the full

intent of the study "to avoid jeopardising its performance" (2005, p25) in order to reduce participant bias, but in mitigation it suggests offering subjects the right for their data to be withdrawn up to a period of two weeks after its submission. I considered carefully whether the nature of the topic together with the design of the study were likely to cause embarrassment. Building on lessons learned from the pilot study in 2009 I decided this was minimal risk.

Strict procedures were invoked surrounding the data to conform to Principle 3's confidentiality and anonymity concerns. A statement of the study's ethical principles was included on the survey form (Annexe A) supplementing the participant information sheet and further (de)briefings held pre- and post-interview.

Participants were free to participate in a voluntary way, free from any coercion, according to Principle 4. Return of the completed survey instrument was taken to be informed consent, a point made on the first page of the form.

In terms of non-malfeasance (Principle 5), the study did not involve vulnerable participants as defined by the *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act* (2006). Sheffield Hallam University's ethical approval, the "research organisation seeking or holding an award with the ESRC" (ESRC 2005, p3) was sought and granted before the study was undertaken. Participants were informed of a complaints procedure that offered a conduit in the first instance to my Supervisory Team. I was not aware of any compliant, nor did any participant withdraw from the process. Indeed I was gratified that several respondents who I met in the corridors at Riverford sometime after their survey return would stop me to express their interest and intrigue in the project. I received several complimentary emails accompanying the survey's return: one read, "I just *love* the questions, but I don't have a clue what you were getting at!" Indeed, two colleagues considering doctoral study were sufficiently interested by the survey to ask my advice on registering for it. I considered these events part justification for the tactics adopted.

3.5 Method

3.5.1 Distribution of the survey instrument

The survey was distributed initially to lecturers at Riverford College during September 2010 coincident with practitioners' return to work. Lecturer's email contact information stratified by curriculum area was available on Riverford's staff intranet. The survey was communicated, as a booklet or email, on three successive Fridays (Annexe D). Although capable of earlier release, it was decided to delay, avoiding the summer break and hopefully increase the response rate and reduce sampling bias. With the possibility that some curriculum areas commonly commit teaching staff to whole-school activities in the first week of September, three weeks were allowed for completion before a broadcast email 'reminder' was sent to the sample (Annexe D). Return envelopes with 'confidential mail' stickers were provided. Distribution by the email attachment method was in three tranches[39]. Emails went out as 'blind carbon copies' ('bcc') so that respondents were unaware of whom else might have received copies. To test confidentiality several dry runs were made of the email distribution mechanism to ensure the suppression of other colleagues' names on the received email. Clearly though, these tactics could not prevent colleagues discussing the project. On reflection, this possibility might have promoted the study's profile and thus increased chances of engagement. A distribution time slot of around 1000-1100 hrs on Fridays was considered optimal since Friday, in common possibly with most of academia, is the least busy delivery day. Lecturers having 'desk-time' on Friday mornings might attempt to clear their inbox before the end of the working week. After the first distribution to "Survey List A" it was noted that responses tailed off markedly after five or six days and only the odd response would be received back after more than ten days.

In addition, the survey instrument was uploaded onto a Riverford web server in early October 2010. This provided an on-line portal for any national respondents after the details of the project were included in the October edition of the Higher Education Academy's (HEA) *"HE in FE Newsletter"* on national circulation to FE colleges.

[39] Distribution list names were chosen carefully so as not to infer preferential bias: "Research List A"; "Survey List A" and "Survey Group A". Connotations of perceived status or rank by using terminology like "List A"; "List B" and List C", or alternatively "Red Group"; "White Group" and "Blue Group" were thus avoided.

Although the number of responses here were disappointing, I remain confident that it is, given better planning and more advanced publicity, a viable route.

An approach was made to a member of the Senior Management Team at Hillstown College in September 2010. Authorisation for email distribution was sanctioned swiftly. The email was broadcast to delivery staff with a short explanatory note. Following the successful approach at Hillstown a similar protocol was adopted for the approach to the Vice Principal at Valedown College. She too was enthusiastic and drafted an email on my behalf for onward circulation.

3.5.2 The survey's sampling frame

The method of 'purposeful stratified sampling' (or 'cluster random sampling') was selected (Patton 1990). Participants chosen pseudo-randomly were clustered in strata defined by curriculum area and a quota allocated within each. To give the broadest range of dispersion, given the study's constraints of scale, the sampling frame was flattened to target approximately an equal number of lecturers from each curriculum area. Riverford, the largest college surveyed, at the time employed 489 lecturers (about 50% sessional) across nine schools with a difference of 33 between the biggest school (69, Health, Care & Early Years Education) and the smallest, Access, Inclusion and Additional Learning Support with 36. Attempts were made to boost the cells in the sample where the returns from a particular school were low. In mitigation for the choice of frame, as a designed sample as opposed to an achieved sample, the method was deemed more appropriate than Oppenheim's 'judgement sample' (1992). Indeed, in lending further support to the selected frame, Oppenheim condones situations where "investigators have done their best to ensure a wide a spread of individuals as possible" (1992, p43).

Based on the Institute for Learning's estimated lecturer headcount of 130,000 (IfL, 2008), sample sizes were calculated for the three confidence intervals of ± 2%, ± 5% and ± 10% at the 95% confidence limit (Table 3). Optimistically, I hoped that a mail-shot of about 600, at a 15-20% response rate, would satisfy the 10% confidence interval. In practice however, the return rate (12%, n=71) fell slightly short of this. Issues of statistical significance are taken up in Chapter Four.

Table 3: Quantitative survey: sample sizes required at three confidence intervals (± 2%, ± 5% and ± 10%) at the 95% confidence level.

Confidence interval	± 2%	± 5%	± 10%
Sample size required	2357	383	96

3.6 Data analysis techniques

A central tenet of data analysis was that it should *not* be the last stage in the process. Instead analysis was planned to run parallel to data collection, "integrated" (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p109) and "with one driving the other" (Miles and Huberman 1994, p63). Analysis was designed to be systematic, comprehensive but not rigid (Tesch 1990), manipulated eclectically, analysed in more than one way (Spradley 1979, p92), and with a view that any categorisation should remain flexible, thereby accommodating progressive accumulation of data.

3.6.1 Quantitative phase

Survey data were input initially to *Microsoft Excel* and double-checked after entry. Because of the extremely large number of atomic data items[40], a maximum of 196 per survey, a further audit of data entry accuracy was made based on a 10% sampling plan. Data were analysed initially using the limited statistical functionality of the spreadsheet program but the application was deemed fit-for-purpose at the descriptive statistics stage to produce measures of correlation, significance and dispersion. Beyond these statistics, the *Excel* results were used to inform potential for deeper inferential statistical treatment. The data were subsequently migrated into *SPSS (PASW)* whose advanced functionality provided factor analysis and multiple component analysis[41].

3.6.2 Qualitative phase

Interview data were transcribed into *Microsoft Word* clean verbatim style and checked for input accuracy. Line numbers were attached to the transcript for reference.

[40] By the end of the pre-analysis, the spreadsheet had grown to a massive 312 x 86 cell matrix.

[41] Bourdieu's analysis in *La Distinction* was dependent on collaboration with Jean-Paul Benzécri's and Henri Rouanet's work on MCA in the 1960s. See for instance, Rouanet H., Ackermann W., Le Roux B. (2000) The geometric analysis of questionnaires: the lesson of Bourdieu's La Distinction. *Bulletin de Méthodologie Sociologique*, 65, 5-15.

Transcripts were studied iteratively to gain a holistic view of the data. Network analysis (Bliss et al. 1983 in Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007) and Thomas' adaptation (Thomas 2009) of construct mapping (Eden, Jones and Sims 1983) were employed to map themes in the transcribed data. First-order constructs, "an impression of important ideas or subjects that are recurring" (Jones 2009, p199), were refined on subsequent iterations into second order constructs, that is those with closer fit to the data and recorded as Microsoft *Word* 'comments' (Annexe F). A memo was written and appended to each transcript summarising its broad themes and correspondences with others in the set, Annexe AC (Corbin and Strauss 2008). Network analyses of these correspondences provided

> "a technique for dealing with the bulk and the complexity of the accounts that are typically generated in qualitative studies" (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2007, p389).

Transcripts were discussed with participants and my extraction of first-order constructs checked with them providing a form of Silverman's "member validation" (2006, p403). Themes were mapped to Bourdieuian constructs, the well-used ones (capital, habitus and field) and those lesser utilised in the literature (conatus, interest, illusio and hysteresis, for example) using an 'analysis comparison matrix' designed for the purpose (Annexe E).

I toyed with a strategy of using Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) to assist in the analysis but decided against on methodological grounds. First I did not wish to get caught up in software functionality and become distracted with working out how to code that I might lose sight of the richness of the data - a problem that Weaver and Atkinson (1994) report. Second, I decided that in this area, unlike in quantitative analysis, technology does not increase the likelihood of rigour. Barry (1998) warns superficial analyses that are lacking in rigour and depth will exist whatever their researchers' tools. Third and pivotally, to develop analysis with any significant depth and robustness requires reading data iteratively both in complete transcripts and in categorised chunks. Yet it appears many CAQDAS applications focus on frequency analysis ('counts') at the expense of conceptual and theoretical explanations. Counting occurrences, giving more weight to more frequent events, ignoring isolated incidences, and formulating and testing out rigid hypotheses are not sensible ways, I argue, to analyse qualitative data. Furthermore, CAQDAS maybe forcing researchers towards a single ideal-type of data analysis, as Coffey et al. (1996)

identify, bucking post-structuralist trends of accepting and celebrating diversity. Instead the 'hybrid' tactic of using MS *Word*'s albeit limited functionality of 'finding' words in the transcript coupled with the ability to insert comments served the qualitative analysis well, and, vitally, did not distract from the iterative reading of the transcripts as important features and themes emerged (Annexe F).

3.7 Issues of validity, reliability and triangulation

The study's internal validity, the degree to which the study's methods measure what they are supposed to measure, was dependent primarily on the extent to which affinities for taste operationalise and proxy for cultural capital and second, that articulated recollections of its deployment are realistic. Here the study, in the main, replicates conventional current thinking (e.g. Bennett et al. 2009). External validity on the other hand, the degree to which such representations may be compared legitimately across groups, is more difficult to establish (Le Compte and Preissle 1984, p323). Here I was reminded of Plato's Heraclitus:

> "You could not step twice into the same river; for other waters are ever flowing on to you" (Plato in *Cratylus*, Fragment 41).

In the study's defence, it was realised that the sample size achieved would not allow robust generalisation possibilities and the findings are presented more as a 'case study' than put up as a statistically significant sub-set of the wider population. In terms of the study's predictive validity, the lack of correspondence found at times between Likert scale (survey) and verbal responses (i.e. at interview) and behaviour is more intricate. The classic demonstration of the gap between attitude expounded and behaviour exhibited is LaPiere's 1934 study (quoted by Oppenheim 1966 in Seale 2004)[42]. Although there are contrasting studies from the same epoch, notably Wilkins (1948), in the current context and with a similar 'quantitative preceding qualitative' study design, Silva (2006) investigating cultural capital echoes LaPiere's findings. In total twenty-

[42] LaPiere travelled in the US by car with a couple of Chinese ethnicity. During that time they visited 251 hotels and restaurants and were turned away only once. LaPiere mailed a survey to all of the businesses they visited with the question, *"Will you accept members of the Chinese race in your establishment?"* Of the 128 that responded 92% answered 'no'.

two tactics were employed to reduce error and increase the data's validity and reliability (Table 4).

As well as intractable problems generated by the sampling frame, at least three significant issues with the principles of mapping taste to status remain. These are linked to the operationalisation and classification of 'taste genre'. The resolution of these remained outside the relatively limited scope of this project but it is important to understand their existence both in the literature and in the context of the results. First, there is the difficulty of classifying genres. Genre boundaries, for instance the one defining the partition between legitimate taste and popular taste is an ontologically subjective area, influenced by a knowledgeable elite - the *cogniscento* - whose prevarications in the extreme may perhaps, to return to a Bourdieuian interpretation, exert symbolic violence on those that accept them. Holt (1998) identifies that genres themselves ought to be a focus for analysis, and proposes classifications or combinations which might work and serve as markers. Siding with Bryson (*ibid.*), Holt argues a case for the reworking of the scope of highbrow culture to include jazz and rock since it appears polarised against other forms. Second, there are methodological difficulties arising from the restricted number of indicators quantitative studies have to draw on. For example the two pieces *The Blue Danube* and *Well-Tempered Clavier*, included on the survey instrument (and also by Bourdieu) are considered here as part of the classical canon, yet Bourdieu suggested Strauss' piece was favoured by working class, whereas Bach's *Well Tempered Clavier* was favoured more by intellectuals (Bourdieu 1984, p17). Some genre reclassification therefore may be in order. Third, Chan and Goldthorpe (2007) suggest much past survey data (including Bourdieu's) presented to potential respondents is predominantly at the high-culture end, few interventions attempt, at their outset, to discern popularist culture choices. Given the paucity of this type of study another interesting opportunity for future work presents itself.

Table 4: Areas of potential error and the tactics used to mitigate them

Area of possible data error	*Tactics employed to mitigate error*
Researcher bias	• Efforts made to enhance objectivity by analytic bracketing of background.
Survey sequence and flow	• Attention paid to question order, conditioning effects of pre-cursor questions, flow (Mosteller et al. 1949, Cantril 1944) and 'funnelling' (Kahn and Cannell 1957).
Survey fatigue, ease of completion	• On-screen 'form' developed using human-computer interface (HCI) design principles of simplicity and consistency (Schneidermann 1987) to make it as respondent-friendly as possible. • Maximum of twelve keys from the keyboard needed. • Certain areas of the form 'locked' preventing users from inadvertently modifying it.
Question bias	• Likert scale questions included central neutral point.
Response bias	• Notion of cultural capital as a significant theme not explicitly stated in order to moderate potential 'impressive' responses. • Several questions 'reversed phrased' (e.g. Q11.2 & Q11.10) to prompt their more detailed reading dissuading simply scanning (Field 2009, p675).
Coherence of Likert questions testing out similar things	• Loadings checked using multiple component analysis (Annexe G).
Data input accuracy	• 2 person task: 1 caller, 1 keyer. • each survey's data cross-checked on entry. • 10% of the 71 randomly checked (all entries).
Calculation checks	• *PASW* (SPSS) results taken verbatim. • Excel's results from formulae input checked manually (Excel does not auto-calculate Spearman's rho, nor chi-squared).
Generalisability and statistical significance	• 2 independent web-based statistical significance calculators used and their results cross-checked.
Interviews	• Attempts made to put interviewer at ease. 'Non-threatening', benign environment. Choice of meeting place left to respondent, in some cases neutral venue, permission sought for audio recording etc. • Audio recorder positioned discretely.
Transcription errors	• Transcription checked against audio file content. Audio replayed several times.
Researcher interpretation	• Transcript discussed with interviewees and uncertainties clarified.
Extracting contrasts and themes	• Multiple re-reading cycles in method of constant comparison.
Overall fluency, coherence of thesis	• Use of a 'critical friend'. Tutorial input and feedback from Director of Studies and Supervisor.
Conceptual agreement	• Wide literature studied, expert 'recyclers'' works read in addition to as original texts e.g. Grenfell (2008)[43].
Hindsight bias	• Analytic bracketing.

[43] Despite being unsuccessful in presenting this research as 'work in-process' at a conference at the University of Bristol in Sept. 2011 where Michael Grenfell - an acknowledged expert on Bourdieu's work - presented, I was pleased to be invited to join the university's Bourdieu study group.

Given these stringent attempts to reduce bias and error, there remain both identified and hitherto hidden problems with the random-stratified and purposive sampling techniques employed that leads to some uncertainty. To give three examples of the problems that were identified: first, distribution of survey form by email or by inviting download from the Internet may have attracted more 'PC-savvy' users than may have been expected should the survey been carried out solely by post. Second, the survey's questions on artistic disposition might have attracted more interest from arts and media lecturers increasing their rate of return. Third the "interesting nature of the questions" commented on by several respondents, although gratifying, may well have attracted the more intellectually curious. In short, despite the researcher's best efforts we can never be 100% sure of validity, we can only lay claim.

With these issues and tactics in mind, Chapter Four that follows, *"Lecturers' Cultural Capital: Manifestations and Differences"* begins the presentation of the study's findings starting with those in relation to RQ1 and RQ2.

Chapter Four

LECTURERS' CULTURAL CAPITAL: MANIFESTATIONS AND DIFFERENCES

Figure 3:
Species: *Homo Artificium*
(cultural omnivore)

Habitat: Colleges of Further Education
Evolutionary period: 1891-2011

Likes: Oasis' *Wonderwall*, Vincent van Gogh, pubs, clubs, museums
Dislikes: J.S. Bach's *Well-tempered Clavier*, Tracey Emin, pâté de foie gras

Artist: Suzanne Burnham 2011
Image © Robert Baker 2011

4.1 Chapter structure

Chapter Four is structured in six parts and addresses the first two research questions. Before the study's headline findings are presented, I interject a caveat for their interpretation from the work of Paul Lazarsfeld, a scholar considered by some the "founder of modern empirical sociology" (Hynek 2001, p229). Issues of statistical significance are then discussed. The chapter then reports in detail the manifestations of cultural capital found in the sample population (RQ1) and examines variations in possession across practitioners from different curriculum areas (RQ2). An emergent theme of cultural capital's valuelessness as currency in the FE field is developed in the final part of the chapter.

4.2 Lazarsfeld's caveat – 'un-common' sense

Lazarsfeld (1950) presents his 'findings' in *"The American Soldier"*, his ethnographic account of US Army GIs during the Second World War, before revealing that every one of the statements is the direct opposite of what was actually found. This neat trick, playing on our non-falsifiable hindsight bias, prompts implicitly for the bracketing of his reader's common sense:

> "If we had mentioned the actual results of the investigation first, the reader would have labelled these 'obvious' also" (Lazarsfeld 1950, p380).

With an assurance of the absence of trickery, I ask that Lazarsfeld's principle of the social sciences is kept in mind:

> "Obviously something is wrong with the entire argument of obviousness, since every kind of human reaction is conceivable, it is of great importance to know which reactions actually occur most frequently and under what conditions" (Lazarsfeld 1950, p380).

4.3 Headline findings

At a first approximation the map of the FE lecturers' cultural taste and participation, the 'cloud of individuals' in cultural space, appears diffuse and ill-defined. Closer inspection though shows several modalities. Anomalously, given their middle class 'teaching professional' social grouping, there is evidence that lecturers pursue cultural consumption patterns ranging from the middlebrow to the popularist. Overt highbrow consumption is clearly present, but it is relatively inconsequential and less well dispersed. From a holistic view of the data, lecturers I argue, classify as cultural omnivores (Peterson 1992, Peterson and Kern 1996) that is, people who possess the differential capacity to engage with or consume cultural goods and services across a wide spectrum of cultural life, differentiating themselves from the highbrow univore and the culturally disengaged paucivore. Deployment of any type of cultural capital is weak, dominated by potentially more advantageous capitals such as knowledge of college working practices and bureaucratic procedures. Interview data showed that respondents who possessed cultural-elitist traits, in the main disguised these affinities in their teaching practice.

4.4 Decomposition of responses by college and the statistical significance of the results

Of the 602 surveys sent out, 71 were received completed, an 11% response rate. Fifty-four responses (76% of the total) were received from Riverford College; Hillstown College provided eleven; Valedown College four. Although the original intent was to survey only these three, two additional responses, one from Northwood College of FE and one from Seashore College were included after the Higher Education Academy (HEA) published details of the research in their national 'HE in FE Newsletter'. Forty-nine of the 71 respondents were female (69%), 22 male (31%), a ratio of about 2:1. Riverford's actual gender split was flatter at 53:47, a factor considered when participants were selected for interview[44]. Twenty-three lecturers delivering HE levels 4, 5 or 6 (HNC/Ds, FDs, BA(Hons.), BSc(Hons.)) responded. This strong return from Higher Education practitioners may, in part, have been due to the growing emphasis in

[44] According to 2009-2010 SIR ('Staff Individual Record') data on teaching staff, FE's gender split nationally is 59.1% female and 40.9% male. There has been little change in the gender proportion over the past five years (LSIS, 2011).

FE colleges, especially at Riverford, to incorporate HE following the 1997 Dearing Report recommendations.

I turn now to discuss the statistical significance of the study attentive to Le Compte, Preissle and Tesch's rejection of the idea that social research can achieve total reliability and reproducibility,

> "[...] the extent to which studies can be replicated. It assumes that the same methods can obtain the same results as those of a prior study. This poses an impossible task for any researcher studying naturalistic behaviour or unique phenomena" (Le Compte, Preissle and Tesch 1984, p332).

The quantitative sample size *(n=71)* allowed a confidence interval of 11% significant at the 95% confidence level. This qualifies a *prima facie* inference of say "80% of lecturers agreed" as needing to be mitigated and restated as:

> "95 times out of 100, between 69% and 91%, (i.e. 80% ± 11%) of lecturers in the wider UK lecturer population would agree".

The results therefore have limited generalisability. This moderately wide confidence interval must be viewed in relation to two factors. First, the limited personal resources scaffolding the project in comparison to the resources available to a major UK-wide study allocated an ESRC six-figure grant and second, against the context in which the statistical inferences are being applied. In pharmaceutical or clinical research employing randomised controlled trials ('RCTs') to determine the effectiveness of a new drug, a confidence interval of this order, clearly, would be unacceptable. However, I argue that because this study's results focus on individual and organisational behaviour and that in a business context, data that is 'probably true' (that is with a probability of it being 'untrue' of 0.05, i.e. a 1 in 20 chance) is likely to be acted upon as if it were in fact 'true'[45]. Modalities for all consumption preferences tested show an unlikelihood of chance results. Chi-square tests, significant at the *p=0.05* level were, in every case, greater than the threshold value of 12.72 indicating a less than 1 in 20

[45] I intend to bid for external funding to extend the sample in 2012/13. This would reduce the confidence interval. A reduction to 5% would need the sample to be increased to 383 and to reduce it further to 2%, 2357 responses would be required. At these increased sample sizes, factors surrounding the response rate need to be carefully considered. For example, to be confident of receiving nearly 400 responses, at say a 25% response rate, would require the targeting of 1600 colleagues. At these levels access to an electronic database is preferable and I hope that, ethical considerations permitting and access issues successfully negotiated, future work might draw on national datasets such as the Institute for Learning's (IfL) practitioner database. This remains, though, future work, a point taken up in Chapter Six.

chance that the preferences reported would have occurred randomly. With necessary caution surrounding these aspects of statistical confidence, the quantitative results were taken forward as fit-for-purpose and were inform the subsequent qualitative phase of the research.

4.5 Detailed findings. Manifestations of lecturers' embodied, objectified and institutionalised cultural capitals

Modalities for leisure activities showed strong preference for three popular culture pastimes: cinema-going, hobbyist activities and visiting pubs and clubs (71.6% engagement in the past year across the three). Conversely, lecturers' recent engagement in 'highbrow' activities tracked weaker patterns: attending classical music concerts (14.9% in the past year) and literary events, book clubs, poetry readings (10.4%). Bennett et al. (2009) report a similar dichotomy in the wider UK population, confirming that members of their 'professional-executive class' engage in popular activities as frequently as members of other classes. The study found that lecturers in the sample appear, in general, to have a low affinity for fine art. Where art is a declared interest, middle brow genres are preferred. Consistent with an omnivorous classification, the findings show lowbrow to middlebrow modalities in food preference but there are interesting legitimate-culture anomalies in the data. In music, popularist and middlebrow genres again appeared dominant. Again its highbrow variant, operationalised as the classical genre, was markedly unpopular. The lecturer's penchant for décor is, in the main, homely; little evidence was found for liking sober or classical interiors. Given *Homo Artificium's* fondness for cinema (the most popular pastime of thirty two choices), popularist, easy-on-the-senses varieties - comedy and science fiction - were ranked favourites. However unlike fine art, several respondents favoured more cerebral cinematic genres. Interestingly the lecturer-omnivore appears to be one of habit. The data showed a high correlation between pastimes she engaged in the last twelve months and those planned to be taken up in the following year (Spearman's rho, $\rho = 0.89$).

Respondents' preferences for art, food and music exhibited a patterning congruent with the idea of cultural contestation, the notion that paintings by Turner, Van Gogh and Lowry for example, and musical pieces like Sinatra's *Chicago* and Oasis' *Wonderwall* are essentially non-contested. These are orthodox forms that many like and few dislike.

In contrast, Tracy Emin's art and heavy metal music can be classified as stigmatised items: items that many like but also many dislike. There is only weak evidence of the existence of an *avant-garde* fraction, those interested in relatively arcane cultural products and inclined to express dislike of orthodox works such as Lowry and Turner's art. It is interesting to note in relation to Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence, that contention is normally accommodated by the more powerful agents within the professional-executive class constructing distinction with certain usually rare and consecrated items subjected to contested evaluation. Little evidence of this was found.

One particular form of embodied cultural capital, familial influence, is perceived unimportant as a factor affecting lecturing practice. Ranked 17th out of 17 embodied capital attributes offered for selection, fewer than 20% self-reported its significance. Unexpectedly perhaps in a vocational sector, the practitioner's past experience in the occupational field was seen as a less important factor in FE practice than academic qualifications. This could result from a mismatch of practitioners' habituses: between habitus structured by past vocational experiences out of step with the increasingly complex performance-related requirements of their new field: their past vocational experience equipping them inadequately for their current teaching role. The phenomenon can be interpreted as a possible effect of Bourdieuian hysteresis accompanying the agent's change of field resulting from a time lag between this change and re-recognition of configurations of cultural capital (i.e. the habitus) that would support a dominant position in the new field. Unlike the sanctity of the security of tenure of the Parisian professors giving rise to the career academic (Bourdieu 1988), results here may be conditioned by the frequency and significance of career shifts and vocational over-qualification that accompanies the practitioner migrating to an FE teaching role. Aeronautical engineering lecturer V2 with six years FE experience explains such a mismatch that accompanied his shift of field, between vocational career and FE, and one integral to his 'new' field. V2 shows his discomfort with the relative worth of experience compared to those attributes required in a period of structural rationalisation at Valedown College forcing him into a lower-skilled position. He laments:

> [V2] "I have got a unique set of knowledge but the college just doesn't seem to want to use it. They are all keen to close the Aerospace Department and they are trying to, sounds elitism myself, but they are trying to down-skill me and just use me for general engineering and motor vehicle maintenance, which, yes,

I can teach that sort of thing, I am capable of teaching it, but they are not utilising my unique skills as much, as much as they could.
[…general engineering…] is teaching the 14 to 16 year olds 'metal bashing'. These kids have got no idea of how to use tools, all they want to do is throw them at each other. They've got no knowledge of reading engineering drawings or anything else."

The diametrically opposed perspective, in the minority, was offered by Riverford College's biochemistry graduate R54 who equated a mix of vocational experience, institutionalised academic capital, and social skills to the worth of academic qualifications:

[R54] "[…]if you can build up a rapport with the people, that sort of thing, you know, that's as important in my opinion as having a degree, and I think, you know, with your vocational experience it's just as valuable."

Encouragingly for proposed collaboration strategies, 40.6% of respondents reported membership of at least one cross-college working group. The modal number of group memberships was one. *In extremis*, HT5, a sports tutor at Hillstown College belonged to six, an attribute that selected him for interview[46]. Problems worked on by cross-college groups were perceived, in the main, important to the practitioner (42.0% agreed or strongly agreed). Advantages to be gained by collaborative practice seem well understood: less than one in ten respondents (7.2%) disagreed that it was an effective problem-solving instrument. Fewer still (5.9%) disagreed with the notion that cooperation allows more innovative problem solving and nearly four-fifths (79.1%) agreed that collaboration will become increasingly important in the light of impending public sector funding cuts likely from 2012/13. There was strong agreement that informality allowed a greater probability of resolving problems. This together with the return that, given an opportunity, 29.4% of respondents 'relished' the thought of joining a working group augurs well for the propagation of practitioner-inspired communities.

However the results emphasised four major obstacles to their formation. First, over half the sample (58.8%) said that they had little time to work collaboratively. Second and important for enterprise-wide sharing of innovative practice, over four-fifths (84.1%)

[46] During their interviews two participants explained their thinking that "team" working (i.e. intra-curriculum team) counted as "cross-college" collaboration: a miss-designation that is interesting in itself.

suggested that there were colleagues from some specialist areas in college that they had never met. Third, the will to collaborate is diluted by professionally-induced insularity linked to job insecurity - R54, for instance, cites tensions between lecturers when materials developed are 'borrowed' and the favour is not reciprocated:

> [R54] "I think people are frightened that if you've got their stuff or you've got better stuff than them, then you can come and, you know, take their job away!"

Demonstrating strong altruism towards colleagues in her interview responses, R54's ownership of pedagogic material was delimited by its preparation in 'office hours', although for her, 'office hours' extends to overtime working at home (this is interesting too from the point of view of what she considers 'paid work'):

> [R54] "I mean, I do a lot of work at home and the work I do at home I consider is my work, not college's, I'm not doing it when I'm getting paid. However, I do it for the benefit of the college."

Fourth, the study found that the FE practitioner was isolated in two ways: physically due to the lack of common social spaces and psychologically by increased management emphasis on college performativity metrics. The corollary is the paradox of heightened inter-school competition setting up protectionism. Expressed as a form of colonisation and compromise of the lecturer's professional position, R54 thought that this could become a barrier to collaboration "because things are kept within the school" [R54, L191], a point re-enforced by R12 recollecting a 'team-day' where "you still end up in your own familiar territory, you still end up with your team."

Although this section focuses on findings in relation to RQ1 "*What are the manifestations of practitioners' cultural capital?*" presenting detail of manifestations of embodied, objectified and institutionalised cultural capitals, where convenient to do so it considers how these expressions differ, if at all, across practitioners from different curriculum areas (RQ2).

First, in order to proceed to interpretation, the discussion must define briefly three forms of cultural capital that collectively interplay to constantly re-form the habitus. First 'embodied', or innate cultural capital i.e. the habitus itself; second 'objectified' capital accumulated through the possession of artefacts; and third 'institutionalised' cultural

capital, that is capital affirmed and credentialised in symbolic terms by, as its name suggests, an institution.

Manifestations of the first type, embodied capital, were initially explored in the quantitative phase operationalised as dispositions towards music, art and photography, food, film genres and interior décor. A series of nine survey questions invited rankings of items spanning highbrow to lowbrow tastes (Annexe A, Q14-Q22). Objectified cultural capital was investigated quantitatively by interrogating possession of artefacts and their deployment in professional practice (Annexe A, Q12). Elements of institutional cultural capital were probed by two survey questions: the first enquired into possession of credentials ('A' level English for instance) and the second asked the respondent to specify the range of QCF levels taught. Here an assumption was made that to teach on progressively higher QCF level programmes, higher level institutionalised qualifications are required. This assumption is justified in the light of protocols insisted upon, in the main, by colleges, exam boards and university accreditation boards.

4.5.1 Embodied capital - participants' current and planned participation in pastimes

As I outlined in the 'Headline Findings', strong preferences were exposed for popular and middlebrow culture activities (cinema going (77.6% had engaged in the last year), hobbyist activities (73.1%) and going to pubs and clubs (71.6%). Engagement in several 'highbrow' activities was weaker, touring abroad (14.9%, ranking equal 26th out of 32), attending classical music concerts (14.9%, ranking 26th equal) and attendance at literary events (10.4%, ranking 31st). Several legitimate capital activities, those of gastronomy (35.8%) and museum visits (47.8%), for example were in mid-range. For the sake of survey instrument simplicity, the option to clarify the type, frequency and cultural intensity of a particular engagement was deferred to the interview phase if it were thought respondent-relevant. Hence interviews were planned to pick up greater detail on say the particular genre of museum visited (the Tate Modern or the Imperial War Museum, for instance) the length of stay, the artefacts viewed and so on.

Knowledge capital as a form of embodied cultural capital was probed. Significantly in a sample of education practitioners, over half (58.2%, rank 7th) self-reported engagement

in some form of study within the past year, but again the detail of its precise form and relationship to practice remained unresolved at the quantitative stage. Perhaps indicative of the majority, at her subsequent interview R12 exhibited this general thirst to gain knowledge for institutional capital, in her case in the form of sector-relevant credentials:

> [R12] "I didn't have any FE experience when I came on board. Since then I've done a lot more qualifications, I've done my A1[47], I've done my V1[48] now, I've done my PTLLS[49], I am going on to do some extra personal studies, for my own personal gain, and I have been here now four years in October and I have really enjoyed it."

The survey's section on planned engagement in pastimes was less comprehensively completed, but on occasion where it was, future trends tended to follow past activity. There was little evidence of an aspiration-bias, Harford's "all good intentions factor" (Harford 2008, p48)[50]. Contributors appeared to negate any esteem need they might possess to be perceived as 'cultural' by declining increased higher-brow cultural activity in the medium-term future.

[47] A1 - City & Guilds Award in "Assessing Learners taking National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ)": a programme of training in skills, techniques and principles of assessing competency.

[48] V1 - City & Guilds "Conduct Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process" Award designed to reflect the requirements of Internal Verifiers in all occupational sectors benchmarking good practice in the Internal Verification of NVQ qualifications.

[49] An Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) covers the basics of teaching in continuing and adult education, a "first step towards official practitioner status - a full licence to teach in the lifelong learning sector", City & Guilds (2012) http://www.cityandguilds.com/45858.html

[50] In a rational choice epistemology Harford (2008, p55-62) argues that when experimenters offered subjects a snack: fruit or chocolate. Seven out of ten subjects asked for chocolate. But when the experimenters offered other subjects a different choice, the answer was different too: 'I'll bring you a snack next week. What would you like then, fruit or chocolate?' Three-quarters of subjects chose fruit. This, Harford argues, demonstrates the theory that human beings have two competing systems for decision making. One, the dopamine system, is geared towards rewarding immediate gratification. The other, the cognitive system, prioritises long-term planning. When the brain is presented with the possibility of immediate gratification (such as the offer of chocolate), the dopamine system over-rides the cognitive system (prioritising the unhealthy sugar rush over the healthier fruit option).

Table 5: Participation in pastimes, current and planned

Rank	Pastime	ƒ(current)	%	ƒ(plan)	Trend	wt.
1	Visiting the cinema	52	77.6%	34	-18	0
2	Hobbyist/personal interest events	49	73.1%	25	-24	0
3	Going to pubs or clubs	48	71.6%	26	-22	-1
4	Taking a seaside holiday in the UK	46	68.7%	26	-20	0
5	Socialising with colleagues from my own department out of college	42	62.7%	30	-12	0
6	Taking a UK city break	40	59.7%	24	-16	1
7	Undertaking further courses of study	39	58.2%	23	-16	0
8	Visiting the theatre	38	56.7%	31	-7	1
9	Taking part in group social outings	34	50.7%	22	-12	0
10	Attending pop/rock music gigs	32	47.8%	25	-7	0
10	Foreign resort holidays	32	47.8%	29	-3	0
10	Visiting a museum	32	47.8%	16	-16	1
13	Visiting a theme park	29	43.3%	16	-13	0
14	Touring, camping or caravanning in the UK	28	41.8%	15	-13	0
15	Spectating at sporting events	25	37.3%	12	-13	0
15	Attending trade fairs or exhibitions linked to your job	25	37.3%	20	-5	0
17	'Gastronomic' activities (fine dining, vineyard tours etc.)	24	35.8%	11	-13	1
18	Competitive team or solo sport	23	34.3%	13	-10	0
18	Watching sport on 'free to air' TV (e.g. Freeview)	23	34.3%	10	-13	-1
18	Foreign city breaks	23	34.3%	21	-2	1
21	Socialising with colleagues from other departments out of college	22	32.8%	14	-8	0
22	Watching sport on a sports subscription channel (e.g. Sky)	20	29.9%	14	-6	-1
23	Involvement in community projects	15	22.4%	12	-3	0
24	Special interest holidays (safaris, mountaineering, trekking etc.)	11	16.4%	10	-1	1
24	Organising charity events	11	16.4%	8	-3	0
26	Touring, camping or caravanning abroad	10	14.9%	9	-1	1
26	Attending a classical music concert	10	14.9%	9	-1	1
26	Activities linked with religion	10	14.9%	8	-2	0
29	Cruises	9	13.4%	12	3	0
30	'White knuckle' activities (skydiving, bungee-jumping etc.)	8	11.9%	4	-4	0
31	Literary events (book clubs, poetry readings etc.)	7	10.4%	5	-2	1
32	Playing bingo	4	6.0%	5	1	-1

Notes:

1. Data is ranked in descending order of current participation.
2. Trend = ƒ(current) – ƒ(plan). An indication of future engagement relative to present activity.
3. 'wt.' = cultural capital weighting based on a nominal score of -1=popularist, 0=middlebrow; +1= legitimate. The weighting was used to compile two indices per

case, one indicating pastime breadth and the other, pastime 'browness', measures of cultural capital. The list of pastimes presented gave a proportion of weightings skewed to the 'legitimate' end. This is in common with studies to date exploring cultural capital (Chan and Goldthorpe 2006). It would be interesting to replicate the study entirely with the emphasis changed to probe popularist cultural capital - a point I develop in the thesis' evaluation in Chapter Six.

4. Although it is entirely feasible that different sports broadcast on Sky TV might be classified +1 and -1, for instance Rugby Union and darts. Therefore sports viewing might warrant a more finite weighting, but the distinction was left, at the quantitative phase, between passivity and activity (i.e. watching as opposed to taking part). Selected respondents sporting tastes (e.g. R21) were discussed at interview. Bourdieu has much to say on bodily hexis, sport and fitness noting that bodily 'appeal' has much to do with cultural capital:

> "Everything takes place as if the social conditionings linked to a social condition tended to inscribe the relation to the social world in a lasting, generalized relation to one's own body, a way of bearing one's body, presenting it to others, moving it, making space for it, which gives the body its social physiognomy" (1984a, p466-484).

4.5.2 The disharmony of lecturers' tastes in music

With 40% of UK households having over 200 CDs or equivalent media (Bennett et al. 2009) and attendance at music events claimed to be a part of life (Longhurst 1995, deNora 2000), musical taste is especially significant in classifying the structure of cultural taste. Bennett et al.'s (2009) findings appear to confirm Bourdieu's (1984a, p19):

> "Music represents the most radical and most absolute form of the negation of the world, and especially the social world, which the bourgeois ethos tends to demand of all forms of art."

For Bennett et al. it is "the most divided, contentious cultural field of any" that they examine (2009, p75) but its inclusion as an operationalised theme for cultural capital is justified as being "central to our concern with probing cultural dynamics and tensions" (2009, p75). Music's reliance on 'form' celebrates a distancing of culture from daily life, and can be seen as one instantiation of a 'Kantian aesthetic'. This 'disinterestedness' is a notion that beauty is not a property of an art-form or natural phenomenon, but is instead a consciousness of the pleasure which attends the 'free play' of the imagination and the understanding. Hence judgment is "consequently not logical,

but aesthetical" (Kant 1790, §1)[51]. Propensity for classical music - legitimate capital - became central to the European cultural heritage, perhaps because of its links with Court and hence it is seen to carry its intrinsic values.

A ranked order of preference was invited for six pieces of music. The range of genres included the classical, Bach's *The Well-Tempered Clavier* and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7 in A major, (Opus 92),* popular classical, J. Strauss' *The Blue Danube* through Brit-pop (Oasis' *Wonderwall),* and rock (The Killers, *Mr.Brightside*) to swing and Sinatra's *Chicago*. The data exhibited strong affinities for popular and middlebrow music. Twenty-four percent ranked Oasis' *Wonderwall* highest preference[52]. Data evidencing highbrow taste, operationalised as an affinity for the classical, was much weaker. This genre was ranked highest in only five cases and J.S. Bach's piece *The Well-Tempered Clavier* was ranked lowest of the six by nearly one-fifth of the sample.

There were sharp differences expressed in likes and dislikes evidencing the "cultural antagonism" found by Bennett et al. (2009, p79). *Wonderwall* was also given the least preferred rating by 13% (more than half the number of those that expressed it as highest preference). Each of the pieces was ranked strongest or weakest preference by at least one of the respondents again confirming these wide taste inconsistencies. These results seem to converge further to Bennett et al.'s finding (2009) underlining the notion that the divide between the classical and the contemporary is rarely straddled.

Studies by Longhurst (1995), Peterson and Kern (1996), Bryson (1996), Martin (1996), and more recently Chan and Goldthorpe (2004) that have concentrated primarily on music taste promote the rise of the omnivore thesis, that is the differential capacity to engage with or consume cultural goods and services across the entire spectrum of cultural life. This ability is predicated on an unequal, class-related distribution in

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[51] The Kantian aesthetic was tested further with Q23 probing the participant's interpretation of photographic subjects as to whether they were aesthetic or sanguine.
[52] This is perhaps not surprising as it was 76th in the UK's list of best-selling singles and certified platinum (600,000 copies) by the British Phonographic Industry and certified gold (500,000) by the Recording Industry Association of America.
"Best Selling Singles Of All Time". http://www.everyhit.com./bestsellingsingles.html. Retrieved 2010-05-30.
The Killers *"Mr.Brightside"* is one of the longest chart sitters so far in the 21st century, spending a total of 71 weeks in the UK Top 100 charts.
http://www.chartstats.com/songinfo.php?id=161. Retrieved 30-05-2010.

cultural competence. Even with sharp demarcation between likes and the stigmatisation of dislikes Peterson's arguments still hold and we see evidence of it here. We may simply be seeing a reworking of the boundaries of 'highbrow' culture.

The distribution's chi-square value, $\chi^2 = 12.72$, significant at the $p = 0.05$ level, indicated a less than 1 in 20 chance that the preferences reported might have occurred purely randomly.

Table 6: Music taste

	Modal preference	Maximum preference	Minimum preference	*f* liked least	*f* liked most
Oasis *Wonderwall*	1	1	6	9	17
The Killers *Mr.Brightside*	2	1	6	9	15
Sinatra *Chicago*	3	1	6	9	8
Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7 in A major*, (*Opus 92)*	4	1	6	6	5
J.S. Bach *The Well-Tempered Clavier*	5	1	6	12	6
J.Strauss *The Blue Danube*	6	1	6	11	10
Total (no preference/not interested)	11				
Chi-square = 12.72 (5 degrees of freedom)					

A 'transgressive' cluster of lecturers was exemplified by V2, the aeronautical engineer from Valedown. He showed the greatest span of omnivore traits expressing a penchant for cultural extremes in music, including a passion for high opera, and in other activities. His extreme range of tastes selected him for interview where he confirmed:

> [V2]"I'll try anything once, and if I enjoy it I'll carry on doing it."

V2's omnivorousness across music genres was apparent:

> [V2] "Music wise, I'm the sort of person that'll listen to something and if I enjoy it I'll buy it and listen to it again. If I don't like it then I don't bother. But I'm not one that'll go: "oooh, I'm not listening to that!"
>
> I always say, "Give us it here let me listen to it, I like that - let me listen to it" and I'll buy it and get into it."

With no hostility towards the refined or 'posh', V2 linked a passion for the highbrow classical to body management practices - his hexis corporeal - with black-tie dress acting as a signifier of distinction but preferring to foreground appearance over nuances of the art-form:

> [V2] "I love the experience of being able to dress up and go to a theatre. This is my special occasion to me, I like to put on a suit and a dickey-bow and be formal for a change and listen to a nice classical concert or go and see a ballet or go to opera."

A possible effect of the middle-class engineer usurping elements of working class culture, he explained abilities to tune easily to "dressing-down" and to "enjoy" commercial mass culture pastimes:

> [V2] "And then the opposite extreme, I like putting jeans and a tee shirt on. The bingo I find, there's a group of us that go, not as often as I'd like, there's a group of us that used to go for the social interaction, to go around just have a laugh sort of thing [...] I got on really well with the people there. Something I enjoyed."

Beauty therapies lecturer R39 was typical: indicating dislikes as well as likes within popular genres - in her case for "pop festival" music. Reminiscent of Bryson's *"Anything but heavy metal"* findings (*ibid.*), R39 a devoted music-festival goer having attended the Leeds Festival in 2009 and 2010, admitted:

> [R39] "If we are talking about music then I like the majority of music. The music I don't particularly like is jazz. The music that I like more than any other would be indie music, indie pop music. I would prefer like a 'festival type' music rather than a concert type music."

When the subject of deployment of her cultural capital in practice was raised it was reported as a mixed blessing. R39 views it as something to be suppressed in order to demark her professional and personal worlds:

> [R39] "[...] because I would have thought that my personality came across more in lessons and things than I particularly wanted it to and I thought my students would have a pretty good idea of how I was out of college which I don't particularly want them to."

Her colleague, HE tutor and part-time semi-professional swing singer, R21, pointed out the indirect effect of his music preferences on his professional practice, believing it to be one of the "main reasons" responsible for his recent promotion:

[R21] "My ability to be able to build a rapport with a group very quickly is based on the fact that you wouldn't look at me and think "that's an academic person". And that's in a positive way - so it's in a way that people can relate to and I think in some ways that gives them a little bit of safety as well."

Asked whether his professional 'identity' might be affected by his music preference, and appearing to understand the importance of cultural capital to his position in college, he advised:

[R21] "If I was doing something like opera or I was a classical musician or something like that, I think *absolutely*, because there is a preconception about that, rightly or wrongly. So yes, I think that would make a huge difference."

Aware of the possibility of 'management's' bias towards the legitimate in the way that it may confer certain advantages, but reluctant to use class explicitly as a unit of social classification, he continued:

[R21] "Perhaps if I was in a heavy metal band or something like that there would be a perception the other way, but then how much of that shapes the other things that you are interested in as well, I don't know."

Evidencing further the theme of R39's life-work differentiation in class, R21 sensed the subconscious structuring of the habitus, in this case as personality and hexis:

[R21] "I think what's interesting about it is that the majority of students anyway really don't know about that aspect of my life but I guess in some ways it must be reflecting in my general personality and how I present myself, so, yes, I think that certainly would have an influence."

The theme of suppression of forms of cultural capital emerged again with R21. Recognising his young mainly working-class students' limited cultural horizons and the suspicion they might have for legitimate culture, as opposed to those of practitioner colleagues, R21 views deployment of high cultural capital as a dangerous tactic alongside his professional *raison d'être* of the co-construction of knowledge:

[R21] "It's more likely to cause disengagement, so some of it [the suppression] is quite, quite deliberate. I do some delivery on a construction programme so it benefits me to go in on a Monday morning and have five minutes talking to them about the football at the weekend, because it puts us on level ground which for me is extremely important that there is a level playing field there, the learning is collaborative and not

someone just stood telling somebody else what to think. So for me that assists in engagement.

Whereas if were to go in and talk about my weekend playing polo it would have completely the opposite effect that. So some of that [the deployment] is quite deliberate and therefore if I were involved with something that I felt was - what might be considered to be elitist or something that, that people can't relate to - then I would be reluctant to share that."

4.5.3 A picture of lecturers' tastes in art

According to Bourdieu an individual's sense of perception is conditioned by an organising structure of class positions and we take legitimate works to act as benchmarks. The primacy of art in determining this distinction through capital is advanced by Bourdieu in stark terms,

> "Working class people, who expect every image to fulfil a function, if only that of a sign, refer, often explicitly, to norms of morality of agreeableness in all their judgements" (1984a, p41-42).

Thus an image of a catastrophe in a Bourdieuian analysis would provoke responses relating to "the reality of the thing represented to the functions the representations could serve" (1984a, p41). More commonly, the popular view recognises only "a beautiful image of a beautiful thing". Kant, scathing of popular taste, is equally blunt:

> "taste that requires an added element of charm and emotion for its delight, not to speak of adopting this as the measure of its approval, has not yet emerged from barbarism" (Kant 1790 [1952], p65).

The investigation attempted to identify cultural capital operationalised by the lecturer's disposition for art in two ways. In the first way, similar to the survey question for music preference, respondents were invited to rank their liking for an eclectic mix of six works of art (Table 7). The selection comprised the French Impressionist work *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* by Manet, (1882); Dutch post-impressionism (van Gogh's *Sunflowers*, 1888); a 'naïve' industrial landscape (L.S. Lowry's *Huddersfield,* 1965); modern art (Tracey Emin's *Everyone I have ever slept with 1963-1995*); an old master from the Northern Renaissance school (Holbein's *The Ambassadors*, 1533) and from the pop-art genre, Warhol's *Gold Marilyn Monroe*, (1962). In the second way, and paralleling Bourdieu's work in *Distinction* (1984a, p517), survey question Q23 presented the respondents with 21 photographic subjects to score 'beautiful', 'interesting',

'meaningless' or 'ugly' (Table 8). Data from the first way were significantly more polarised than those returned for music. The chi-square value, $\chi^2 = 130.17$, indicated a less than 1 in 100 chance that the preferred rankings could have occurred by chance. Aligning with a lowbrow modality there was a high degree of apathy for the subject: thirty respondents expressed either "no preference" or that the subject "didn't interest them". Where preferences were returned, highest were for the work of Manet and Lowry, in contrast to that of Tracey Emin which was ranked lowest by over a quarter (28.1%). Emin's piece was selected as highest preference in only two cases (by R18 an HE Arts and Design tutor, and R32 a Health Care and Education lecturer)[53]. 1970s working-class popularist culture, the fifty- and sixty-year old lecturer's formative period, may have elevated the then ubiquitous *Sunflowers* in popular taste. Not ranked lowest by any of the respondents and with a modal value of two it was the second most popular of the six.

Table 7: Preferences for art

	Modal preference	Maximum preference	Minimum preference	*f* liked least	*f* liked most
Manet *A Bar at the Folies-Bergere*, 1882	1	1	6	2	12
L.S. Lowry *Huddersfield* 1965	1	1	6	1	8
van Gogh *Sunflowers*, 1888	2	1	5	0	10
Holbein *The Ambassadors*, 1533	3	1	6	5	1
Warhol *Gold Marilyn Monroe*, 1962	5	1	6	2	3
Tracey Emin *Everyone I have ever slept with 1963-1995*	6	1	6	20	2
Total (no preference/not interested)	30				
$\chi 2 = 130.17$ (5 degrees of freedom)					

In the second scheme (Table 8), artistic interpretation for photography subjects attempted to test out any possession of a Kantian aesthetic (Kant 1790). As we have seen, Kant's approach emphasises our interest in art rather than the artwork in itself: art

[53] As an indication of the possible fluidity of culture boundaries, it was reported during August 2011 coincident with the analysis phase, Prime Minister, David Cameron, leant some legitimacy to Emin's work, hanging her 'neon signs' in No. 10.

is beautiful insofar as it instigates an intellectual activity. Dividing aestheticism into the 'beautiful' and the 'sublime', Kant suggests one represents a pleasure in order, harmony, delicacy and the like, the other a response of awe before the infinite or the overwhelming. While the beautiful presents the appearance of form, the sublime, to the non-possessor, may often seem formless.

Data in the second scheme were analysed in two ways. First, the frequency of 'interesting' responses in each respondent's case was determined. Operationalising for possession of the 'Kantian aesthetic' an index threshold value was triggered and the case flagged when the participant's total 'interesting' responses exceeded the sum of the other three classifiers, that is when $\Sigma I > \Sigma(B+M+U)$. Using this metric, this scheme evidenced a line of cleavage, 28 out of 71 (39%) cases scored above the threshold. More than half the photographic subjects too scored 'interesting' as their maximum over the other three categories, but high scores for 'traditional' art subjects, a landscape (74% 'beautiful') and a sunset seascape (90% 'beautiful') indicated a propensity to veer away from the Kantian sublime and align instead with lower cultural capital. Reinforcing this finding and that of Bourdieu's that "working class people, who expect every image to fulfil a function" (*ibid.*), subjects depicting catastrophes were, in the main, classified as 'ugly' and 'meaningless' (a car crash, 53% 'ugly', a wounded man 43% 'ugly').

A second index derived a nominal weighted score from weightings attached to each of the four classifiers: a 'beautiful' response coded '+2' reflecting a taste toward the objective, 'meaningless' coded '+1' indicating abdication of interest, an 'ugly' response scored '+2' (symmetrical with the score for 'beautiful'). 'Interesting' responses were scored at '+5' crediting an appreciation of the Kantian sublime for the subject. This index's range was thus 21 to 105 with a mean score of 67, and a standard deviation of $\sigma = 15$. Two cases approached the scale maximum of 105: HT8, a media lecturer who rated every subject unanimously 'interesting' and R17 a member of Riverford's Quality, Learning and Teaching Improvement Department. Clustering towards the lower end of the scale was a group of NVQ cleaning, trowel trades, early years, beauty therapy, business management and sport lecturers.

Table 8: Exploring the 'Kantian aesthetic' (from Q23)

Notes

1. Bold type indicates maximum in the category, or overall.

Photographic subject	Number of responses B= beautiful; I=interesting; M=meaningless; U= ugly.				Highest category value	Lowest category value
	'I'	'M'	'B'	'U'		
Nominal brow-ness 'score'	*5*	*1*	*2*	*2*		
a landscape	18	1	**50**	0	50	0
a car crash (most Us)	27	4	1	**36**	36	1
a little girl playing with a cat	13	**37**	20	0	37	0
a pregnant woman	21	10	**36**	3	36	3
a still life	**36**	15	16	1	36	1
a woman breastfeeding	20	19	**27**	2	27	2
a metal structure	**41**	10	7	10	41	7
tramps quarrelling	**48**	11	0	10	48	0
cabbages (most Ms)	18	**39**	6	6	39	6
a sunset over the sea (most Bs)	3	5	**61**	0	**61**	0
a weaver at his loom	**52**	11	4	1	52	1
a folk dance	**50**	16	3	0	50	0
a rope	30	**33**	4	2	33	2
a butcher's stall	**41**	20	1	7	41	1
the bark of a tree	**34**	15	20	0	34	0
a famous monument (most Is)	**53**	5	11	1	53	1
a scrap yard	**42**	15	4	9	42	4
a first communion	**36**	26	7	1	36	1
a wounded man	**39**	0	1	28	39	0
a snake	36	7	12	14	36	7
an 'old master'	**52**	6	11	0	52	0
total responses per category	**710**	305	302	131	710	131

Bourdieu claims (1984a, 1990) that access to culture is more critical for the ways individuals are perceived than knowledge of the cultural good itself. HT5, a lecturer in sport and recreation at Hillstown and strong omnivore, at interview however, seemed to emphasise the importance of 'understanding'. Seizing the opportunity to spend his lunchtime away from his Liverpool conference proceedings and visit a nearby art gallery, he described his art preferences as a function of getting to "`know the detail of things`". He appeared to edge towards an appreciation of the Kantian sublime, but his admission that he would leave the knowledgeable appreciation of certain consecrated genres to expert professionals alternately seems to fit Zolberg's claims (1992):

> [HT5] "[…] so what I would do if I went to an art gallery, I would rather spend the time understanding 10

> pieces of work and really enjoy them than trying to see 400 pieces of work. But there are certain genres I would probably think, you know, I just don't get that and I'd rather look at a beautiful set of flowers or a beautiful landscape or some, than a portrait of somebody who I don't know very much about."

Valedown's V2, the ex-RAF engineer, who studied for an M.Ed. "for some mad reason", too offered a reaction encroaching on an appreciation of the sublime but tempered this with an 'interestedness' linking to aspects of the realist world of his specialism. Equating beauty to goodness within ugliness, he promotes:

> [V2] "It's because, to me the world is an interesting place. I can see beauty in almost anything. Like for example, in a car crash you might think a horrible place to be, but you can see deformed metal and interesting shapes and reflections and things like that. I'm forever an optimist, I see good in most things.
>
> You can say, "OK that impacted there, that's bent around". You can say, [to his students] "OK, look lads this is what happens if a car hits another car at 70 miles an hour. There you go!" I can see things from a different point of view."

Patterning of aesthetic taste then appears amorphous. It was perhaps surprising that an *undefined* 'Old Master' presented in the table scored 'interesting' in 52 cases, a fact interesting in itself and perhaps a result of subliminally acquired influences of orthodoxy.

4.5.4 Lecturers' food tastes

"Shopping is an agonistic struggle to define not what one is, but what one is not" (Douglas 1996, p104).

For Bourdieu, we demonstrate distinction by our affinity for the food we eat and how we eat it. Taste in food consumption is where one might expect to find "the most indelible mark of infant learning" ingrained into the habitus (Bourdieu 1984a, p79). What we eat displays *amor fati,* the 'love of one's fate' (1984a, p178). The working class, closer to 'necessity', tend to eat out far less (Bennett et al. 2009, p165) and consume Bourdieu identified on the whole, large portions of hearty economical food. We can translate this into fish and chips, and the traditional 'meat and two veg.' for example in the UK. Highbrow food taste - demonstrated by those more remote from

'necessity' - is more discriminating. Bourdieu's 'food space' (1984a, p186) assigns high cultural capital to the consumption of healthy, raw, grilled, delicate, lean foods as opposed to the lowbrow rich, strong, fatty, cheap and nourishing ones. Although the limitations of the survey did not allow exhaustive examination of eating out as a leisure activity, the intimidation of necessary restaurant competence - using the 'correct' cutlery and glassware - and discriminating taste are exemplified by many as instantiations of symbolic violence perpetrated by those who make the social 'rules'. With these divisions in mind six foods were presented in Q16. They included ethnic and vegetarian options (lamb balti and rice and kosherie); expensive haute cuisine (pate de fois gras with truffles); high-modernity consumerist fast food (hamburger and fries); a wholesome and plentiful dish (a roast pork carvery); and a minimalist option (grilled Dover sole with steamed green vegetables) serving as a healthy lifestyle marker and extrapolating to Bourdieu's notion of 'californianisation' and body consciousness.

Fewer respondents abdicated giving their food preferences than for music or art. Respondent's reactions showed a bi-modal predilection for the wholesome and health conscious coupled with a strong aversion for fast food and haute cuisine. Preferences exhibited the strongest non-randomness out of all the categories (χ^2 = 133.18). It is interesting to note that thirty years ago Bourdieu found that French teachers' food purchases were almost identically structured to those of office workers somewhat attenuating the 'professional' status contemporarily afforded to teaching (Bourdieu 1984a). True professionals Bourdieu suggests are "mainly distinguished by the high proportion of spending which goes on expensive products" (1984a, p185).

Table 9: Food preferences

	Modal preference	Maximum preference	Minimum preference	*f* liked least	*f* liked most
A roast pork carvery, wholesome and plentiful	1	1	6	3	23
Grilled Dover sole with steamed green vegetables	1	1	6	3	18
Lamb balti and rice	2	1	6	4	15
Vegetarian kosherie	5	1	6	11	4
Fast food: hamburger, fries	6	1	6	22	1
Pate de fois gras with truffles	6	1	6	23	6
Total (no preference/not interested)	12				
χ^2 = 133.18 (5 deg. of freedom)					

R29, a mathematics tutor with high cultural capital, was perhaps typical of about one-third (35.8%) of the sample who had taken part in gastronomy or oenology activity in the last year. He recounted enthusiastically what he termed his "round-the-world food club"

> [R29] "[…] we bought on the new estate: brand new houses and everyone knows each other. The next door neighbours, us, and the couple just down the road, we've got a food club and we take it in turns to go round to each other's houses and we do a themed evening. So far we have had a Chinese evening, my wife and I did that, we have had Thai, we have had Indian, and we've got Greek coming up then followed by Mexican. We have a map and we are sticking pins in a map. I want to do the Balinese one because when we came back from Bali we bought a Bali cookbook so obviously I want to do the Balinese one. There are six of us who are having dining events and we do full meals. It's been amazing so far. Love it."

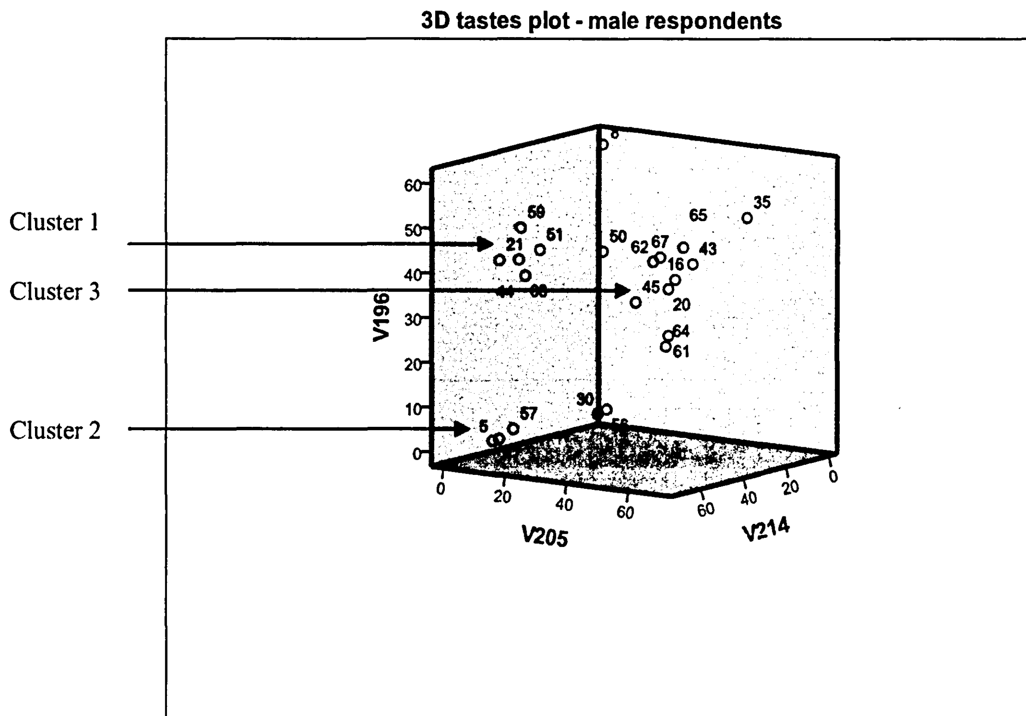
4.5.5 Consolidating affinities in FE for food, music and art: a test of gender difference

In stark contrast to Savage's (2007) findings in the UK population where gender marked a cleavage line, when taken together the patterning of male and female food, music and art tastes were indistinguishable (Plots 2 and 3 below). Individual cases from both genders appeared to cluster in three similar parts of the 3D space. This result I believe

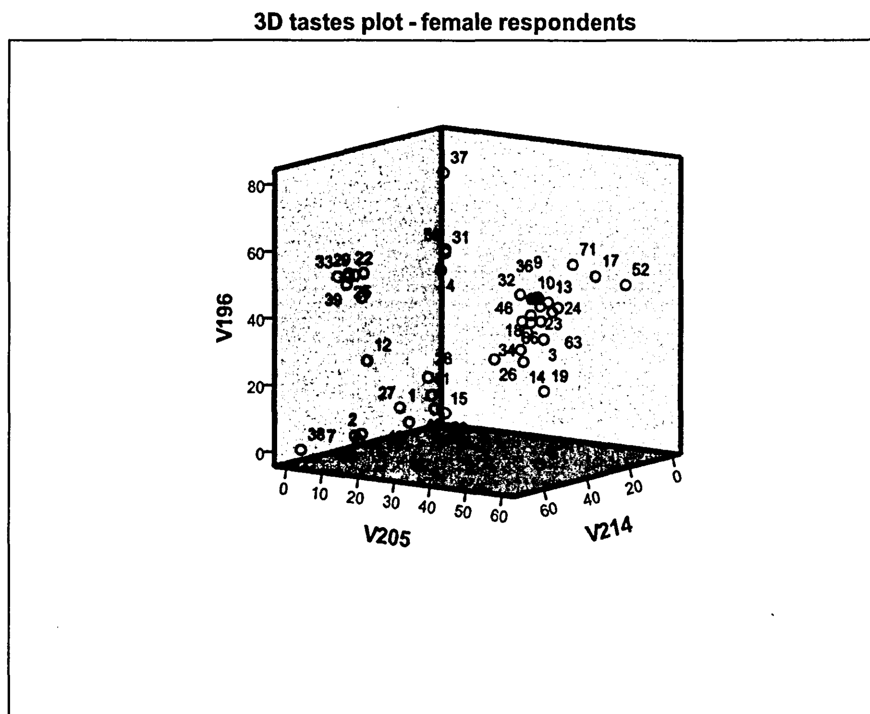
supported in some way the study's backgrounding of gender as an independent variable. The similarity in the plots lends weight to FE practitioners being a more homogeneous subset than the wider UK population.

The composition of the clusters was amorphous across subject specialisms and given their relatively small sizes, difficult to draw further firm conclusions from. Cluster 1 exhibited legitimate music taste but low affinity for highbrow art. *Post facto* three interviewees were to be drawn form this grouping, two male (R21, Law and HT5, Sports) and one female respondent, beauty therapy lecturer R39, who coincidentally was to foreground her music tastes in a large segment of her interview. Cluster 2 was populated by respondents having low affinities for art and music whereas cluster 3, the majority, showed median tastes across all three: music, art and food. A very small number (two male and perhaps three female) were intransigent to all. Here too patterning in relation to taught subject was unstructured.

Plot 2: 3D plot of male respondents' food 'V214', music 'V196' and art taste 'V205'[54].
Numbers in the plot area refer to SPSS 'case number', that is respondent number. It may ease interpretation given the trompe-l'oeil effect, if the darker lower panel is viewed as the upper surface of a 'floor'.



Plot 3: 3D plot of female respondents' food 'V214', music 'V196' and art taste 'V205'.



[54] The 'V' in 'V214' for instance stands for 'variable', i.e. variable number 214 in SPSS' nomenclature.

4.5.6 Interior décor

Taste for interior décor is powerfully differentiated. Lecturers abstain almost unanimously from the overtly scholastic and classical. From a total of 216 responses only a single preference was expressed for the classical, sober or studious. The aggregate popularity across all specialisms was for the tidy, clean, and homely.

Table 10: Ranked 'favourite' and 'least favourite' interior décor

Rank	*'favourite' interior Décor*	*f*
1	clean and tidy	43
2	Comfortable	40
3	Warm	32
4	easy to maintain	22
4	harmonious	22
6	cosy & intimate	17
7	imaginative	15
8	Neat	12
8	practical & functional	12
10	classical	1
11	studious	0
11	sober & discreet	0

Rank	*'least favourite' interior decor*	*f*
1	classical	52
2	sober & discreet	48
3	studious	40
4	imaginative	22
5	easy to maintain	10
6	neat	8
6	harmonious	8
8	practical & functional	6
8	cosy & intimate	6
10	clean and tidy	2
11	warm	1
11	comfortable	1

Twin questions (Q17 and Q18) were set. Q18 acted as a check. It asked for 'least favourite' décor, inverting Q17's interrogation of 'favourite' décor. Intuitively one might expect that with the same list and with the question negated, results should be a near perfect inverse monotone function. However, the rankings of the two datasets had a Spearman's rho value of -0.66 indicating a moderate 'like/dislike' asymmetry. Although not a significant finding, it nudges towards Wilk's (1997) position, in partial critique of Bourdieu (1997, p184). Bourdieu, Wilk asserts, was overwhelmingly concerned with patterns of liking. Wilk urges:

> "The key point is that taste and distaste do not form simple complementary pairs; taste cannot be seen simply as the inversion, opposite, or mirror of distaste in forming social boundaries" (Wilk 1997, p175).

4.5.7 Homo Artificium's preferences for film

Table 11: Homo Artificium's preferences for film

Rank	*Favourite film genres*	*n=*
1	Comedy	41
2	Sci-fi	23
3	Thrillers	19
4	Films with a message	18
5	Romance	16
5	Period drama	16
5	Musicals	16
5	Films that have psychological themes	16
9	Horror	11
10	Films of books you have read	9
11	Films that solve riddles	5
12	Spectaculars	4
12	War	4
14	Film noir	2
15	Westerns	1
16	Bollywood	0

Rank	*Least favourite film genres*	*n=*
1	Horror	34
2	Westerns	32
3	War	25
4	Bollywood	21
5	Period drama	15
6	Sci-fi	14
7	Musicals	13
8	Film noir	11
8	Romance	11
10	Spectaculars	6
11	Films with a message	4
11	Films that have psychological themes	4
13	Comedy	3
13	Thrillers	3
15	Films of books you have read	2
15	Films that solve riddles	2

Homo Artificium is an anthropomorphism of the FE lecturer built from the study's data. The species envisaged is a composite: part omnivore, part middlebrow, and having a pre-occupation with his profession's imposed bureaucracy and key performance indices that is never too far away. *Homo Artificium* indulges cinema: the most popular pastime selected from the list of 35 offered in Q13. Three quarters of the sample population had visited the cinema in the past twelve months, with the popularist, lighter genres well-liked. Five citations of 'war' and 'Westerns' preference, against the trend, were from males including HT5 who during his interview related to time spent in the armed services. Film noir, *avant-garde* stylish Hollywood crime drama emphasising cynical attitudes and sexual motivations, was the preserve of just two female lecturers.

R12, an ebullient and enthusiastic assessor in industrial cleaning, and R54 were perhaps typical of a small number identified from the quantitative data that evidenced a propensity for a film to intellectually challenge but then were to articulate contradictory 'likes' at interview. Interpreting `'first'` as 'favourite', R12 went on to recall in detail the plot and dramatic twists of *Bucket List* after expanding her range of preferences:

> [R12] "With movies I tend to go for movies which have more meaning to it. [...] I believe the fact that we

> nurture that child in us. I actually love cartoons. I *love* cartoons. I often watch cartoons for a day. I find that funny but I find that to be the inner child, I find it very relaxing. I go to all cartoons that I can watch. Movies I like where there's mystery involved and there is a meaning of life, for instance one of my first movies is the *Bucket List* with Jack Nicholson and Morgan Friedman."

Mathematician R29's affinity for high cultural capital film genres permeated into television viewing choices. Recalling a penchant for Stephen Fry's "*QI*", he enthused

> [R29] "Love it. Absolutely love it. Anything like that I love it. I recorded that Human Planet last night, I have not watched it yet, I have *SKY+* it, but anything that's going to tell me something I didn't know and I think it's going to be quite interesting. I love *QI*."

With manifestations of Bourdieu's scholastic disposition "skholè" (2000, p12) - the intellectual bias abstracting practice as ideas for contemplation rather than as problems for solution - surfacing in discussion, he found television as a source of material for his professional practice. Echoing R12's thirst for knowledge, R29 explains

> [R29]"I am a firm believer that everyday is a school day. You learn something new every day, without fail you come out and you will have gone home today knowing something you didn't know before, and then I will have passed that on."

Perhaps unsure of a kind of legitimacy offered by the omnivore discourse, ex-police officer R29 then talked about his ability to 'come down' culturally, and again, a propensity for the challenging:

> [R29] "I like named comedy which you don't have to think about. It's kind of just escapism; it's just chill out, put a funny film on and have a chuckle. But I do like the complex ones as well. I guess it's a mood thing, largely. If you asked me to put a film on I'd pick something that's quite, quite 'actiony' or quite funny. Occasionally I will watch something that is thought provoking. But it's mood talking - and the thrillers, the psychological ones, it must be the detective in me. I love the 'detectivy' psychological ones."

As one of the fifty percent who declared an aversion for "creepiness and the gruesome" he admitted:

> [R29] I don't like horrors, it's just scare factor but no story line, so I like the ones that have a bit of a story behind it."

There was evidence of ethnic culture tempering disclosure. After recounting her love of film R12 returned to qualify points of discussion, fore-grounding the influence her Caribbean upbringing had:

> [R12] "I was brought up by discipline and very [inaudible] by my Grandmamma, though she is very Caribbean culture - very, very disciplined [...]. My Grandmamma, would say "you carry yourself with respect but you don't ever let anybody into your personal life too much". Yes. So I try and be friendly and welcoming but I don't let them know anything about myself."

She described how she would suppress her private persona if she were to work collaboratively: "I have to get to know you before you get to know me." Probed as to whether this might be part of her background, she appeared to confirm:

> "Yes. Yes. My grandma said to me "never hang your dirty linen in public", mean to say that don't always let people know how you feel or what's going off. It's a cultural thing, it's very private - very. And sometimes it can be very suppressing because people think oh I'm being offish, I'm not being sociable."

4.5.8 Film genre and FE lecturers' class

The study's findings are compared to recent data linking film genre preference with class position (Bennett et al. 2009, p139) in Table 12. Skewed by the relatively poor fit of the two studies' genre categories and by no means conclusive, it is perhaps interesting to note FE lecturers' weak alignment to working class traits in the genres of comedy, musicals, horror and romance and similarities to Bennett et al.'s intermediate class partiality for Westerns and costume drama.

Table 12: Class position and film genre preference (column percentage); Bennett et al (2009, p139) and Baker (2012) compared.

	Bennett et al. (2009, p139)			Baker 2012
	Working class	*Intermediate class*	*Professional-executive class*	*FE lecturers*
Action, thrillers	28	27	27	10
Alternative arts	1	1	6	nc
Bollywood	1	0.4	1	0
Cartoons	1	1	0	nc
Comedy	17	15	17	20
Costume dramas	6	9	13	8
Crime	3	4	5	nc
Documentary	7	7	5	nc
Fantasy	0.4	2	3	nc
Film noir	0	0.2	1	1
Horror	6	4	3	6
Musicals	7	5	2	8
Other	2	2	1	nc
Romance	7	6	7	8
War	4	4	1	2
Westerns	6	2	3	1
n=	*710*	*449*	*361*	*71*

Notes:

1. 'nc' = no comparison possible (dissimilar categories surveyed)
2. Bennett et al.'s class totals are "less than sample totals for technical reasons concerning the construction of [their] three-class model" (2009, p139)

Leaving the subjective domain temporarily, Chapter Four now turns to present findings on cultural capital objectified in credentials.

4.5.9 Objectified cultural capital

From the list of seventeen objectified capitals presented in survey question Q12, three were significant in terms of possession and in perceived importance to practice: teaching qualifications, academic qualifications and, mainly long-past, vocational experience (Table 13). Culture experiences and cultural artefacts were, on the whole, less prominently deployed. Ex-police officer and gastronome R29 generalises the use of experience in classroom practice:

> [R29] "We talk about written communication; we talk about things like even right down to being down in court and things like that. The experiences that you have in giving them an example of what it's like gives them that picture sometimes, it gives a 'realness' to it that they wouldn't have."

The data returned from Q12 showed several surprising modalities, each at odds with current strategic thinking in Further Education. For example, the provision, monitoring and control of 'organised' continuous professional development, 'CPD', is now a prominent feature in college. Since 2008 lecturers have been required to log their annual CPD hours with the Institute for Learning, the 'IfL'. However, the responses illustrate their self-taught skills rank higher in practice. A third of the lecturers in the sample had qualifications in fields unrelated to their specialism, although 'skills-for-life' lecturer and biochemistry graduate R54 does not see the 'generalist lecturer' as an issue:

> [R54] "I think it could have been absolutely any degree at all and to get the job though I'm in now, I needed a degree and to do my PGCE, I needed a degree. I don't teach anything to do with my degree, but it's just that it's transferable skills that you learn in your degree, so that's the value to me in my job."

There are signs too of a trend that FE's vocational bias is being increasingly subsumed by the academic. Possibly indicating some resurgence in the establishment of a professional 'academic' ethos, possibly in part due to the conflation of FE and HE in colleges, the regard in which qualifications are held refutes Spenceley's conclusion that pedagogic qualifications are devalued as educational (and 'professional') cultural capital (Spenceley 2006). Furthermore, in a progressively market-led sector, increasingly encouraged to network with employers and more dependent on them for full-cost sponsorship, only weak sway was given to the currency of a practitioner's vocational experience. Fewer than 40% of practitioners had vocational experience within the last three years. Spenceley (2006, p290) finds that teacher knowledge in the sector is based on "personal knowledge [...] gained from skills and experience acquired in a previous occupation", yet findings here indicate that these credentials are possibly outdated. Important for all specialisms and disciplines, this currency-lag is more critical in the technologically-progressive ones, computer networking technologies for instance. The results showed only a modest valuation of linkages with industry and the membership of trade bodies and institutions. Practitioners remain unconvinced of the worth of apprenticeship schemes (ranked 17th and last, in "importance"), at least as far as progression into a teaching career is concerned, portend perhaps for a Government

initiative promoting their take-up as an alternative to going to university[55]. However, it is possible that this severely depressed ranking might have resulted from the sample's specialism profile as twelve lecturers in the sample were 'career academics'. The perceived importance of L3 literacy and numeracy was also depressed. Within the constraints of the study's limited generalisability, it may be conceivable that recent educational policy is, in Bourdieuian terms, misrecognising these undercurrents.

[55] For instance the *'Higher Apprenticeships Fund'*, announced 25 Jul 2011, a £25 million fund that will support up to 10,000 Advanced and Higher Apprenticeships. This expansion of apprenticeships up to degree equivalent in companies, particularly SMEs ['small/medium sized enterprises, less than 250 employees], is where there is unmet demand for the higher level skills that, according to BIS, are necessary to create additional jobs and growth. "This, it is hoped, will give firms in sectors such as advanced manufacturing, information technology and engineering the hi-tech skills they need to grow" (BIS 2011) http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2011/Jul/higher-apprenticeships-fund.

Table 13: Lecturers' objectified cultural capital: possessions and perceived importance for practice.

Objectified cultural capital credential	*f(pos)*	*%*	*Rank(pos)*	*Modal response (Likert 0-5)*	*Rank(imp)*	*Rank (pos) - Rank (imp)*
A teaching qualification	55	77.5	1	5	1	0
Formal academic qualifications	50	70.4	2	5	2	0
Relevant vocational experience	48	67.6	3	5	3	0
Formal vocational qualifications	45	63.4	4	5	6	-2
Related vocational experience	43	60.6	5	5	7	-2
Artefacts gathered over career	39	54.9	6	5	5	1
Self-taught skills	35	49.3	7	5	4	3
Vocational experience (< 3 yr.)	28	39.4	8	5	8	0
Teaching experience at other institutions (not FE colleges)	27	38.0	9	4	12	-3
Previous lecturing experience at other colleges	25	35.2	10	5	11	-1
Qualifications unrelated to specialism	25	35.2	10	3	16	-6
Employment with an industry 'leader' company	24	33.8	12	3	13	-1
A level standard English and mathematics	20	28.2	13	5	9	4
Professional links to 'centres of excellence'	19	26.8	14	5	10	4
Membership of a trade institution	16	22.5	15	3	15	0
A served apprenticeship	14	19.7	16	3	17	-1
Influence of family background	13	18.3	17	3	14	3

Notes:

1. Ranked in descending order of credential possession.
2. pos = possessed, imp = perceived importance.
3. Rank (possessed) - Rank (importance attached) [i.e. the final column] gives an indication of the mismatch to practice.

4.5.10 Qualifications and Credit Framework ('QCF') levels

The range and levels at which practitioners taught was weighted and used to compile an index proxying for the educational level of the lecturer based on the assumption that to teach at say L5, she would be qualified at least to L6 [56]. This index was used as a variable in multi-component analysis. Fewer than 20% of lecturers delivered across more than four QCF levels. Anomalously, one practitioner, a Riverford information

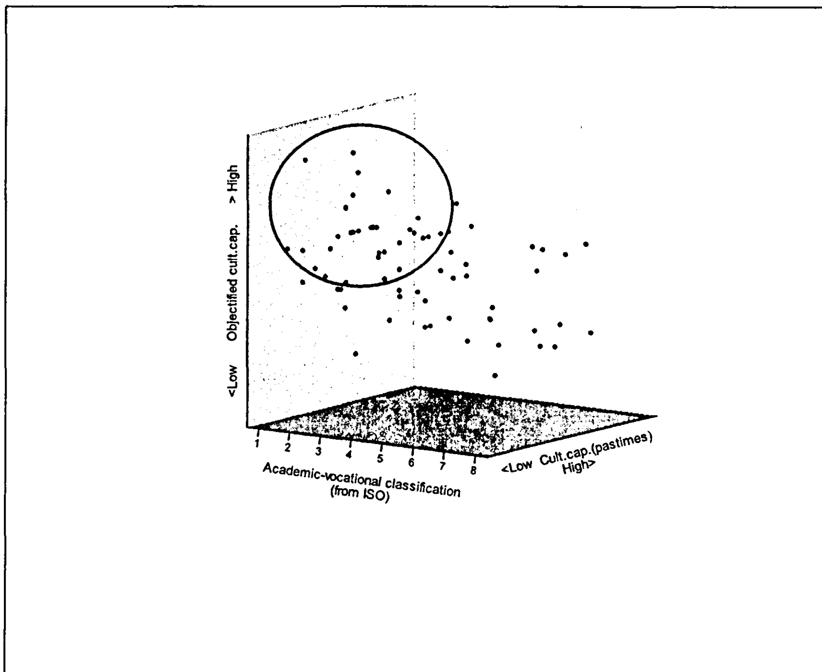
[56] The index was used in various multiple component analyses, but because of their relative insignificance to the main data, I present only a commentary.

services lecturer, taught on programmes at seven levels (from entry level to L6). The modal number of taught levels was three; predictably given colleges' 16-18 bias, mainly at levels one to three. Sixteen respondents delivered at a single QCF level, mainly at L3 ('A' level or equivalent).

4.6 Cultural capital, similarities and differences

International Standard Classification of Occupations categories (ISCO-88, Annexe Z) were superimposed on the case data to operationalise a variable for 'curriculum area'. In this schema plumbing lecturers, for instance, coded '4' and law tutors '1'. A 3D plot was produced of respondents' ISCO-88 codings against pastimes engaged and a weighted index for objectified cultural capital (Plot 4). Although diffuse, it appeared to show slightly higher objectified capital held by the higher status groups (circled). Interestingly these cases exhibited greater popularist pastime engagement.

Plot 4: 3D plot of ISCO classification, coded from vocational background (X-axis) against 'pastimes' cultural capital (Y-axis) against objectified cultural capital possessed (Z-axis).



Greater contrasts emerged from the qualitative data and it is to this the discussion now turns introduced by engineering lecturer R8's phrases "wooden-tops" and "spiky

profiles". In the first interview of the series in January 2011, R8 would use these terms to describe, pejoratively, "professional" colleagues who, to him were "wooden and mechanical" and the disparity of the profiles of practitioner's economic capital resulting from their previous careers before they entered FE.

4.6.1 "Wooden-tops and spiky profiles"

The surge in public sector professions, education, social work, housing and health care, in the 1950s and again in the 1990s associated with increased credentialism through paper qualifications and the expansion of HE burgeoned the middle class. FE lecturers are now an accepted part of this class which now accounts for nearly a third of the UK workforce. The middle-class retains an extremely diverse composition and the findings echo some fractionation within it.

It is important first to contextualise the three colleges sampled within their industrial demography. Coal mining and textile manufacture were the main employers of male and female labour in Riverford, Hillstown and Valedown until the 1980s. Classic cultural studies accounts of such working class communities[57], of Yorkshire coal-mining (Denis, Henriques and Slaughter, 1956) and of Hunslet, Leeds (Hoggart, 1958), emphasised the bond and cooperation in residential communities, and solidarity and camaraderie at work. R8, coincidentally the only interviewee to cite the importance of his family background to his practice, evidenced his working-class attributes at interview. Having made a successful transition from manufacturing industry to lecturing, and now a consistent "grade one teacher" he regretted the demise of his vocational trade (textile machine engineering) and the camaraderie and economic equivalence that went with it. Having resonance with parameters for successful collaborative practice in FE, he lamented the passing of belongingness, togetherness, communal identity, collective dignity and equivalence at Textile Machine Co.:

> [R8] "[...]we all came from the local estates, we all came from Riverford, we were all within walking distance almost, so we all came from a similar type of house, a similar type of income that the parents had - so we were all very similar. So, whereas in FE for

[57] Riverford, Hillstown and Valedown all classify as high areas of multiple deprivation according to the geographical mapping at The English Indices of Deprivation 2010, http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/pdf/1870718.pdf.

> example Mr. X he used to run his own business and now he rents three properties out, he's got his own big house he drives a 4x4 then you've got Mr. Y who's got a mortgage on his first house because he comes from a mining background, he drives a little Fiat Punto. In assets, assets-wise he's probably worth half a million, three quarters of a million, [gesticulating progressively to different parts of the desk in front of him] *he's* [gesticulating to 'Mr.Y''s part of the desk] probably worth £100,000."

Citing FE's "spiky profiles" of FE lecturers' backgrounds, he widens his argument out to embrace more than the lecturing role emphasising salary differentials between lecturing staff, their management counterparts and technicians:

> [R8] At Textile Machine Co. we all lived in a semi-detached house or a terraced house, we all earned within fifty quid of each other, whereas in FE you can have a technician on £12,000, you can have a Head of School on £50,000. There ain't no similarity there. So there's big gaps, very much - I call it, a 'spiky profile'. When I worked at Textile Machine Co. it wasn't a spiky profile; it was very 'linear'."

Evidence of symbolic violence becomes apparent as he 'misrecognises' the role of education, his credentials, and his outstanding 'grade 1' lecturer status. Paying homage to others who had 'succeeded' whilst irrationally assuming he had not, R8 tendered a crisis of self-confidence in coming to terms with his new role:

> [R8] "You might find this hard to accept but I don't consider myself good enough to be a teacher. I,I think that teachers are people that come from good families that do A levels and go to university and they are like middle class if you like, that is how I see a *proper* teacher."

In a data-rich interview R8, an accomplished mountaineer and classical guitarist, interpreted how one's past can become inscribed onto the body, Bourdieu's 'hexis corporeal', and into the lecturer's dress and deportment, posture, stance, gait and so forth, presenting a high-capital differentiator (Bourdieu 1985). He reasons that FE is infiltrated by people who "aren't proper teachers", and self-deprecatingly, as we see above, includes himself. Legitimacy though, delimited by this bodily hexis, confers undesirable "wooden" qualities on the more 'professional' practitioner:

> [R8] "One of them stands with his shoulders up. He has always got a tie that's immaculately tied. He never comes to work without a shave; the other bloke is not so fussed with his appearance, he's more interested in values and things like that. The other bloke is

> professional to the hilt, I'd say wooden and mechanical."

R8 refutes personal adoption of these attributes of legitimate bodily hexis instead choosing to empathise with what he perceives to be the lower status of his engineering students:

> [R8] "You look around college and there are people that look like your schoolteacher did they are always immaculate. They've always got a tie on and they always walk with their chest out and their shoulders back and they look like you imagine a teacher to look like […] and I don't feel like that - but what I have got, and I'll argue it with anybody, is that I can connect with kids, probably because I'm not that middle class and professional and I've still got that touch of my roots […]".

R8 would frequently attempt to explain differences between colleagues through a form of 'anthropolitisation' using terms "like Arthur Scargill" and "Margaret Thatcher". Suggesting spiky profiles lead to conflict and little collaboration in his department, he asserts:

> [R8] "And you can tell it straight away in their personalities and they don't get on at all. You know, the times we have had to have them both in, me and the Curriculum Manager because it's almost come to blows or bullying, they have a go at each other very much."

HE criminology lecturer R43 encapsulated differences analogous to R8's 'spiky profiles' anthropomorphically in *Nouveau Academicus*, a neologism he invented to describe his FE vocational lecturer colleagues. Invited to match lecturers to items of furniture in a 'parlour game of associations' he defended his reasoning for his mapping in the debrief:

> [R43] "OK, so, we will start at the top [of the data collection instrument, Appendix H]...the wardrobe, most people who live in houses have got wardrobes and I see a bricklayer as being… bricklaying lecturers being pretty ordinary, pretty ordinary chaps, nothing too special in the house… wardrobe, table that kind of stuff, that's why I put them in there. Four poster bed, ah, strange! The hairdressing lecturer is always a woman, a middle aged woman who is fairly salacious so I chose a four poster bed. She has a little bit of class if you know what I mean and she likes the bedroom."

When asked how he would define the 'class' of the hairdressing lecturer he advanced the notion of cultural capital (the only interviewee to do so), linking to it:

> [R43] "I'm talking about the things she consumes, her ability to be able pick out things like aesthetics, shall we say - ability to pick out wall paper, colours, art work, furniture, those kinds of things."

He was to identify capital divisions citing both the cultural and the academic. Sports and fitness lecturers and travel and tourism lecturers lacked both forms[58]:

> [R43] "Farm house table: I always see as being rustic and wholesome, something to be associated with teachers, but in my head it's a female middle class teacher who comes from a wholesome background and she is quite idealistic - in my head she still lives at home with her parents and that's the table that they have at home. The IKEA desk is this kind of nouveaux-riche thing and I kind of see the sports and fitness lecturers being *nouveaux-academic* to coin a phrase, you know, not a traditional academic subject but in their furniture to match, 'drinking holes' to match no real academic capital or - I sound like a bastard - or cultural capital. The Louis XVI chair: has to be the mathematics lecturer without a doubt."
>
> [Researcher] Why?
>
> [R43] "Because I can just imagine them there on a chair. It was just putting images together, I don't know why: stuffy, boring, bookish had the chair. IT teacher - leather chez-longue. Again just those two went together for me, and a pine self assembly bookcase: bland, run of the mill, same again for travel and tourism lecturer, again kind of a *nouveaux-riche* thing, happy with a pine self assembly bookcase, fairly practical and pragmatic and dull stuff."

R43's disparaging comments seem to resurrect aspects, forty years on, of Tipton's 1973 research identifying tensions of an academic schism within college, with graduate pitched against non-graduate, and fractionation of those with theory pitched against those lecturers with industrial experience (Tipton 1973). This time the fractionation appears linked to cultural disposition.

[58] His Riverford School comprised wide-ranging disciplines of Public Services and Law, Catering and Hospitality, Travel and Tourism, and Sport and Fitness. He shared a staff room with these colleagues.

Figure 4

Species: *Nouveau Academic*
(cultural paucivore)

My interpretation of R43's sports tutor, Feb., 2011

Caricaturist: Suzanne Burnham 2011
Image © Robert Baker 2011

4.6.2 Processes of the field: R29's and R54's "machine"

An analysis of capital cannot ignore its conceptual inter-relationships with the field, and it is to field-analysis that I now turn, its rationale supported by Bourdieu's declaration of the "ontological complicity" of capital and field inextricably linked through the habitus (Bourdieu 1982, p47 in Grenfell 2008, p52).

The data suggest the existence of overlapping and interacting Bourdieuian fields. At least three can be identified: the field of FE, the field of HE within FE (delineated by R21 as "[HE in FE] practitioners being not bent on 'survival' "). Subsuming both is the field of power. These three exist within a fourth, what Bourdieu defines as the field of intellectual workers (Webb 2002).

The field of FE is a composite and is complex and heterogeneous: its heterogeneity defined by autonomous and heteronymous poles (Bourdieu 1988). This field's autonomous pole encloses the philanthropy and altruism of the professional educator, described by R21 and R29, and her recognition of the centrality of the interests of the learner. The field's heteronymous pole is bound up with economic and political

imperatives, characterised by the discourse of managerialism "set in a context of fiscal crisis and the rewriting of state professionalism" (Avis 1999, p246), and exemplified by the commoditisation of its product, credentialism, pseudo-marketisation and business imperatives - all bringing with them the controlling aspects of performativity (Randell and Brady 1997, Hannagan et al. 2007). Effects of this polar bifurcation can be seen in the micro-level data, in particular R29's data. R29, an "idealist educator" appears as one of the cognoscenti (i.e. those who "get it", that is one who knows the 'rules-of-the-game'), advancing, first, the purity of education for education's sake:

> [R29] "I'd like the learners to have that thirst for knowledge and I would like to be able to be given the time to give some knowledge […] rather than churn them through the machine."

Aligning himself clearly to the field's autonomous pole of educational altruism, he distances himself from colleagues in "one side of the school", a group of orthodox, unswerving, risk-averse colleagues labelling them "part-of-the-machine"; tutors who were past students at college and who, according to R29, are

> [R29] "[…] not happy to be, but they are part of the 'machine'. I always feel like they are there to churn things through."

This recognition of the field's heteronymous pole figuratively as "the machine" was conflated in a practical sense with his retail management experience making it easier to identify similarities in the FE field with those in his past profit-centred retail field:

> "I appreciate where we are coming from and I expect targets and overheads to be met and things like that."

To capture the structural interrelationships of the fields, I decided to construct a 'field diagram' (Figure 5) along the lines of a 'rich picture' borrowed from System Theory's soft systems methodology ('SSM'). SSM provides a framework to deal with the kind of messy situations that lack a formal problem definition (Wilson 1980, Checkland 1981, 2000, Ackoff 1981). The 'rich picture' is an attempt to show the content, structure and inter-relationships within the situation. In it the field of FE ('fFE') overlaps the field of HE in FE ('fHE'). R29's and R43's accounts indicate that the fields share a coincident axial point, their autonomous poles synonymous with the purity of knowledge-for-knowledge's sake. Lecturers' perceptions of the field of power however are markedly different. Described as structured, legitimate and hierarchical, in R8's eyes, it is:

> [R8] "Very much a tiered system that's quite rigid experience […] adhered to 90% of the time."

A more polemical slant was described by R54, an ICT tutor, who noticed a recent shift in the seat of power:

> [R54] "Four years ago I would have said up there in the ivory towers, but I think the kids are getting more and more aware now that actually it's *them* … that they are the ones with the power.
>
> They [the students] know about the data for retention and achievement and, you know, it doesn't matter one bit to them and they know that you know, they can more or less do whatever and we will want to keep them on the course because of these retention figures. I don't think tutors have any power at all, really."

The antagonism between polar-opposites of the field, followers of "the machine" and the knowledge-altruists, is reiterated by R43, again with links to capital[59]. During the debrief from another 'associations game' (Bourdieu 1984a, Annexe H), this time matching board and card games to stereotypical lecturers, he reflected:

> "So Monopoly was the easiest game and I associated, thinking about it, with sports and fitness lecturers being male and probably out of all of them possessing the least academic ability."

Advancing further dislocations between FE and HE cultures, R43 continues:

> "My experience with FE lecturers as we talk here, they talk about things like sex and get drunk and I find it boring, juvenile, I feel like it's a waste of my life.. I don't want these conversations at all. Not here."

Here the mundane appears in collision with R43's legitimate capital leading to nihilism in the fact that the breadth and depth of cultural capital cannot find a domain in which they can be deployed effectively. In the absence of cultural capital exchange as currency, R43 admitted to deploying a form of academic-capital, in this case HE subject knowledge, to challenge the authority and legitimacy of management. It was deployed as a form of 'academic intimidation':

> [R43] "I told my Head of School about publications that are about to go in 'Higher Education Quarterly' [long pause] .. not interested. We were talking about research methods and the way my views been neutralised.
>
> 'Can you speak in English please?'
>
> 'But I'm only talking about validity and reliability!'

[59] It is perhaps interesting to note that R43 was the only interviewee to use the term "cultural capital" in the entire series of interviews.

I am happy to explain those things and this is over statistics, college retention, college attendance, student satisfaction."

He recounts:
[R43] "We are sat in a meeting, and I said, 'You know, none of these things are valid or reliable, and which begs the question why the hell are we using them?'

And then you get 'In English please!' You know, I find that quite frustrating. I think somebody in a high academic position, Head of School, should be familiar with those terms."

A way to understand R43's frustration at this neutralisation of his capital, both academic and cultural, is advanced in the following part.

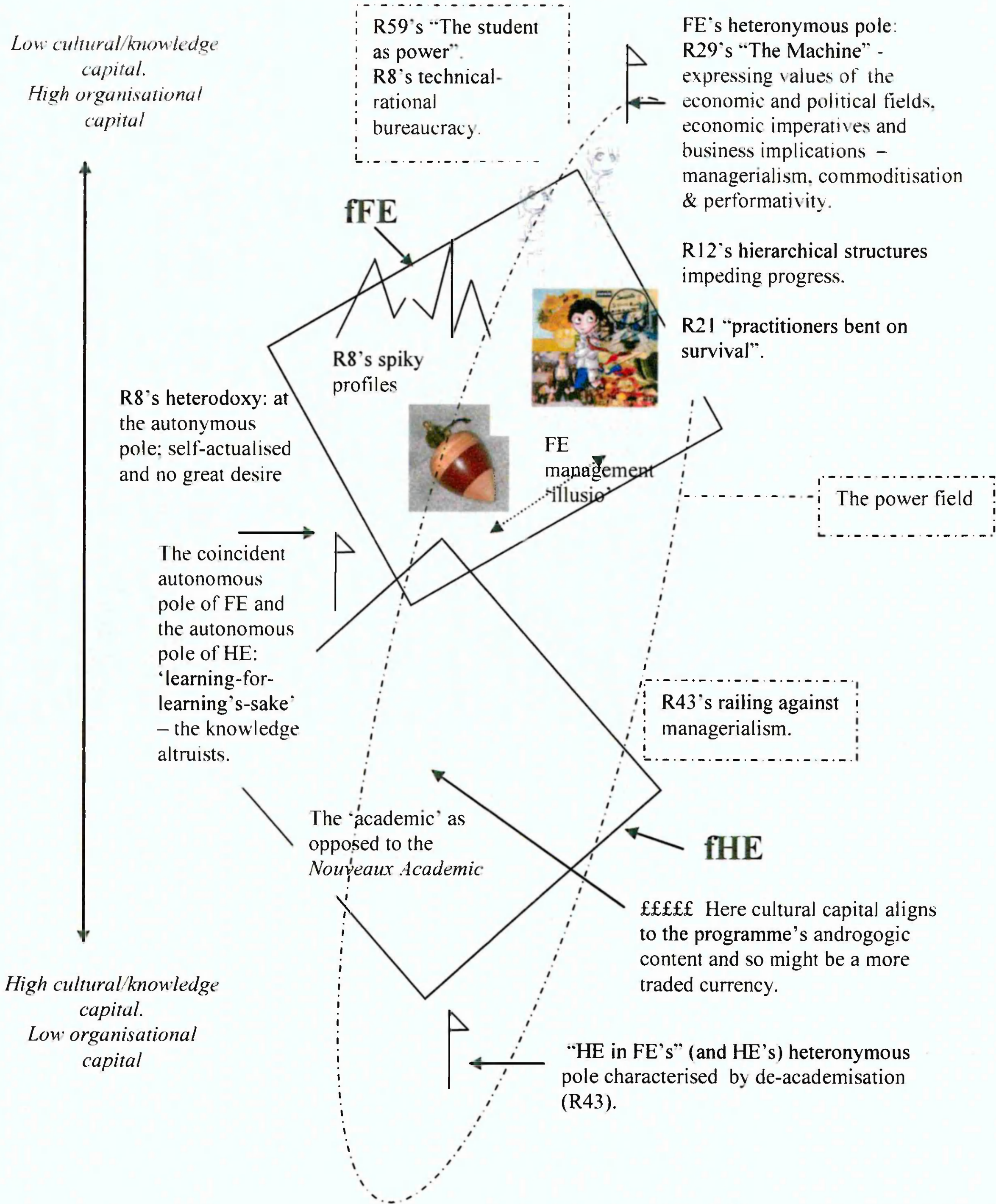


Figure 5: Field diagram: the superimposition of the (1)'FE', (2)'HE in FE' and (3) the 'power' fields (after Checkland 1981).

4.7 The 'valuelessness' of cultural capital at the level of the lecturer

Apart from R8's identification of colleagues' bodily hexis there was little other evidence for the currency of cultural capital being overtly exchanged for status. Where lecturers possessed highbrow cultural capital, for example R21's affinity for highbrow music genres, R43's esoteric construction of knowledge for 'knowledge's sake' and V2's appreciation of high opera, the study found it suppressed in professional practice and not exchanged for personal interest. There was evidence for such capital being eroded by the more mundane conditions of operating in an FE field whose heteronymous pole is influenced by increased managerialist pressures. Lecturers, immersed in a field preoccupied with the markers of key performance indicators of retention, success and achievement, as we have seen, report forces that turn them against their inclination. It appears that the reluctant participant becomes subsumed by the field coming to feel "like a fish in water" (Bourdieu 1992, p127) - but a fish in water at the field's *heteronymous* pole.

Indeed there was evidence that capital, and hence positioning in the FE field, appeared to materialise from cultural containment: behaviour remaining congruent with Bourdieu's premise that there is no such thing as an agent's disinterested act. R29 was a case of a lecturer with certain highbrow affinities who discerned the relative effectiveness of its deployment at work and in his personal life, like R39 did. Offering the recollections of his hosting gastronomic parties with a small number of similarly minded neighbours of equivalent economic and professional status and shunning the popularist label "*Come dine with me*"[60] he enthused in recollecting his social circle's exotic travel exploits. Here though there appeared no 'disinterestedness': the disconnection between economic and social interest and one of the markers of heterodoxy (Bourdieu 1977a). But, in his words, "in the face of 'the machine'", he came to recognise cultural assets valueless in professional practice. Instead he saw class objectivism as a factor in determining his out-of-college behaviour and providing a necessary outlet for cultural capital exchange:

> [R29]"I think I am quite spoilt in the lifestyle my wife has led because she was a nanny to the landed gentry - so quite well to do. We have experienced how

[60] A popularist TV competition where 'guests' from a wide range of backgrounds, interests and social status visit each other's houses to be entertained at dinner parties and vote on each other's hospitality.

> the other half live but also my wife is an excellent cook as well."

Perhaps unsure of the contemporary legitimacy of wide-ranging tastes and vacillating between omnivorousness and the shunning of some aspects of popular taste, the pub and the take-away and in some ways reminiscent of Bryson's findings (*ibid.*), R29 continued:

> [R29] "If we travel we are quite open to try new things. So you would never, ever, find us going abroad and looking for the nearest pizza shop or whatever, we would be trying their cuisines and we love that so we are both fine diners really. Not to say that we don't enjoy the odd take away! […]"

Two other forms of capital stock appeared to fill the vacuum left by the valuelessness of the cultural variety. These were to emerge as a system of organisational capital linked to FE experience and the capital asset of subject knowledge. The pair was discussed by several participants as being converted into professional kudos in the hope of increased job security[61]. Asked what might constitute capital in the sector, HE tutor R21 in promoting experience and tenacity was typical:

> [R21] "[…] you get your capital within this sector by the fact that you have been doing something for a certain period of time and it is not necessarily based on how well qualified or how good you are at it […] It's not as much based on traditional academic ability, but rather the ability to get through the day in a lot of senses."

Aeronautical engineer V2, involved in many collaborative initiatives during his first career with a prestigious helicopter manufacturer, related his transition to FE as a "culture shock", finding new colleagues protective of their investments:

> [V2] "So you say 'Oh let's share knowledge…'
> But hold on a minute…" 'We don't do that in here!' "

admitting he struggled with

> [V2] "[…] certain little cliques around that are knowledge driven. They get this knowledge and they think "oh if I keep this bit of knowledge to myself no one else can pinch it and I've got my place secure at this college because no one else can teach it."

[61] Following Claude Barbier's comparative analysis of 'precarious employment' in Europe (Barbier 2004), Bourdieu built on the notion of 'précarité' in his writings for *Contre Feux* seeing it as "a new mode of domination in public life […] based on the creation of a generalised and permanent state of insecurity aimed at forcing workers into submission" (Bourdieu 1998, p95-9).

These cliques forced a non-collaborative stance for a personal interest in job security. A manifestation of hysteresis appears, a lengthy time-lag in accepting and accommodating threats from "newness", as V2 continues:

> [V2] "You will find they are - it's mainly 'old school' - that I've got this and I need my knowledge to keep my job safe, I don't really want to share it. Teachers that have been there ten, fifteen years. Ones from … they're from the old school type."

A deeper inspection of the interplay between cultural and organisational capitals shows why the cultural form appears recessive. Contained within the habitus, cultural capital although malleable, has permanence, and its constituent entities have certain longevity[62]. However its asset value as status positioning the agent in a particular field has to be *established* rather than assumed. Organisational capital, that is knowledge enhancing the ability of an individual or organisation to mobilize and sustain the process of change, on the other hand is tangible and readily deployable when called on to inform or implement strategy. Enshrined in technical bureaucracy it is the orthodox method called on to steer the college's future direction. Therefore, in order for cultural capital assets to become additional axes of exploitation in the organisation, those with these resources may first have to acquire necessary organisational assets to allow them to exploit others, a point Savage recognises (1992, p17). Accumulation of further organisational assets, for instance those associated with a college senior management post, that of vice-principal say, normally follows from the successful deployment of such organisational capital during the post-holder's career. Yet what constitutes this form of capital can change a good deal on a much shorter timescale, its value determined at any instant by its currency and applicability with regard to contingent environmental, political and social forces shaping the college's operating environment. Acting as a device allowing managers to control the labour of subordinates there was evidence in the study of manoeuvrings of this capital

In explaining the paucity of highbrow capital deployment, two additional points seem relevant. First, lecturers are not in the strategically influential management positions where cultural capital *can be* exploited, a factor that may partially explain its recessive

[62] Here, one has only to look at the longevity of legitimate capital: an appreciation of J.S. Bach's music (rated highest genre by six respondents), for instance, has endured over 250 years.

nature relative to the acquisition of organisational capital, capital that may allow them to reach those exploitative positions. Second, this may go some way to explain the cleavage line between FE lecturers and their counterparts delivering HE in FE by marking a threshold beyond which cultural capital's value in education becomes significant when the very nature of cultural capital is aligned closely to the pedagogic content, for instance when the lecturer's appreciation of fine art is deployed to complement and substantiate lesson content. These instances are more likely to occur in undergraduate work which, by definition, needs to incorporate critical analysis, critical evaluation and the requirement for a certain 'disinterestedness'. The fact that cultural capital is personally suppressed and recessive may be construed as Bourdieuian symbolic violence exerted by pressures from the field's heteronymous pole. The findings this far suggest that it might be interesting to replicate the study in two alternate forms: the first studying college senior and middle managers who are in those strategic positions to be able to benefit from deployment of the asset, and second repeating the work solely with HE in FE practitioners - points I develop in Chapter Six's section *Opportunities for further progress.*

Given that cultural capital is, in many cases, a relatively valueless asset incapable of being traded for status in FE practice and that differences in its possession are not well differentiated, Chapter Five now turns to examine the implications of this finding in relation to collaborative practice (RQ3 and RQ4).

Chapter Five

A FENCE OR A BRIDGE? THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CULTURAL CAPITAL PATTERN FOR COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE (RQ3 & RQ4)

5.1 Chapter structure

Having established omnivorousness and the recessive nature of cultural capital in the sample, Chapter Five addresses the final two research questions, RQ3 and RQ4. The chapter starts by setting out the research's findings relative to collaborative practice and establishes the enthusiasm of lecturers to join communities. It continues by examining the four conjugal fields within the FE context attempting to extract the impediments to greater collaboration. Informed by the findings in relation to RQ1 and RQ2 a short, but essential, theoretic diversion is then taken to discuss the principle that types and magnitudes of cultural capital, especially those of the omnivore, are significant factors in community coalescence. With this analysis complete, the discussion takes the stance that practitioners within the sample case at least, through the omnivore's more accommodating posture, are well placed to engage a greater number of socially networked 'weak ties' (Granovetter 1973) and thus facilitate increased possibilities for collaboration. Teasing out several other emergent themes in the data it examines the significance of these too for collaborative practice. The ground prepared, the chapter concludes by recommending mechanisms to stimulate increased collaborative practice. *"Fag-sheds, water coolers and tipping points: catalysing increased collaboration"* concentrates on RQ4. Drawing on sociometry research to give the issue theoretical and empirical purchase, in particular Granovetter (1973), Chwe (1999), and Lin (2001), I argue that colleges should consider, wherever possible, enlarging staffrooms and

providing additional cost-efficient informal social network spaces organised around the optimum 'Dunbar numbers'.

5.2 Attitudes to collaboration

Fewer than one in ten respondents disagreed with the statement that cross college working solves problems, and even fewer, about one in twenty, disagreed with the idea that it allows more innovative problem solving (Annexe T). When asked whether collaborative working would become increasingly important in the light of impending public sector funding cuts, nearly four-fifths agreed. There appeared to be strong agreement too that informal collaboration facilitated a greater chance of resolving problems. Previous cross-college working initiatives had solved problems deemed personally important (42.0% agreed or strongly agreed). Although 40.6% of respondents reported membership of at least one cross-college group, the modal number of group memberships was one. An outlier in the data HT5, a Hillstown College sports tutor, reported membership of six, a response that was to select him as part of the purposive sample to interview. When the detail of collaboration, however, was probed at interview some 'groups' would turn out to be teaching teams: R54's "Functional Skills team", R21's "HE team", R12's "Care team" and so on. Some lecturers belonged to several because they delivered across several schools and considered themselves part of more than one teaching team. Encouragingly though, nearly one-third of respondents 'relished' the thought of joining a group given the opportunity. A subset of the sample surveyed, twelve lecturers, currently not members of a group, reported that they would be eager to join one. Clearly there is a lack of rigour in scaling-up these proportions to infer enterprise-wide the number of potential collaborators. Neither is there a guarantee that 'eager' responses would automatically turn into 'eager collaborators'. Yet despite these strong survey responses evidencing a desire to work together there are several obstructions in the way. First, 58.8% said that they had "little time to work collaboratively". Second, and pointing up the insularity of their practice, 84.1% suggested that there were colleagues from some specialist areas that they never met. R12 confirms this latter point:

> [R12] "I've not had any conversation or sharing good practice with anybody from the care team for instance, never. […] I think if we came together and just shared one day good practice together I think that would be very useful - to see how the other person works."

It was interesting that R12 declined to answer any of Q10's series of questions about cross-collage working (one of only three participants to do so). Mindful of Silva's (2006) ESRC research findings of incoherence between information provided by the same person in a survey questionnaire and a semi-structured interview, I decided to pursue this theme with R12 at interview. R12 explains a sense of belonging to a subject specialism appears to bind team relationships at the expense of interfacing with other practitioners:

> [R12] "The only time we see anything of our colleagues is at the School of Learning meeting. Everyone sits in their own little groups. You don't mix around, we all sit in our groups, so, the Riverford care [the Health and Social Care Team] will come in first and sit at their table or tables and we all share the back of the actual classroom so we don't integrate."

Given R12's data it appears that there is some kind of 'introduction' threshold to overcome, since paradoxically, feelings of personal 'ease' with co-collaborators from the same and different curriculum areas were explicit and positive. More than 80% disagreed with a statement that they would feel uneasy when working with colleagues from their own curriculum area. Asked their feelings to working with other curriculum areas the implied sense of unfamiliarity depressed the result only marginally (71.0%).

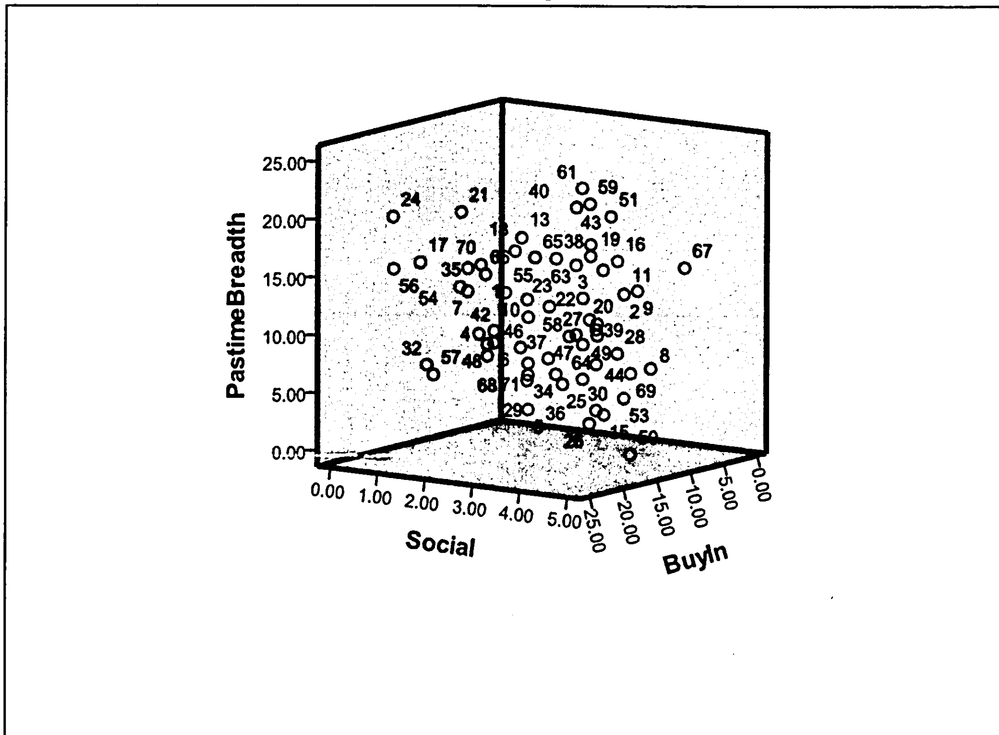
Counterproductively in R12's case and possibly tainting attitudes in the medium-term, a Riverford management initiative aimed at coalescence had ended in failure, as R12, an otherwise enthusiastic collaborator, recalled

> [R12] "I know that they've tried doing a day out together, the 'team day', but you still end up being in your own familiar territory really. I know we have tried to do a day out on the river [name redacted] with boats and be together. They tried to do a treasure hunt - but you still end up with your team. I just think the way forward would be moving in with and being in the same building together."

Possible relationships between intensity of out-of-hours socialising with colleagues, the range of pastimes engaged - a crude measure of omnivorousness – and a measure of lecturers' buy-in were modelled but these appeared diffuse with no significant lines of cleavage (Plot 5).

Plot 5: 3D plot of number of different pastimes engaged in over the past 12 months (Z-axis) v. inclination to socialise with colleagues (X-axis, Likert scale responses) v. attitude to collaborative working (Y-axis, Likert scale responses)

3D plot: breadth of pastimes engaged, social activities, buy-in to collaborative working



For some practitioners the imperative to collaborate remains ingrained from past careers. R29's spent his first career in retail management with a large supermarket chain. He elaborates on commercial pressures for collaboration, and with it, sanctions for non-compliance. With it there are indications of a strategy:

> [R29] "After training, no longer would you meet someone in the aisle, and God help them if you did and said, 'Phhh, not my job. I don't know'.
>
> It was now: 'I've not been on there for a while, but I know someone who can help', or 'I can do this', or 'I know someone who can do this', or 'I can do this because I'm trained in it'.
>
> So this collaboration was there and as a management team we met sort of every day and we met on the shop floor."

Similarly, V2 points up contrasting aspects of collaboration between that he finds in FE and that in his previous engineering career. When confronted with new technology he relied on his RAF colleagues who would become involved:

> [V2] "You'd go over and they'd give up half an hour, an hour of their time, get the manuals out for you, give you copies of them, talk to you, highlight the pertinent points that you need to know and... 'yes, that's great, that's what I need to know to update my training programme'."

but was stymied when he made the transition to lecturing. Relating this in a military-style dialogue (he was an RAF engineering officer), he acted out:

> [V2] "You come into FE...
>
> 'Right. Now then V2 - you're going to teach this subject!'
>
> 'Where's the lesson plans?'
>
> 'Oh, you'll have to make them up!'
>
> 'But, but... I've got no idea...'
>
> 'Yea, no, off you go, you're teaching that tomorrow morning. Carry on!' "

The data painted the world of FE as an insular and isolating place, separated by the physical and also by the organisational: through inter-school competition and rivalries, and colonisation of the academy, the result of strategies pressing for increasing performativity. The physical insularity of the large college environment was mentioned by R29: "big place this and you are very segregated". A cross-college manager in the recent past before choosing to return to a lecturing post, R29 had seen it from the 'other side':

> [R29]"So I know people and because I know people, its good. I've got colleagues that have been within the one school of learning all the time, they will be in the canteen and you say, 'Hey up, so and so, are you alright?' [But others] they don't know them because they are very insular."

Conditioned by inter-departmental rivalries eroding the sense of a 'whole-college identity', reminiscent of those found some years earlier by Green and Lucas (1999) instances would emerge where the practitioner is protectionist rather than associate.

Mitigating the enthusiasm to collaborate was the lack of reciprocity of some lecturers in sharing teaching materials:

> [R54] "When you think about it, I mean I don't mind sharing with anyone really, but it really goes against grain when I'm asked to share something that I know is good with someone that I know couldn't give a toss, or doesn't work hard at their own stuff. You know, and that if that person asks me, I'm a soft touch. So I'd say yes, but it would niggle a bit when people are not prepared to put the work in themselves."

The nature of the disparate disciplines within FE, too, appeared to be another obstacle. Engineering lecturer R8, holding very positive personal views on the benefits of collaborative problem solving, is stymied by the issues of the specificity of his department's problems:

> [R8] "Everything we do is a million miles away from say what they do in Hair and Beauty."

Emphasising his personal and the Engineering Department's pragmatism over "philosophy" and with it more resonance of symbolic violence inflicted by his 'more educated' peers he added:

> [R8] "I think we look at things very simplistically and logically whereas I think the more educated counterparts look at it a bit more philosophically if that makes sense. And I just find, I can honestly say this, that every problem I have ever had I've never had anything of any use from anybody other than myself or my own team.
>
> I find it's a lot easier to solve it yourself. Yeah. Nobody's ever given me anything from another department where I've thought 'that's made my job a lot easier'. Everything that I've got that I cherish, is what *I've* done."

The FE field and within it the college's multi-layered hierarchical organisation installs yet another obstacle. R12, the industrial cleaning NVQ assessor, struggled with the constraints of the seemingly labyrinthine structure and her position within it:

> [R12] "Well the barrier I find is that we are very much into hierarchy structures. You can't like go and see somebody because you may step on that person's toe. Everything is very, to mind it's, yes, for instance I am coordinator but I can't just … because I am not a

> PAL[64] , although I have the ability to do it, I can't because I'm not labelled as a PAL, so I find that the hierarchy system is what the barrier is."

Exemplifying the frustrations of the practitioner disempowered, R12 cites organisational inhibitors to progress on an assessment workbook she had been developing over three years:

> "If you say you have a suggestion or idea and you put it to the PAL, [...] that PAL would have to seek authorisation from the CM[65] and then marketing - approved by marketing to be published and that, anyway it end up being on my memory stick for many years, I'd forgotten about it! So you have this 'backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards'. [...] So really you are not given the initiative or the confidence to do something."

The constraints to R12's innovation ideal, the codified structures laid down in organisation structure diagrams, may well be an instantiation of Bourdieu's "illusio". When Bourdieu draws the analogy between social fields and 'games' (1984a, 1986) he is aware of a mindset that accepts the limitations and possibilities that set up the competition in the 'game'. Whilst playing the game, Bourdieu says, we forget the status of playing, when really the *'enjeu'*, the agreement in the field of what is worth fighting for - innovative practice - is missed. This is significant in that, masked by this illusio, and the symbolic violence metered out in the acceptance of the organisation's bureaucratic form *per se*, progress, in this case the development of R12's innovative learning and teaching materials, is stifled. If these obstacles can be attenuated, given the enthusiasm of the practitioner to collaborate, there are signs that augur well for collaborative practice.

With the basic premises of, on the one hand, the will to collaborate, and on the other the obstacles that stand in its way established, the thesis now takes a short but essential theoretical diversion to contextualise these in relation to cultural capital and to omnivorousness in particular.

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[64] 'Programme Area Leader' who, at Riverford College, has responsibility for the pedagogy but has no authority over staff. The PAL reports to the Curriculum Manager (CM).
[65] 'Curriculum Manager'.

5.3 The fence is the machine - the bridge, the omnivore: a theoretical diversion

Given the range of cultural taste omnivorousness implies, the lecturer appears, *ceteris paribus*, well-equipped to engage socially. By dint of its nature, and in contrast to material goods, all shades of cultural capital are invisible: a quality DiMaggio noticed that makes it a "portable and thus potent medium of interactional exchange" (DiMaggio 1987, p442-43). Indeed DiMaggio discusses at some length in the same work "the ways that people use culture to make connections with one another" (DiMaggio 1987, p442). To develop the argument starting out on a basic plane, Erickson and Schultz (1982) advance that when agents enter into conversation they are seeking to establish 'co-membership'. They identify the 'bridge' in this co-membership relation using a premise of homophily, that is the likelihood of a social tie existing increases with the cultural similarity in any given dyadic relation. Collins (1981) and Romo (1986) both note that the process of concreting Erickson and Schultz's co-membership is a negotiated ritual during which participants must find topics to which each partner can legitimately contribute. This, together with an identification of groups to which they both belong, reflects the level of necessary intimacy. The result is a positive feedback loop converging cultural similarities further as individuals exchange their stocks of cultural knowledge with one another thereby enhancing the bridge (Carley 1991, Mark 1998b, 2003). Cultural capital is thus translated into social connections. Social structures (the distribution of chances to interact across persons in the social system) and cultural structures (the distribution of cultural forms across persons) can be defined therefore in an interdependent manner. In these negotiated social rituals, the browness of taste is consequential: popular artistic taste, television, can provide "fodder for least-common-denominator talk". In contrast, conversations about more esoteric cultural forms, high opera or Renaissance art for example, "enable individuals to place one another and serve as rituals of greater intensity" (Collins 1979, p60-62). Fine (1983) concurs noting that conversations about scarce cultural goods bind partners who can reciprocate and identify as outsiders those who do not command the required codes. Furthermore artistic taste is identified as instrumental in the formation, and indeed the removal of inter-personal barriers: artistic tastes "are neutral, their uses are social; they can be used as *fences or bridges* [my italics]" (Douglas and Isherwood 1979, p12). Feld (1982) supports, proposing that popular culture and the arts provide foci of interaction. So

when the FE omnivore dips into popular cultural activities that action "provides the stuff of everyday sociability" (DiMaggio 1987, p444).

Precisely because popular culture has a broader distribution in social space, it tends to be associated with having connections that have a wider reach in that space - through so called 'weak-ties'. Whereas the consumption of more esoteric high brow culture forms, because of their relatively stronger correlation with social position, are more likely to sustain local connections that do not reach far in social space - the 'strong-ties' (Mark 1998a, McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook 2001). Taste manifested through forms of cultural disposition thus forms an integral part of the ritual identification and a means of constructing social relations helping to establish networks of trusting relations that facilitate group mobilisation (Collins 1975, DiMaggio and Mohr 1985). Clearly then, these notions elevate the importance of cultural affinities in the catalysis and coalescence of communities of practice.

5.4 At last! A semblance of a community

Given the paucity of communities of practice in Riverford and at the other colleges where I had worked and the obstacles to their formation identified from the data, my spirits rose towards the end of the interview series in late February 2011. As we have seen the data had indicated, paradoxically, lecturers' latent intentions to collaborate. I was encouraged further when I discovered the existence of the semblance of a community, membership of which was not linked to cultural capital but to... nicotine.

Biochemist R54 revealed how being a smoker paid dividends in garnering information:

> "[...]and this is how I came to be talking to a Head of School, who I didn't know was the Head of School because that's how it is in the fag shed. Everyone talks to everyone. I might talk to a Head of School about what's happening. You know, there really is no hierarchy in the shed.
>
> I mean, the tutors in college that I know, that I speak to that are in different teams, mostly smokers. You know... I know their [observation] grades, I know they are nice people, I have shared resources with them before. I think, as well, you know, smokers, you know when you are smoking there really are no barriers. There is no *hierarchy* in the fag shed, if that makes sense."

Having analysed the context of cultural capital in collaborative practice and enthused by this discovery, the remainder of Chapter Five asks what needs to be done in the light of the findings, addressing RQ4.

5.5 An overview of the recommendations

It appears that you don't necessarily have to throw money
at problems, just space and time (Anon.).

The remainder of Chapter Five makes recommendations for the catalysis of collaborative practice based on findings from the first three research questions (RQ1, 2 and 3, see bookmark). Drawing on sociometry research to give the issue theoretical and empirical purchase, in particular Granovetter (1973), Chwe (1999), and Lin (2001), I argue that FE colleges should rebalance the emphasis in their accommodation strategies to give more of an equal weighting to staff provision as they do for students. Few practitioners in the sector would doubt the criticality of student common rooms and Students' Union meeting places for the totality of the college learner experience. I argue though, wherever possible, colleges should consider enlarging staffrooms and providing additional cost-efficient informal social network spaces for their staff organised around the optimum 'Dunbar numbers' (Dunbar 1992). The provision of these would facilitate a process of 'conversion' of cultural capital first into social capital[66] and then into collaboration. This idea makes use of Lizardo's extrapolation (2006) of Granovetter's work. According to Lizardo consumption of more popular and omnivorous cultural forms is more beneficial in community formation because it provides the appropriate form of cultural capital that is more likely to flow through those types of (weaker) social connections and traverse wider portions of social space (Lizardo 2006, p783). The uptake of these facilities, it is envisaged, could be influenced by a 'seeding' process utilising a nucleus of committed practitioners - the 'connectors' - acting as 'tipping

[66] Social capital does not have a clear, undisputed meaning, for substantive and ideological reasons (Dolfsma and Dannreuther 2003; Foley and Edwards 1997). Indeed Robinson et al. (2002) suggest that the particular definition will depend on the discipline and the level of the investigation. A working definition is taken to be 'the value of collective benefits derived from the preferential treatment and cooperation between individuals and groups'.

people' to achieve Schelling's (1971) 'tipping point'[67], the watershed point of epidemic community formation[68].

As Ibarra and Hansen, in a Harvard Business Review piece published recently, promote of connectors:

> "It's their ability to link people, ideas and resources that wouldn't normally bump into one another. In business, connectors are critical factors of collaboration" (Ibarra and Hansen 2011, p70).

5.6 Fag-sheds, water-coolers and weak ties: catalysing increased collaboration

The study has shown that obstacles to collaborative working lay not with the nuances of practitioners' cultural capital - indeed the variant held by most FE lecturers should promote it - but at the pragmatic level: the physical and psychological 'isolationism' of the lecturer, aspects of performativity and the time available. In order to allow *Homo Artificium's* collaborative communities to develop and the implicit trust that goes with them, people need the time and the space to connect and engage. 'Time' in this context includes both length of time spent with the organisation and time during the workday, and is a factor of the organisation's permanence. Disappointingly for Sennett

> "the short time frame of modern institutions limits the ripening of informal trust where strong ties depend on long association, and, more personally, they depend on a willingness to make commitments to others" (1998, p24-25).

Even in a period of unprecedented change, despite college mergers, rationalisation and downsizings, FE, unlike many private sector enterprises that are forced to continually appraise and innovate their product - as did my manufacturing company - retains some permanence in its provision. Sennett's reservation does not apply. 'Space' means the physical layout of the organisation. Under Taylorism, in organisational pre-modernity, informal social spaces were generally viewed as sources of inefficiency and distractions from 'real work' (Roethlisberger and Dickson 1939). More recently though, informal organisational interaction has been shown to be productive and a key part of

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[67] The "tipping point', a term now in common parlance (after Gladwell 2000), is a concept that originates with Grodzin (1958): a threshold point in a systemic process beyond which the rate at which the process proceeds increases dramatically.

[68] When modelling racial segregation with 'mathematical sociology', Schelling showed that a small preference for one's neighbours to be of the same colour could lead to total segregation. In an inverse way it is hoped that infectious contagion might apply.

management work (Kotter 1972, Mintzberg 1973). It influences the rate of innovation (Allen 1977) and increases cooperation within teams (Pinto et al. 1993). From this perspective corridor and water-cooler conversations, photo-copying rooms, college diners, refectories and perhaps fag-sheds are neither wastes of time nor space. In using them to tell stories, have social conversations, and gossip, these places and times serve to develop trust and set and communicate organisational norms and knowledge.

The significance of both single-status informal spaces and the weak tie is confirmed by R54 who described how she got her first sessional teaching work in FE, as a result of sharing the orthodox social, but organisationally unorthodox space of the fag-shed:

> [R54] "My daughter was at Riverford College and I brought her for an interview for a course. I had left her to go for an interview so I had gone for a smoke in the smoking shed and I happened to speak to a lecturer who taught me years before and he'd sort of said, [...] I always thought you would come back into teaching, did you know there is a job going in the IT Centre? It was in the *Riverford Gazette* that week so it was fate that it was that week, so I applied for that and got the job. The tutor that had said it to me was no connection whatsoever, had he been a connection I might have thought, mmm, has he put a word in or whatever, but there was absolutely no connection and I never saw him for two years after I got the job."

Misrecognising Granovetter's (1973) idea of the significance of the strength of the weak tie - those characterized by relatively infrequent, extra-local interactions spanning a larger distance in socio-demographic space connecting people to dissimilar others - and expecting something more tangible instead she recounted how the same process took her from being a sessional tutor to a full-time lecturing post,

> [R54] "I happened to mention to one of the ladies that was there that I was working in the IT centre but I really wanted to go into teaching and my degree is in biochemistry, She gave me some sessional teaching in her school. It ends up she was Head of School at the time, I didn't know that, she was just someone I had a fag with occasionally, I knew what her name was but didn't know what she did. She gave me some teaching. That's how I got into teaching."

5.7 Privacy v. propinquity: enablers not causes of informal interaction

Theoretical stances on the behavioural impact of office layouts are contentious. Oldham and Brass (1979), Oldham and Rotchford (1983), Hatch (1987) for example find lower

levels of informal interaction among people working in open-plan offices. Their notion is however rejected by Homans (1954), Allen (1977), and Davis (1984) amongst others who counter that the physical distance separating people at work is likely to decrease exponentially the amount of spontaneous informal contact among them. A necessary first step in the reconciliation of these positions, suggested by Fayard and Weeks, is to acknowledge that the social construction of a setting is "as important as its physical construction" (2007, p608). Account must be taken of the social meaning of space (for instance its particular signifier: "broom cupboard", "boardroom", "café" or "speakeasy") and what protocols and norms of 'outsider' encroachment into the space and interruption apply. Theories of propinquity have tended to make the implicit assumption that a decrease in distance between two people is associated with an increase in their obligation to communicate with each other (Sykes et al. 1976, Schutte and Light 1978 in Fayard and Weeks 2007) levying a social obligation for face-to-face communication (Monge et al. 1985). This obligation is partly a function of physical proximity and partly a function of social norms. It seems that proximity at the photocopier or in the fag shed brings with it the obligation to engage in conversation. This is a start.

5.8 Towards a conclusion: lecturers, monkeys and Dunbar numbers

It is perhaps fitting that as I work towards conclusions I should refer to a piece of research from Bourdieu's original specialism, anthropology. Dunbar (1992), from work originally on primates, extrapolates the results to humans discovering that modern humans operate on a hierarchy of group sizes:

> "150 is roughly the number of people you could ask for a favour and expect to have it granted" (Dunbar 1992, p469).

Dunbar argues 150 to be the mean group size for communities with a very high incentive to remain together. He postulates about five, six or seven are needed for the formation of a more intimate clique. The ideas are gaining authority and are being adopted organisationally. Indeed the Swedish tax authorities have reorganised part of their operation affecting 1350 people according to Dunbar numbers (*The Local: Sweden's News in English*, 23 July 2007)[69]. Riverford, a relatively large college has

[69] The same article reports: "Employees who have spoken to TT [the Swedish news agency] said they 'seriously questioned' whether it was serious to compare them to apes."!

around 250 full-time lecturers, in excess of the Dunbar optimum, so it is perhaps unlikely that the entire population might congeal into a single social network. This being the case, the provision of a number of smaller meeting places, each accommodating twice the 'Dunbar intimate clique' number (say fifteen) for a college of this size seems appropriate. Clearly, there is an assumption that any space provided needs to cater on a 'drop-in' principle. At this size each space is therefore capable of accommodating two functioning communities simultaneously.

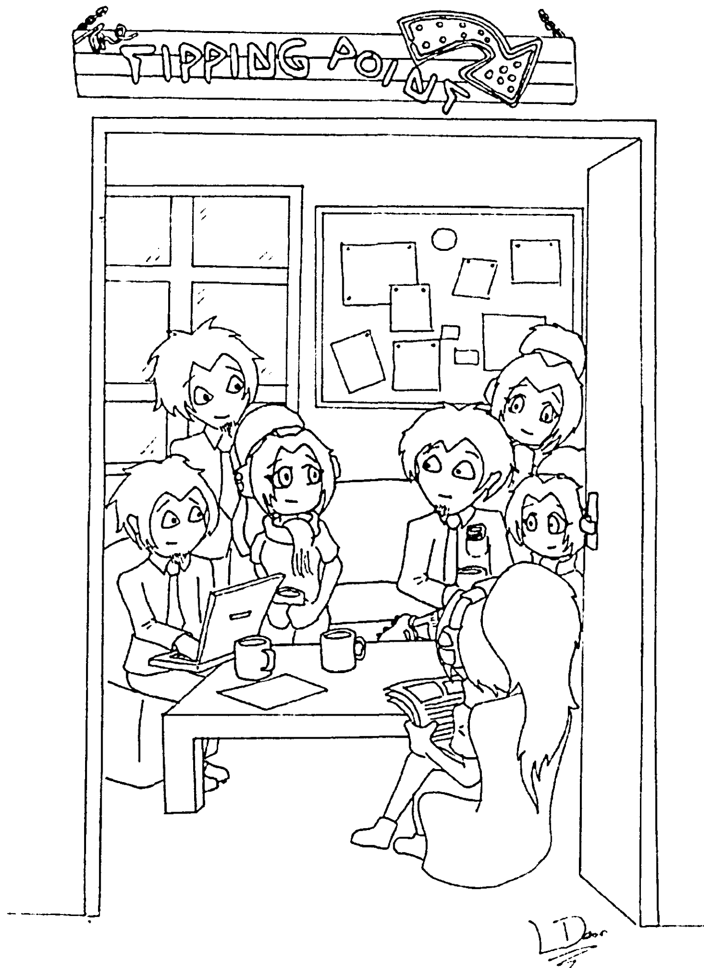

Figure 6: *"The Tipping Point"*

Tipping people, *Homo Artificium* and *Nouveaux Academic* meet in "The Tipping Point": a social space created to encourage proximity, propinquity and the probability of collaboration.

Artist: Luke Dean, 2011
Copyright Rob Baker © 2011

5.9 Affordances

The core property for a community's success over time according to Wenger, McDermott and Snyder is the sense of *aliveness* in generating "excitement, relevance and value to attract and engage members" (2002, p50-51). Yet they admit this critical

property cannot be 'designed-in', contrived or dictated. In order to engage members in community social spaces, progress can be made by linking to the notion of affordance. Gibson's work on visual perception draws attention to the affordance of an object or environment and its possibilities for action - handles are for grasping, doorknobs afford turning and so on (Gibson 1986). The world that we perceive is thus imbued with meaning. And so it is with the environment. The social spaces proposed should have an affordance that reinforces the notion of collaboration and should be "comfortable places to *be* with others and [...] a place that it is comfortable to *be found* in" (Fayard and Weeks 2007, p623, original emphasis) where, like photocopier rooms, a physical presence is required but at the outset minimal mental effort is needed. These spaces according to Oldenberg (1989) weave a community together over time. For Fayard and Weeks (*ibid.*) it must be a delicate balance between the extent to which the spaces bring people into contact (propinquity) yet allowing them to control the borders of their conversation (privacy) whilst simultaneously providing a social designation legitimising rationalisations for people to stay and talk together. Agency, but with the advantage of congruent cultural capital, determines what happens next.

But some form of accelerator can be imagined. The tipping point is a tipping point in more than one way - not only is it a threshold to the proliferation of communities but it is also a threshold in one-to-one networking. An important point and a common mistake often missed, is "to focus too much on public events" (Wenger et al. 2002, p58). Oldenburg explains community spaces as neutral spaces separate from the everyday pressures of people's jobs and many valuable community activities are "the small everyday interactions", so the space should be designed around alcoves for one-to-ones with sofa-style spaces for six or seven people - the Dunbar clique number. The design must accommodate peripherality - "intellectual neighbors" - as Wenger et al. have it and should "build benches for those on the sidelines" (2002, p56). Simple cost-effective hospitality, another affordance for conviviality and cooperation, needs to be provided. For people to leave ideas but not feel oppressive commitment - another cornerstone of cultivating community - community 'mood-boards', unstructured, informal note taking/leaving panels need to be put up on walls. Their parallel, 'e-mood-boards', could serve a purpose as community bulletin boards on a college's intranet. It is important in the use of these knowledge-generating and recording tools that no

speculation as to 'where this is going' is evident: structuration comes from the evolution of community.

5.10 Small point, bigger staffrooms

As I have developed previously, the study showed FE to be an isolated and isolating place. My personal experience corroborates this. The five staffrooms in which I have worked at three colleges were shared with six, three, one, three, and three colleagues, seclusion and compartmentalisation I share with V2:

> [V2] "You go into the college and you've got the engineering department with their little office, they don't go and mix with Health and Beauty: 'Oh no, we can't mix with them, they're a different department'. And you've got these little segregated departments.
>
> It's *not* a mixed culture, they are all [high falsetto voice] 'Oh, you're in here, oh, we didn't know you existed'.
>
> I've been into some comprehensive type schools where you've ***got*** a staff room!"

5.11 Time: not that old chestnut!

FE professionals might argue overwhelmingly that they have little time. Mather, Worrall and Seifert substantiate this perception:

> "The application of market-based reforms in the FE sector, as in other parts of the public sector, has resulted in the intensification and extensification of work effort for lecturers on the front line. There are fewer lecturers who are working harder, working for longer and teaching more students: we have shown that they are struggling to cope with these increased workload demands" (2007, p109).

Any raw measure of 'working hours' of course ignores intensification and extensification of work effort. The UK's National Office of Statistics however seems to have dispelled the myth that we are working ever longer hours. In 1995 they reported the number of hours worked by the average full-time employee was 38.5 hours a week, falling to 37.3 hours in 2005. More recently, perhaps to be expected in early post-recession times, hours of full-time employees crept up to 39.2 hours in April 2010, an increase of 0.3 hours since April 2009, appearing to side with Mather and Worrall's assertion (ONS, 2010). Analysing evidence from ten national work surveys undertaken since 1963, Tight (2010) discussing academic workloads in general across sectors

argues that there has been no substantial change in the UK for nearly fifteen years but whereas the hours have not risen, the administrative load has. On the administrative burden, the Joint AoC and Teaching Union agreement is clear: managers have a responsibility for

> "regularly reviewing work allocations, targets and organising deadlines with appropriate consideration of workloads, [and] reviewing departmental procedures and practices to improve efficiency and reduce time wasting, e.g. with unnecessary meetings" (AoC 2007).

Thirty-seven percent of the lecturers sampled could not agree with the statement that they had little time for collaborative working. Indeed 15 out of the 71 respondents apportion their time to belong to more than two working groups. Here though the interpretation of what constitutes a 'working group' at the survey stage might have been confused. In defence of the study method, it was infeasible for the survey instrument to clarify a detailed exposition of the differences between say 'cohort' and 'group', and the subtler ones between 'team' and 'community' - a point echoed by HT5 when the definition was refined at interview:

> [HT5]"We did some work [at Hillstown] on groups and teams and it is interesting the wording: I still feel that some of our working… are groups and not working 'teams'."

HT5 was a member of six groups - the highest in the sample, but these were mainly as a result of the range of his recently merged school responsibilities:

> [HT5] "The reason we have six is that we have very, very different outcomes that we are responsible for."

Probed for his ability to juggle priorities and calling for management intervention he advances that:

> [HT5]"To do any of those things needs a lot of time and I think I am happy to do it but it's got to be recognised, it's got to be a priority therefore someone else has got to be replaced. That is the challenge really, it's almost above my level."

He resorts to a sporting metaphor to acknowledge his limits:

> [HT5]"If you give me the dimensions of the pitch, I will create the team and I'll find the resources and we will do something but I haven't got the time or the skills to design the pitch, collaborate with 'DC', 'CS', 'NH' [collaborating local colleges] - whoever wants to be involved."

Perhaps indicative of linkages between cultural capital, the omnivore, and a passion in this case for knowledge-for-knowledge's sake, HT5 embraced many interests including a diverse span of knowledge complementing the diversity of his tastes. After introducing the subject of quantum physics in interview he explained he

> [HT5] "[…] gravitated between interests and I still do"

but was

> [HT5] "Very happy to sit and I collect first day covers and I love the order and the keeping everything pristine, logical and all that and yet I would be quite happy to go to the cinema and watch an action film".

As I added my memo comments onto the foot of his completed transcript I remembered a Riverford colleague, R44, who on a separate issue in January 2011 when invited to join a research group emailed by return:

> [R44] "I'm very busy, I have no time at all - especially for these extra-curricular activities!! *When do we start?*"

Although constrained by Tight's (*ibid.*) increased bureaucracy, it appears that 'tipping-people' have metaphorical 'elastic edges' to their working week.

Given instances of demonstrable and latent enthusiasm underpinned by cultural omnivorousness, I move in the final chapter, Chapter Six, towards conclusions from this study and the opportunities that present themselves in the light of the work so far.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSIONS, EVALUATION AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Epigraph 1
"It can scarcely be denied that the supreme goal of all theory is to make the irreducible basic elements as simple and as few as possible without having to surrender the adequate representation of a single datum of experience".

A. Einstein. "On the Method of Theoretical Physics". The Herbert Spencer Lecture, delivered at the University of Oxford, 10 June 1933. Published in *Philosophy of Science*, **1**, (2) (April 1934), pp. 163-169., p. 165.

Epigraph 2
"A curious thing about the ontological problem is its simplicity. It can be put into three Anglo-Saxon monosyllables: 'What is there?' It can be answered, moreover, in a word, 'everything', and everyone will accept this answer as true."

W.V.O. Quine, (1948) "On What There Is". *The Review of Metaphysics* ,2 (5), 21-38 [reprinted in Quine's 1953 work *From a Logical Point of View*. Harvard, HUP.]

This final chapter starts out by consolidating the study's findings and their implications for policy and practice. Dilemmas and paradoxes remaining after the completion of this project and areas where further clarification is required are itemised and returned to as possible future work a little later on in the chapter. It progresses to an evaluation of the project in relation to the research questions I identified in Chapter One, before widening out to defend the thesis against Wellington's (2000, p173) cumulating of significant watersheds of criticisms of educational research, notably those originating with Hargreaves (1996), Woodhead (1997), Hillage et al. (1998), and Tooley and Darby

(1998). I move on to discuss my development as a researcher and a stark personal epistemological shift as a result of undertaking the work, signposting the reader to a fuller exposition in a co-authored paper in which this trajectory is tracked. In the final part I lay out opportunities for dissemination of these results, further study and present plans for the continuation of the research.

6.1 So what? A summary of the main findings

The study has demonstrated that in relation to RQ1, lecturers in the main, exhibit cultural tastes in the range from popularist to middle-brow in music, food, art, interior décor, furnishings, and pastimes. Apparent from analyses of the quantitative data, the finding is reinforced by findings from the ethnographic data. The individual lecturer's tastes are generally homologous across these cultural fields. FE practitioners preferring purely highbrow cultural forms, distinguished by their taste in fine art, abstruse film genres or more esoteric classical music[70], 'highbrow univores', were in the extreme minority. There is evidence from the patterns of the factor and multiple component analyses of lecturers being culturally omnivorous. Again this finding is strongly supported by interview accounts. Lecturers' tastes are not singular: indeed practitioners who are regular museum-goers are equally likely to enjoy an evening at the pub or night-club with friends or departmental colleagues.

In relation to RQ2, the study's multiple component and factor analyses evidenced little differentiation in cultural capital portfolios held by practitioners from different FE curriculum areas. Cultural capital is not generally overtly deployed to gain status in the (Bourdieuian) field of the lecturer's practice. In place of a utility value for cultural capital, the study's qualitative data supports a premise for the supremacy of 'organisational capital' in the form of knowledge of college bureaucratic procedures and practice. This capital is used to some advantage in the interplay between colleagues in attempts to secure higher status positions in the field. The Further Education profession needs to be aware that pressures at the heteronymous pole of the field, characterised by marketisation and managerialism, are obscuring, detrimentally, the richness of whatever cultural capital there might be.

[70] Operationalised, for instance, by the preludes and fugues of J.S. Bach that were "for the profit and use of musical youth desirous of learning, and especially for the pastime of those already skilled in this study", and the art work of Hans Holbein the Younger.

The findings need to be qualified by a statement of provisionality. The relatively small survey size (*n=71*) and smaller interview sample (*n=9*) prevents any significant generalisation from the data. It is planned to replicate the work increasing the survey sample to 400 to give a confidence interval in the results of ± 5% at the 95% confidence level. At or above this threshold it would then be possible to begin to make inferences in the national FE lecturer population as a whole.

In relation to RQ3 and RQ4, the study showed *prima facie* recognition of, and enthusiasm for, the advantages of collaborative practice. Results from large population surveys (mainly Peterson 1992, Peterson and Kern 1996, *op. cit*) combined with secondary data from organisational behaviour research (Erickson 1996 *op. cit*) was used first to inform and then investigate mechanisms linking community coalescence and the types and volumes of cultural capital exhibited by practitioners. The latent enthusiasm, coupled with the lecturer's culturally omnivorous traits found in the study augurs well for enhanced levels of collaboration cross-college. A proposal to allocate small social spaces designed specifically for the purpose of increasing lecturer-lecturer proximity is intended to be a catalyst to the formation of nuclei of collaborating communities. Propinquity is inhibited by space and time, as we have seen, and provision of these meeting spaces should be relatively low-cost in comparison to the benefits that will be accrued as a result of increased collaboration.

It may be possible to engage practitioners identified in the survey that are keen on collaboration in these embryonic communities of practice. Clearly ethical and permission issues in the use of the survey data for other purposes need to be resolved but the findings support this strategy as a productive one. Once these issues are overcome the mechanisms to involve colleagues do not have to be sophisticated: a message on the college intranet inviting interested practitioners to an initial meeting would be one such device. At this meeting the range of passionate professional interests would be determined and practitioners sharing similar interests encouraged to continue their initial contact. The nucleus of a community of practice may well coalesce and these actions may hopefully seed the formation of others. These events and others like them will, in themselves, form fertile research grounds for further investigation into how the more prolific and successful collaborators apportion their time and to determine what precisely they do and what they do not do.

6.2 So what? An evaluation of the project

> "This then is the myth of the Hero-innovator: the idea that you produce, by training, a knight in shining armour who, loins girded with new techniques and beliefs, will assault the organisational fortress and institute changes in himself and others at a stroke. Such a view is ingenuous. The fact of the matter is that organisations will, like dragons, eat the hero-innovator for breakfast" (Giorgiades and Phillmore 1975, p315).

The study contributes to the body of knowledge in several ways: in the acuity of its focus, features of the *bricolage* method deployed, and in advancing techniques in a Bourdieuian analysis of its results. The study is perhaps the first to examine with any significance manifestations of cultural capital within a very much restricted sub-set of the UK population - that of lecturer practitioners within FE - itself a sub-set of the UK education sector. The FE sector as a whole, as we have seen, is under-researched. It is only in the last five years or so that colleges have been encouraged to promote lecturers' 'scholarly activity' and grant short research sabbaticals[71]. The study thus contributes to this nascent development. The study's method may be seen as innovative from its combinatorial *bricolage* approach drilling down to the dissimilar ontological facets posed by the research questions. Its rebalancing of the qualitative with the quantitative has gone some way to alleviating concerns of previous large-scale studies. The thesis has innovated the representation of the 'field-map' as an amalgamation of Cartesian representation - similar to that employed by Bourdieu (*ibid.*) - with the 'rich picture' diagramming techniques of systems theory (Checkland 1981). There is paucity, generally, of schematic representation of Bourdieuian fields[72]. Field mapping, although present in the literature, was invariably used to represent positions of macro-level social groups in cultural space defined by orthogonal axes of cultural capital volume and type (e.g. university academics in *Distinction*) or trace an artist's developmental trajectory (e.g. the French anarchist, singer songwriter, poet, composer, and conductor Léo Ferré in Hawkins 2003). Invariably these representations suffer from methodological restrictions imposed by graph plot, tabular representation or structure schematics

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[71] The Higher Education Authority (HEA) reminds us that the importance and need for research and scholarly activity as integral factors within FE colleges' planning and management of HE is constantly highlighted as an area for improvement. "The recent introductions of IQER ('Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review'), FDAP ('Foundation Degree Awarding Powers), HE strategies and IfL CPD commitments has lead to a much greater emphasis being placed upon staff to engage with research and scholarly activity" (HEA, 2009).

[72] A Google search using the term "Bourdieu field map" returned just two 'hits', one legitimate and one, an image of Pierre Bourdieu, in error.

representing strengths of association by the printed 'weight' of the interconnecting line (for instance Bennett et al. 2005, p7). The format of the map developed for the thesis allows the individual agent to be positioned in multiple fields whilst depicting in tandem the content, structure and inter-relationship between organisational or individual entities in complex field scenarios. Its development was justified in that the incorporation of images into the schematic enhanced data analysis possibilities and it is hoped will augment assimilation and interpretation of the results.

The thesis has gone much of the way to addressing RQ1, RQ2 and RQ3. The response to RQ4, by the nature of its definition, was clearly dependent on the findings from its predecessor research questions. Throughout I have tried to make the research serve two masters: not simply that of solving, or at least progressing a solution to the intellectual puzzle, but also that of making the research practically relevant by examining routes to innovative thinking that would allow FE to "deliver more and save money by challenging 'orthodox assumptions' " (Hayes 2010, *ibid.*). Pure research of course has a place and adaptation of the knowledge garnered by its process into practical application normally follows later. Analogously, it is entirely conceivable that Maiman, the inventor of the ruby-LASER, did not set out to invent the supermarket checkout scanner nor the DVD player, both of which of course, utilise his invention. Research which sets out to understand phenomena is valid not only in the sense of the utility in knowing it, but also in the fact that its results - like Maiman's - can be resurrected and applied at some later stage. Giorgiades and Phillmore's (1975) Hero-innovator however encapsulates my concern for the proposals I make here. It is extraordinarily difficult to effect change in an organisation and I am in no doubt of the magnitude of the task. My first career work of twenty-three years in trying to bring about enterprise-wide acceptance of new working practices and a 'no-blame' culture provided a salutary lesson that a great deal of attention to the workings of an organisation, its structures and its politics is also needed. In a sense the recommendations I make may appear a little trite in the absence of this deeper understanding. However it is important that the generalisations that can be made are used and built upon.

There are a number of pernicious criticisms of the processes and deliverables in education research that I have been acutely aware of throughout. Wellington's (2000, p173) list of major criticisms of educational research drawn from those originating with

Hargreaves (1996), Woodhead (1997), Hillage et al (1998), and Tooley and Darby (1998) appears to distil into three main fault areas. The first area of criticism is one of inappropriate methodologies and non-cumulative, small-scale, unreliable projects conducted in biased, partisan ways. A second tranche is levelled at the lack of impact of the research, as either irrelevant to practitioners and policy makers, or indeed if there is an impact, in the lack of interpretation to the intended audience. The conduct and presentation of the research forms the third area.

In response to these, I have attempted to posit the need for solution to the intellectual puzzle firmly as a factor that could enhance FE's lot. The conduct of many qualitative studies, the lack of possibilities for triangulation, a lack of definition of sampling bias and partisan research were particularly singled out for methodological criticism by Tooley and Darby (1998, p5). I approached the project attempting to bracket my natural biases and have tried to resist, I hope strenuously, the encroachment of these in the thesis. I hope too that my partisanship has been parked, but that a commitment to collaboration for innovation's sake is detectable. I hope, too, that the thesis has not fallen into Tooley and Darby's category of a poorly written impenetrable piece tending towards political correctness that their report particularly singles out for criticism. The research although inevitably small scale at this stage has relevance for policy-makers at the local and national level, and lays down the foundations for scaling-up to achieve further understanding and enhanced generalisability.

Another point Tooley and Darby stress is the need "[...] for some common sense caution" in research advising that principal investigators should provide their audiences with full details of sample size, method and caveats (1998, p45). Furthermore subjectivity should be accepted and discussed and researchers should be aware of the dangers of unwarranted generalisations from small scale study. They added that over-use of secondary sources, non-empirical research, giving rise to "academic Chinese whispers" (1998, p62) is to be avoided. I believe that an empirical-theoretical study of this nature overcomes these denigrations. In compliance, I have fore-grounded and discussed overtly issues of statistical significance. Erickson and Gutierrez (2002) advocate that a large proportion of the research material must document the treatment, and in this vein I hope that the extensive chapter on methodology, Chapter Three, goes

some way to allaying uncertainty in the mind of the reader as to the veracity of the study's design, method and philosophical scaffolding.

Wragg (1994, p50) notes the attractor of the self-fulfilling prophecy: that "subjectivity can become compounded, with judgement and assertion repeated and reinforced until reified". "Rigorous scrutiny" of the barriers to accurate perception needs to occur (Tooley and Darby 1998, p43) and critical theoretical approaches like those employed here are not without criticism. Their report remonstrates an adulation of the 'great' thinkers advising this needs to be avoided where superficial attempts are made to lend academic weight and where there are few explicit links of their work to the educational debate. In relation to this last caveat, I feel at ease that much of Bourdieu's work engaged education from the inside and the outside. The use of his work as an organising framework was entirely justified.

Returning to Medawar whose counsel in writing up the research I chose to ignore, I hope that the claims the study makes have not approached what he called "Olympian glibness" (1982, p2). The Nobel Laureate's advice in approaching research was to elevate it to an art form that makes difficult problems soluble by devising means of getting at them. I hope that the study *bricolage* has gone some way to do this. Like Jane Austen's Dashwood (who Medawar cites) who carries "strength of understanding" in her analysis of the temperaments of *sense,* of logic and propriety, and *sensibility* of emotion and unthinking action characterised by the neo-classists and romantics of her age; my "strength of understanding" is a complicated and many-sided business. My struggle with the nuances of cultural capital held by FE lecturers has certainly reflected this in the *sense* of structure and the *sensibility* of agency.

Finally in evaluation I return to Bourdieu's salient advice encapsulated in Chapter One's epigraph:

> "To be able to see and describe the world as it is, you have to be ready to be always dealing with things that are complicated, confused, impure, uncertain, all of which runs counter to the usual idea of intellectual rigour" (Bourdieu et al. 1991, p259).

Bourdieu's advice echoes guidance from my supervisory team given in the taught component of my Ed.D. - that "simple solutions are simplistic solutions". Here the indeterminacy of the study's *bricolage* approach was fundamental in allowing glimpses

of the ontological complicity of the social world of FE whilst retaining the necessary intellectual rigour. The study has answered four questions posed by the intellectual puzzle. But akin to Hume's problem of infinite regression answering four has pointed up more that need addressing (Hume 1779). These deeper layers of the knowledge onion, now exposed, are identified below.

6.3 So what? An evaluation of my progress during the project

In the course of the research I have been challenged to change much. The project afforded an opportunity to learn about the affinities, tastes and dispositions within the lives of lecturers in FE, professionally and in a more privileged sense, personally. Equally, I have gained much self-awareness. There were occasions when I recognised I had to challenge what Quine and Duhem postulated years earlier that the consequences of a particular hypothesis typically rest on a labyrinth of background assumptions, my 'web of belief' (Gilles 1998) and the difficulty is in establishing which one(s) is under threat of falsification. Moreover, I was aware of my growth as a researcher in the sense of making a significant personal epistemological shift: from the relative safety of 'comfortable' natural science law that I had for so long held prime. I refer the reader to *"Rob's narrative"* in the paper attached, I co-authored during my Ed.D., *"I did it my way': voice, visuality and identity in doctoral students' reflexive videonarratives on their doctoral research journeys"* for a more detailed exposition (Annexe AD).

6.4 Opportunities for further progress

I intend to disseminate the research to several different audiences. I intend writing a paper of about 8,000 words for an academic journal distilling the study's findings and seeking publication in 2012. I aim also to disseminate its findings to colleagues at Riverford College in Summer 2012 and hopefully within the same time-frame bring about the formation of at least one community of practice to test out the ideas in practise and to lobby Riverford's senior management to provide a *"Tipping Point"*. Ethical considerations permitting, I hope that several of the research participants who left their contact details on the survey instrument might consent to form a nucleus of several communities and act as the "tipping people".

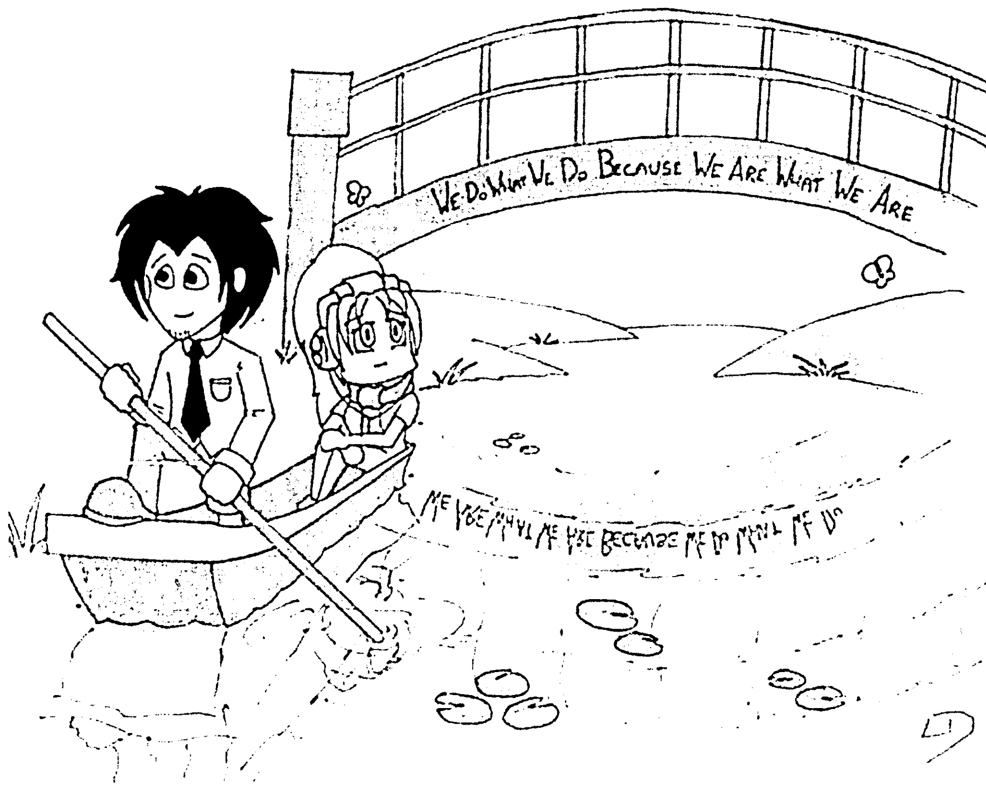
At several points during the research appealing but, at the time, tangential intellectual puzzles would surface. After recognising the first of these, I implemented a discipline by which I would make *aides-memoire*, in the hope that once the thesis was completed I might return to them. This section outlines these other puzzles. Working outwards from the thrust of the current project: it would be interesting, first, to increase the sample size to at least 400 to give more robust data reliability and statistical significance, and thus provide a view on generalisability across the UK lecturer population. This would entail the use of national datasets, the IfL's for instance. I already have made the research known to the HEA and other researchers in the field and these may well act as productive conduits. Second, given the subtle delimitations found in this study, it would be interesting to investigate a sample of 'HE in FE' practitioners using a similar methodological approach to the one here. This might inform practice and policy around further integration or retraction of university level programmes in FE, already at a watershed following publication of the Browne Report. Third, further searches for secondary data on lecturers' backgrounds and professional activity, assuming the data can be operationalised, may afford opportunities for triangulation. Fourth, it would be worthwhile, following on from the discovery that in the lecturer population organisational capital utility is greater than that of cultural capital, to shift the study focus to higher organisational levels replicating the work with samples of middle and senior college managers. In this case it would be attractive to explore any possible rebalancing of cultural and organisational capitals after a lecturer is promoted to a higher-ranking position. Fifthly and divergently, it is feasible to investigate the contexts of lecturers' social capital. This might add to the Bourdieu-Goldthorpe-Putnam discourse encompassing three capitals: cultural, economic and social. This projection, in an area originally scoped outside of this project, might explore social capital factors - professional and social ties - through access to personal resources. Van der Gaag and Snijders' (2005) pose a fascinating series of questions, as do Savage et al. (2011) in their BBC survey, along the lines of "Do you know anybody who is an MP?" or, "Do you have an acquaintance who is a chief executive?" These schemes again point up interesting data operationalisation possibilities. Sixth I am interested in conflating the basis of the Cambridge socio-economic stratification scheme with the FE lecturers' status operationalised by 'connected friends'. This overlay technique, amongst others, could be employed to investigate class fractionation at the curriculum area level, and thus provide another triangulation possibility to the thesis findings. Knowledge of

social networks in FE, in their physical form rather than virtual, is in a relatively embryonic stage and I believe work unifying Schelling's 'mathematical sociology' with manifestations of cultural and social capital in FE would contribute to the canon of professional knowledge. A further thread might be an attempt to investigate nuances of lecturers' intentions to alter their trajectories of cultural participation, building on the back of the survey's current and past engagement in pastimes question. Revisiting R43's identification of the tensions between the academic, the *Nouveaux Academic*, and management, and testing out his assertions further would be informative too.

6.5 Coda

By something of a coincidence, and without any intention to resort to trite histrionics, as I was completing the final sections of the thesis in late October 2011 a lunchtime conversation in my tiny Riverford staffroom, no bigger than the average domestic dining room, turned to the idea that sports lecturers were being earmarked to deliver on a top-up degree programme validated to run parallel to the one in our Business School. Although there was sufficient student demand to accommodate the extra capacity this year, uncertainties in funding following the Browne Report and the effect this might have on future HE student numbers and job security brought with it the first hints of protectionism. The conversation, perhaps inevitably, veered off in the direction of the sports lecturers' qualifications, credentials, and backgrounds. With the start of my afternoon session ten minutes away I finished off my BLT sandwich lunch, and went off to deliver my afternoon lecture pondering the conversation I had left behind from a significantly more enlightened position than the one I remember from 2007. This though was not to be the end...

Figure 7. **Homo Artificium punting with Nouveau Academic**
With apologies to Claude Monet's *Bridge over a Pond of Water Lilies*, 1899.



Artist: Luke Dean, 2012.
Copyright Rob Baker © 2012.

...at the very end of the project in February 2012 a friend, who I had not seen for some time, asked me what my research had been about. In reply, I tried to condense the thrust of my research and Bourdieu's thinking, not intending to simplify it, and managed: *"we do what we do because we are what we are."* Later that day, I wrote my Supervisory Team, Dr. Rebecca Mallett and Dr. Paul Garland an email update on its status and to thank them for their unstinting support throughout the project. I happened to mention the impromptu reply to my friend's question in the email. Paul, seeing the one-sidedness of my summary, added the necessary reflexivity by return email: *"I suppose then that we are what we are because we do what we do".* The profound nature of the circularity of this couplet - as was pointed out - encapsulated, in its reflective and reflexive nature, much of what had gone before.

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Glossary of acronyms and abbreviations used

AoC	Association of Colleges
bcc	blind carbon copies
BCS	British Computer Society
BIS	UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
CAQDAS	Computer assisted qualitative data analysis
CITB	Construction Industry Training Board
CM	Curriculum Manager
CoP	Community of Practice
CPD	Continuous professional development
CSR	Comprehensive Spending Review
EMA	Education Maintenance Allowance
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FD	Foundation Degree
FDAP	Foundation Degree awarding powers
fDE	'field of FE'
FE	Further Education
FTSE-100	Financial Times Stock Exchange index of the top 100 listed companies
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HBCT	Hair, beauty and complementary therapies
HCI	Human-computer interface
HE	Higher Education
HE in FE	Higher Education programmes delivered in FE colleges
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HNC	Edexcel's BTEC Higher National Certificate
HND	Edexcel's BTEC Higher National Diploma
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IfL	Institute for Learning
IFS	Institute for Fiscal Studies
IQER	Integrated Quality and Enhancement Review
ISCO	International standard classification of occupations
JIT	Just-in-time
LLUK	Lifelong Learning UK
LSIS	Leaning and Skills Improvement Service
MCA	Multiple correspondence analysis
NAICS	North American Industry Classification System

NICE	National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OB	Organizational behaviour
Ofqual	Office of qualifications and examinations regulation
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills.
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PAL	Programme Area Leader
PASW	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, new version)
PCET	Post-compulsory education and training
PGCE	Post-graduate certificate in education
PTTLS	Preparing to teach in the lifelong learning sector
QCF	Qualifications and credit framework
RCT	Randomised control trials
SES	Socio-economic status
SFL	Skills for Life
SLC	Subject learning coach
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPSS	see PASW
SSM	Soft systems methodology
TES	Times Educational Supplement
TQM	Total Quality Management
U3A	The University of the Third Age
ZD	Zero defects

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Appendices

Annexe A:	A copy of the survey instrument (the responses are mine)
Annexe B:	email correspondence to Prof. Mike Savage
Annexe C:	Annotated working copy of the agenda 'script' used in V2's interview, 17 Jan. 2011
Annexe D:	Copies of email invitations to participate and final call for responses to the survey instrument
Annexe E:	Construct-mapping from the data to the meta-analytical framework - an excerpt from the 'analysis comparison matrix' compiled from each transcript
Annexe F:	First and second order constructs in a portion of R8's transcript showing 'comment' annotation in Microsoft Word
Annexe G:	Factor Analysis: component extraction performed on responses to Q12
Annexe H:	'Associations' parlour game, one of four tables used (presented to the participant as a set of laminated cards)
Annexe J:	Breakdown of responses by college and gender
Annexe K:	Responses by curriculum area (all colleges) Q1
Annexe L:	Respondent's subject specialisms (responses to Q2 reported verbatim)
Annexe M:	Number of lecturers delivering respective QCF levels, by college responding (Q4)
Annexe N:	Incidences of teaching level (Q4)
Annexe P:	Length of vocational career before joining FE (responses to Q5)
Annexe Q:	Frequencies of the total number of QCF levels taught by a lecturer (Q4)
Annexe R:	Membership of cross-college working groups (Q7)
Annexe S:	Frequency plot - practitioner's involvement in cross-college working groups, number involved with (Q7)
Annexe T:	Attitudes to collaboration (Q10)
Annexe U:	Curriculum area collaborators (Q8 & Q9)
Annexe V:	SPSS descriptive statistics of responses to survey Q10, 'Attitudes to cross-college working'
Annexe W:	Attitudes to cross-college working (Q10)
Annexe X:	Attitudes towards specialisms and those of colleagues (Q11)
Annexe Y:	Objectified cultural capital: owned and perceived importance to practice
Annexe Z:	Academic-vocational spectrum classification based on International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)
Annexe AA:	Correlation matrix Q10 and Q11 merged
Annexe AB:	3D plot of the interviewees' (1-9) sets of cultural capitals 'indices'(weighted institutionalised capital Q12, breadth of pastimes engaged Q13 and affinity for highbrow music Q14)
Annexe AC:	R29's'memo' - Bourdieuian notes

Annexe A: A copy of the survey instrument (the responses are mine)

Cross-college working and attitudes to collaborative practice survey

Dear colleague,

This survey is part of a personal research project investigating practitioners' attitudes to collaborative working across curriculum areas. There are 22 questions in 5 sections. *Most of the responses require only a tick in a box and completing the survey should take no longer than 10 minutes.* There are questions about your curriculum area and specialism, about cross-college collaboration, your professional practice and about preferences for certain objects, pastimes, and activities.

Please note that completion and submission of the form implies 'informed consent' in the use of your data. *Please be assured that all responses are confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Data will remain anonymous and secure at all times.* The study is being conducted under stringent ethical principles; the study's ethics statement is on page 10.

Completing the survey
You will have received the survey in one of two ways; either electronically or as a hard-copy. If you prefer the alternative form, please contact me.

Completing the survey on-line
to help you navigate easily through the form...

- You can jump from one input field to an adjacent field with the up, down, left and right arrow keys; or alternatively by pointing and clicking the left mouse key.
- When you are in a 'tick-box', pressing the space bar ticks it, pressing it again unticks it and so on. Left-click works the same.

When complete, please save the document and return as an email attachment to
robert.baker@

Completing a paper copy
Internal colleagues: please complete and return anonymously with a 'confidential' sticker in the internal mail to:
Rob Baker
[LOCATION REDACTED]

External colleagues: please complete and return anonymously to:
Rob Baker
[ADDRESS REDACTED]

Thank you for taking part in this survey.
Best wishes for your professional practice
Rob Baker

Rob Baker
School of Business, Professional and Continuing Education
[TELEPHONE NUMBER REDACTED], robert.baker@[REDACTED].ac.uk
rob.baker@sky.com

Section One: questions about your curriculum area, teaching level and background

Q1 Which is your main curriculum teaching area?
(please tick one)

- ☐ Academic Studies & Computer Science
- ☐ Access & Inclusion
- ☐ Additional Learning Support
- ☒ Business, Professional & Cont. Education
- ☐ Construction & Building Services
- ☐ Creative Arts
- ☐ Engineering & Transport Skills
- ☐ Hair & Beauty
- ☐ Health, Care & Education
- ☐ Hospitality, Sport, Leisure & Travel
- ☐ Quality, Learning & Teaching Improvement
- ☐ Other. Please specify

Q2 ...and your subject specialism? **HE Business programmes**
e.g. computer programming, wood occupations, music etc.

Q3 Gender?
- ☒ M
- ☐ F

Q4 At what QCF ('qualifications and credit framework') level(s) do you lecture?
(select as many as apply)

- ☐ entry level(s)
- ☐ level 1
- ☐ level 2 (GCSE C-A*)
- ☒ level 3 (A level, BTEC Nationals)
- ☒ level 4 (HNC, 1st year degree, FD)
- ☒ level 5 (HNC/D, FD)
- ☒ level 6 (B.A.(Hons.). B.Sc (Hons.))
- ☐ level 7 (post-graduate)

Q5 About your career path to date...
(select one)

☐ continuous career in education; little or no vocational experience, or vocational experience is not required for my subject/post

☐ a vocational career, less than 2yrs, before teaching in FE

☐ a vocational career, between 2 and 5 years, before teaching in FE

☐ between 5 and 15 years vocational experience before teaching in FE

☒ over 15 years vocational experience before teaching in FE

☐ I currently have a vocational career and deliver on a sessional / part-time basis

☐ none of these apply

Section Two: questions about your involvement, if any, in cross-college working groups

Q6 **Are you a member of any cross-college working group?** Y ☒ N ☐

If 'No' please go to Q9.

Q7 **If you are a member, approximately how many working groups are you involved with?** **2**

Q8 **In your cross-college working, which curriculum area do you have most dealings with?** **Computing Science, Learning Consultants**

Q9 **In any possible future cross-college working, colleagues from which area would you most *prefer* to work with?** **Any**

Q10 **Indicate how much you agree with the following statements about cross-college working on the 5-point scale:**

Please tick √ one box per row.	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree	don't know / doesn't apply
Cross-college working, generally, gives solutions to most problems worked on	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cross-college working, in the main, allows more innovative problem solving	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cross-college collaboration will become increasingly important as funding in the sector gets tighter	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I work collaboratively with colleagues across college I'm not concerned who else is a member of the group	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I work collaboratively I feel uneasy with colleagues from my own area	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
When I work collaboratively I feel uneasy with colleagues from other curriculum areas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Informal 'get togethers' offer a much greater chance of solving problems than groups formally set up	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have little time to work collaboratively	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
Cross-college groups tend to work on problems that are unimportant to me	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
I relish the thought of joining a group	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are some specialist areas in college that I never come into contact with	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section Three: questions about your specialism and those of others

Q11 Indicate on the 5-point scale how much you agree with the following statements:

Please tick √ one box per row.	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree	don't know / doesn't apply
My specialist area calls for a greater degree of training than most others in college	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
The skills I need to teach in my specialist area seem to be lower grade than most other areas	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Irrespective of curriculum area, all lecturers should be paid on the same salary scale	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have to constantly update my skills	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My background is similar with that of colleagues from my own curriculum area	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
I share more of my background with colleagues from other curriculum areas	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
I share more interests with colleagues from other curriculum areas	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Differences in practitioners' backgrounds can lead to conflict	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
My specialist area is more demanding than most others in college	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
My specialist area is more prestigious than most others in college	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
There is too much emphasis on the 'academic' in FE (or HE in FE) teaching	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Having broad general knowledge is a useful attribute in FE (or HE in FE) teaching	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have similar interests to colleagues from my own area	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
Higher skills and/or qualifications should command a greater salary	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
On the matter of trust, generally speaking, you can't be too careful in dealing with people	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐

Q12 In your prime teaching area, how important would you say, are these attributes to the success of your practice?
Please tick the box in the first column if you possess the attribute listed. Then tick one other box per row on the 5-point scale.

Attribute:	Please tick if you hold this	For my successful practice this attribute is…				
		Important	Relatively important	Neither unimportant nor important	Relatively unimportant	Unimportant
Having served an apprenticeship	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
Formal vocational qualifications	☒	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
Vocational experience in the areas that I teach	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Vocational experience in a discipline related to the one that I teach	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
Recent vocational experience (in the last 3 years)	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
A teaching qualification	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Formal academic qualifications	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Previous lecturing experience at other colleges	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐
Past teaching experience at other institutions (not FE colleges)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒
Past employment at a company that's an industry 'leader'	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
A level standard English and mathematics competences	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professional links to 'centres of excellence' for my specialism	☐	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
The influence of my family's background	☒	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
A qualification(s) in a field unrelated to my specialism	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My self-taught skills	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Artefacts that I have gathered over my career (tools or texts etc)	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
Membership of a trade institution (CITB, BCS etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
Another credential (please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Another credential (please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My background allows me to enrich my teaching…						
…because I can use personal artefacts I have collected (tools, artworks, computer applications, photographs etc.)		☒	☐	☐	☐	☐
…because I can deploy anecdotes from my vocational experiences		☒	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section Four: questions about your involvement in activities and pastimes

Q13 Please tick those activities that you have taken part in during the last 12 months, and those you plan to take part in within the next 12 months:

Activities and pastimes: Which of these activities….	have you taken part in within the last 12 months? (tick as many as apply)	are you *planning to* take part in within the next 12 months? (tick as many as apply)
Attending pop/rock music gigs	☒	☒
Hobbyist/personal interest events	☒	☒
Going to pubs or night-clubs	☒	☒
Competitive team or solo sport	☐	☒
Spectating at sporting events	☒	☒
Watching sport on a sports subscription channel (e.g. *Sky*)	☐	☐
Watching sport on 'free to air' TV (e.g. *Freeview*)	☒	☒
Taking a seaside holiday in the UK	☐	☐
Touring, camping or caravanning in the UK	☐	☐
Taking a UK city break	☒	☒
Foreign resort holidays	☐	☐
Touring, camping or caravanning abroad	☐	☐
Foreign city breaks	☒	☒
Special interest holidays (safaris, mountaineering, trekking etc.)	☐	☐
Cruises	☐	☐
Involvement in community projects	☐	☐
Taking part in group social outings	☐	☐
Organising charity events	☐	☐
Playing bingo	☐	☐
Visiting a theme park	☐	☐
Visiting a museum	☒	☒
Socialising with colleagues from my own department out of college	☐	☒
Socialising with colleagues from other departments out of college	☐	☒
Attending a classical music concert	☐	☒
'White knuckle' activities (skydiving, bungee-jumping etc.)	☐	☐
Activities linked with religion	☐	☐
Attending trade fairs or exhibitions linked to your job	☐	☐
Undertaking further courses of study	☒	☒
'Gastronomic' activities (fine dining, vineyard tours etc.)	☒	☒
Literary events (book clubs, poetry readings etc.)	☐	☐
Visiting the theatre	☒	☒
Visiting the cinema	☒	☒

Section Five: about your preferences and tastes

Q14 Please rank your preferences (1-6) for the following pieces of music:
1=highest preference, 6=lowest preference. If you have no preference please tick the last box.

J.S. Bach The Well-Tempered Clavier	3☐
J.Strauss The Blue Danube	4☐
Oasis Wonderwall	2☐
The Killers Mr.Brightside	1☐
Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 in A major, Opus 92	5☐
Sinatra Chicago	6☐
No preference / this subject doesn't interest me	☐

Q15 Please rank your preferences (1-6) for the following works of art:
1=highest preference, 6=lowest preference. If you have no preference please tick the last box.

Manet *A Bar at the Folies-Bergere*, 1882	1☐
Tracey Emin *Everyone I have ever slept with 1963-1995*	6☐
van Gogh *Sunflowers*, 1888	4☐
L.S. Lowry *Huddersfield* 1965	3☐
Holbein *The Ambassadors*, 1533	2☐
Warhol *Gold Marilyn Monroe*, 1962	5☐
No preference / this subject doesn't interest me	☐

Q16 Please rank your preferences (1-6) for the following foods:
1=highest preference, 6=lowest preference. If you have no preference please tick the last box.

lamb balti and rice	2☐
fast food: hamburger, fries	6☐
vegetarian kosherie	4☐
a roast pork carvery; wholesome and plentiful	3☐
pate de fois gras with truffles	5☐
grilled Dover sole with steamed green vegetables	1☐
No preference / this subject doesn't interest me	☐

Q17 Which three adjectives below best describe the type of interior you would like to live in? (tick 3)

- clean and tidy ☒
- warm ☐
- neat ☐
- comfortable ☒
- easy to maintain ☐
- imaginative ☐
- studious ☐
- classical ☐
- practical & functional ☐
- sober & discreet ☒
- harmonious ☐
- cosy & intimate ☐

Q18 Following on from the last question, which three are the *least* important to you? (tick 3)

- clean and tidy ☐
- warm ☐
- neat ☐
- comfortable ☐
- easy to maintain ☐
- imaginative ☒
- studious ☐
- classical ☒
- practical & functional ☐
- sober & discreet ☐
- harmonious ☒
- cosy & intimate ☐

Q19 Which are your 3 favourite film genres?

comedy	☒
spectaculars	☐
Westerns	☐
horror	☐
romance	☐
period drama	☐
war	☐
film noire	☐
Bollywood	☐
musicals	☐
thrillers	☐
sci-fi	☐
films that have psychological themes	☐
films of books you have read	☐
films with a message	☒
films that solve riddles	☒

Q20 ....and your 3 *least* favourite

comedy	☐
spectaculars	☐
Westerns	☒
horror	☒
romance	☐
period drama	☐
war	☐
film noire	☒
Bollywood	☐
musicals	☐
thrillers	☐
sci-fi	☐
films that have psychological themes	☐
films of books you have read	☐
films with a message	☐
films that solve riddles	☐

Q21 What interests you most in a film (tick one)?

The actors	☐
The director	☐
The plot	☒

Q22 With the following subjects, is a photographer more likely to produce a beautiful, interesting, meaningless or ugly photograph? (Please tick one category for each subject)

Subject	*beautiful*	*interesting*	*meaningless*	*ugly*
a landscape	☒	☐	☐	☐
a car crash	☐	☒	☐	☐
a little girl playing with a cat	☐	☒	☐	☐
a pregnant woman	☐	☒	☐	☐
a still life	☒	☐	☐	☐
a woman breastfeeding	☐	☒	☐	☐
a metal structure	☐	☒	☐	☐
tramps quarrelling	☐	☒	☐	☐
cabbages	☐	☒	☐	☐
a sunset over the sea	☒	☐	☐	☐
a weaver at his loom	☐	☒	☐	☐
a folk dance	☐	☒	☐	☐
a rope	☐	☒	☐	☐
a butcher's stall	☐	☒	☐	☐
the bark of a tree	☒	☐	☐	☐
a famous monument	☐	☒	☐	☐
a scrap yard	☐	☒	☐	☐
a first communion	☐	☒	☐	☐
a wounded man	☐	☒	☐	☐
a snake	☐	☒	☐	☐
an 'old master'	☒	☐	☐	☐

[END OF SURVEY]
THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

Invitation to participate further

After participating in this survey, you might consider being interviewed as part of the ongoing research programme. If you would like to do so, please complete your contact details below. Interviews (about one hour) are planned for Oct 2010-Jan 2011. Alternatively, e-mail me.

If you would like to take part, please enter your contact number here:

Respondent's name: Rob Baker

(Note: these details will be treated in the strictest confidence)

The research's ethical principles: a summary

Ethical standards govern the conduct of the research. A summary of the study's ethics is set out below.

Survey data: analysis
Data analysis will be, in part, inferential statistical analysis. Correspondingly, data items will be anonymous and indistinguishable as part of the larger data-set. Statistical analysis software will be used.

Digital data will be kept in encrypted format on a secure PC requiring log-in credentials that only the principal investigator will be party to. Hard copy data will be held securely and draft paper copies shredded. Raw data will be held for the minimum time necessary and then expunged from the PC.

Optional follow-up interviews
If you were to give further consent, follow-up interviews, with recorded audio, to discuss the questionnaire's findings are planned to take place between October 2010 and January 2011.

1. All responses will remain confidential and will be anonymised.
2. The interview would last about an hour and, with your permission, digitally recorded.
3. Digital data will be kept in encrypted format on a secure PC requiring log-in credentials that only the principal investigator will be party to. Hard copy data will be held securely and draft paper copies shredded.
4. Raw data will be held for the minimum time necessary and then expunged from the PC.
5. There would be no other expense incurred by yourself other than giving the time.
6. I would guarantee *absolute* anonymity and confidentiality. Participants in the study would be referred to, for instance as "Participant A: Riverford College" in the research thesis.
7. The content would be used only for the reasons of my personal education research and no other use would be made of the findings other than to inform generally greater knowledge in the FE sector.
8. The thesis will be presented to Sheffield Hallam University in October 2011 and is, and will, remain confidential between the University and myself.
9. The findings, in part or whole, may be thought acceptable for publication at some future time.
10. Prior to incorporation in the thesis, I will check relevant content with yourself.
11. If you request it, a copy of the finished thesis will be made available for you.
12. You would have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, for whatever reason and without question. Information you had provided up to that time would be deleted from the record.
13. You have the right to withhold information, although in the spirit of pure research and our joint professional commitment to improve education, I would hope that our discussions can be frank, honest, and productive whilst remaining strictly confidential.
14. You would have full access to me at all times to discuss any concerns.
15. As with disclosure principles between student and tutor in our professional lives, I am sure you are aware that if information is given in confidence but has serious criminal or legal mplications, then I would be duty bound to pass on that information. I am sure though that this information will not be sought, pursued nor provided.

Annexe B: email correspondence with Prof. Mike Savage

24 February 2011
16:43

Dear Professor Savage,

I apologise for writing to you out-of-the blue. I am a 58-year old full-time lecturer in FE and in what, I hope, will be the last year of a part-time Ed.D. at Sheffield Hallam University. My multi-methodological study is titled *"The contexts of cultural capital in collaborative work cultures in UK Further Education"*. It uses a Bourdieusian framework and 'thinking tools' to illuminate the mechanisms by which the possession and deployment of FE lecturers' cultural capital inhibits or promotes participation in 'cross-college', that is interdepartmental, collaborative working. Such practice I believe becomes important in catalysing innovative problem-resolution in what will be the increasingly cash-poor context of FE.

I am familiar with some of your work and currently your involvement with the BBC on-line survey. Some of its questions, for example engagement in pastimes, perhaps unsurprisingly, were similar to the much smaller scale (!) quantitative survey I put out in 2010. I was wondering if you would comment or steer on the metrics that your team aim to employ in the 2011 analysis to classify quantitatively, if indeed they do, the measures of low-medium-high cultural capital. I have used similar thinking to that in *Distinction*, flavoured with your colleagues' work on the 'omnivore' thesis, to devise an arbitrary scale for my analyses and I was wondering how they might compare (or not, as the case may be!).

My Director of Studies and Supervisor are aware of my approaching you.

With best wishes for the BBC survey and for your professional practice. I look forward to its results being published later this year.

Rob Baker
[Role, organisation and contact details redacted]

Annexe C: Annotated working copy of the agenda 'script' used in V2's interview, 17 Jan. 2011

A='associations' (card-sort) activity; G='general'; Q=relates to interesting survey responses (by question number)

V2 Follow up 17/01/11
Explain selection criteria. Recap on anonymity, confidentiality, etc. Ask permission to tape. Lasts no more than 1 hour.

A1 Really to set the context of FE lecturers' perceptions of their backgrounds as displayed by consumption, can I ask you to complete an activity? The activity is a card-sort activity. It may appear a little frivolous but it has a serious intent.
Explain activity. Table 1 & Table 3

A2 What can we tease out of the 'associations activity'?

G1 Would you mind telling me briefly about your background before you joined FE? Between 5 and 15 years voc. experience, what form did that take? Instances of collaborative working? In what form? How effective?

G2 Why did you move into FE?

Q6-10 Advocate of collaborative practice: why? What form? What kind of problems ought to be worked on?
Experience of informality or otherwise?

G9 How does your team resolve problems?
G10 How effective is its problem solving, do you think?
G11 Given the variety in FE, can lecturers work effectively cross college?

~~Q11 Seen evidence of vast amount of general knowledge from many disciplines; is it possible to explain how you have gained this? Can you give me an example of how you implement it in your practice?~~

"Differences in backgrounds can lead to conflict" totally strongly disagree what are your reasons for saying this?

Q12 your responses to the question about personal artefacts and the deployment of them in your teaching are especially strong. Can you elaborate on these further?

What artefacts?
Example of deployment?

Q13 Pattern of consumption
This is an important section for this respondent.
Your responses indicate a wide range of interests, from bingo to classical music concerts, you say you enjoy socialising and gastronomic activities and your food and music preferences indicate a liking of 'haute cuisine' and things cultured: ~~can you elaborate on these further?~~ how do you describe yourself culturally
Does culture link in any way to your engagement in pastimes: do you consider 'fine dining' a cultural experience, for instance? Why?

Your responses to the section on photographic subjects was extremely interesting; you rated no subjects either meaningless or ugly. Can you explain why?

Generally: *(if not covered above)* how would you describe your tastes?
G3 What do you think are the main power relationships in your area?
G4 In college?
G5 What do you think of your role in relation to others at college?
G6 What kinds of tensions, if any, have you witnessed between practitioners, departments, schools?
G7 In what ways might these be reliant on the backgrounds of the practitioners, departments or schools?
G8 In what ways if any does your background affect your role?

Stop and thank.

Annexe D: Copies of email invitations to participate and final call for responses to the survey instrument

Invitation to participate - Riverford

From: Robert Baker
Sent: 10 September 2010 08:30
To: Robert Baker
Subject: Invitation to participate in an education research project

Colleagues,
Attached is a survey form that is part of a personal project. You have been sent the survey as part of a curriculum area-wide sample across College. The College's SMT has given permission for the survey. I realise that it is a busy time of year, but probably no time is a good time: if you *could* spend 10 mins. or so to have a look at it, it would be greatly appreciated.
With all good wishes for 2010/11,

Rob Baker
Programme Area Leader HE
Business & Management
Public Sector and Corporate Administration degrees

Invitation to participate - Hillstown College

From: Postmaster
Sent: 16 September 2010 10:52
To: Hillstown Staff
Subject: Invitation to participate in an education research project
This message has been sent on behalf of Rob Baker, who was previously employed at Hillstown, with SMTs authorisation

---

Colleagues,
Attached is a survey form that is part of a personal project. You have been sent the survey as part of a curriculum area-wide sample across various colleges. The College's SMT has given permission for the survey. I realise that it is a busy time of year, but probably no time is a good time: if you *could* spend 10 mins. or so to have a look at it, it would be greatly appreciated.
With all good wishes for 2010/11,

Rob Baker
Programme Area Leader HE
Business & Management
Public Sector and Corporate Administration degrees

Annexe D: Invitation to participate in education research - final call for responses

10 Dec 2010

Colleagues,
You may be aware that a survey forming part of a personal project was circulated to you in September. I want to thank you for your time spent completing it. I have had many responses and offers of follow-up interviews for the next stage of the research and I will be contacting those colleagues during October.

If you haven't yet had an opportunity and wish to complete the survey it's at:
www.riverford.ac.uk/rb/sf18n.docm

With best wishes for your professional practice,
Thank you

Rob Baker
Programme Area Leader HE
Business & Management
Public Sector and Corporate Administration degrees

Annexe D: Invitation to participate published in HEA September 2010's e-Newsletter HE in FE

Research project: The Contexts of Cultural Capital in Collaborative Working in UK Further Education.

Colleagues delivering HE in FE are invited to participate in a personal research study being carried out by Rob Baker, an HE Business and Administration tutor at ██ ████████ in the East Midlands. The aim of the research is to explore the relationship between, on the one hand, lecturers' possession and deployment of forms of cultural and social capital and, on the other, collaborative working cultures and practitioner engagement in cross-college working groups. Knowledge of reasons why practitioners sign-up to or resist collaborative working is seen as important if professional practice is to gain from its many advantages.
Moreover, innovative problem solving resulting from group working may well become increasingly important for the sector in the context of the expected public-sector cuts.

In order to gain a national perspective, colleges wishing to participate can download the survey and complete it electronically at www.███.ac.uk/rb/sfl8n.docm .

Annexe E: Construct-mapping from the data to the meta-analytical framework - an excerpt from the 'analysis comparison matrix' compiled from each transcript

	R54	R8	V2	R43	R21	R39
capitals	in terms of collaboration: mainly non-cultural similarities; importance of gender; collaboration based on tutors' perception of curriculum's 'relevance'; equivalence between institutionalised academic capital and vocational experience	economic capital as a driver Relationships forged linked to progression teachers" not "lecturers" self denigration Anthropoliticisation to explain social difference identifies advantages in empathising with students inversion and advantage of 'lower class' membership evidences dissimilarities within department: cultural detachment from the economic dress code; bodily hexis defines 'professional' acting as differentiator capital and social space politicisation	emphasis on high-end institutionalised CC (a masters degree in education "for some made reason" a la Kantian aesthetic "knowledge-for-knowledge's sake" social capital through employment in field used as currency to enhance position in FE field	provides and defends two sharp demarcations between what is perceived to be academic and what is perceived to be vocational – a kind of subject territorialism and the HE-FE schism (as does R21) Views teaching as a middle class occupation in evaluation of his 'associations game' classification awareness of academic intimidation towards his colleagues because of his traditional academic university lecturing background L265-284 "sports and fitness lecturers being nouveaux-academic to coin a phrase, you know, not a traditional academic subject but in their furniture to match, 'drinking holes' to match no real academic capital or… I sound like a bastard…or cultural capital." Nouveaux-academics non-academic qualities. NA lacking conceptualisation nouveaux-academic linked to dullness and practicality: is this reported by the survey's interior types? deploys capital Challenging colleagues' capitals and its effects L233- frustration with the 'under qualified' managers	Autobiographical experience of the dichotomy that may exist in FE: class fractionation mirrored by the academic-vocational schism Capital defined as experience. Capital as knowledge not recognised Capital accepted as experience by the sector at odds with competence argue against any accusations of personal bias: high status position, well respected, grade 1 lesson observations, operating at nucleus of HE in FE at Riverford.	Unintentional suppression of cultural capital Restricted chance for dialogue on anything other than the professional The separation of the professional from the personal students open up more than fellow lecturers Unintentional suppression of cultural capital to reinforce R39's required separation of work/home practices Gender as a classifier; note absence of class connotations in 'parlour game' sheet Hair seen as having restricted skill base Classified as proficiency as did R43

Annexe F: First and second order constructs in a portion of R8's transcript showing 'comment' annotation in *Microsoft* Word

203
204 R8 [One of them stands with his shoulders up he has always got a tie that's
205 immaculately tied, he never comes to work without a shave; the other bloke is not so
206 fussed with his appearance, [he's more interested in values and things like that] [The
207 other bloke is professional to the hilt] very I'd say wooden and mechanical.]
208
209 R Right.
210
211 R8 [And you can tell it straight away in their personalities and they don't get on at
212 all.] You know, the times we have had to have them both in, me and the Curriculum
213 Manager because it's almost come to blows or bullying, they have a go at each other
214 very much.
215
216 R Really?
217
218 R8 [Yeh, its like Arthur Scargill and Margaret Thatcher.]
219
220 R Thank you for that. You mentioned one of the lectures there 'Y' was very
221 much into camaraderie; he was very much into team play.
222
223 R8 Yea.
224
225 R That is important to you in terms of team work?
226
227 R8 What I can't… I dislike, an intrinsically motivated…the most important thing

Comment [B45]: cultural detachment from the economic

Comment [B46]: dress code; bodily hexis defines 'professional'

Comment [B47]: bodily hexis as a differentiator

Comment [B48]: capital and social space

Comment [B49]: politicisation

Annexe G: Factor Analysis: component extraction performed on responses to Q12

Component Matrix[a]

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
12.5s	.834				
12.3s	.732	-.606			
12.10s	.700				
12.4s	.691	-.631			
12.17s	.673				
12.14s	.630				
12.16s	.595			.541	
12.2s	.589	-.586			
12.12s	.557	.402			
12.11s	.543				
12.13s	.503				
12.9s	.569	.579		-.401	
12.8s	.541	.574			.461
12.1s	.409	-.494			.462
12.7s			.772		
12.6s			.705		
12.15s				.757	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation

5 components extracted, rotation converged in 4 iterations.

Annexe H: 'Associations' parlour game, one of four tables used (presented to the participant as a set of laminated cards)

Fit the pastime to the lecturer. You may allocate more than one lecturer to a game category or choose not to allocate a category at all.

Ms. A. Hairdressing lecturer
Mr. B. Mathematics lecturer
Ms. C. IT lecturer
Ms. D. Travel and Tourism lecturer
Mr. E. Bricklaying lecturer
Ms. F. Sports and fitness lecturer
Ms. G. Initial Teacher Training lecturer.

Table 1
Bridge
Chess
Monopoly
Poker
Roulette
Scrabble
Dominoes

Annexe J: Breakdown of responses by college and gender

		Male		*Female*	
		Count	*%*	*Count*	*%*
College	HT	7	31.8%	4	8.2%
	N	0	0.0%	1	2.0%
	R	13	59.1%	41	83.7%
	S	0	0.0%	1	2.0%
	V	2	9.1%	2	4.1%
	Total	22	100%	49	100%

Annexe K: Responses by curriculum area (all colleges) Q1

	Survey responses		Riverford's lecturer headcount (for comparison)	
	n	%	n	%
Academic studies & computer science	7	9.9%	62	14.3%
Access & inclusion	2	2.8%	22	5.1%
Additional learning support	3	4.2%	6	1.4%
Business, professional & continuing education	13	18.3%	51	11.8%
Construction & building services	4	5.6%	48	11.1%
Creative arts	5	7.0%	45	10.4%
Engineering & transport skills	2	2.8%	49	11.3%
Hair & beauty	7	9.9%	32	7.4%
Health, care & education	6	8.5%	68	15.7%
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	8	11.3%	43	9.9%
Quality, learning & teaching improvement	3	4.2%	7	1.6%
Other	11	15.5%	0	0.0%
Total	71	100.0%	433	100.0%

Annexe L: Subject specialisms of the respondents (responses to Q2 reported verbatim)

Respondent	*Specialism*
R1	Special Educational needs/life skills
R2	Management
R3	ESOL
R4	Accounting
R5	PC technician's hardware/software build & test
R6	-
R7	Information literacy skills
R8	Electrical engineering
R9	Travel and tourism
R10	Business
R11	Management
R12	Cleaning
R13	ESOL
R14	Literacy
R15	-
R16	IT User
R17	Teacher training
R18	Art and design
R19	Childcare
R20	Mechanical engineering
R21	Law
R22	Sports science
R23	Literacy
R24	Maths and management studies
R25	Software
R26	Childcare
R27	Special educational needs/life skills
R28	Health and social care
R29	Skills for life: mathematics
R30	Plumbing
R31	Numeracy
R32	Assessing care assistants
R33	Travel
R34	Early years education
R35	Teacher Ed., wood occupations
R36	Maths
R37	-
R38	Beauty therapy
R39	Spa therapies
R40	Beauty therapy
R41	Beauty
R42	-
R43	Sociology and law
R44	Business improvement & personal development
R45	Art and design
R46	Literacy and numeracy
R47	Trowel occupations
R48	Study skills

R49	-
R50	Programming, hardware
R51	ICT
R52	Performing arts
R53	Level 1 beauty therapy
R54	ICT
V1	Performing arts
V2	Aeronautical engineering
V3	Networking
V4	Anatomy and physiology
HT1	English
HT2	ICT
HT3	Computing/ICT
HT4	Business management
HT5	Sport
HT6	Craft
HT7	-
HT8	Media and performing arts
HT9	Skills for life
HT10	Teamwork, fitness, adventure training
HT11	Computing – systems analysis, programming, database development, games design
S1	E commerce
N1	Research

Annexe M: Number of lecturers delivering respective QCF levels, by college responding (Q4)

QCF level		No. levels taught by respondent								Total
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
College	HT	0	2	1	3	2	3	0	0	11
	N	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	R	2	10	14	19	5	1	2	1	54
	S	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	V	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
Total		2	15	16	23	8	4	2	1	71

Annexe N: Incidences of teaching level (Q4)

(NB. lecturers may deliver at more than one QCF level)

QCF level	Incidence	Percentage
Entry levels	19	10.2%
Level 1	30	16.0%
Level 2	43	23.0%
Level 3	46	24.6%
Level 4	23	12.3%
Level 5	19	10.2%
Level 6	6	3.2%
Level 7	1	0.5%
		100.0%

Annexe P: Length of vocational career before joining FE (Responses to Q5)

Vocational-academic career split	n
Continuous career in education	12
Vocational career less than 2 years before joining education	6
Vocational career between 2 and 5 years before joining education	7
Vocational career between 5 and 15 years before joining education	25
Vocational career longer than 15 years before joining education	13
Sessional lecturer: still in a vocational career	2
Not applicable	8

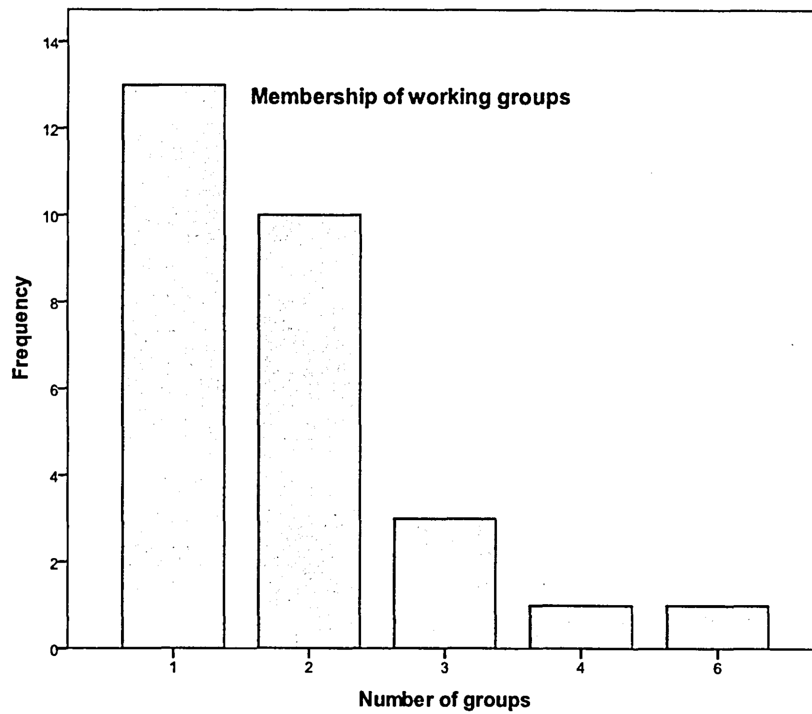
Annexe Q: Frequencies of the total number of QCF levels taught by a lecturer, Q4

Number of levels taught by a lecturer	Frequency
1	16
2	14
3	22
4	7
5	3
6	1
7	1
total	64

Annexe R: Membership of cross-college working groups (Q7)

	n=	%
Yes	29	40.8
No	41	57.7
No response	1	2.5

Annexe S: Frequency plot - practitioner's involvement in cross-college working groups, number involved with (Q7).

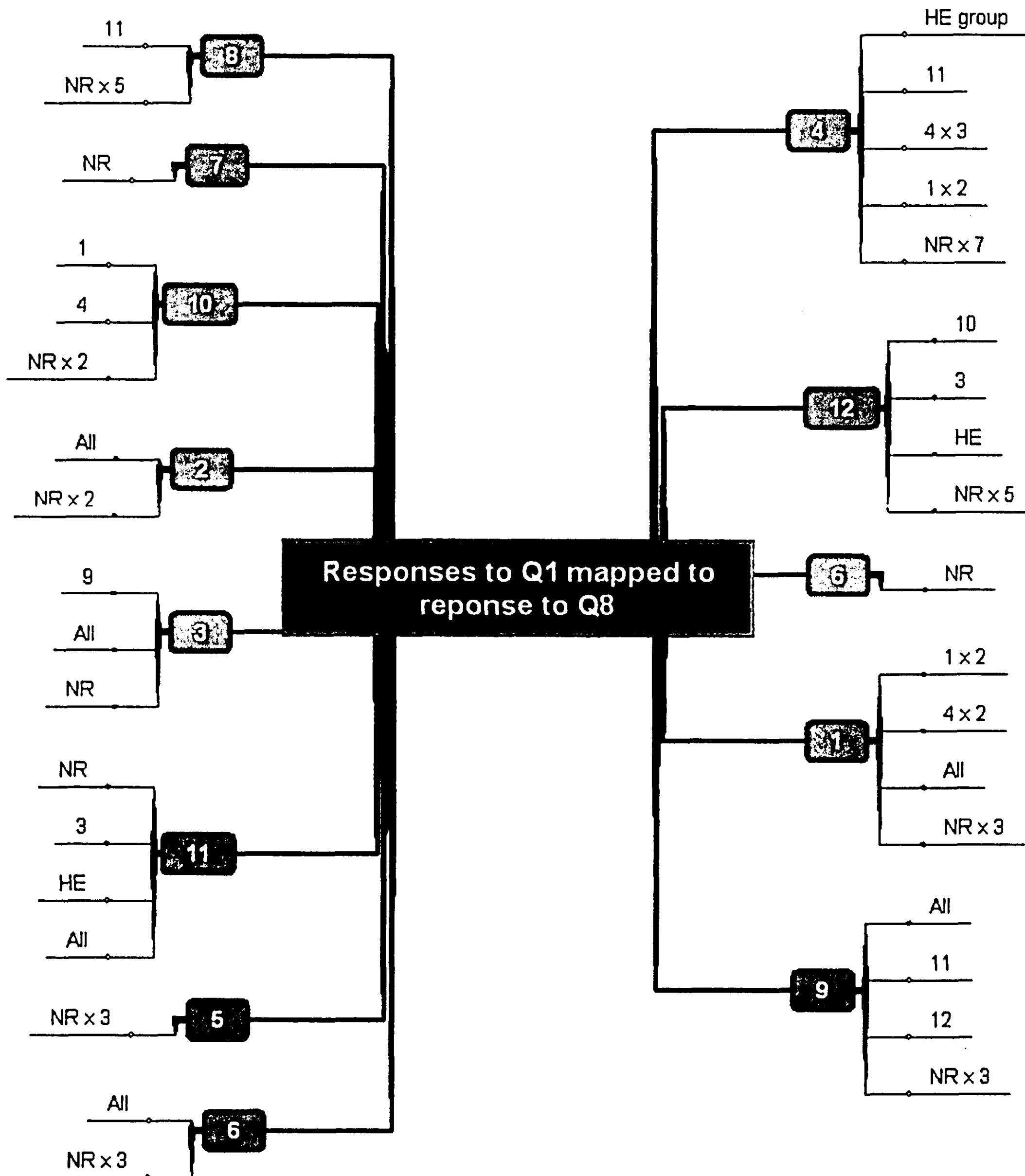


Annexe T: Attitudes to collaboration (Q10)

	No Pref.	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	
	%	%	%	%	n=
My background is similar with that of colleagues from my own curriculum area	4.4	52.9	17.6	25.0	68
I share more of my background with colleagues from other curriculum areas	8.6	18.6	21.4	51.4	70
I share more interests with colleagues from other curriculum areas	10.3	14.7	32.4	42.6	68
Differences in practitioners' backgrounds can lead to conflict	2.9	31.4	18.6	47.1	70
My specialist area is more prestigious than most others in college	4.3	7.1	40.0	48.6	70
Having broad general knowledge is a useful attribute in FE (or HE in FE) teaching	4.3	84.1	11.6	0.0	69
I have similar interests to colleagues from my own area	2.9	53.6	29.0	14.5	69
When I work collaboratively with colleagues across college I'm not concerned who else is a member of the group	4.5	56.7	13.4	25.4	67
When I work collaboratively I feel uneasy with colleagues from my own area	2.9	5.9	10.3	80.9	68
When I work collaboratively I feel uneasy with colleagues from other curriculum areas	3.2	11.3	14.5	71.0	62
There are some specialist areas in college that I never come into contact with	1.4	84.1	8.7	5.8	69
Cross-college working, generally, gives solutions to most problems worked on	8.7	50.7	33.3	7.2	69
Cross-college working, in the main, allows more innovative problem solving	5.9	67.6	20.6	5.9	68
Cross-college collaboration will become increasingly important as funding in the sector gets tighter	4.5	79.1	11.9	4.5	67
Informal 'get togethers' offer a much greater chance of solving problems than groups formally set up	2.9	39.1	43.5	14.5	69
I have little time to work collaboratively	4.4	58.8	16.2	20.6	68
Cross-college groups tend to work on problems that are unimportant to me	8.7	14.5	34.8	42.0	69
I relish the thought of joining a group	2.9	29.4	42.6	25.0	68

Annexe U: Curriculum area collaborators (Q8/Q9)

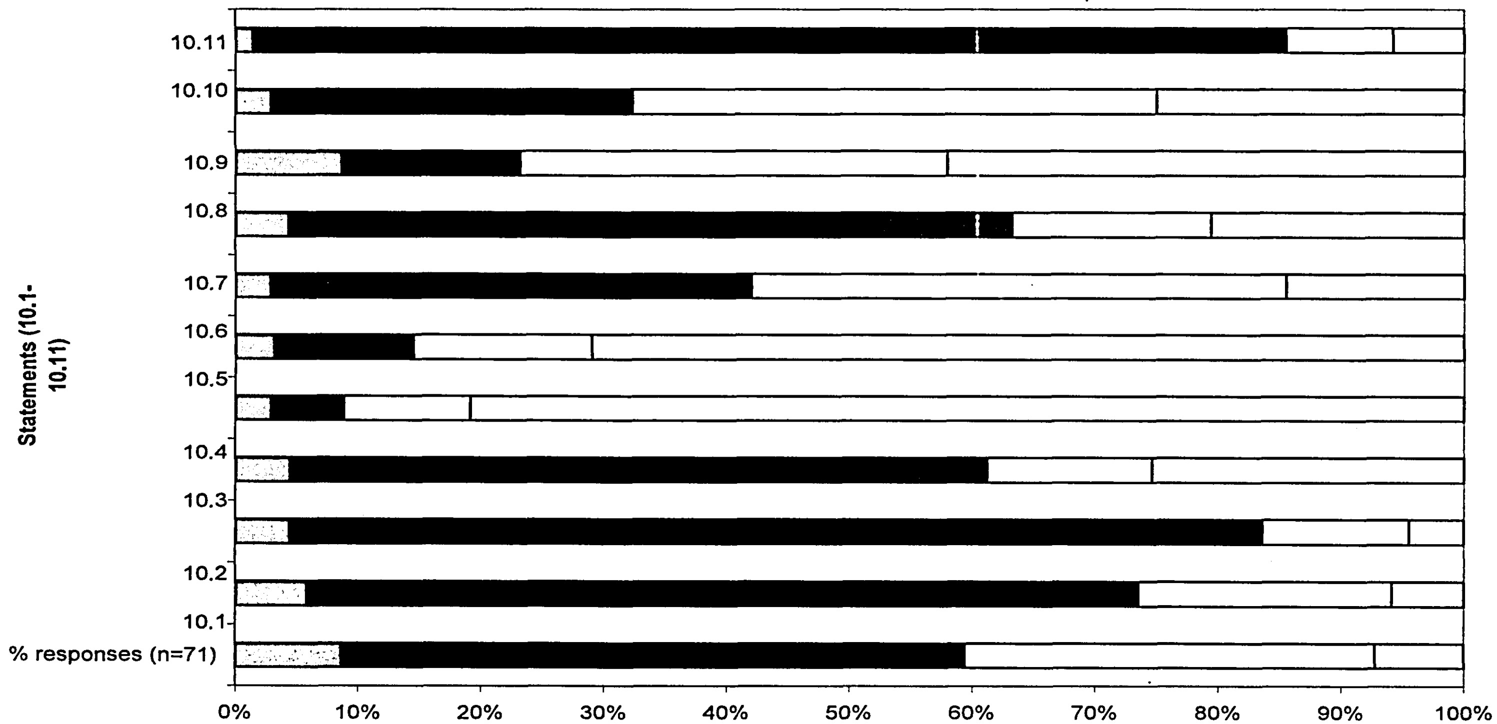
The numbers in small blue boxes on the 'stem' refer to curriculum areas list in Q1, the number on the leaf indicates number of responses.



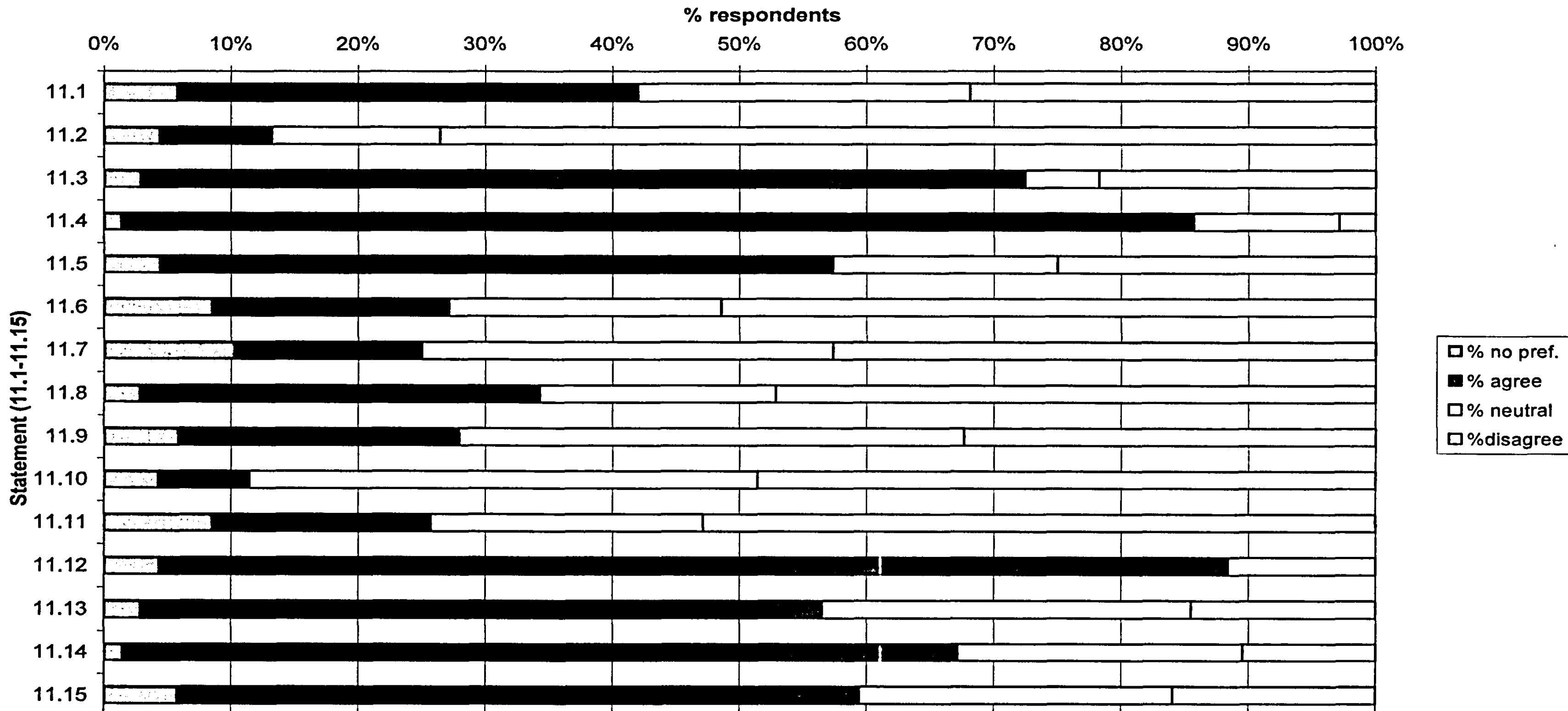
Annexe V: SPSS descriptive statistics of responses to survey Q10, 'Attitudes to cross-college working'

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SolutionsPoss	69	0	5	3.28	1.305
InnovSolutions	68	0	5	3.59	1.175
CollabImp	67	0	5	3.90	1.143
MemNoConcern	67	0	5	3.36	1.453
UneasyOwnArea	68	0	5	1.75	.952
UneasyOtherArea	62	0	4	2.02	1.016
InformalGpBenef	69	0	5	3.25	1.090
LittleTime	68	0	5	3.31	1.284
ProbsUnimp	69	0	5	2.45	1.132
RelishJoining	68	0	5	2.97	1.106
NoContact	69	0	5	4.14	.974
Valid N (listwise)	57				

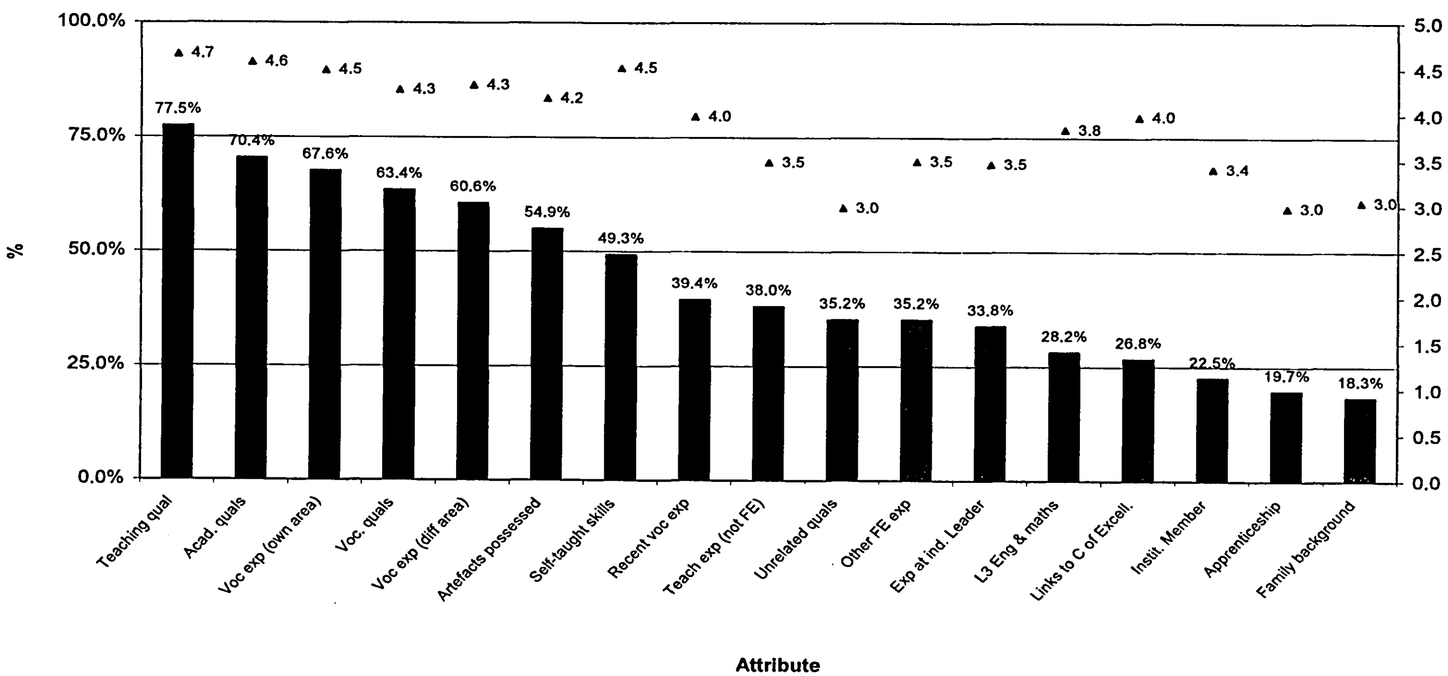
Annexe W: Attitudes to cross-college working (Q10)



Annexe X: Attitudes towards specialisms and those of colleagues (Q11)



Annexe Y: Objectified cultural capital: owned and perceived importance to practice (Q12)



Annexe Z: Academic-vocational spectrum classification based on International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)

Occupational classification of the lecturer's curriculum specialism.

Law	1
Sciences and mathematics, including programming	1
Initial teacher education	1
English, literacy, ESOL	1
Research, study skills	1
Special needs education	1
Performing arts, fine art	1
Languages	1
Mechanical engineering, computer networking	2
Early years' education,	2
Accountancy	2
Management	2
Business, ecommerce	3
ICT	3
Health & social care	3
Crafts	3
Skills for life (SFL)	3
Electrical engineering	4
Plumbing	5
Carpentry	5
Building, trowel occupations	5
Travel & tourism	6
Sports and fitness	7
Beauty therapy and hair	7
Employer Engagement	7
Cleaning	8

Source: International Labour Organisation (2011) [on-line] available from http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/isco88/major.htm. Date accessed 3/11/2011.

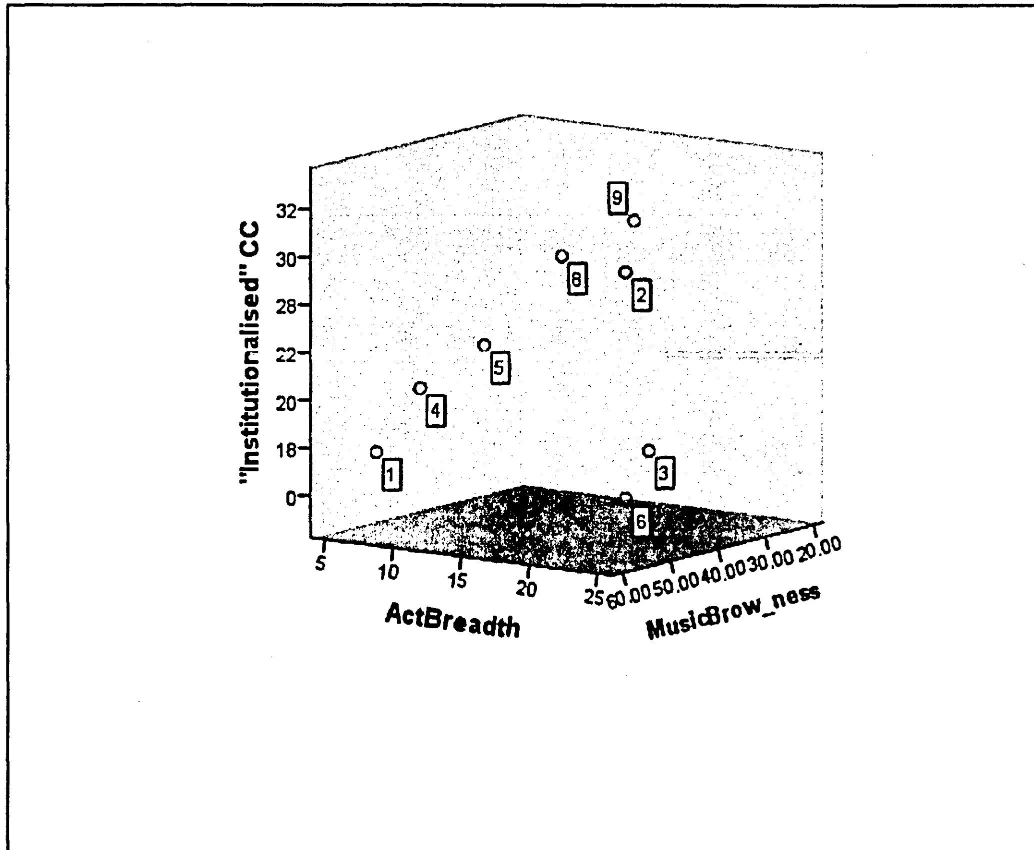
Annexe AA: Correlation matrix Q10 and Q11merged

Correlation Matrix[a]

		SolutionsPoss	InnovSolutions	CollabImp	MemNoConcern	UneasyOwnArea	UneasyOtherArea	InformalGpBenef	LittleTime	ProbsUnimp	RelishJoining	NoContact	MoreTrainingForSpecialism	SkillsLowerGrade	EquivalentSalary	SkillsUpdatingReqd	BackgroundSimilarOwnArea	SimilarBackgroundOtherAreas	SimilarInterestsOtherAreas	BackgroundsLeadConflict	SpecialismMoreDemanding	SpecialismMorePrestigeous	TooMuchAcademicEmphasis	GenKnowledgeAdvantageous	SimilarInterestsOwnArea	HigherQualsHigherSalary	OnTrustCantBeTooCareful
Correlation	SolutionsPoss	1.000	.802	.667	.378	.293	.304	.156	.129	.027	.290	.185	-.074	.222	.370	-.017	.031	.257	.383	.076	-.038	.061	.037	.199	.063	-.084	.052
	InnovSolutions	.802	1.000	.845	.382	.232	.273	.276	.218	.159	.256	.153	-.139	.247	.298	.104	.018	.267	.360	.011	.020	.083	.024	.082	.221	-.020	.004
	CollabImp	.667	.845	1.000	.286	.261	.283	.461	.208	.266	.264	.204	-.194	.187	.294	.132	-.022	.323	.403	-.048	.066	.109	.023	.069	.195	-.049	-.033
	MemNoConcern	.378	.382	.286	1.000	.364	.117	.190	.169	-.087	.241	.013	.123	.196	.187	.085	.258	.082	.070	-.039	.221	.251	.133	.174	.277	-.124	.108
	UneasyOwnArea	.293	.232	.261	.364	1.000	.592	.320	.335	.130	-.101	.196	-.015	.197	.217	.010	.314	.165	.220	.217	.117	.132	.131	.055	.282	.145	.180
	UneasyOtherArea	.304	.273	.283	.117	.592	1.000	.237	.420	.168	-.237	.156	-.130	.166	.260	.104	.323	.150	.133	.310	.066	-.028	.082	.170	.053	.134	.264
	InformalGpBenef	.156	.276	.461	.190	.320	.237	1.000	.397	.378	-.077	.195	-.077	.052	.204	.153	.026	.124	.231	.290	.272	.224	.235	-.007	.174	.057	.191
	LittleTime	.129	.218	.208	.169	.335	.420	.397	1.000	.267	-.111	.401	.064	.081	.213	.266	.259	.043	.169	.194	.291	.024	.206	.137	.204	.227	.479
	ProbsUnimp	.027	.159	.266	-.087	.130	.168	.378	.267	1.000	-.172	.220	.069	.023	-.044	.061	.035	.015	.196	.063	.220	.197	.107	-.215	.105	.033	.077
	RelishJoining	.290	.256	.264	.241	-.101	-.237	-.077	-.111	-.172	1.000	.162	.085	-.029	.131	.105	-.066	.046	.158	-.246	-.120	.115	-.127	.198	.226	.122	-.144
	NoContact	.185	.153	.204	.013	.196	.156	.195	.401	.220	.162	1.000	.040	.042	.103	.202	.106	.087	.111	.189	.109	-.083	.037	.278	.071	.234	.280
	MoreTrainingForSpecialism	-.074	-.139	-.194	.123	-.015	-.130	-.077	[illegible]	[illegible]	.085	.040	1.000	.071	.111	.337	.236	.027	.274	.284	.459	.256	.086	.376	.198	.312	.273
	SkillsLowerGrade	.222	.247	.187	.196	.197	.166	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-.029	.042	.071	1.000	.115	.187	.147	.277	.069	.164	.164	.371	.423	.329	.261	.051	.257
	EquivalentSalary	.370	.298	.294	.187	.217	.260	.204	.213	-.044	.131	.103	.111	.115	1.000	.403	.116	.176	.325	.208	.222	.198	.157	.421	.294	.250	.336
	SkillsUpdatingReqd	-.017	.104	.132	[illegible]	.010	.104	.153	.266	.061	.105	.202	.337	.187	.403	1.000	.324	.266	.393	.371	.552	.407	.329	.537	.299	.382	.326
	BackgroundSimilarOwnArea	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	.258	.314	.323	[illegible]	.259	[illegible]	-.066	.106	.236	.147	.116	.324	1.000	.085	.064	.272	.360	.280	.379	.336	.448	.262	.186
	SimilarBackgroundOtherAreas	.257	.267	.323	[illegible]	.165	.150	.124	.043	.015	.046	.087	.027	.277	.176	.266	.085	1.000	.579	.146	.157	.096	.004	.264	-.061	.125	.200
	SimilarInterestsOtherAreas	.383	.360	.403	[illegible]	.220	.133	.231	.169	.196	.158	.111	.274	.069	.325	.393	.064	.579	1.000	.410	.340	.316	.163	.334	.066	.143	.177
	BackgroundsLeadConflict	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	.217	.310	.290	.194	.063	-.246	.189	.284	.164	.208	.371	.272	.146	.410	1.000	.482	.266	.192	.453	.125	.232	.404
	SpecialismMoreDemanding	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	.221	.117	[illegible]	.272	.291	.220	-.120	.109	.459	.164	.222	.552	.360	.157	.340	.482	1.000	.593	.262	.396	.324	.243	.395
	SpecialismMorePrestigeous	[illegible]	[illegible]	.109	.251	.132	[illegible]	.224	.024	.197	.115	-.083	.256	.371	.198	.407	.280	.096	.316	.266	.593	1.000	.367	.324	.403	.201	.142
	TooMuchAcademicEmphasis	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	.133	.131	[illegible]	.235	.206	.107	-.127	.037	.086	.423	.157	.329	.379	.004	.163	.192	.262	.367	1.000	.284	.242	-.044	.207
	GenKnowledgeAdvantageous	.199	[illegible]	[illegible]	.174	[illegible]	.170	-.007	.137	-.215	.198	.278	.376	.329	.421	.537	.336	.264	.334	.453	.396	.324	.284	1.000	.245	.423	.444
	SimilarInterestsOwnArea	[illegible]	.221	.195	.277	.282	[illegible]	.174	.204	.105	.226	.071	.198	.261	.294	.299	.448	-.061	.066	.125	.324	.403	.242	.245	1.000	.511	.254
	HigherQualsHigherSalary	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	-.124	.145	.134	.057	.227	.033	.122	.234	.312	.051	.250	.382	.262	.125	.143	.232	.243	.201	-.044	.423	.511	1.000	.376
	OnTrustCantBeTooCareful	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	.108	.180	.264	.191	.479	.077	-.144	.280	.273	.257	.336	.326	.186	.200	.177	.404	.395	.142	.207	.444	.254	.376	1.000

Annexe AB: 3D plot of the interviewees' (1-9) sets of cultural capitals 'indices'

(weighted institutionalised capital Q12, breadth of pastimes engaged Q13 and affinity for highbrow music)



Annexe AC: R29's 'memo' - Bourdieuian notes

'Practical sense' of the FE field - the understanding and negotiations positions within cultural fields.

A group of practitioners identified as "part-of-the-machine": orthodox, unswerving, risk-averse. Themselves a product of the "machine" having studied FDs at Riverford.

Movement across and between the two fields of supermarket retailing and FE constitutes a cultural trajectory, shaping the habitus, in particular the embracing of collaboration perhaps.

The heteronymous poles of (1) supermarket retailing and (2) FE converge in managerialism embraced by the respondent:
"I know you have got to go down that route and from a business background I appreciate where we are coming and I expect targets and overheads to be met and things like that, but at the end of the day, you know, there's that I'd like the learners to have that first knowledge and I would like to be able to be given the time to give some knowledge and for them to use it rather than "...

A heteronymous pole of FE bound up in relations, and expressing the values, of the imperatives of business.

Engagement in highbrow cultural capital activities: QI, Trivial Pursuit, themed dinner parties recollecting exotic travel, invitees similar economic status (not "come dine with me").
'Disinterestedness': the disconnect between economic and social interest not apparent; the interviewee is economically-aware.

High academic capital: QI; imparting knowledge to 3 yr old son; deployment of current affairs in lessons.

Markers of distinction: dinner parties; exotic foreign travel; gastronomy.

Rejects alienation of education, the commoditisation and domination by the power in the field.

Annexe AD: Journal article co-authored and published during the project

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'I did it my way': voice, visuality and identity in doctoral students' reflexive videonarratives on their doctoral research journeys

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This article presents accounts of four UK doctoral students' engagement in a Higher Education Academy project which used digital video (DV) to promote reflexivity on their doctoral journeys. Proceeding from participants' accounts of the production of their videonarratives, the article analyses the relations between doctoral research, reflexivity and the use of DV, and their articulation in different ways by the participants. As an 'assemblage', the written form of the article aims to evoke both the collaborative design of the project, in that it is constructed as a multivocality, a series of 'plateaus', and also the multiple, shifting and always in-process nature of identity, immanent in each individual's account. The accounts address how epistemological, ontological and ethical considerations are articulated within visual and vocal re-presentations of the self in the individual videonarratives. Each narrative both does (and does not) resonate with the other narratives and each offers insights into the specificities of particular doctoral journeys. In experimenting with this form of presentation, we aim to bypass traditional accounts of research 'findings' as a form of transparent knowledge production and, instead, work within a mode of representation which seeks to acknowledge the 'masks of methodology'.

Keywords: voice; visuality; identity; doctoral students; reflexivity; videonarrative

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Introduction

This article has three aims. The first is to present four reflexive accounts from UK doctoral students about their research journeys. Each account was generated in relation to the participants' engagement in the production of a videonarrative, a reflexive visual narrative of each individual's doctoral journey recorded on digital video (DV). The videonarratives were produced during a project funded by ESCalate, the Education Subject Centre of the UK Higher Education Academy, and led by one of the authors (Carol) while she was completing her doctoral studies. The project is outlined in the next section and the four accounts are included below. The accounts themselves provide important insights into individual doctoral learning journeys, into what matters in terms of reflexive self-presentation and into how identity is reflexively accomplished visually and vocally in digital videonarrative presentations. Substantive findings from the project, and a consideration of the use of DV as a research method,

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have been more fully discussed elsewhere (Taylor 2011) which has enabled us in this article to focus on the methodological challenge presented in taking up the concepts of rhizome and assemblage (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

Thus, the second aim is to draw on our experiences from the videonarratives project to explore how a Deleuzian-inspired methodology might be put into practice. The article proceeds from two concepts from Deleuze and Guattari (1987), rhizome and assemblage, which are used to frame the article conceptually and methodologically. As we explain more fully below, a rhizome is a natural form or being which, in its growth and movement, can spread in any direction and move through levels and scales. The rhizome seemed a useful concept with which to explore the ways in which the doctoral journey opens its participants to multiple, iterative and heterogeneous ways of knowing, becoming and telling. In doing so, we see the rhizome as a means to contest academic accounts which construct the doctoral journey as a linear process. The concept of assemblage, simply put, refers to the emergence of non-unified wholes from the interactions between heterogeneous parts (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). In this article, the concept of assemblage describes well the process of reflexive production of the videonarratives as evolving compositions, as narrative (re)-tellings of the self and the relations between subjectivity, knowledge, memory, institutional space and place, are caught (or momentarily assembled) into video accounts which, coherent or not, were recognized by participants as provisional and contingent digital productions.

The third aim of the article was to put the concept of assemblage to work in relation to our methodological attempts to author this article horizontally and collaboratively, as a rhizomatic series rather than a linearity. Having multiple authors and no one 'centre', our intention has been to construct the article as an experiment in multivocal production. As such, the aim is to unsettle established (normative) modes of authorial academic production by instantiating the practice of assemblage in the writing process. The article stands as one outcome of a complex research process which was itself based on reflexive, collaborative participation (i.e. the production of the videonarratives and the video-prompted reflexive interviews). Furthermore, during the research process and during the writing of this article, the establishment of working ethical relations among doctoral peers was paramount, given that both research project and article emerged through processes of instantiated, collaborative, negotiated, participatory research practice. Of course, putting these 'immanent ethics' into practice was not always easy: different authors had different roles (Carol as project lead author); relations and experiences (doctoral peers but at different stages in the journey); and methodological and theoretical commitments (Yvonne's allegiance to life history, Gladson's to Marxism and Rob's to a hybrid interpretivism, for example). More widely, we held varying orientations to the purposes of the project, different responsibilities in the production of the article and divergent experiences of power relations in the processes of both.

All of these factors have, visibly and invisibly, impinged on the ethical production of the text you are reading. Nevertheless, it is in its constitution as an academic assemblage that we hope to draw the reader into a multicentred complexity, characteristic of what Lather (2007, 120) calls a 'less comfortable social science' in which all the pieces have a place but do not necessarily 'fit'. Of course, the alternative scenario is possible: the 'fugitive pieces' (Michaels 1997) remain fugitive and frustration, rather than insight, might be the result. It is a risk we think is worth taking.

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The videonarratives project

The videonarratives project ran from February until June 2009. The participants were five doctoral students whose participation in the project arose in response to an open letter of invitation circulated within the doctoral schools of two Northern UK universities. While having a small number of participants, the project included both main types of UK doctorate (i.e. a three-year research-based PhD and an EdD, a professional doctorate, which includes taught and research components); a 'research-led' and a 'post-1992' university; and students at different stages of their doctoral journeys. Its main purpose was to enable participants to gain practical skills in the use and editing of DV in order to produce individual videonarratives. The videonarratives were then used in one-to-one interviews to prompt participants' reflexivity on their doctoral journeys (Taylor 2009a, http://escalate.ac.uk/5214). The project also sought to explore the use of videonarratives for personal and professional development purposes.

The reasons for using DV include: first, the practical availability of portable videocameras and the ease of use of editing programs such as moviemaker on home computers; second, the ethical requirement that ownership of students' reflexive 'products' would lie solely with them and would not be stored or located within an institutional site such as a virtual doctoral school (all videonarratives were held on a USB memory stick in the possession of the individual); and the methodological desire to explore how video could be used to promote reflexivity, along with developing some critical understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of video as a method. The use of visual methods is increasingly popular in social science research generally and has recently been used in a range of educational contexts to promote professional development, analyse classroom interaction and to reflect on teaching practice (Jaworski 1990; Hennessy and Deaney 2006; Coombs and Potts 2007; Clarke 2009). Although Pauwels (2010, 545) notes that visual research is still a 'dispersed and ill-defined' conglomerate of varied research practices which remain in need of significant methodological and conceptual elaboration, there have been recent (Emmison and Smith 2000; Prosser 2000, 2007; Banks 2007) and past studies (Hockings 1975; Curry and Clarke 1977) which have argued strongly for the insights that may be gained in using visual sources in qualitative research. In the videonarratives project, the use of DV offered participants the scope to hold and analyse a frame in detail and to conduct repeat observations in a range of contexts. Both of these practices were important in facilitating reflexive engagement with images which are inherently polysemic and avail themselves of multiple interpretations; and in directing attention to the micro-processes of visual self-presentation through verbal and non-verbal communication. Carol discusses these visual aspects of the project in more detail elsewhere (Taylor 2011).

The project had two stages: a one-day workshop followed by in-depth one-to-one interviews which used the videonarrative as a basis for reflexive discussion. Both the workshop and the interviews evolved collaboratively from participants' discussions. The first part of the workshop focused on identification and discussion of critical incidents in individual's doctoral journeys. As events which are 'critical, influential, or decisive' (Miles and Huberman 1994, 115) and which may 'generate ethical reflection' (Hanhimaki and Tirri 2009, 8), critical incidents provided a useful framework to focus initial reflection on the significance of specific events in the doctoral journey while at the same time opening up a discursive space for discussion of the particular events and experiences which were uniquely meaningful to that individual (Richardson and van

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Maanen 1995; Coffey and Atkinson 1996). The focus on experience of the event rather than the event itself (Worth 2009) generated a reflexive, iterative and collaborative sharing of doctoral stories and enabled participants to develop a narrative 'line' for their videonarratives. The rest of the workshop focused on production and editing skills, filming the videonarrative and a plenary reflection. Each of us produced a videonarrative detailing key events which we considered had formatively influenced our self-production as becoming-researchers (Crossouard and Pryor 2008). The content, structure and visual style of the videonarratives were left entirely to participants (Taylor 2011).

In the second stage of the project, Carol carried out one-to-one in-depth interviews with the four project participants using the method of video-prompted reflexivity (Taylor 2011). This method is based on a reflexive viewing of the videonarrative in which key images or image sequences are selected by the participant and then used as the basis for explication, discussion and further reflexive exploration. The discussions ranged widely and included biography, career choice, family support and relationships, academic and institutional contexts, relations with supervisors, ontological, methodological and ethical issues. The use of video-prompted reflexivity effectively created a reflexive relay between the videonarrative accounts and the participants' ongoing narrations of their doctoral journeys. Significant also in adding reflexive layers were the repeated viewings of the videonarratives with family, friends and a doctoral supervisor which had occurred in the intervening period in a range of largely informal viewing contexts.

As reflexive accomplishments, the videonarratives exemplified some of the advantages of narrative. They captured the temporality of events within the doctoral journey; they illustrate how individuals revise their stories as new events are added; and they demonstrate how personal narratives are structured and made meaningful through the retelling of key events (Polkinghorne 1988). By focusing on the meaning of events in the doctoral journey, the videonarratives functioned as self-storying practices which became constitutive of the self represented on video. Because the videonarratives were designed with an audience in mind, they evoked reflexive consideration of their social dimension and purpose, even where the videonarrative was primarily made for the participant and not for public display. All of these factors gave a depth and complexity to the narration of the individual doctoral journeys in the videonarratives.

However, this article is based not on the videonarratives themselves, but on a further reflexive iteration. Participants produced a 1000-word written narrative commenting on their involvement in the project and its impact on their thinking about research practices, on their self-representational practices in their videonarrative and on their personae as potential public academics. The reflexive layers involved are constitutive of the narratives included here (and their relation with the videonarratives and the video-prompted reflexive interviews) and work as a multiplicity of intersections and contingencies (Squire, Andrews, and Tamboukou 2008). Thus, this article privileges what Kenway and McLeod (2004, 527) refer to as a 'stronger form' of reflexivity which fully acknowledges how the activity of the knower influences what can be known, rather than 'reflection', which is usually articulated to an instrumental improvement of practice (Clegg and Bradley 2006), although an element of the latter does inform one of the narratives below. Our four written reflexive narratives are included below. Taken together, and individually, they offer insights into the relations between reflexive self-narration, doctoral research journeys and the opportunities and the problems of DV. In doing so, they contribute to an aspect of doctoral education currently

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theoretically under-elaborated. The heterogeneity of the accounts also underpins the methodological orientation of this article and it is to this that we now turn.

Doctoral students' narratives, videonarratives and the doctoral journey: the article as assemblage

In *Writing degree zero*, Barthes (1953, 58) characterizes 'clarity' as 'purely a rhetorical device', noting how what is 'possible' in writing is conditioned by 'History and Tradition'. The pressure to 'prune, eliminate, forbid, purge, purify', in other words perform what Minh-ha (1989, 16–17) has called an 'ablution of language', has long been central to modes of academic writing in which clarity has been presumed to be the guarantor of presence (Derrida 1972), whether the presence of authorial intention or of the 'reality' of the events represented in the text. Taken on these terms, academic writing has itself been seen as an instantiation of a mode of power, as a means by which authors (whether un/willingly and/or un/consciously) collaborate in and thereby reproduce the 'official' institutional power of the academy by subjectivating themselves within and to modes of 'correct' writing (Usher and Edwards 1994; Schostak 2002; Dunne, Pryor, and Yates 2005). Recently, accounts of education emanating from different theoretical orientations including deconstructionism (Stronach and MacLure 1997; MacLure 2005), postmodernism (Cary 2006) and feminism (Lather 2007) have critiqued on a number of grounds authorial/authoritative approaches to academic writing by questioning the presumptions of omnipresence, objectivity and linearity on which they rely.

In such a vein, Richardson (2003) regards writing as itself a method of inquiry, as a way of knowing, not simply a way of telling. In positing language as constitutive, Richardson envisages writing as a multiple textual space within which various voices jostle, and in which that which is partisan, partial, personal and perhaps even political can find expression without seeking the resolution offered by an imposition of (fake) clarity. Incorporating Richardson's insights into Deleuzoguattarian analytics, in particular through use of the concepts of assemblage and rhizome will, we argue, move us further on in the direction of 'challenging an image of narratives as unified representations of lives and subjects' (Tamboukou 2008, 360). As we see it, the advantage to be gained from these concepts is that it offers a means of authoring and presenting this article as a series or multiplicity of narratives. These are enmeshed within a multicentred complexity as a collage of perhaps incompatible parts, which render the article itself as a methodological instance of flux and instability (Law 2004).

As an organic form with offshoots which travel in any direction and points which are connected to others in non-linear ways, the rhizome offers a conceptual means to break with radical (root and surface) and arborescent (root and flowering) explanations in order to get beyond a dualistic mode of thinking which privileges epistemological and ontological binaries, for example, depth/surface, presence/absence, truth/ideology, mind/body. Thus, the four narratives which appear below are not designed to 'follow' each other or 'lead on' in any linear fashion; they are not designed to 'clarify' the essence of the doctoral journey; and neither do they blend into a coherent and contained narrative. Instead, they work as an assemblage. The concept of assemblage provides a way to think about 'wholes' which 'emerge' from the interaction between the parts, and entail a relation of 'exteriority' in that a part may be detached from one assemblage and plugged into another in which it will function differently (DeLanda 2006). In presenting the doctoral journey in its individual complexity, the

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four narratives together form a conjunctive synthesis of heterogeneous elements which retain, and privilege, their individuating differentiation in meaning and style. Secondly, because each narrative stands 'alone' but in conjunctive assemblage, they invite the reader to draw her own 'lines' between them, to read them as 'open configurations [with] continuous connections' (Tamboukou 2008, 368). As such, they aspire to the status of 'plateaus' where each narrative becomes a 'self-vibrating region(s) of intensities' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 22). Thirdly, the videonarratives and the doctoral journeys they recount trace the desire of each of us as becoming-researcher as a flow of 'connectivities, intersections and openings between knowing-identity-power-space' (Taylor 2009b, 267), attesting to the evolving nature of identity as a mobile and open process.

The article, then, instates our attempt to present the doctoral journey as a multiplicity and, as a horizontality without a central pivot, puts into practice the concept of rhizomic assemblage by foregrounding 'connection and heterogeneity' rather than linearity. While everything in the article 'can be connected to anything other and must be' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 7), at the same time, each narrative functions as a rupture or break, a deterritorializing line of flight moving out and towards the exterior of the narratives and of the article. This has not been/cannot be 'comfortable': as doctoral students, we are positioned precariously in what Lather (1998) called the 'in-between space of any knowing' and this perhaps conditions our academic status and our knowledge claims as it does our identities. Alternatively, this 'in-between space' is an intricate, multiple location from which we can view the institutional entanglements and desiring problematics of the doctoral journey with a keen insight. We would argue that the benefits of writing as assemblage help us unmask the 'masks of methodology' and move us in the direction of that 'less comfortable social science' of which Lather (2007, 119–20) spoke by further unpicking the traditional epistemic codes of objectivist social science.

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Narratives of the doctoral journey are now increasingly prevalent and include accounts by students (Batchelor and Di Napoli 2006; Luck 2009), joint accounts by students and supervisors (Mackenzie and Ling 2009) and a growing number of accounts, in both written and video formats, of the doctoral journey framed in terms of research skills development arising from recent policy reconfigurations (Wisker 2008; Vitae 2009). The current article adds to the range of doctoral narratives and, through its form as rhizomatic assemblage, provides a distinctive methodological approach in conceptualizing the doctoral journey. The next four sections present each of our reflexive narratives. In line with the methodological principle of rhizomatic assemblage, the order in which they appear was determined by the drawing of lots, a strategy deployed as a practical and conceptual move to enable us actively to work against integrating 'parts' into a seamless whole.

Gladson's narrative: Marx, Mills and me: crafting a life history from a videonarrative

> Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past (Marx 1969, 389).

> The life of an individual cannot be adequately understood without references to the institutions within which his biography is enacted (Mills 1959, 12).

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My participation in the videonarratives project precipitated my subsequent thinking and writing about my doctoral journey and how I might represent this as a life history. Taking my lead from Marx and Mills and from Goodson and Sikes' (2001, 88) contention that 'the life story individualizes and personalizes, the life history contextualizes and politicizes', I was moved to consider how an individualized account might serve as a springboard to a narrative at the intersections of biography, society and history (Mills 1959). Awareness of the life-history approach to research has in turn broadened my understanding of the epistemological and the ontological assumptions in my own research on the use of virtual learning environments in science education where I have adopted a mixed methodology approach.

Identifying critical incidents in my research journey and listening to my experiences and those of co-participants in the project provided the impetus to reflect on the commonalities and differences in our stories. How far and in what respects are they shaped by and relational to their location in specific historical, cultural, political, geographical and institutional contexts? The story of how I, a Zimbabwean from a 'poor' family, became a doctoral student at a UK institution has led me to an understanding that transcends a narrative of individual resourcefulness. This is not to deny my own agency because I have been resourceful. Moreover, decisions to leave one's country, family and friends are inherently complex and difficult and not just on a personal level. However, listening to the linear narrative of my doctoral journey on DV, I came to understand how desires, beliefs and aspirations are entangled with bigger social forces. I thus reproduce an albeit truncated version of this linear narrative below. I also consciously interlace critical incidents in the narrative with commentary on their significance. This commentary was not as deliberate in my videonarrative.

I started my formal education at the same time Zimbabwe gained its political independence in 1980. This is significant because the new government was prioritizing the formal educational system. Education was an important vehicle for the country's development agenda and academic rather than vocational education held the promise of access to employment. Almost every member of this new society believed that their lives could be improved by an academic education. Thus parents, regardless of their economic status, tried their best to ensure that their children went to school and my parents were no different. However, they could only afford to send me and my siblings to public day schools. My father was a motor mechanic and, although she was an intelligent woman, my mother had received only a basic primary education. My dreams of specializing in veterinary sciences, themselves shaped by the country's development agenda at that time, were shattered by my failure to get a place at either of the two intensely competitive public universities which offered the course I wished to take.

Significantly for me, my country at that time wanted to implement socialism as a political ideology and I got a Zimbabwean government scholarship to train as a science teacher in Cuba. I lived in Cuba for five years, studied at one of the best pedagogical institutions and graduated with a first class BSc in biology. I also had the opportunity to develop my interest in teaching and learning and research and to present research papers at several conferences. Upon completion of my training, I went back to Zimbabwe to work as a secondary school science/biology teacher. Here, I was reminded of the fragility of socialist aspirations as corruption and nepotism was rampant. I expected my degree and experience would ensure a sought after job in a good urban school, but I was placed in a small rural secondary school in an unfamiliar locality. I realized social connections still seemed to be essential. However, conditions in this school gave me the impetus to embark on postgraduate studies as a way to lead

the 'better life' that I had always imagined. I enrolled for a Master's degree at a local university and proceeded to become a university lecturer. My family celebrated the achievement with a sense of pride.

By this time, my country, and I, began to feel the effects of the deteriorating economic situation. Personally, I also realized that a Master's degree was not enough, and I was convinced that a PhD was the best way forward if I wanted to continue in an academic career at university. Due to funding problems, I could not get a place at a local university and I had to explore opportunities abroad. At this time, the Spanish government was offering scholarships for a Master's degree in diplomacy and international relations as a way of promoting cultural ties within the framework of the two countries' bilateral relations. I thus moved to Spain and, because of the volatile political situation back home, I was compelled to remain in Europe. I received a scholarship from a UK university and it was finally possible for me to undertake PhD studies.

In summary, my doctoral journey has again required me to leave my family, friends and country. As I now reflexively see it, this linear narrative of my doctoral journey, and the literal, geographical journeying it has required, is relational to wider social forces including the development agenda of Zimbabwe and its economic and political crises. Not only have these forces impacted on my individual desires, choices and decisions, I have also felt the consequences of having to align my ambitions for educational credentials with the social inequalities of a ruthlessly competitive educational meritocracy. My doctoral journey may be a sign of individual resourcefulness, but it is not singularly heroic: as Marx reminds us, all individual struggle is located within wider social and economic structures. This 'conversation with Marx' is itself a critical incident within my videoanarrative. As Lawler (2002, 242) says, 'narratives are social products produced by people within the context of specific social, historical and cultural locations'. Producing my own videonarrative led me to appreciate this approach to stimulate reflexivity, which, I contend, is both a critical and an ethical practice (Adkins 2002).

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Yvonne's narrative: troubling reflexivity through videonarrative

Pillow (2003) argues that reflexivity is used simultaneously to validate *and* interrogate research practices and representations. How can this be? I think there are four interrelated reasons. First, 'reflexivity' is conceptually overburdened. Secondly, conceptual elisions and conflations occur within it. Thirdly, this in turn hinders appreciation of how densely packed the term is and from teasing out and troubling what it means. Finally, as a result, 'reflexivity' hardens into a monolith. These are bold statements and I am being provocative, but they can explain why 'reflexivity' can serve a myriad of sometimes paradoxical purposes. It also explains why I am invariably required to clarify what I mean by 'feminist' and 'life-history' research, but my 'reflexivity' has never been stopped and searched.

Pillow's paper was based on a notion of reflexivity as 'self-telling' (Skeggs 2002) which allowed her to critique its role as 'confession, catharsis or cure'. Assigning this role to reflexivity would have been difficult, if not impossible had she understood it instead as a set of practices and actions. This is not a matter of differing interpretations of the same concept. 'Self-telling' and 'doing reflexivity' are in my view different animals altogether and sometimes I use the term 'reflexing' to signify the latter. However, self-telling may itself be a way of reflexing, as it was for me in the videonarratives project. In my view, the purpose of reflexing in academic productions is akin to

use of *Verfremdungseffekte* (alienation techniques) in theatrical productions by the German playwright Bertholt Brecht. In short, they are intended to induce a prickle under the skin and keep us critically alert so that we might hang on to our disbelief. They make us aware of the particular purposes of what we are producing or being presented with. So here, for example, I am employing as *Verfremdungseffekte* the use of German words in English text and referencing literary rather than social scientific work. As a further example, I will now fragment my narrative and interrupt it with interpolations, in italics, from Skeggs' (2002) trenchant and provocative critique of the methods used to constitute 'the reflexive self'. I am not engaging with Skeggs' arguments here. I am simply citing her to keep my (and the reader's) attention on the processes of my academic labouring rather than on the product. Clearly, this sort of writing requires a different kind of reading than is the norm (Sparkes 2009) which in turn raises a number of ethical issues. I assure readers that doing reflexivity is a facet of my praxis, so these considerations are never far from my mind (Downs 2009) even if I do not address them directly here.

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YD	I am doing life-history research and I agree with Goodson and Sikes (2001) that it is the context that distinguishes a life history from a life story.
BS	*The discursive struggle has a long and dispersed history (351).*
YD	For this reason, I have been keen to foreground my thesis as a cultural artefact and to represent it in the form of other cultural artefacts.
BS	*(T)he powerful …… authorize themselves through their own cultural resources (363).*
YD	Among other things, I am creating a small patchwork quilt as a way to (re)present my research, and I also set up a blog (http://phoenixrising-mindingthegaps.blogspot.com). The latter was intended as a counter-narrative to my thesis. I thus describe my blog as 'recording parts of my research journey other methods cannot reach', one of whose aims is a 'test of my willingness to ramble publicly' (blog entry November 2008).
BS	*(D)ifferent technologies …. enable different forms of narration and visuality (351).*
YD	My participation in the videonarratives project was intended to support and animate the aims of my blog, because as Pink (2007a) observes, the visual cannot be divorced from other elements of culture.
BS	*The self that could be told also had to be seen to be fully known (351).*
YD	Furthermore, cultural artefacts and productions are also representations of social practices and experiences, here understood as the social practices attached to 'being a PhD student'.

BS '(Reflexivity is) a resource for authorizing oneself (350) ... mobilized for the display of cleverness (351) ... to shore up the composite of the academic reflexive self (361)'

YD For me, producing the videonarrative epitomized 'the irrational, messy and embodied process' of 'becoming-other-to-one's-self in research' (Sparkes 2009, 301).

BS *(The researcher's) story is based on their identity which is usually articulated as a singularity and takes no account of movement in and out of space, cultural resources, place, bodies and others but nonetheless authorizes itself to speak (360).*

YD Transfixed, I could not take my eyes off the storyteller. Was that me?

BS 'The telling of personal stories operates as a form of rhetoric whereby we become seduced by the confession, the immediacy of the experience of being there and the personal information' (364).

YD I then took the recording and fragmented these into three shorter 'movies'. This fragmenting of my narrative was, I felt, in tune with my ideas that the stories of our 'selves' are multiple, complex, inconsistent and relational to the specific purposes they serve.

BS *So we need only to ask who is representing themselves as reflexive, as having a self worth knowing, a voice worth hearing (365).*

YD I intended to use all three clips in the blog but finally embedded only one. This was due to issues with 'internal confidentiality' (Tolich 2004), when someone may be identifiable even though they are not named. Paradoxically, the clip I did use contained a named person, my mother, as I juxtapose starting my 'journey' as a PhD student with the start of her decline.

BS 'The techniques of telling also rely on accruing the stories of others in order to make them property for oneself (349). In order for some people to move, to be reflexive, others must be fixed in place' (349).

YD In this videonarrative, I wanted to show how the self is not a bounded entity but is replete with often competing identities. So I included it on my blog because/although it prompts an (uncomfortable) engagement with Davies and Davies' (2007, 1140) question 'what are we doing when we generate accounts of experience, and what is it that we can responsibly do with those accounts?'

BS *The telling of the self becomes a manifestation and maintenance of difference and distinction (350).*

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This is a necessarily brief example. Nonetheless, it illustrates what I mean by 'doing reflexivity' or 'reflexing'. It supports my intention to cast videonarrative as a way to generate opportunities for engaging with 'doing reflexivity' and for reflection on how to transform self-telling into awareness of the ways in which we make knowledge.

Carol's narrative: intermezzo positionality

This narrative muses on the politics of intermezzo positionality in my doctoral journey and during the videonarratives project. As noted earlier, 'a rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, intermezzo' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 25), and this became an appropriate characterization of the epistemological spaces I occupied during my doctoral journey.

The first dimension of my intermezzo positionality was my theoretical location at the border crossing of various disciplines (English, media studies, popular culture studies, film studies and social science) even while I was physically located within a university school of education. My doctoral journey became a move towards deterritorialization (Deleuze and Guattari 1987), a line of flight from territorializing forms of disciplinarity (Foucault 1982) which, I felt, sought to situate my doctoral research as a boundaried subject (i.e. 'education research') and condition my subjectivity within conventional academic educational discourse. In contrast, my intermezzo positionality enabled me to align myself with those theorists who see education as a contested disciplinary field, marked by struggles between different disciplinary paradigms and differing methodological orientations (Bourdieu 1998; Grenfell and James 2004). My intermezzo becoming as a post-disciplinary researcher within 'education' conceived as a 'magnetic subject' (Pels 1999), shifted me into a smooth interstitial epistemological space where different knowledges could mingle (Taylor 2009a).

The second intermezzo positionality concerned my hybrid occupational position as a (new) full-time academic in a post-1992 Northern UK university and my position as a (very) part-time doctoral student at a research-led South-East university. I dispensed with Hartley (1992) and Said's (1994) concept of the traveller, migrant, exile or stranger, that quintessential postmodern subject whose physical displacements are mirrored by ontological dislocations, finding them inaccurate descriptions of my experiences. Instead, I considered whether becoming-nomad was a more appropriate explanation. In Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) geophilosophy, the 'nomad' is a category of person whose line of flight leads beyond striated space, i.e. institutional and hegemonically disciplined space, into the 'smooth space' of 'nomad thought'. My geographical-spatial shift 'North' did not lead to experiences of displacement but, rather, to rhizomic paths which were affective, virtual and generative in relation to writing my doctoral thesis. As becoming-nomad, I ontologically 'found myself' (in both senses of the term) as an inhabitant in 'smooth space', a space characterized by conductivity, flux and immersion (Massumi 1992, 5–6). A necessary consequence of my occupation of smooth space was the epistemological requirement that I constitute myself as thesis author by taking up the 'authorizing' possibility to author my thesis in accordance with the flatter, horizontal, heterogeneous connections of the rhizome. From this, various conjunctive syntheses emerged: now, at the 'end' of my nomadic doctoral journey, I see that my thesis, my becoming-researcher subjectivity and positionality as hybrid lecturer/doctoral student all partake of 'the consistency of a fuzzy aggregate' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 420).

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Occupying an intermezzo positionality also characterized my research practice in the videonarrative project. On the one hand, I occupied the position of lead-researcher among my doctoral student peers, having budgetary responsibility for the delivery of 'educational outcomes' to an external funding body as well as having an ethical duty to other project participants. On the other hand, as doctoral student, I was ostensibly an equal in a project specifically designed as a multivocal participatory narrative collaboration (Robson 2002; Creswell 2003; Andrews, Squire, and Tamboukou 2008). The different positionalities conferred by my methodological horizontality (as equal) and performative hierarchization (as project lead) enmeshed me in delicate tensions and negotiations during the workshop and the interviews for the project. For example, my willing subjectivation (Foucault 1990, 212) to the performative exigencies I imagined necessary to run a research project 'successfully', *simultaneously* enmeshed me within a contradictory research performative, a feminist allegiance to unmasking the authority invested in normative/normalized research protocols.

Fourth and finally, I turn to the embodied performative that I produced as a self-representation in my videonarrative. In what way might this too be an intermezzo proceeding from the middle? I did not prepare a script for my videonarrative, but as I listened to it afterwards, I see it as a carefully modulated storying. It hinges on a distillation of a series of 'me's' in order to produce a contemporary me who stands as a visual and verbal signifier of the distance travelled on the doctoral journey from the 'me then' to the 'me now'. It is an intermezzo 'me now' who speaks in the videonarrative to tell how close she is to finishing her thesis and to obtaining the external badge of academic credibility conferred by doctoral completion, the achieved status of the posited 'future me'. My videonarrative performative is an embodiment of what Deleuze (2004, 96) meant when he said 'it is always a third party who says "me"'.

My videonarrative instates a reflexive process of verbal biographical self-production (Giddens 1991) while, at the same time, it is crafted as a visual self-technology, 'a tool [to] enable embodied communication' (Pink 2007b, 242). Like Williamson (1986), I chose my clothes to present a certain 'look', I modulate my voice using tone and stress patterns to signify I am interestingly knowledgeable and I enunciate consonants to ensure clarity of expression. I also keep my hands still in awareness that quiet hands are the embodied habitus of authority (Zandy 1995), while consciously employing a practice of looking directly into the camera-eye in order to address personally my putative audience and to demonstrate my (feminist) possession of the gaze (Thornham 1999). In other words, I craft an intelligible gendered performative (Butler 1999, 22) that visually embodies academic confidence and the modulated enthusiasm of authorial presence.

But I now ask where am 'I' in these verbal and visual self-representations? Am I that person/those persons? Not any longer and yet ... yes, I was, momentarily. My videonarrative is, then, a momentary capture of that instantaneous 'me' in the process of becoming, where 'becoming is not an evolution ... becoming is a verb, becoming is a rhizome [which] produces nothing other than itself' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 262). The particular videonarrative I produced on that particular day is, then, and can only be an assemblage of narrative and visual forces, a 'plane for the emission of signs' (Tamboukou 2010), in which my self-storying as becoming-researcher is momentarily rendered visible, and in which the affective capacities of my body (Ringrose 2010) are momentarily held. Subjectivity, it would seem, is always intermezzo, always a proceeding from the middle, a way of coming and going while being 'here' at the same time. The intermezzo locations I have traced here complicate

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the doctoral research journey, figuring it as an 'in-between space of any knowing' (Lather 1998), as a rhizomic multiplicity which combines material, affective, symbolic, ontological and epistemological dimensions.

Rob's narrative: the road is made by walking

> Wanderer, your footsteps are the road, and nothing more; wanderer, there is no road, the road is made by walking. (Machado 1978)

My narrative has two themes. First, I foreground my doctoral journey as a process of unlearning my entrenched realist thinking to embrace the unsettling indeterminacy of relativism. The second considers the role of videonarrative in this process.

When I joined the EdD programme at a northern UK university two years ago, I anticipated a logical, sequential pathway. Module 2, it was explained, was built on Module 1 and informed Module 3; a comforting model of progressive knowledge construction. It aligned to my natural sciences background and my view of research as the application of prior-art to new situations. In a short time, I realized my learning was becoming amorphous and disorientating – a kind of Durkheimian anomie (Durkheim 1897). I also identified a trajectory towards 'self-actualization': Goldstein's (1995) master motive for the realization of all of one's possibilities; *der Wille zur Macht*, the 'will to power' of Nietzsche's philosophy (1909–16) popularized by Maslow (1943) as the pinnacle in the hierarchy of human need. I began to notice how significant events, 'critical incidents', were coterminous with the seemingly insignificant and serendipitous. These stochastic (randomly occurring) events brought a depth of personal change: a clear epistemological shift to a position engaging with relativism.

One piece of new knowledge could trigger a disturbing cascade through my entire belief system, dismantling much in my entire knowledge structure. I remember vividly a seemingly innocuous remark from the thought-provoking programme leader, Paul: 'Are then simplistic solutions simple solutions?' Critical moments occurring at otherwise uncritical times also contributed to this often challenging and unsettling situation. I feel as Alice might have done in Wonderland: if we do not know where we want to go (or indeed, where we *could* go), then each path we can take is good (Carroll 1865). I now think of knowledge as a self-searching, self-finding path; a self-organizing autopoiesis. As a consequence, my research practice seems chaotic: a confusing plethora of possible paths appear legitimate; no interconnection appears wasted.

I am not entirely unfamiliar with shifts and tensions because I had a career in management in the private sector before becoming a doctoral student, but then I accepted and manoeuvred around them, rather than attempting to analyse and explain them. Fortunately, I was reassured that my feelings of disorientation were not unusual when I read Quine's 'web of belief ', the 'Duhem-Quine hypothesis' (Gillies 1998). I have traded an insistence on the rigour of logical progression for an entanglement with multiple realities, multiple perspectives and the mutability of 'truth'. Further reassurance has come from Feyerabend's proposal of epistemological anarchism to explain progress in the realist world. I warm now to his rejection of the natural respect for the scientific method (Feyerabend 1988).

Unscripted and without prior thought, I was to foreground these experiences in my video-prompted reflexive meanderings. This event itself was significant, a tipping-point, a water-shed. I recalled a friend's words when I was about to enter teaching:

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'You only know what you don't know when you have to teach it'. My experience with video-prompted reflexivity demonstrated how disorientating doctoral learning has been for me. Nevertheless, on a practical level, it has influenced me for the better I believe. I was persuaded of this in a recent assignment, a literature review chapter, where I called for a narrative search model, predicated on correspondence to the topology of the knowledge structure being searched rather than adherence to a rigid search model. Reviewing my videonarrative also prompted reflexivity on philosophical orientation for a second assignment.

As a viewer of my own videonarrative, Kottkamp's (1990, 193) definition of reflection is particularly significant for me:

> A cycle of paying deliberate, analytical attention to one's own actions in relation to intentions – *as if from an external observer's perspective* [Deleuze and Guattari's 'deterritorialisation'] – for the purpose of expanding one's options and making decisions about improved ways of acting in the future, or *in the midst of the action itself.* (emphasis added)

Kottkamp goes on to cite a newly appointed dean of a US university, whose staff, all highly reputed tutors, taught miserably. Classroom videos were made and marked 'for your eyes only'; 'seeing themselves teach, they were motivated to improve' (1990, 193). Like the tutors, I also see video-prompted reflexivity as 'action learning' (Revans 1980), that is as an educational process where the participant studies their own actions and experience in order to improve performance. Moreover, the ability to share my video clips with significant others, close colleagues and family lays bare any less-than-coherent thinking. I can identify where my style of presentation could be improved and that should help me prepare better as a doctoral student when I have articles to present or a viva to sit. These too, as well as the epistemological shifts outlined in the first part of my narrative, are important considerations for doctoral students and cannot be discounted or de-privileged. Nor, as I have argued earlier, are the theoretical and practical disjointed entities.

The rhizomatic model of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) allows for a schema of theory and research with multiple, non-hierarchical entry and exit points in data representation and interpretation. The videonarrative I produced, and the reflexivity it prompted, as with my doctoral journey so far, is not a story of a neat linear pathway of defining moments. I realize now, like Machado did many years earlier, that the path is made by me walking my own doctoral journey, a path that seems to reinforce the notion that 'he who sows order, reaps chaos' (Baets 2006, 36).

Conclusion

As an 'assemblage of multiple forces' (Tamboukou 2010, 7), this article has perhaps been a bumpy ride/read. We have traced the origins of the article in the reflexive production of our respective videonarratives, the collaborative video-promoted reflexive interviews they gave rise to and the subsequent production of our four reflexive written narrative accounts. We alluded to the advantages of using DV within this process, in particular that video enabled us to focus on the microprocesses of embodied self-presentation, attuned us to the polysemic nature of images and required us to proceed carefully with image interpretation. As with the videonarratives, the written reflexive accounts included here offer four very different narrative 'takes' on the doctoral journey, each of which has different emphases, different methodological and

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theoretical orientations, different styles and modes of address, and which articulate different ideas about the constitution of the subject in and through the doctoral journey, and the relations between knowledge and self-production in academia. We have argued that thinking of each narrative as a 'plateau' enables us to posit the individual doctoral journey as 'a self vibrating region of intensities' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 24). Working with the concept of the rhizome has enabled us to gesture towards the multiplicity of relations (biographical, cultural, epistemological, ontological) which are constitutive of each doctoral journey. Not only does a rhizomic conceptualization offer insights into the heterogeneity, variability and particularity of each doctoral journey, it may also produce interesting connections and syntheses between each journey. While such syntheses may be fortuitous, intuitive or happenstance (and, indeed, that is their point), they nevertheless signal some of the ways in which Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of the rhizome has explanatory theoretical value for educational instances. Thus, as it stands, we hope the article manages to 'hold differences together, not as oppositions but as multiplicities' (Tamboukou 2010, 8) and, in doing so, that it affords new insights into the doctoral journey.

In addition, the concept of assemblage both supports understanding of how the article has emerged from the various reflexive, narrative and visual strands of the project and provides a way to think differently about modes of writing and representation. By de-privileging otherwise powerful conventions in academic writing such as linearity, hierarchy and clarity, we have moved towards a more effective, 'intensive approach' which instates 'the positive structure of difference' (Braidotti 2005, 307). The article stands, then, as a practical example of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, namely as a way to write multiplicity. It does not play with methodology but engages in methodological play as we consider how to capture and (re)present doctoral experiences. As such, it is a brief example of Lather's (2007, 120) 'less comfortable' social science, a practice which provides an 'apparatus for observing the staging of the poses of methodology'. It also opens a line of flight to Flyvbjerg (2004, 432) for whom 'good social science is opposed to an either/or and stands for a both/and'.

We end with some forward thoughts regarding the appropriateness of the concept of assemblage more generally to the analysis of educational processes and practices. First, 'assemblage' has conceptual potential to help explore individual educational instances, experiences and becomings in which affective, corporeal and incorporeal elements are conjoined; second, assemblage may provide insights into how individual educational institutions, as 'collective extensions' to use Colebrook's (2002, 81) term, hold multiple heterogeneous elements together in an assemblage that is historically conditioned, material-discursive and embodied; and third, it may provide conceptual insights into how educational institutions work within larger assemblages (of governments, parents, unions) on national or international social scales (DeLanda 2006). However, whatever the educational scale, perhaps the concept of assemblage has most value in exploring how emergent and contingent heterogeneous relations interact to generate an always provisional conjunctive synthesis.

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