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**ENTERPRISE AND CARING IN COMMUNITY ARTS WORK:
A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

By

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a discursive analysis of enterprising work of community arts: a domain of cultural work often portrayed as bringing important value to local communities (Matarasso, 2019; Jeffers, 2017a, 2017b; Moriarty, 2017; Matarasso, 2013; Kelly, 1984; Goldbard, 1993), yet lacking any significant academic research into this form of work and employment. Aiming to fill the existing knowledge gap on entrepreneurial work of community arts, this study draws on Foucauldian Discourse Analysis approach and an ethnographic outlook on research methodology. It explores how the discourse of ‘enterprise’ (Foucault, 2008; Du Gay, 1994a, 1994b, 1996, 2004; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992; Rose, 1992; Keat, 1991b; Gordon, 1991) pervades the work of community arts in Wales and whether an enterprising subjectivity is reproduced in this domain of work. The data for this study was collected in Wales from June 2021 to November 2022 principally by drawing on interviews supplemented through participant diaries, field observations, and participant-generated documents. The analysis of collected data highlights the proliferation of neoliberal enterprise in areas of cultural work not traditionally associated with commercial activity (Beirne et al., 2017), detailing the shape and form of entrepreneurial subject positions of workers primarily involved in prosocial activities within local community. Furthermore, this study sheds light on complex manifestations of enterprise reproduced within the context of collaborative, caring, and precarious work, which challenges paradigmatic portrayals of enterprising work (Du Gay, 1996) and highlights the role of non-economic discourses in the constitution of workers’ subjectivity (Fournier & Grey, 1999). A key finding of this study is the proliferation of the discourse of ‘caring about’ that acts both to operationalise the discourse of enterprise, as well as being a point of resistance for workers against identifying as entrepreneurial, self-interested, money-oriented, individualised subjects.

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

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STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Sources are acknowledged through in-text citations and an appended reference list.

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TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

Transcription example	Description
Text text text, text text.	<i>A verbatim textual representation of recorded interviews</i>
[text]	<i>Anonymised data</i> , such as references to places, names, and organisations that could identify the participant, as well as <i>alterations of direct quotations</i> , such as changed tenses, to grammatically and contextually fit within the main text
Nicole: RS: etc.	<i>Anonymised Speaker IDs</i> assigned to each interview participant to identify them in the conversation
@	Denotes <i>laughter</i> , with each @ symbol approximates one laughter sound
<@>text</@>	Participant <i>utterances</i> expressed <i>laughingly</i>
(text)	Any utterances that are <i>not entirely clear</i> are placed in parentheses
<un> xxx </un>	Any <i>illegible utterances</i> are marked as xxx and placed within <un></un>
Text ... text	Designates portions of omitted text from collected data.

The above transcription conventions have been adapted to fit the purpose of this research from Vienna Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE) (VOICE Project, 2007).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In recent years, scholars have paid considerable attention to the development of new conceptualisations of work and employment, shedding light on the proliferation of entrepreneurial forms of organisation and identity (Fournier & Grey, 1999). One such persistent theorisation of work has been framed within the Foucauldian tradition of governmentality through a notion of the discourse of ‘enterprise’. Such discourse has been portrayed as a powerful force bringing to bear its normalising logics on the organisation of work towards an adoption of business-like, consumer-like, entrepreneurial practices (Read, 2009; Donzelot, 2008; Foucault, 2008; O’Malley, 1996; Du Gay, 1994a, 1994b, 1996, 2004; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992; Rose, 1992; Keat, 1991b; Gordon, 1991). Within this discourse there appears to be a promotion of an idealised form of worker subjectivity presented through the lens of an ‘entrepreneur of the self’ (Foucault, 2008) – a subject position that necessitates one to display a range of flexible and changing individual characteristics, such as being competitive, autonomous, responsible, calculative, risk-taking, proactive, and seeking self-fulfilment through work (Vallas & Cummins, 2015; Foucault, 2008; Leffler & Svedberg, 2005; Cohen & Musson, 2000; Ainsworth & Hardy, 2008; Du Gay, 1996). This ‘entrepreneur of the self’ has been framed within the general antagonism towards bureaucracy and the culture of dependency offered as an effective solution to challenges of post-Fordist neoliberal economy, and the effects of globalisation and new technology on labour markets and organisations.

In the UK, studies have noted a proliferation of enterprising discourse through a ‘culture of enterprise’ in the second quarter of the twentieth century (Keat, 1991b; Keat & Abercrombie, 1991; Morris, 1991). This culture of enterprise was actively promoted under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher after her ascent to power in 1979 in response to the economic ‘stagflation’ of the 1970s, the failure of Keynesian economics, and the desire to move away from centralised control and dependency on the State (Kus, 2006; Fourcade-Gourinchas & Babb, 2002). It was during that time

that the notion of enterprise was employed to construct the realm of the social, including that of organisations, based on notions of individual responsibility and entrepreneurial prowess as “the ‘spirit’ that is to transform our whole way of life” (Morris, 1991, p. 34). This neoliberal outlook on life continues to influence the world of work and employment in Britain to this day, actively promulgated by successive governments in reproducing the principles of the markets as organising logics (Crerar, 2022; Elliott, 2022; Coleman & Mullin-McCandlish, 2021; Alston, 2016; Wiggan, 2012; Fuller & Geddes, 2008). For example, the neoliberal language of enterprise was particularly evident during the New Labour administration of the 1990s and early 2000s through the establishment of the ‘Creative Industries’ (Banks, 2007), the promotion of the idea of ‘Big Society’ during the Cameron era of the Conservatives of the 2010s (Alston, 2016), and Liz Truss’ recent talk about British workers’ “mindset and attitude ... [lacking] a bit more graft” (Crerar, 2022, para. 15).

Within the domain of cultural work, which has long been portrayed as in need of ‘enterprise’ to realise its economic potential (Banks, 2007), a great deal of attention has been paid to understanding entrepreneurial forms of work and subjectivity. Embedded within contexts of precarious employment, cultural workers have been shown to reproduce the discourse of enterprise. They have been portrayed as mini-businesses or products who reinvent their body image entrepreneurially to ‘stand out from the crowd’ (Entwistle & Wissinger, 2006), being constantly ‘on the go’ and actively seeking new job opportunities, flexibly self-managing to cater for the preferences of their customers (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2009; Storey et al., 2005), taking on a calculative and rational outlook on work (Hoedemaekers, 2018; Blair, 2009; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, 2007), and making ‘investment-like’ decisions about their future career (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020). Existing research has also linked the uptake of enterprise with individual attempts of cultural workers to achieve self-fulfilment, autonomy, and self-determination as a reflection of the disciplining effects of neoliberal power (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020; Duffy & Wissinger, 2017; McRobbie, 2016; Neff et al., 2005). Whilst attempts have been made to bring forward the more complex representations of the cultural domain by focusing on the propensity of workers to resist the neoliberal imperatives of the markets through a range of alternative non-economic vocabularies (Luckman, 2018; Sandoval, 2018; Coulson, 2012), the discourse of enterprise remains understood as a paradigmatic force shaping

the nature of work and employment more generally (Vallas & Cummins, 2015; Bolton & Houlihan, 2005; Fournier & Grey, 1999).

Yet, despite the existing extensive academic interest into the reproduction of enterprise in cultural work, research into the proliferation of entrepreneurial forms of work and subjectivity in the generally non-commercialised and publicly-funded area of cultural work of community arts is scant (Beirne et al., 2017). Considering the social value ascribed to community arts work (Matarasso, 2019b; Jeffers, 2017a, 2017b; Moriarty, 2017; Matarasso, 2013; Kelly, 1984; Goldbard, 1993), only a handful of studies considered the manifestations of entrepreneurial work within this employment domain (see for example, Chin, 2021; Rimmer, 2020; Jennings et al., 2017). Taking account of the current lack of academic research into the neoliberal work of community arts and responding to the call for further research into more complex, contextually-specific conceptualisations of discourse in work and employment (Fournier & Grey, 1999), this study aims to contribute both empirically and theoretically to understanding how the discourse of enterprise and enterprising subjectivity may be reproduced in cultural work of community arts practice, focusing on workers in Wales. This Introduction Chapter summarises the aims of this research, detailing the wider contributions that this study seeks to achieve. It also provides a discussion on the motivations that underpinned this study, followed by an outline of the structure of the thesis.

1.2 Aims of the Study and Research Questions

Drawing on the methodological framework of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Willig, 2008a, 2008b; Parker, 1992; Hollway, 1989), extended through an ethnographic outlook on research (Brady, 2011; Clifford, 2010; Forsey, 2010b; Scott-Jones, 2010; Heller, 2008; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Tamboukou & Ball, 2003; Emerson et al., 1995), this study seeks to shed light on the reproduction of enterprise discourse and entrepreneurial subjectivity in the cultural work of community arts workers in Wales. Considering the dearth of academic interest into the nature of work and employment in the community arts sector, this study aims to contribute empirically

to the existing scholarship on the shape and form of entrepreneurial work in community arts practice, as well as to show how workers may reproduce and resist it through discourse. The focus on community arts workers in Wales has been chosen to generate knowledge on more locally specific manifestations of enterprising work and to encourage further academic interest in researching cultural work and employment regionally, beyond areas known as ‘creative hubs’ in major UK cities (British Council, 2024a). Moreover, this research seeks to reconnect the enterprising work of community arts within the wider dynamics of cultural work in general, adding new knowledge to that domain of work as well. Theoretically, this study addresses the role of non-economic vocabularies in the production of the discourse of enterprise, thus opening opportunities for extending the analytical reach of the current theorisations of enterprising work to account for locally specific discursive contexts. Furthermore, it aims to provide valuable knowledge about community arts workers for academics, policymakers, and management practitioners alike across and beyond the UK, by gaining deeper understanding of the uptake of entrepreneurial work by individuals engaged in primarily non-commercialised, community-oriented areas of employment.

Thus, this study was framed by the following research questions:

1. Does a discourse of enterprise pervade the cultural work of community arts in Wales?
2. Does an enterprising subjectivity get reproduced in community arts practice?

1.3 Study Motivations and Researcher Background

Reflexive recognition of the role of researcher positionality was key to the overall conduct and direction of this study. As will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, the framing of this research was not separate from my own subject position as a researcher, which had implications on the production of knowledge on enterprising work of community arts (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2017; Krause-Jensen, 2013; Clifford, 2010; Parker, 1992; Foucault, 1978; Becker, 1967). Concurring with Heller’s (2008) position that any systematic and rigorous study, particularly that which draws on an

ethnographic outlook on research, must recognise the role of researcher’s “historically and socially situated subjectivity” (p. 251), it is important to highlight how my personal, professional, and academic background fuelled my interest in doing this study. Having spent most of my childhood and teenage years in Kazakhstan – a country that in the last thirty years has seen a dramatic political, economic, and social change in search of its own identity beyond the idea of the ‘post-Soviet’ identity (Wheeler, 2017) – I had been really fortunate to travel internationally and appreciate the rich tapestry of cultures around the world, both as a foreign exchange student in Hawaii and an undergraduate student in the UK. It is through these experiences that I became aware of the diverse nature of representations of reality through language and practice very early on. Joining the world of work later in my life in a range of industries, and experiencing precarious and fulfilling aspects of work first-hand, my interest in the contested, flexible, and often common-sense portrayals of social reality further fuelled my keen curiosity in understanding the role of enterprise discourse within the domain of work and employment. As I joined Swansea University as a Master’s student in management in 2018, I was able to merge my personal and professional experiences alongside the conceptual frameworks, ideas, and worldviews offered through academic study, which to this day guide my perspectives as an early career researcher.

The focus on choosing to study the cultural work of community arts has not been accidental either. Having completed my Master’s dissertation on the topic of precarious work of performing artists in the UK, I became aware of the complex shape and boundaries of cultural work drawn alongside questions of precarious employment and individual desire for art, creativity, and bringing value to the community. Cultural work has long been recognised as an exemplar of enterprising work through its impact on economic growth, regeneration of urban areas, strengthening of community cohesion, and combatting unemployment in the UK (Campbell, 2021; Belfiore, 2020; Luckman, 2018; Thestrup & Pokarier, 2018; Conor et al., 2015; Morgan & Wood, 2014; de Peuter, 2011; Banks, 2007; Freedman, 2007). Yet, with the onset of the global Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the question of sustainability of cultural work became ‘front and centre’ (Khlystova et al., 2022; Banks & O’Connor, 2021; Comunian & England, 2020), whilst this area of work was also presented as fundamental to overcoming many challenges that society was facing at the same time (Fairley, 2023; BBC News, 2021, 2023; Sayej, 2021; BBC Arts, 2020). Serendipitously, it was during

that time that I became aware of the notion of community arts practice as a sector of cultural work that has been instrumental in performing a valuable role within communities, not only during the pandemic, but for many decades prior to it (see for example, Matarasso, 2019; Jeffers, 2017a, 2017b; Moriarty, 2017; Matarasso, 2013; Kelly, 1984; Goldbard, 1993). Weaving the previous knowledge on cultural work alongside the newly found interest in community arts work fuelled the direction of the study towards exploring the nature of enterprise discourse and subjectivity in community arts. Narrowing down the research within Wales has been particularly important, as it made it more practical to be conducted within the travel limitations of the pandemic across national regions in the UK. However, as will be discussed throughout this thesis, it enabled the generation of further insights into the specific manifestations of work and employment of community arts beyond sweeping generalisations and paradigmatic representations of enterprising work.

1.4 The Outline of the Thesis

This Introduction Chapter provided a brief overview of the existing academic theorisations of entrepreneurial work through the notion of the discourse of enterprise. It highlighted the proliferation of neoliberal forms of subjectivity in the domain of cultural work, as well as drawing attention to the lack of academic studies into the work and employment of community arts practice. This Introduction also highlighted how the current study aims to contribute to current knowledge in relation to the concept of enterprise in the domain of cultural work generally, and community arts practice specifically, detailing the research questions that guided this study. Furthermore, it reflexively described the role of professional, academic, and personal motivations that were instrumental to the current research.

The Literature Review is divided into three interconnected chapters. Chapter Two presents the theoretical frameworks that underpinned the analysis and understanding of enterprising work in community arts by engaging with Foucauldian concepts of governmentality, power, discourse, and subjectivity. This chapter also highlights the contemporary theorisations of work and employment portrayed through the notion of

the discourse of enterprise, providing paradigmatic portrayal of idealised worker subjectivity as the ‘entrepreneur of the self’ (Foucault, 2008; Du Gay, 1994b, 1996). Following this discussion, a review of existing academic research is provided in Chapter Three, shedding light on various manifestations of enterprise in the domain of cultural work, as well as the scope for resistance of artists and creatives against the idea of entrepreneurial work. This is followed by Chapter Four which focuses on the domain of community arts work, which forms the basis of this study. This discussion draws out the discursive boundaries and key characteristics of community arts work, followed by a review of the small body of research that highlighted the enterprising work of community arts workers.

The Methodology, Chapter Five, of this thesis provides a detailed discussion of the approach to conducting this study. First, it shows how the Foucauldian Discourse Analysis approach, supplemented through an ethnographic outlook on research, was integral in guiding the overall direction and outcomes of this thesis. Both of these approaches enabled this study to account for the role of discourse in the construction of reality of community arts and the production of worker subjectivity, whilst also being sensitive to local contexts of the work of community arts. This chapter also details the research design, the approach to participant recruitment, as well as the methods of data collection used. After this, the approach to data analysis is discussed, showing how various tools from ethnography and discourse analysis were instrumental in making sense of the data collected for this study. It also discusses the questions of academic rigour and ethical and safety considerations that were fundamental throughout this study.

The conceptual frameworks, research design, and methods detailed in Chapter Five led to the formulation of findings presented in Chapter Six. This chapter considers the discourse of enterprise in the cultural work of community arts in Wales, shedding light on how workers reproduced and resisted enterprising subjectivity. Throughout this chapter, five general areas emerged that highlighted the entrepreneurial work of community arts - (1) competition/competitiveness, (2) autonomy and responsibility, (3) flexibility and adaptability, (4) calculative outlook on work, and (5) entrepreneurial self-identifications. Each of these sections draws attention to the multifaceted manifestations of enterprising work in community arts, exploring the formation of worker subjectivity beyond the neoliberal imperatives of the markets. It also shows

how community arts workers may engage with alternative non-economic discourses as a pathway to the legitimization of, and resistance to, the discourse of enterprise.

Chapter Seven engages with the key themes drawn from the analysis of data that frame enterprising work of community arts in relation to existing academic research and the wider dynamics of work and employment both empirically and theoretically. It highlights how participants presented acceptable and unacceptable competitive positions of enterprise shaped alongside prosocial vocabularies of ‘caring about’ the community and fellow peers. It also considers the autonomous subject positions of workers, shedding light on the responsible and productive aspects of discourse and illustrating the flexible outlook on work held by individuals that emerged within binary oppositions against ‘traditional’ work outside community arts. It then details the calculative vocabularies of participants against the established representations of enterprising workers as rational subjects. Despite the complex manifestations of enterprise in community arts, a consideration of alternative non-economic discourses appears to be important in providing more contextually contingent, locally situated understandings of work and employment. This consideration helps to shed light on the wider discourses that may be implicated in the legitimization of, as well as resistance to, neoliberal rationality of enterprise.

This thesis is concluded in Chapter Eight with an overview of the key findings of this study in relation to addressing the research questions. It also sheds light on the implications of this research to current theorisations of enterprising work, policymaking, and managerial practice. Responding to the call for conducting research into enterprising work beyond the neoliberal idea of ‘the entrepreneur of the self’ as a paradigmatic model for workers subjectivity (Fournier & Grey, 1999), this study draws attention to the complex ways in which alternative non-economic discourses may act as grounds for resistance, as well as reinterpretation of the meaning of enterprising work. By accounting for the role of the ethics of care and collaboration, as well as work precariousness, this study encourages any future research of work and employment to go beyond the established theorisations of enterprise based on the notions of consumer sovereignty, self-interest, and economic utility maximisation (Vallas & Cummins, 2015; Foucault, 2008; Du Gay, 1994b, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). Within the domains of policymaking and managerial practice, this study calls for revised understandings of cultural work beyond the exclusive notion of enterprise

in the formulation of approaches to managing of this domain of work. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the limitations of this research linked to questions of geographic focus, the need to further account for the role of discourse in the relationship between funders and community arts organisations, and considerations of alternative methods of data collection and participant recruitment, drawing out suggestions for future studies of enterprising work.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS: GOVERNMENTALITY AND THE DISCOURSE OF ENTERPRISE

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a theoretical and empirical foundation for the study of community arts work by engaging with the notion of governmentality and outlining the key aspects upon which current theorisations of the discourse of enterprise have been based. To do so, Section 2.2 draws on the theory of governmentality based on the scholarship of Michel Foucault to show how discourses may be implicated in the production of particular forms of subjectivity and “new ways for people to be at work” (Du Gay, 1996, p. 54). Such theory provides a valuable lens to understand how the discourse of enterprise can be operationalised, as well as resisted by workers. Section 2.3 indicates the key aspects of the theory of enterprise as neoliberal governmentality, highlighting the ways in which it has come to be presented as a model for a particular kind of business-oriented worker subjectivity. A summary of this chapter is provided in Section 2.4, drawing attention to the ambivalent meaning of enterprise as a path to the reproduction of neoliberal market principles within the domain of work and employment.

2.2 Governmentality: Power, Discourse, and Subjectivity

The concept of governmentality provides an analytical lens in understanding the role of discourse as implicated in management and self-management of individuals within a broad range of social domains, from family to work and employment. Initially developed by Michel Foucault (see for example, Foucault, 2008), governmentality, a portmanteau of ‘govern’ and ‘mentality’, can be broadly described as “a way of problematising life and seeking to act upon it” (Rose, 1993, p. 288). The fundamental feature of governmentality theory is the notion of ‘government’ that sheds light on non-coercive forms of power. Unlike the conventional understanding of government

as a political power vested centrally within a particular entity (such as a person or the State) (Robertson, 2002), Foucault (1982b) described government as the “way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed” (p. 790). Thus, the theory of governmentality draws attention to a dispersed, non-centralised, and all pervasive nature of power, which is not predicated upon subjugation or oppressive forms of rule (Lynch, 2011; Taylor, 2011; Bevir, 1999; Foucault, 1978). The discussion below sheds light on some of the formative aspects of governmentality theory by looking at the concepts of power, discourse, rationality, and technologies of government.

2.2.1 The Dispersed, Non-Coercive Nature of Power

Foucault (1978, 1980, 1982b) provided a unique conception of power, particularly within Western societies. Such power cannot be located in a particular place, institution, or person, neither it is exclusively prohibitive, violent or consensual. Power is “always already there” (Foucault, 1980, p. 141), present in every aspect of social life, where one cannot be ‘outside’ it. It is characterised by subtle, persuasive attempts at working on people’s “desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs” (Dean, 1999, p. 11) in order to achieve certain ends, but with no guaranteed outcomes (Foucault, 1978, 1980, 1982b, 1991a). Fundamentally, such a view of power avoids the problematic dichotomy of those who have power and those who don’t, providing a way out of this limiting perspective with a more complex understanding of social dynamics (Garland, 1997).

For Foucault (1982b) power is operationalised in relationships between individuals. It is all pervasive: “[it is] not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex situation in a particular society” (Foucault, 1978, p. 93). Such power can be understood as “the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization” (p. 92). Foucault was adamant for his account of power not to be viewed as a ‘theory’, and instead advocated for an ‘analytics’ of power, shifting the research narrative from “what power is” to “how power operates” (Deacon, 2002, p. 14). He

illustrated this in a range of studies, such as in relation to the school, the asylum, the prison (Foucault, 1991a), or the wider normalising effects of neoliberal governmentality (Foucault, 2008). All power relations appear to be “intentional and nonsubjective” (Foucault, 1978, p. 94). Individuals may be aware of what they are doing and what they are trying to achieve, but “the broader consequences of these local actions are [not] coordinated” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 187). “People know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don’t know is what they do does” (Foucault, n.d. as cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 187).

Foucault’s analytics are linked to power as something that makes the social sphere intelligible through establishing its condition of possibility, captured in the French term *‘pouvoir’*, an infinitive form of the verb signifying “to be able to” (Feder, 2011, p. 55). Against this backdrop, power is about setting out what one is ‘able to do’, it “does not act directly and immediately on others ... [it is] an action upon an action, on existing actions or on those which may arise in the present or the future” (Foucault, 1982b, p. 789). Furthermore, although power can produce “effects of domination”, its effects are never “completely stable” (Foucault, 1978, p. 102), as the character of force relations is in a state of “ceaseless struggles and confrontation” (Foucault, 1978, p. 92). This conception of power forms the basis of governmentality theory and analysis of the discourse of enterprise (as discussed in Sections 2.2 and 2.3), shedding light on the exercise of power over the conduct of people via subtle, persuasive attempts at cultivating a particular form of subjectivity.

2.2.2 *Governmental Rationalities*

Governmentality theory highlights the role of rationality that makes operation of power feasible and practicable (Binkley, 2011; Skålen et al., 2006; Tremain, 2005; Dean, 1999). Foucault (see, for example, Foucault, 2007, 2008) has drawn attention to the idea of governmental rationality interchangeably with ‘governmental reason(ing)’, ‘governmental *ratio*’, ‘rationality’, ‘the art of government’, and ‘governmentality’ as “any form of thinking which strives to be relatively clear, systematic and explicit about aspects of ‘external’ and ‘internal’ existence, about how things are or how they ought

to be” (Dean, 1999, p. 11). In his own studies of power, for example, Foucault (2007) examined the proliferation of various governmentalities from *Raison d’État* to the emergence of liberalism. It is perhaps through his focus on neoliberal governmentality that attention to the subtle and pervasive role of the discourse of enterprise was made most visible, highlighting entrepreneurial modes of work as conditions of possibility for social relations and individual conduct (discussed in more detail in Section 2.3). Yet, it is important to note that governmentalities are neither stable nor epochal in their nature. Governmental rationalities should not be understood as distinct time periods replacing one another. Instead, as Rose (1999c, p. 28) pointed out they should be seen as dispersed and competing discursive attempts at establishing the nature of social reality, designating the various ways for an individual to be, some of which may overlap or contradict one another.

2.2.3 *Discourse and Subjectivity*

For Foucault (1972) power is operationalised through a particular notion of discourse. Broadly speaking, discourse can be defined as “a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation ... made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined” (p. 117). This notion of discourse does not simply connote any written or spoken text, but it provides a way of thinking about the operation of governmental power and the production of reality that is historically contingent and relies on a particular form of representation (Hall, 2001; Foucault, 1972). In particular, various discourses can be seen as implicated in imposing the conditions of possibility within which truth, knowledge, and meaning is produced and made sense of, whilst also contesting alternative ways of thinking about the reality (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Parker, 1992). Furthermore, as Foucault (1978) suggested, there is no “accepted discourse and excluded discourse” (p. 100), but instead discourses can be employed differently in various situations, by different speakers, and in contexts within which they come into action. They come into play in complex situations, rather than binary confrontations, between a range of “cooperating discourses and resistances” (James, 2018, p. 37). Discourses could also be

interconnected, as well as connoting a variety of contested and competing meanings of reality (Parker, 1992; Foucault, 1978).

Discourse fundamentally relates to the question of individuals as particular subjects. Within governmentality, subjectivity appears as key to achieving its goals and objectives. “[T]he things which the government is to be concerned about are men ... in their relations, their links, their imbrication with those other things which are wealth, resources, means of subsistence ... men in their relation to ... customs, habits, ways of doing and thinking” (Foucault, 1979, p. 11). Subjectivity, in this way, can be understood as a subject position that individuals occupy within and in relation to discourse - a particular “vantage point” (Willig, 2008a, p. 102) from within which individuals can speak and act from, as well as make sense of the world around them, themselves, their experiences, reactions, and motives (Wetherell, 2001). As Parker (1992) suggested, “discourse makes available space for particular types of self to step in” (p. 9). Discourse aims to address and construct individuals as particular subjects, “hailing us, shouting ‘hey you there’ and making us listen as a certain type of person” (1992, p. 9). As such, subjectivity is ‘made up’ or ‘cultivated’ within the power confines of governmentality that aim to govern individuals and collectivities by promoting certain ethical ways to be (Garland, 1997; Du Gay, 1996). Moreover, such positions can also be seen as produced relationally, contingent or ‘dislocated’ against “an outside which both denies that identity and provides its condition of possibility at the same time” (Laclau, 1990, p. 39).

However, this is not to say that discourse is limited to linguistic representations. Although Foucault’s governmentality is generally vague on the role of discourse in the extra-linguistic practices, Laclau and Mouffe (2013) extended Foucault’s conceptualisation of discourse, suggesting that just like language, all social practices, may also be imbued with discursive meaning. Similarly, Parker (1992) noted that “material practices [including speaking or writing] are ... invested with meaning” (p. 17). Thus, the subject positions offered through discourse could have a direct impact not only on the way people speak or write, but on their actions and behaviours as an expression of the “formidable materiality of discourse” (Foucault, 1981, p. 52).

Although the notion of discourse draws attention to the operation of governmental power by establishing the conditions of possibility, such conceptualisation does not

negate a possibility of resistance. As Foucault (1978) pointed out, discourses can act as a “a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy” (p. 101). In particular, any discourse may also presuppose a possibility of a ‘reverse discourse’, whereby the vocabularies of one mode of representation can act as grounds for resistance and subversion of meaning of other discourses. For example, Foucault (1978) evidenced this by drawing attention to the discourse surrounding homosexuality in the 19th century. He pointed out that the new vocabularies of medical expertise, particularly that in psychiatry, aimed to control, manage, and pathologize homosexuality, thus creating a particular negative view of this practice as ‘perverse’ and establishing paths of controlling it. However, the emergence of this discourse also made possible the reverse discourse of homosexuality, giving voice to and legitimising this practice using the very same medicalised language through which it was originally pathologized and excluded.

There is no guarantee that governmentality will achieve its goals, as there always appears a possibility for resistance by individual subjects, which could lead to unexpected outcomes (Dean, 1999). As Du Gay (1996) pointed out, governmentality is “agonistic ... because this relation passes through the manner in which governed individuals are willing to exist as particular subjects” (p. 55). Foucault (1982b) suggested that power could be exercised only to the extent that individuals were free as a particular feature of governmental power. Governmental power does not exclude freedom, but instead it is a “game [where] freedom may well appear as the condition for the exercise of power” (Foucault, 1982b, p. 790). Foucault recognised that freedom was not something that one can possess or not possess – a position distinct from the notions of metaphysical and political freedoms implicit in the writings of Kant, Heidegger, and Derrida (de Ville, 2024), but instead he was concerned about how one can be historically bound by discourse and be able to act differently within such constraints (May, 2011). To be free does not mean to be outside of power relationships or being outside of discourse completely. For instance, whilst the penal system could be understood as an example of power that aims to restrain convicts within tightly controlled spaces, Foucault (1991a) showed how power could act positively by “constrain[ing] rather than *restrain*[ing]” (May, 2011, p. 77) individuals. Discursively shaping inmates as particular kinds of governable individuals, as ‘delinquents’, may be an attempt to establish the conditions of possibility within which they can be

oriented to behave in a certain way. Yet, the implications of such power relations is that there appear to be opportunities to draw on alternative understandings of the self within, and not without, the constraints of discourse (Rose et al., 2009). Governmental power should not be understood as a definitive project at eliciting certain individual behaviours, but neither it should be treated as something that is predicated upon the notion of freedom as complete liberty from the particular historically contingent conditions within which individuals exist.

2.2.4 Governmental Technologies

As governmental power places discourse at its centre, it needs to rely on various technological means to achieve its objectives (Miller & Rose, 1990). Governmental technologies are various techniques, instruments, tactics, and methods that “seek to translate thought into the domain of reality” (Miller & Rose, 1990, p. 8) and through which a knowledge about social reality can be established and made comprehensible (Dean, 1995, 1999). To analyse governmental rationality is then to be sensitive to the “humble and mundane mechanisms” (1990, p. 8) that set out the conditions of possibility that actually make government possible. Language in itself can also be considered as an “intellectual technology” (Miller & Rose, 1990, p. 7) of government, as it does not simply describe the world and expresses it, but it can be employed in establishing the material reality of objects and subjects that can be practically acted upon. In other words, language is in itself performative – that is, it does not simply describe the world, but instead it constructs reality in particular ways to “make things happen” (Marshall, 1999, p. 314). For example, the performative nature of language has been traced by Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* (1991a), showing the way convicts come to be classified as ‘delinquents’ within the penal system. By displacing the notion of a ‘convicted offender’ with that of a ‘delinquent’, the individual is no longer seen as one who committed a crime for which they must pay with their physical freedom. The ‘delinquent’ is to be constructed through the assembling of knowledge on the totality of a person’s life – the causes of their crime, the psychological and social assessment of their life and upbringing, thus creating a kind of a biographical narrative about such individual. The implication of such discursive construction is that

the delinquency of the individual becomes seen “as existing before the crime and even outside it” (p. 252), making this individual responsible for their own acts, amenable to further organising and corrective practices of the penal system.

Beyond the possible way in which discourse shapes subjectivity, there is also the question of the relationship of subjects to themselves and their own subjectivity. Foucault (1988) has described ‘technologies of the self’, or ‘the art of self-government’, as that “which permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their bodies and souls, thought, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state” (p. 18). For Foucault, governmentality should not be seen as limited to external technologies ‘from above’, but recognised that power can work hand-in-hand with how individuals are willing to shape themselves as particular subjects (Cahill, 2012). He deliberated about the genealogy of the subject in the West, arguing that in understanding government one needs to grasp the interrelated nature of the technologies of government (or of domination) and the technologies of the self, where “the techniques of the self are integrated into structures of coercion and domination ... where the individuals are driven by others ... tied to the way they conduct themselves” (Foucault, 1993, p. 203). In other words, analysis of governmental power necessitates an understanding of how subjects may be implicated in the process of self-formation – that they are not simply recipients of discourse, but that they also operate within the conditions of possibility established through discourse.

The discussion above has described the conceptual framework of governmentality that provides the basis upon which theorisations of the discourse of enterprise have been built and drawn upon to understand recent changes in work and employment. It has highlighted the dispersed nature of power in society and the role of discourse in making of individuals into particular governable subjects. Engaging with the conceptual tools offered by this framework, the following section draws out the key aspects of the current theorisations of enterprise as neoliberal governmentality. These have been portrayed as a key to shaping the nature of contemporary work and employment and offering a particular exemplar model of subjectivity for workers and organisations to adopt.

2.3 The Discourse of Enterprise

2.3.1 *The Genealogy of Neoliberal Governmentality*

The discourse of enterprise has been shown to be closely linked to the proliferation of neoliberal governmentality throughout the 20th century, providing a foundation and a connecting logic for the reproduction of this discourse (Foucault, 2008). By tracing the genealogy of neoliberalism it is possible to shed light on the economic logics of “interest, investment and competition” (Read, 2009, p. 29) that underpin this form of governmentality, placing the ‘enterprise form’ as “a model of social relations and of existence itself” (Foucault, 2008, p. 242).

Neoliberalism emerged as a rationality of government, at least in the Western hemisphere, in the post-War period. Foucault originally only lightly touched upon the question of neoliberalism in the West (McNay, 2009), however it was in his lectures at the Collège de France in 1978-1979 (Foucault, 2008) where he presented a more comprehensive analysis of this form of governmentality, drawing attention to its paradigmatic status. Foucault formulated his analysis by tracing the history of two strands of neoliberal thinking – that of German neoliberals/ordoliberals of the 1930s and 1940s, which emerged against the backdrop of the Nazi state and post-war reconstruction efforts in Europe, and that of the American variation of neoliberalism associated with the New Deal and an anti-Roosevelt coalition. Despite the slightly different historical geneses of the two variants of neoliberal rationality, Foucault noted that they appeared to communicate very similar ideas about the nature of reality and advocated for a model of social, economic, and political relations united by a common critique of Keynesian politics and a clear stance against state interventionism and planned economy.

Advocating for a reform of society and the State through the imposition of market principles, ordoliberals attempted to redesign the conventional doctrine of liberalism (Foucault, 2008). Traditional liberalism of the 18th century Europe was based on the idea of market exchanges, non-interventionism, economic freedom, and *laissez-faire* competition, allocating the State minimal power to safeguard the private ownership of

production (see for example Smith, 1981). For ordoliberals, however, the principle of market exchanges was superseded by the notion of market-based competition. A *laissez-faire* as ‘pure’ and ‘natural’ competition was reimagined as needing to be “carefully and artificially constructed” (Foucault, 2008, p. 120) for it to work within the market economy, becoming an area of governmental action. These ideas were developed not in a vacuum, but against the backdrop of growing recalcitrance towards the post-war renovation efforts under the auspices of the Marshall plan predicated upon “reconstruction, planning ... socialization and social objectives ... [through] an interventionist policy” (p. 80). At that time in 1948, as Foucault noted, Ludwig Erhardt, a leading German politician, was one of the first public figures to vehemently argue against state control, promoting early ideas of neoliberalism. Erhardt claimed that “only a state that establishes both the freedom and responsibility of the citizens can legitimately speak in the name of the people” (p. 81). For Foucault, such statement, along with works of other ordoliberals of the times, was emblematic of the emerging governmentality of post-War neoliberalism in the sense that it attempted to establish the image of future German relations and the legitimacy of the new State as predicated upon novel liberal values of economic freedom and the role of the market in regulating of social relationships.

For ordoliberals, it was necessary to establish “the concrete and real space in which the formal structure of competition could function” (Foucault, 2008, p. 132) by establishing *Gesellschaftspolitik*, or ‘a policy of society’. Such policy took competitive market regulation as an organising principle of society. It was to be achieved via interventions in the economic and the social domains, through individualisation of risk and a move away from social equality, with the aim of subsequent functioning of the logics of markets and of economic growth in every aspect of human life. Under the idea of *Gesellschaftspolitik* neoliberalism promoted market-based rules to be projected over the life of the society, but unlike traditional liberalism it was not about free competition as the sole organising element of society. Instead, as Foucault averred, the State needed to provide a certain “political and moral framework” to ensure that “a community is not fragmented” (Röpke, 1942, as cited in Foucault, 2008, p. 243) and cooperation between such individuals and enterprises is guaranteed.

The emerging rationality of neoliberalism was taken up in many economies of the West, highlighting the spread of competitiveness, responsibility, and self-reliance as

an organising grid of society. Foucault (2008) traced the spread of neoliberalism throughout the majority of the twentieth century. In France, for example, neoliberal governmentality came to prominence in the 1970s, incentivised by the 1973 oil crisis, as well as the earlier rise in unemployment from 1969 onwards, problems with the balancing of payments, and rising inflation. Within such a context, neoliberalism was seen as a solution to these economic crises by competitively integrating the economy within European and world markets. In particular, very similarly to German ordoliberalism in the decades prior, it was then French president Giscard who advocated in 1972 for the market economy being akin to a game with rules – rules that are established between production competition and the safety of individuals, but these rules were there not for the benefit and equality of all, but essentially “to ensure non-exclusion with regard to an economic game that ... must follow its own course” (p. 202). Giscard promoted the idea of a negative tax, where the state were to allocate universal payments to those in the society who fell below the necessary minimum economic level of consumption, and therefore excluded from this ‘economic game’ of the markets (Rimbert, 2013; Foucault, 2008). The only purpose of such intervention was not to solve poverty or social ills, but to ensure that such individuals are back in the ‘game’ of “competitive enterprise” (Foucault, 2008, p. 206) by choosing to work instead of receiving such payments. The British neoliberal thinker, Milton Friedman (2013), similarly advocated for an introduction of negative income tax, as he took a stance against the notion of welfare payments. He believed that basic income is likely to lead to more self-reliance amongst the recipients, and that “[i]t would be far better to give the indigent money and let them spend according to their values ... at least some would grow in the course of making their own decisions and would develop habits of independence and self-reliance” (p. 12).

American neoliberalism, similar to that of France and Germany, emerged in response to Keynesian politics of the New Deal, the Beveridge Report, rising state interventionism and the growth of the federal administration under the presidencies of Truman and Johnson. The American neoliberal project employed the principles of market economy to “decipher non-market relationships...[within the fabric of the social via] the inversion of the relationship of the social to the economic” (Foucault, 2008, p. 240). In other words, it took a more radical stance than German ordoliberalism, by generalising market economics as a principle against which all social relationships

were established and judged. Foucault illustrated this by looking at the way the family has been envisaged as enterprises and a locus of economic relationship. He highlighted the discursive construction of the parent-child relationship seen through the logics of interventions, investments, and a calculative outlook on costs-returns, noting how parents were imagined by neoliberals to give their love, affection, fund their offsprings' education, and further develop their children in order to extract certain "psychical income" (p. 244) and a production of human capital that could be exchanged for income when the child grew up.

Foucault's analysis appeared to be prescient and ahead of its time, foretelling the proliferation of neoliberalism as a paradigmatic form of governmental power in society (McNay, 2009). In Britain, for example, neoliberalism has been portrayed as a rationality that underpinned political responses to 'stagflation' in the 1970s and the disenchantment with Keynesian government approaches (Kus, 2006). When the Conservatives took power in 1979, they actively employed a language of neoliberalism (Fourcade-Gourinchas & Babb, 2002) to criticise the incumbent political system for economic stagnation, excessive state interventionism, disruptive growth of union powers, and the culture of so-called 'dependency' (Kus, 2006). Under the premiership of Margaret Thatcher, neoliberal governmentality was promoted through two forms of thinking. The first was an economic form that focused on monetarism as an approach to economy. "Thatcherism's critical innovation was ... to articulate 'retrenchment' with a full-blown ideology for a national revival, underpinned by a strong conviction in the Hayekian and Friedmanite doctrines, an almost visceral distaste for inflation, and a ferocious desire to break the power of the labour unions" (Fourcade-Gourinchas & Babb, 2002, p. 556). The second form went beyond just the economic domain and attempted to extend the economic grid to now redesign "the state-economy-society relationship in a radical manner" (Kus, 2006, p. 506). This redesign was particularly evident in the promotion of the 'enterprise culture' throughout the 1980s (Keat, 1991b; Keat & Abercrombie, 1991; Morris, 1991), which to this day reverberates as a paradigmatic model for social relations (Vallas & Cummins, 2015; Du Gay, 1996).

Neoliberalism has appeared as key to governmentality in the UK in the recent decades in the post-Thatcher era too. During the New Labour administration, vocabularies of neoliberalism were reflected in the focus on markets, deregulation, and the reproduction of the logics of economics in spheres of the social and political through

a range of state interventions (Fuller & Geddes, 2008). The primacy of market principles further continued under the 2010 Cameron-Clegg coalition government, where the role of work as central to prosperity, benefits as barriers to full participation in society, and construction of competition as a ‘modern’ practice in relation to state regulation emerged in political debates around dependency (Wiggan, 2012). Of particular interest during that time was an idea of ‘Big Society’ actively promoted under David Cameron’s leadership as an ambitious plan to build “a society with much higher levels of personal, professional, civic and corporate responsibility” (Cabinet Office 2010, p. 1, as cited in Alston, 2016, p. 116). It is through this idea that individuals and collectivities were to assume a more active role in community problem-solving and care of personal wellbeing moved away from the culture of dependency. As Alston (2016) has noted, such an idea echoed the neoliberal sentiments of Thatcher that focused on redistribution of power and individualisation of responsibility, while setting up a model of entrepreneurship as a particular ideal across sectors of society that had so far escaped the economic grid of neoliberalism.

The neoliberal governmentality conceptualised by neo-Foucauldian scholarship discussed above, appears to have maintained its paradigmatic status in the political life of the UK. This has been particularly evident in the way the principles of the market continue to dominate the vocabularies of the British State on a wide range of issues, from the management of the Grenfell Tower tragedy and Boris Johnson’s response to Covid-19 pandemic, to re-emergence of trickle-down economics under the former premiership of Liz Truss (Crerar, 2022; Elliott, 2022; Coleman & Mullin-McCandlish, 2021). These examples, of course, form only a rough illustration of the practices of neoliberal governmentality, but also shed light on the continued importance of neoliberalism as a rationality that attempts to envisage every aspect of social reality through the notion of markets and commercial enterprise to this day. These practices highlighted the broader movement in society toward the prioritisation of market principles of profits, self-interest, and competition as a model for the organisation of society (Foucault, 2008; Read, 2008). This rise of neoliberalism has been linked to the production of a particular individualised discourse of ‘enterprise’ that has come to characterise the broader changes in the understanding and organisation of work (Du Gay, 1996). Against this backdrop, the following discussion traces the discursive construction of organisational life through the notion of enterprise and the implications

of such discourse for the nature of contemporary work, employment, and worker subjectivity.

2.3.2 The Discourse of Enterprise and the Organisation of Work

Whilst Foucault provided an important basis for understanding the broader effects of neoliberalism in society, within the domain of work and employment it has come to be made practical through the discourse of enterprise (Davies, 2014; Du Gay, 1994a). The discourse of enterprise has been shown to act as a powerful critique of bureaucracy in organisational life (Du Gay, 1994b). According to Weber (2005), bureaucracy is a model of work predicated upon strict division of labour, rigid hierarchies of control, and technocratic modes of governance, which appears to ‘trap’ workers within its “iron cage” (p. 123). It is also described as preventing realisation of individual freedom and autonomy (Du Gay, 1994b). Popular writers in the fields of management and organisation, such as the proponents of the culture of ‘excellence’ (Peters & Waterman, 1984), celebrants of creativity at work (Florida, 2004), as well as human behaviouralists and urban ethnographers (Whyte, 2002), have all shared anti-bureaucratic sentiments, drawing attention to the detrimental effects of bureaucracy in organisational life. Within the context of a shifting economic terrain, accelerated through globalisation and rapid technological innovations, bureaucracy has come to be presented as a ‘static’, outdated, inflexible, inefficient, and unresponsive way of working, necessitating novel ways of organising work (Du Gay, 1994b, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992).

The discourse of enterprise has come to occupy a central role in new managerial approaches to working, offering a critique and a solution to the ‘problems’ of bureaucratic hierarchies and seeking to provide an effective response to the ‘post-Fordist’ flexibilization and de-centralisation of work (Kalleberg, 2000; Vallas, 1999; Du Gay, 1994b, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). This has been evident in the change in work and employment in recent decades towards reimagining of work as ‘commercial enterprises’ (Keat, 1991b). This view came to prominence alongside the promotion of the culture of excellence in the 1980s (Peters & Waterman, 1984),

emergence of the human resource management philosophy (Storey, 1989), and adoption of new entrepreneurial ways to organisational process control, such as just-in-time and total quality management (Du Gay, 1996). In the UK, as has also been discussed earlier, the discourse of enterprise under the title of the ‘enterprise culture’ in the 1980s underpinned a series of reforms in an attempt to reconstitute all institutions and their internal relationships as commercial enterprises through the market logics of neoliberalism (Keat, 1991b). In a more recent example, Maitra (2017) has shown how work training programmes have promoted the discourse of enterprise amongst immigrants of colour in Canada, drawing on vocabularies of self-reliance, productivity and responsibility as an attempt to reproduce the culture of enterprise at work. In a slightly different take on the discourse of enterprise, Bay (2019) studied neoliberal governmentality in social work showing that precarious working conditions prompted an adoption of enterprise amongst social workers, but also highlighted the role of these workers in reproducing the discourse of enterprise amongst their clients, directing these workers towards “vigilant self-attention” (p. 206). These are just a few examples illustrating what Du Gay (1996) considered the generalisation, or diffusion, of “the enterprise form throughout the social body” (p. 185) of work pitted against the logics of bureaucratic control.

Recent theorisations of the discourse of enterprise have linked it to the idea of workers as customers/consumers (Du Gay, 1994b, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). This linking of consumption to the discourse of enterprise provides a governmental model for social relations – it aims to constrain workers within consumer-like relations rather than promote individual identifications with goods or products as visible extensions of the self (Munro, 1997). For example, Du Gay noted that since the late 1970s there has been a growing tendency to redesign relationships of organisations and institutions with various groups, such as students, passengers, hospital patients, in new terms as customers first and foremost, setting a blueprint for re-modelling of internal relationships in organisations as well. Various organisational departments have come to be expected to act as customers-suppliers towards each another, necessitating business-like behaviours, such as competition, productivity, and economic efficiency. This model of work effectively replaces older bureaucratic forms of control with market mechanisms via decentralisation, allocation of more autonomy to individual units, increased focus on performance, and encouragement of entrepreneurial

tendencies amongst workers. The blurring of traditional boundaries between consumption and production, and reification of the ‘sovereign consumer’, highlights the operation of governmental power that radically changes the nature of organisational control. It alters the relationship between managers and employees who could be expected “to re-imagine their work situations as sites for ongoing commercial transactions” (Vallas & Cummins, 2015, p. 297) and actively work towards fostering self-reliance, responsibility, autonomy, and productivity as enterprising workers.

The above theorisation of enterprise discourse appears to draw attention to a model for work and employment that promotes a particular paradigmatic form of conduct predicated upon the logics of neoliberal governmentality. It opposes the static nature of bureaucratic government in favour of market principles, promotes consumer-like behaviour underpinned by individualisation of responsibility and entrepreneurship. The significance of this discourse appears to be presented as the way against which all aspects of contemporary work must be judged. This proliferation of the discourse of enterprise has been particularly germane in the domain of cultural work, which is highlighted in more detail in Chapter Three. However, the “ubiquitous and inexorable spread” (Fournier & Grey, 1999, p. 122) of the current theorisations of the discourse of enterprise has been critiqued along several lines of inquiry (Vallas & Cummins, 2015). Bolton and Houlihan (2005), for instance, commented on the overly deterministic representation of enterprise, arguing against the logic of the markets as becoming the “only vocabulary” (p. 686) of human life. For example, the discourse of enterprise, particularly as presented by du Gay, appears to be a “constant master category” (Rose et al., 2009), with the “character of the entrepreneur ... assum[ing] an ontological priority” (Du Gay, 1994b, p. 662). Furthermore, as Fournier and Grey (1999) have pointed, any attempts at portraying the discourse of enterprise as a ‘blanket term’ risks concealing alternative understandings of work practices, managerial roles, and public sector changes. They noted that managerial roles in organisations may not be related to entrepreneurial behaviour and could in fact be limited by bureaucratic, administrative processes within organisations, such as budgetary reporting constraints. Thus, workplace practices may “embody meanings which are not reducible to a unitary concept” (p. 113) of enterprise. Against this backdrop, the following section considers how the discourse of enterprise has come to be linked to the image of the entrepreneur, providing paradigmatic theorisations of the

discourse of enterprise that leave less space for the consideration of alternative discourses and practices of resistance in the formation of worker subjectivity.

2.3.3 *The Enterprising Subject of Work*

The discourse of enterprise interpellates a particular kind of entrepreneurial subject (Du Gay, 1996, 2004; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992; Keat, 1991b). Keat (1991b), for example, has noted that this discourse refers to the conduct of individuals who display a “loosely related set of characteristics” (p. 3), such as autonomy, responsibility, initiative, boldness, energy, self-reliance, risk-taking, and the ability to accept personal responsibility. Such references to enterprising characteristics can be frequently encountered in the speeches of politicians in the UK. For instance, consider Margaret Thatcher’s (1975) speech in Finchley, where she advocated for Conservative values to be built upon “the enterprising, the hard-working and the thrifty” (para. 12). More recently, Boris Johnson (BBC News, 23 July 2019) pledged to “energise the country ... and take advantage of all the opportunities [Brexit] will bring with a new spirit of can do” (para. 5-6), whilst Liz Truss made the infamous off-the-record reference to British workers’ “mindset and attitude ... [lacking] a bit more graft” (Crerar, 2022, para. 15). In all these examples there appeared to be reference to particular enterprising characteristics and qualities – promoting an “ethic of personhood” (Du Gay, 2004, p. 41) deemed as desired and necessary for economic growth and development.

The image of the entrepreneur forms a fundamental part of the discourse of enterprise. Although the definition of entrepreneurship is a malleable and contested concept, it is often linked to the individuals who run a business, focus on economic growth, and provide some sort of products and services for the purposes of generating profit (Gibb, 2008; Leffler & Svedberg, 2005). However, the discourse of enterprise goes beyond an image of business owners and extends entrepreneurial principles to a diverse areas of life and work (Gibb, 2008; Du Gay, 1996, 2004; Sedgwick, 1992). Within the logics of neoliberal enterprise, the individual is now enticed to visualise themselves as an ‘entrepreneur of the self’, turning their life into “a sort of permanent and multiple enterprise” (Du Gay, 1994b, 1996; Foucault, 2008). As Foucault (2008) pointed out,

the entrepreneur of the self is a *homo economicus* who must be actively involved in their life as enterprise, “being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer, being for himself the source of ... earnings” (p. 226). What matters is not to actually be an entrepreneur, but to foster ‘entrepreneurial spirit’ through an application of a range of flexible and loosely related enterprising tendencies and aptitudes, such as being bold, taking risks, exercising autonomy and control, in the aspects of life not necessarily seen as commercial.

To be entrepreneurial in this sense is to be driven by self-interest, looking at the world through the notion of competition (Read, 2009; Donzelot, 2008; Foucault, 2008). For example, competition and competitiveness formed a basis of the enterprise culture for Thatcher and Reagan administrations in the UK and the US as paths to economic growth, promoting an image of the competitive world through the notion of the ‘survival of the fittest’ (Green et al., 2008). As Donzelot (2008) suggested, “the *homo oeconomicus*-entrepreneur ... as entrepreneur of himself, has only competitors” (p. 129) and is situated within a ‘game’ of inequalities that are necessary for achieving successful outcomes. For Foucault (2008), competition extends beyond the economic markets and appears to be generalised throughout the fabric of the society. The boundary of such competition is delineated by a potential of one being excluded, which must be avoided at all costs to ensure the primacy of the market. Moreover, the entrepreneur of the self appears to be driven by the promise of rewards in the world of competition; the success of others becomes instrumental to them as a “[spur] to greater efforts of their own” (Keat, 1991b, p. 6). Yet, the ‘spirit’ of competition goes beyond mere interest in economic gains and could encompass “the will to conquer: the impulse to fight, to prove oneself superior to others, to succeed for the sake, not of the fruits of success, but of success itself” (Schumpeter, 1934, p. 93, as cited in Davies, 2014, p. 52).

Within the discourse of enterprise workers are further portrayed as calculative, rational subjects. The life of the entrepreneur of the self is to be understood through the economised notion of “investment-costs-profit” (Foucault, 2008, p. 242) as an area for “the preservation, reproduction and reconstruction of one’s own human capital” (Gordon, 1991, p. 44). Foucault (2008) defined human capital as “that which makes a future income possible” (p. 224) – a set of various individual resources, such as skills, aptitudes, and competences understood through a logic of ‘investments’ for the

purposes of producing a return on that capital in the workplace (Foucault, 2008; Gordon, 1991). For example, a student who plays football for a university team is encouraged to see themselves as entrepreneurs who invest in themselves. They are encouraged to take advantage of such sport to ‘stand out’ against others in the labour market, with a promise of gaining new skills of leadership, team work and crisis management (Houghton, 2019). For such an individual then, a football game would no longer be just an intrinsically enjoyable practice, but essentially constructed through the discourse of enterprise as “an investable advantage in a competitive world” (p. 621). Within the contemporary context of precarious employment, workers have been encouraged to see themselves as “companies of one ... for whom every action, from taking courses on a new computer software to application to having their teeth whitened, can be considered an investment in human capital” (Read, 2009, p. 30).

One way in which the calculative position of the entrepreneur of the self could be made practical is through the notion of risk-management. Peters (2005) pointed out that in the era of the politics of the Right and neoliberalisation of society, the image of the self has appeared to be that of responsible “citizen-consumer subjects” (p. 134). These responsible subjects are encouraged to apply business-like or managerial approaches in calculating “risks and returns on investments” (p. 134) they make in diverse area of life, such as work, education, healthcare, or retirement. Because an act of investment, such as incurring financial costs for education, may bring future income (Foucault, 2008), this act seeks to prompt workers to carefully deliberate upon its risks, which must be managed. For the entrepreneur of the self, there is a necessity to adopt a range of “prudential strategies” (O’Malley, 1996, p. 200) to calculate and manage the risks of investments by using all information available at their disposal, exercising autonomy and responsibility to ensure their own security in the pursuit of self-interest. Therefore, the entrepreneur of the self appears to be a “calculative rational choice actor” and a “prudent subject of risk [who] must be responsible, knowledgeable and rational” (p. 202).

The ‘entrepreneur of the self’ then is a rational, calculative, risk-managing subject who exists according to “the economic model of supply and demand and of investment-costs-profits” (Foucault, 2008, p. 242). Considering the proliferation of precarious working conditions in many sectors of contemporary work and employment, as Christiaens (2020) commented, any ‘rational’ worker must work towards maximising

their interest and diminishing risks, thus choosing ‘safer’ jobs that are more likely to bring returns on their investments. Yet, existing research has suggested that entrepreneurial workers may avoid such rational calculation in their practice, continuing to ‘tag along’ in often insecure working conditions in the hope of a better future (for example, ‘hope labour’ and entrepreneurial subjectivity, Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020), “despite the odds being stacked against them” (Christiaens, 2020, p. 494). Foucauldian analysis of enterprise may be useful in illustrating the persistence of the languages of neoliberalism in the workplace, yet any further research must recognise a possibility for more “multifarious notion of neoliberal subjectivity that allows for more forms of self-conduct than calculative action” (p. 495).

Against this backdrop, the ‘entrepreneur of the self’ may not always need to be understood as a rational and calculative individual, and instead be seen as someone who could embrace uncertainty and unpredictability of the future, looking to proactively create their own markets and take advantage of emerging opportunities as an act of exercising of own autonomy (O’Malley, 2000). Keat (1991b), for example, portrayed enterprising subjects as those who often appear full of “energy, optimism, and initiative” (Keat, 1991b, p. 6). Others have shown that enterprising individuals do not simply ‘tag along’ or ‘sit back’ passively, but instead they turn words into actions, show initiative, and view the world around them as full of opportunities to be acted upon (Leffler & Svedberg, 2005; Heelas, 1991; Keat, 1991b), eliciting change in an “innovative fashion” (Sedgwick, 1992, p. 16). Thus, in the world of work portrayed as full of risks and uncertainties, the neoliberal subjects of enterprise must be proactive and creative in everything they do in the hope of a brighter future, “a euphoria of imagined success” (McRobbie, 2016, p. 4). The other side of this coin, however, would be that anyone who falls behind this proactive entrepreneurial outlook on work risks equated with the inefficiencies of ‘outdated’ forms of bureaucratic work who must be corrected or marginalised (Du Gay, 1996).

The ethic of the entrepreneur also connotes a particular image of individuals who are autonomous, self-reliant, responsible, and in control. Within the discourse of enterprise, workers have been imagined to “aspire to autonomy, ... to strive for personal fulfillment in its earthy life, ... to interpret its reality and destiny as matters of individual responsibility, ... to find meaning and existence by shaping its life through acts of choice” (Rose, 1992, p. 142). Such references to autonomous and

responsible subjectivity has been eminent in business and management literature, offering people to take responsibility through creativity and innovation (Walker & Henry, 1991), with the aim of fostering effective team work and dedication to organisational objectives by being “autonomous and in control” (Kanter, 1991, p. 60), whilst defining a managerial criterion based on the ability to “take much responsibility for their contribution and result” (Drucker, 1999, p. 18). For example, Florida (2004), has drawn attention to the advantages of autonomy, flexibility and personal responsibility of contemporary forms of flexible employment compared to more hierarchical and better paid jobs that required “grinding away to meet quotas and schedules with bosses looking over your shoulders” (p. 86). The ‘rising’ creative class, according to Florida, was now in control of their means of production through acts of creativity, which involved both formation of new knowledge and artifacts, as well as an ability to ‘think on their own’ at work, “rendering old class understandings all but obsolete” (Fougere & Solitander, 2010, p. 46).

This proliferation of the language of entrepreneurial autonomy, however, has implications for power. For Du Gay and Salaman (1992), autonomy is inextricably linked to the neoliberal logics of enterprise, acting as a form of organisational control in an attempt to “get the most out of their employees by harnessing ‘the psychological strivings of individuals for autonomy and creativity’ ” (p. 625). As Fougere and Solitander (2010) commented, what emerged in attempts at construction of the worker through autonomy and responsibility was the promotion of enterprise, which aimed at “the creative *worker*, ‘independent’ from [their] employer ... but fully expected to commit all ... embodied knowledge and creativity as an epistemological resource of the company” (p. 52). In essence then, any autonomy appears to be contained within the conditions of possibility of organisational objectives, turning into “responsible autonomy” (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011, p. 41).

One way in which the responsible autonomy of enterprising selves has been shown to be made practical is through the notion of flexibility. The vision of ‘risk society’ (Beck, 1992) and the reconstruction of labour markets associated with post-Fordist individualisation of work has come to prompt individuals to take up a flexible outlook on working, making themselves available for work at any moment and at any location (Ilcan, 2009). This flexible/agile/adaptable worker of enterprise is presented as not a voiceless subject who is manipulated by organisations to achieve their goals, but

envisaged as an individual who actively partakes in their own autonomy, ready to “anticipate change and seek out opportunities to exploit changing circumstances” (Gillies, 2011, p. 213). Moreover, as the discourse of enterprise shifts the focus away from structural issues and inequalities towards individual subjects (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020; Gill & Orgad, 2015, 2018), there appears to be an emergence of “an enhanced culture of *self-blaming*” (Banks, 2007, p. 61) that disciplines workers as flexible individuals who must “plan, reflect, and re-evaluate their endeavours, and anticipate any consequences of future actions” ” (p. 62).

The discourse of enterprise portrays workers as choosing and self-fulfilling individuals (Du Gay, 1994b; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992; Scitovsky, 1962; Hutt, 1940). There are several ways self-fulfilment can be understood. Maslow (1970) defined self-fulfilment, or self-actualisation, as that which instils desire in an individual to achieve one’s highest goals in life, one’s “highest aspirations” (p. xii), whatever they may be. In a different take, Rogers (1980) described an “actualizing tendency” (p. 118) as endemic to human life, drawing attention to an active process of ‘becoming’ a certain self as a whole, as an organism moving towards realising one’s potential. Within theorisations of enterprise, self-fulfilment has been linked to the image of the sovereign consumer and the power effects this has in the workplace. “Enterprise brooks no opposition between the dispositions and capacities required of ‘workers’ and those required by ‘consumers’” (Du Gay, 1994b, p. 662). The notion of consumer sovereignty envisages people not simply purchasers of goods or services, but as those whose relationship to the outside world can be shifted towards the logics of commercial enterprises, whilst also assigning them a degree of autonomy, accountability, and a desire for self-fulfilment in everything they do (Du Gay, 1996; Keat, 1991b). Like such sovereign consumers, enterprising workers are to treat every act in the workplace as ‘adding value’ to their lives, blurring the distinction between work and life, making any type of paid work a path to self-fulfilment and self-realisation. These workers are to be continuously engaged in this entrepreneurial project of shaping of their life through avoiding risk and maximisation of own happiness (McNay, 2009; Donzelot, 2008; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). The technological connotations of this consumer sovereignty harnesses individual strivings of workers for self-fulfilment towards achieving organisational objectives, as

“enterprise plays the role of relay between objectives that are economically desirable and those that are personally seductive” (Du Gay, 1994b, p. 663).

However, the concept of the sovereign consumer has been critiqued for its inability to accurately reflect the nature of enterprising work. Vallas and Cummins (2015) have pointed out that the notion of the sovereign consumer places workers in “a dependent position ... to respond passively to the demands of consumer markets” (p. 313). Yet, they averred that enterprising work should not be seen as a mere response to the challenges of flexibilisation of markets, but instead more as an ‘incorporated’ type of activity that employs corporate tools and approaches, such as marketing campaigns, SWOT analyses, brand statements, and focus groups to actively “*shape* the market [workers’] wares, thereby producing demand for their personal and professional attributes” (p. 313). Others, like Keat (1991b), have outright opposed the idea of consumer sovereignty as a valid conceptual tool for understanding the discourse of enterprise. He suggested that within contemporary capitalism consumers can never be completely autonomous from the producers of goods and services, as large corporations often “shape and control” (p. 7) consumer preferences through a wide array of marketing and advertising approaches. Therefore, the idea sovereign consumer appears to be problematic as a sole analytical concept in understanding the tenacity of enterprise, necessitating a reconsideration of this theory along broader dynamics of the business world.

There have also been calls to reconnect contemporary analyses of enterprising work with the context within which it may be reproduced. Vallas and Cummins (2015) drew attention to the role of precarious working conditions and their effect on the reproduction of market-based principles in the workplace. They noted a general tendency to represent the discourse of enterprise in a static manner, failing to account for the flexible meanings of this discourse in local situations. In particular, Vallas and Cummins (2015) highlighted the “*de-contextualized* nature” (p. 299) of research into enterprise, which they believed failed to make linkages between the reproduction of the neoliberal discourse and the rise of precarious work. “[T]he onset of stark uncertainty within the labor market and of the need to continually demonstrate one’s employability ... may leave workers and job seekers increasingly susceptible to the discourse of enterprise” (p. 299). Vallas and Cummins pointed out a general move away from ‘standard’ work arrangements (Kalleberg, 2009) in contemporary work that

denoted ‘emancipation’ from organisational structures of control and provided ‘idealised’ representations of contingent work, such as freelancing, contract work, or portfolio careers, as “opening new routes to freedom and fulfillment” (Vallas & Cummins, 2015, p. 302). Within these flexibilised and emancipated forms of work one is encouraged to adopt entrepreneurial subjectivity through self-promotion and self-branding, using a range of corporate tools to retain a better control of one’s economic situation, even if workers may not associate themselves with the image of the entrepreneur. As such, failing to recognise the role of other discourses, such as of precarious work, risks providing a limited understanding of the operation of enterprise within the domain of work and employment.

As Du Gay (1996) has pointed out, the discourse of enterprise appears to be all-pervasive, the power of which can be felt throughout every area of work and employment. The image of the entrepreneur “is no longer represented as one among many ethical personalities but assumes ontological priority” (Du Gay, 1994b, p. 662) and is generalised “throughout the social body” (Du Gay, 1996, p. 185). In other words, enterprise appears to take on a paradigmatic status in every part of organisational life, whether directly linked to commercial activity or not. Those who ‘fall short’ of enterprise, such as the unemployed or underperforming individuals, must be encouraged and given an opportunity to take on an entrepreneurial outlook as a solution to their problems (Rose, 1999). Such discourse appears to exclude and marginalise those outside of enterprising work (Du Gay, 1996, p. 179) as problematic subjects who must be “responsible individuals with a moral duty to take care of themselves” (p. 179). Such marginalisation of people ‘outside’ enterprising work has been traced in the ‘refusal to work’ argument. For instance, Frayne (2015) analysed a discursive construction of people who either chose not to work, or dramatically shifted their careers from higher paid jobs to less paid jobs. He showed that such individuals were often portrayed as what he termed “half a person” – as ‘lazy’, ‘idlers’, ‘abnormal’, not doing ‘anything special’, and even being socially ‘deviant’. Within such discursive marginalisation any other non-economic activities, such as taking care of children or families, strengthening own health or doing creative activities, appeared to be hidden or positioned as not valuable to society. This negative image of people ‘outside’ of jobs appears to have been constructed in contradistinction to the positive image of those ‘within’ the labour market, where the latter group has been presented

as gaining appreciation, recognition, social rewards from their work and being valued for sustaining themselves financially.

However, the current theorisations of enterprise as a paradigmatic discourse appear to leave no adequate space for alternative understandings of enterprising work and a possibility of resistance. Fournier and Grey (1999), for example, have noted that Du Gay's analysis of organisational reforms along the discourse of enterprise presented the role of resistance as "an inconsequential sideline" (p. 117). They pointed out that any overlooking of acts of resistance can be problematic, as workers' subject positions may be predicated upon alternative discourses, some of which may extract their legitimacy separately from the logics of enterprise. Although, Du Gay's analysis of enterprise does appear to leave some space for practices of resistance (see for example Du Gay, 1996, 2000), no adequate attention has been given to the role of non-economic vocabularies, risking creating analytical ambiguity and an uncritical stance towards the nature of contemporary work and employment. For example, in healthcare organisations, such as the NHS, alternative non-economic discourses have been shown to play an important role in the constitution of professional subjectivity employed "to rescue or colonize the notion of the customer from its enterprising meanings" (Fournier & Grey, 1999, p. 118). In this thesis as well, the role of alternative discourses, particularly that of 'caring about' the community, have played an important role as grounds for justifying enterprise of community arts workers in Wales. Such discourse also formed a basis for resistance to economic logics and a construction of alternative subject positions beyond purely commercial imperatives of enterprise. Thus, care must be taken against monolithic interpretations of enterprise in the workplace, providing space for consideration of discourses that may run counter, independently, as well as co-terminus with this form of governmentality (Green et al., 2008). The discourse of enterprise must not always take centre stage against which all other non-economic discourses, such as that of professional expertise, caring, and collaborative work, amongst others, are presented simply as "inferior responses" (Fournier & Grey, 1999, p. 121).

2.4 Chapter Summary

The discussion above has drawn attention to the theoretical underpinnings of the discourse of enterprise. It first presented the Foucauldian theory of governmentality as a basis upon which the operation of the discourse of enterprise can be understood. The discussion then highlighted the contemporary changes in work and employment that have seen a discursive shift away from bureaucratic, hierarchical governmentality towards a paradigmatic neoliberal ideal of individuals as entrepreneurial selves (Foucault, 2008). The logics of enterprise, predicated upon the neoliberal rationality of competition, self-interest, and investments (Read, 2009, Foucault, 2008), envisage an idealised organisational model based on antipathy to bureaucratic forms of governance and towards more ‘dynamic’ ways of organisation and reification of the notion of ‘sovereign consumer’. Importantly, this discourse has envisaged workers as entrepreneurial selves – a market-oriented subjectivity no longer contained to the commercial domain of business, and one expected to be internalised by workers everywhere, be it the public or private sector. The list of attributes of what constitutes to be ‘enterprising’ is not exhaustive, and at any one time this discourse could relate to a range of aspects in the world of commerce and entrepreneurship, such as being autonomous, self-interested, calculative, flexible, self-fulfilling, and continuously investing in personal human capital. Yet, as the discussion has also shown, one-sided theorisations of enterprise as paradigmatic, consumer-oriented, all-pervasive discourse can be problematic in understanding the complex dynamics of work and employment and worker subjectivity. Therefore, enterprising work should be understood as an ambivalent concept linked to both economic and non-economic vocabularies that may act both as grounds for its reproduction, as well as resistance.

As Fairclough (1991) has noted, this ambivalent meaning of enterprise must not be dismissed as insignificant. It should be construed as something that may enable flexible employment of this discourse in local strategies of reevaluating the nature of contemporary work, thus helping to further strengthen the role of market principles. As the following Chapter Three illustrates, the flexible meaning of the discourse of enterprise can be particularly traced within the domain of cultural work, linked to question of precariousness and languages of autonomous and passionate work that acted as strong imperatives for the reproduction of enterprising subjectivity.

3 CULTURAL WORK AND THE DISCOURSE OF ENTERPRISE

3.1 Introduction

The discourse of enterprise has been shown to pervade the domain of cultural work – an area of work that has been praised for its economic potential in the era of the ‘new economy’ (DCMS, 2023; Morgan & Wood, 2014; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Banks, 2007). A growing corpus of recent literature has drawn attention to the role of cultural work as an important driver for economic growth (Campbell, 2021; Belfiore, 2020; Luckman, 2018; Thestrup & Pokarier, 2018; Conor et al., 2015; Morgan & Wood, 2014; De Peuter, 2011; Banks, 2007; Freedman, 2007). The individualised nature of cultural work has also come to be presented as “a model for how various jobs and careers could shape up in the neoliberal era” (McRobbie, 2016, p. 70), providing a romanticised image of artists as blueprints for worker subjectivity, as self-reliant, responsible entrepreneurs (McRobbie, 2002). This section highlights how the discourse of enterprise has been shown as underpinning the organisation of cultural work and the production of worker subjectivities, as well as the tensions that such work implies in relation to market-principles of neoliberalism. Section 3.2 first provides the definition of the term ‘cultural work’ delineating it from the notion of ‘creative work’. It also traces the key characteristics of this form of work and employment. Then, in Section 3.3 a discussion is provided, which highlights how existing academic research draws attention to the construction of cultural work as a domain of enterprise, particularly through public policies and allocation of significance to entrepreneurial logics of self-fulfilment and autonomy. Following this, Sections 3.4 details how enterprise has been made practical in cultural work, shedding light on the role of precarious employment and autonomous and passionate attachments to work in the production of enterprising workers. Section 3.5 then considers alternative representations of the domain of cultural work, looking at how individuals resist the neoliberal imperatives of enterprise by engaging with alternative non-economic discourses. Such portrayals of cultural work open opportunities for more complex, contextually specific understandings of worker subjectivity beyond the logics of business and commerce.

3.2 Definitions and Characteristics of Cultural Work

For the purposes of this thesis, the term ‘cultural work’ is defined following the conceptualisation of Banks (2006, 2007). Unlike culture as a conglomerate, or a “complex whole” (Tylor, 1920, p. 1), made up of knowledge, beliefs, laws, customs, norms, habits and capabilities of individuals in a society, as well as “webs of significance” within which individuals are ‘suspended’ (Geertz, 2017, p. 5), references to ‘cultural work’ in this study draw upon a different meaning of culture - one often used throughout many studies of artistic and creative work. According to Banks, cultural work can be described as a variety of activities within the field of work and employment concerned with production of symbolic artifacts that acquire their value through production and communication of meaning using “images, symbols, signs and sounds” (2007, p. 2). Thus, ‘culture’ in ‘cultural work’ has more to do with what workers create and make, rather than what they think and how they assign meanings to who they are and what they do as workers (Tharp, 2009). Such cultural work may encompass a rich variety of activities often referred to as ‘traditional’ arts, such as theatre, music, crafts, painting, sculpture, dance, singing, literature, architecture, as well as ‘contemporary’ arts, such as film, television, web design and gaming, photography, graphic design, and new media. This type of work activity is not limited to direct producers of cultural meaning and value, such as artists, but also encompasses those individuals who are involved in the managerial, logistical, and administrative activities that make cultural production possible (Banks, 2007; Pratt, 2005, 2004; Filicko & Lafferty, 2002; O’Connor, 2000).

Cultural work should not be understood as synonymous to the notion of ‘creative’ work, although creativity forms an important part of its logics. Using the term ‘creative’ instead of ‘cultural’ work has been shown as problematic, because ‘creativity’ can be understood as a wide variety of practices that can be assigned to virtually any type of human activity (Galloway & Dunlop, 2007; Pratt, 2005). Thus, it is possible to see any practice as having a certain level of creativity in one way or the other, thus complicating any meaningful analysis of cultural work as particular practices related to arts and crafts. Nevertheless, in Britain there have been attempts at subsuming cultural work under a common umbrella term of ‘creative industries’, particularly within the language of public policymaking (see for example Department

for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS), 1999, 2001, 2023). As Banks (2007) has pointed out, such redefinitions of cultural work aim at applying enterprising notions of creativity to make cultural workers more amenable to governance as economic subjects.

Cultural work has often been linked to the idea of precariousness, because of its generally insecure working conditions. Precarious work relates to a type of work characterised by a pervasive sense of insecurity, a lack of confidence in the future, diminishing or no access to a variety of ‘safety nets’ usually available within more traditional forms of employment, such as better access to welfare and social protections, all of which expose workers to various risks of existence (Masquelier, 2019; Butler, 2010; Bourdieu, 1998). Cultural work has been shown to be dominated by “non-standard work arrangements” (Kalleberg, 2009, p. 8), such as casual, project-based, portfolio, temporary or other contracts, providing no job security or any guarantee of future work (Wallis et al., 2019; Butler & Stoyanova Russell, 2018; Kleppe, 2017; Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Lee, 2012; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010; Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Gill & Pratt, 2008; Gill, 2007; Batt et al., 2000; Bourdieu, 1998). Within such a context of uncertainty, cultural workers, or “creative precariat” (Arvidsson et al., 2010, p. 296), could be required to adopt a flexible and peripatetic outlook on their work, move from one job to the other to fill employment gaps, ‘multi-task’ and take up “peripheral work” (Coulson, 2012, p. 255), in order to ensure their own financial sustenance (Kleppe, 2017; Umney & Kretsos, 2014; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Christopherson & Jaarsveld, 2005; Christopherson, 2002; McRobbie, 2002). This point is highlighted in Section 3.4. Moreover, cultural workers may not always be well remunerated, except for a few individuals employed at higher levels of management (Wallis et al., 2019; Percival, 2020; Butler & Stoyanova Russell, 2018; Beirne et al., 2017; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011, 2010; McRobbie, 2002). Overworking, self-exploitation, self-blame, a sense of alienation, as well as intense stop-start patterns of work, have been noted as common features of this domain of work (Lee, 2012; Dobson, 2011; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010; Banks, 2007; Gill, 2002; Pratt, 2000).

Attention has also been paid to questions of workplace fairness and democracy, with studies shedding light on informal recruitment practices based on personal connections and reputation, rather than more formalised processes (Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Umney

& Kretsos, 2014; Coulson, 2012; Gill, 2007; Banks et al., 2000). Some research has also drawn attention to how issues of reconciling private life and family obligations within cultural work affect certain social groups more than the others (Dent, 2020; Wallis et al., 2019; Percival, 2020; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010; Gill, 2007; Ursell, 2000; Bourdieu, 1998). Recently, the Covid-19 pandemic has come to exacerbate these insecurities of cultural work, having a negative impact on the availability of funding and economic viability of projects, worsening job security and creating uncertainty about returning ‘back to normal’. It also placed pressure upon availability and clarity of structures of support and exacerbated existing social and demographic inequalities (Khlystova et al., 2022; Banks & O’Connor, 2021; Comunian & England, 2020).

3.3 Governing Cultural Work as Enterprise

I want our creative industries in particular to continue to seize the opportunities of a fast-changing world, to think “out of the box”, to innovate, to be flexible and swift, and to strive to realise their full potential.

Baron Smith of Finsbury,
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1997-2001)
(DCMS, 2001, p. 3)

Growing our economy is one of my priorities. And growing the economy means growing the creative industries. So today we’re setting out this new vision to realise the enormous potential of our creative entrepreneurs and businesses.

Rishi Sunak
UK Prime Minister
(DCMS, 2023, p. 3)

Despite the precarious working conditions of cultural work, the last three decades have seen a variety of interventions that aimed to promote cultural work as an exemplar of enterprising labour. As Banks and Hesmondhalgh (2009) have noted, there has been an active construction of cultural work, particularly within the political arena, as “good work” (p. 417), celebrating it as a space for creative autonomy, self-realisation, and

fulfilment, pinned against the boredom of traditional ‘uncreative’ sectors of economy. Cultural work, with its history of radicalism and political activism (Janes & Sandell, 2019; Young, 2006; Farrell, 1997), has been represented as “no longer intrinsically antipathetic to economic demands” (Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009, p. 419), reconciling artists’ striving for autonomy with that of demands of enterprise. As De Peuter (2014) noted, cultural workers, especially those involved in more precarious forms of employment, “are invoked as paradigmatic figures of 21st century capitalism” (p. 264) that operate within an environment where entrepreneurial tendencies, such as flexibility, risk-taking, self-reliance, self-branding, and responsibility, are valorised as preferable, and even necessary, within the context of post-Fordism defined by a persistence of nonstandard employment arrangements, flexibilisation of markets, and pervasive precarity.

Cultural policies have been instrumental in the attempt to envisage cultural work through the logics of enterprise, presenting such work as paths to economic growth and job creation (Banks, 2007; Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009). In the UK, these policies promoted cultural work as “amenable to the formulations of market and enterprise discourses” (Banks, 2007, p. 48), based on principles of autonomy, freedom from state support, and competition. A key technological intervention can be traced to the publication of the Creative Industries Mapping Documents (CIMDs) (DCMS, 1998, 2001), developed under the New Labour administration (Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009). The aim of the CIMDs was to govern cultural work by establishing the conditions of possibility through the discourse of enterprise that was “relentless[ly] emphasi[sing] ... the application of creativity for profit” (Banks, 2007, pp. 48–49; Rossello & Wright, 2010). In particular, the documents broke down cultural work, or ‘creative industries’, into thirteen easily identifiable sectors: advertising, architecture, arts and antique markets, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music, performing arts, publishing, software and computer services, television and radio. These sectors were methodically defined, measured, and evaluated according to the economic input by which their value can be exclusively determined.



Figure 1: Creative Industries Revenues Illustration (DCMS, 2001)

The newly defined ‘creative’ industry sectors have been represented visually (Figure 1) within the 2001 CIMD as various types of writing implements, with the highest economic contributor depicted as ‘stylish’ computer stylus, and the less economically ‘successful’ ones as smaller, seemingly less important writing tools, such as a small, short pencil stub. Within CIMDs, each ‘creative’ sector has been portrayed as having “‘special needs’ ... requiring government interventions in order to effectively mobilise greater success” (Banks, 2007, p. 50). Such construction of cultural work suggests the technological nature of public policy. The importance of CIMDs as technologies of government cannot be understated, considering their influence on shaping both national and regional policy-making in the UK for many years, promoting the role of creativity as being paramount to economic success, and inspiring creative industries development throughout the globe (Rossello & Wright, 2010; Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009), acting later as a harbinger of the wider concept of creative economy that went beyond the cultural domain itself (Higgs et al., 2008).

In Europe, the decrease in public funding for cultural work led to a growth in an economisation of this type of work too. In Nordic countries, Pyykkönen and Stavrum

(2018) suggested state policy attempted to envisage cultural actors as entrepreneurial workers, devising the best ways to deal with economic issues. In particular, the authors noted a promotion of an idealised work ethic through a range of educational interventions that prioritised subject positions associated with values of the entrepreneur of the self – “self-confidence, creativity, innovation, initiative, courage, creation, ideas, business” (p. 18). These policies reified “a new entrepreneurial and economically enlightened artist, who continuously calculates his/her market value and brands her-/himself” (p. 20). To be an artist, according to these interventions, is no longer limited to production of cultural artifacts, but involves viewing one’s life as a continuous enterprise and “working on the self economically towards a profitable future” (p. 20). A similar focus on entrepreneurial subjectivity was also observed in the UK through a variety of state-commissioned reports and white papers, which promoted individual flexibility, personal responsibility, work mobility and multi-tasking as necessary qualities of workers to be able to compete effectively in the economic market (De Beukelaer, 2012; Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009).

The proliferation of the discourse of enterprise in cultural work has also been linked to the instrumentalisation of individual strivings for autonomy and self-realisation. Within the new economy predicated upon notions of creativity and profiting, “[c]ultural work [has been presented as] hardly like work at all” (Banks, 2007, p. 4). Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2011) drew attention to two dimensions of autonomy that define the cultural domain: creative autonomy and workplace autonomy. Creative autonomy is linked to the idea of autonomous art production, of artists free from external determinants and social, political, or moral constraints and is often associated with the idea of ‘art for art’s sake’. Workplace autonomy, on the other hand, is generally associated with “the degree of self-determination that individual workers or groups of workers have within a certain work situation” (p. 40). Cultural work has long been presented as synonymous with the much vaunted ideas of freedom, individual autonomy, creativity, choice in decision-making, and the ability to shape own life (see for example Buckner, 2013; Banks, 2010; Gill, 2007; Altieri, 2009). In the language of public policy, cultural work has become synonymous with ‘good work’ – an ultimate employment arena where “the sublime taste of freedom can be most deliciously savoured” (Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009, p. 417). Such work can be seen as offering “genuine possibilities for self-realization”, providing individuals

with ways of realising of own creative aspirations and talents, adding to own “sense of purpose and meaning in their lives” (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011, p. 141). As Banks (2007) noted, the word ‘creativity’ in cultural work has often been synonymous with the word ‘enterprise’.

Whilst cultural work has been promoted as ‘good work’, these liberating and empowering representations appear to be enmeshed in power relations of neoliberalism, encouraging workers to adopt an entrepreneurial relationship to themselves. As cultural workers appear to be increasingly embedded in post-Fordist production and deregulation, they are enticed by organisations to become flexible and responsible for their own sustenance by embracing “responsible autonomy” (Friedman, 1977, p. 78, as quoted in Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011, p. 41; Lin, 2019). This outlook on autonomy “attempts to harness the adaptability of labour power by giving leeway and encouraging them to adapt to changing situations in a manner beneficial to the firm” (Friedman, 1977, p. 78, as quoted in Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011, p. 41). These productive aspects of autonomy are also emphasised in this study (see the Findings and Discussion Chapters), where workplace autonomy and creative freedom formed an important basis for the formation of individual subjectivity, but which appeared to be primarily confined within organisational boundaries and oriented towards achieving the prosocial goals of community arts.

The emancipatory representations of cultural work thus appear to be closely linked to neoliberal governmentality. The discursive constructions of cultural work through ideas of autonomy, passion, ‘doing what you love’, ‘hip’, ‘cool’, and ‘fun’ have been shown to not only describe work in an upbeat manner, but fundamentally shape the conditions of possibility of cultural work that could normalise high levels of precariousness and the incessant need to become enterprising to survive and thrive (Shukaitis & Figiel, 2020; McRobbie, 2016; Taylor, 2011; Gill, 2007; Neff et al., 2005). The subjects of cultural work have become linked to the image of the entrepreneur of the self, who must continuously work on one’s own image and see no distinction between work and private life (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017). In other words, cultural workers have been portrayed in much academic and policy language as what Leadbeater and Oakley (1999) termed ‘The Independents’. These ‘independents’ are “anti-establishment, anti-traditionalist and ... highly individualistic [individuals who] ... prize freedom, autonomy and choice ... [which] predispose them to pursue self-

employment and entrepreneurship in a spirit of self-exploration and self-fulfillment” (pp. 14-15). As McRobbie (2016) pointed out, the neoliberal government of cultural work does not coerce its subjects, but instead calls upon them to realise their own freedom and capabilities, take on active responsibility, and “embark on a voyage of self-discovery” (p. 15).

3.4 The Enterprising Subjects of Cultural Work

I’m not a businessman, I am a business, man!

Kanye West ft. Jay-Z
(Lyrics excerpt from ‘Diamonds from Sierra Leone’ song)
(Lyrics, 2024)

Despite the attempts to construct and govern cultural work ‘from above’, a growing body of academic research has highlighted the more complex nature of this type of work, drawing attention to the extent to which workers actually engaged with the discourse of enterprise. Understanding the way workers engage with various discourses is important, as it illustrates the extent to which various governmentalities can be successful in the formation and disciplining of individuals as particular subjects (Dean, 1999). The discussion that follows illustrates the extent to which cultural workers have engaged with the discourse of enterprise as entrepreneurs of the self. Although these studies come from a variety of theoretical backgrounds, they nevertheless provide a telling account of the proliferation of entrepreneurial forms of work throughout the social fabric of cultural work.

The identity of cultural workers, and those of artists, has historically been associated with the idea of art for art’s sake. The discourses of autonomous arts appear to construct art production as a greater good, which must stand above any material or commercial interest of its producer (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007). Within such discourse, the utility that artists are to extract from their work is inherent in the process of production of artefacts – “[t]he artist ... takes satisfaction from the work itself and

not the acclaim (if any) it elicits” (Caves, 2003, p. 75). Cultural workers thus have been envisioned as autonomous and self-fulfilling subjects, as ‘bohemians’ that must pursue every aspect of their lives as a project and piece of art (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007; Wilson, 1999). However, recent research showed that it would be misleading to portray artists as completely detached from economic discourses. This is because artists can be directly involved in commercial activity as an important source of their economic subsistence, whilst being embedded within predominantly precarious working conditions (Cunningham, 2009).

The pervasive nature of precariousness in cultural work and the insecurity of labour markets have been shown to act as a strong imperative for the proliferation of the discourse of enterprise, prompting cultural workers to become entrepreneurs of themselves (Morgan & Wood, 2014). One way in which this has been evoked relates to the way workers position themselves in terms of enterprise, as brands, products, or micro-businesses. For instance, Entwistle and Wissinger (2006) studied fashion modelling work in New York and London, illustrating how freelance models constructed the image of their bodies as ‘hardware’ that necessitated a level of commodification in order to effectively respond to the insecurities and uncertainty of labour markets. Freelance models were often involved in precarious employment, working on a short-term, project, or hourly basis, with no guarantee of future work. Entwistle and Wissinger showed that freelance workers positioned themselves as entrepreneurs of the self by referring to themselves as businesses, or ‘products’, which necessitated constant self-promotion and self-advertising. With no corporate guidance on how they must behave, these workers had to “reflexively manage aspects of their work” (p. 781), such as aesthetic elements of their look, career progression, and training. These workers were responsible for their own sustenance, having to be flexible and adaptable to the changing trends of the fashion industry and client demands, invest in maintaining of own bodies, and adopt an “always on” (p. 789) attitude, or risk having no work. The precarious pressures of the labour market necessitated workers to act entrepreneurially by incessantly marketing themselves through the use of body image and often having to ‘reinvent’ it for employability’s sake and to “stand out from the newer models coming through” (p. 783). Thus, as these authors commented, the success of modelling was embedded in one’s ability to embrace enterprise, adapting one’s own body as a form of calculation and strategising

to satisfy the needs of clients, not limited to working hours, but encompassing all areas of their professional and personal lives.

Cultural workers have been shown to exercise flexibility and self-reliance in response to their precarious working conditions. As illustrated by Storey et al. (2005), media workers often adopted an enterprising outlook on work in order to survive and succeed. Like the fashion models described by Entwistle and Wissinger, these workers were generally involved in precarious work, doing project-based assignments over shorter periods of time. For many of them “[t]ermination’ was ... an intrinsic property of the freelance employment relationship” (Storey et al., 2005, p. 1040). There was no promise of future work, incomes were under pressure due to high competition from new entrants into this type of work, and workers had no access to work benefits, such as redundancy pay. Work recruitment was dominated by informal, word-of-mouth practices through networks of colleagues and friends, which appeared to provide a constantly ready supply of labour to employers. But it also exposed freelancers to various issues of such informal employment, such as accessing information about new opportunities, lack of transparency about the recruitment processes, and the cliquish nature of established networks. Within this context of insecurity, many had to engage with the discourse of enterprise. Fundamentally, media workers considered their trade as an extension of themselves, the failure of which was seen as a personal issue. Cultural workers were shown to be autonomous actors, responsible for their own job security, which necessitated them being flexible and self-managing. As Storey et al. have illustrated, media workers were “playing a game of risk” (p. 1048) and to alleviate such risk they often directed all their work efforts towards client satisfaction in order to increase their chances of future employment. One way to do that, the authors pointed out, was to “develop an ‘amoebic-like ability’ ... to adapt to the needs of the clients and the demands of the market” (p. 1048). These workers were always ‘on the go’: seeking new clients, developing their skills, and exploring new areas of work. Any opportunity that presented itself was seized, which meant that freelancers had to be involved in work that transgressed styles, subjects, and outlets. As a result, some described themselves as being “an inch deep and a mile wide” (p. 1048). In an example of the ‘real enterprise’, described by Storey et al., one worker had to lie their way into a graphics design job, and then actively learn the skills necessary for it on-the-go.

Eikhof and Haunschild (2009) drew attention to entrepreneurial practices of flexibility, in what they termed ‘self-control’, amongst German repertoire theatre actors. They highlighted how cultural workers were responsible for the success of their own careers, and as such, needed to manage their working lives actively and flexibly. Repertoire actors constructed their work as an area that necessitated self-control, as they spoke of having to prepare for rehearsal in advance, review scripts, research their roles through field studies, as well as gain new skills and abilities for a play. Further, they had to often actively self-promote via interviews and attend various networking events. During the actual work process on the theatre stage, actors were also shown as flexible subjects who had to use their expertise in interpreting stage roles on-the-go and “mak[ing] an empty space come alive” (162). This ability to exercise their enterprise during theatre plays had implications for the future prospects of these actors and whether directors would choose to work with them again. As Eikhof and Haunschild pointed out, constant monitoring of their own work and the ability to flexibly stay in control during moments of crisis was a defining feature of the work of theatre actors that differentiated them from other non-creative sectors of employment. However, it is important to note that this flexible outlook – an ability to exercise self-control – is not always available to workers, as various demographic elements, such as gender, parenthood, health, may prevent individual from the ‘full play’ of this flexible enterprise (see for example, Banks & Milestone, 2011).

Cultural workers have further been portrayed as calculative and rational actors, who approach any relationships they establish through networking as opportunities for furthering of own interests. In an investigation of the UK film industry, Blair (2009) drew attention to the practices of “active networking” (p. 116), which reflected the economised nature of interpersonal relations in cultural work. Although Blair did not explicitly engage with the theory of enterprise, her analysis provides a telling account of social relations predicated upon neoliberal principles of calculative self-interest. Blair defined active networking as “the consciously enacted activity of initiating, building and maintaining a network of informal personal contacts with the purpose of influencing outcomes of actions” (p. 122). She pointed out that networking was often “a conscious and informal process” (p. 127), as freelancers established their networks with colleagues and other cultural workers as an opportunity to become ‘known’ amongst potential recruiters, as well as to gain new knowledge about upcoming work

opportunities. These workers appeared to be cognisant of the instrumental aspects of networking and recruitment, as they talked about prioritising more personal ways of reaching out to new and established contacts via phone calls or face-to-face meetings over more impersonal methods of direct CV sending or ‘cold calling’. Once a network was established, these workers spoke of the importance of maintaining positive relationships with their contacts, as they may provide them with knowledge about upcoming jobs or spread information to recruiters about the job searcher. For Blair, the makeup of these networks was an example of “conscious calculation” (p. 123) of workers, because they only included and maintained those individuals who could provide access to various work-related resources and opportunities. Other ‘less productive’ contacts may be used less frequently or shed completely. Thus, workers maintained an entrepreneurial, calculative outlook on networking that never remained static and was dependent on the changing circumstances of work.

These calculative, rational positions of cultural workers as enterprising subjects have also been linked to practices of networking in relation to repertoire actors in Germany, according to Eikhof and Haunschild (2006, 2007). Actors in their study were often on temporary contracts and embedded within a context of high competition, with no guarantee of future work and a pervasive possibility of termination of their contracts or being replaced by freelance actors at any time. For many of these workers reputation was key social capital that must be maintained to ensure access to career opportunities and professional growth. As Eikhof and Haunschild (2006) showed, these actors often referred to their work as a vocation, talking about being personally devoted to theatre as a life-long project. To ensure the achievement of such vocation, they were shown to strategically network in ‘bohemian’ spaces, such as canteens or premier celebrations, “gathering information and selling their labour power” (p. 238). Actors often gathered daily theatre gossip, which allowed them to be kept “up to date about [their] market value, future job opportunities and (potential) rivals” (p. 239). Choosing who to socialise with, sitting next to influential people during premiers, joining important conversations, and clustering around directors were all practices that highlighted the entrepreneurial positions of these German theatre actors.

Building friendships and establishing new acquaintances, particularly with influential people, were part of the rational self-marketing practices of the German theatre actors, which allowed them to gain the necessary social capital for employability purposes.

Even in situations when these actors drew on collectivist discourses of “theatre as a family”, and “showing closeness with others through gestures such as hugging and kissing”, these actors were nevertheless calculative in the portrayal of their relationships with others publicly, where they often took care to be “seen hugging and kissing only the ‘right’ kind of people” (p. 239). As a consequence, “since every personal relationship had a potential economic value it was often hard to distinguish true friends from those who just try to advance their career” (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2009, p. 165). Driven by artistic ambitions of ‘art for art’s sake’, these actors were “marketers and entrepreneurs of their own labour” (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, p. 237), yet they often downplayed the role of economic logics in their work to “be camouflaged as part of the lifestyle of a bohemian entrepreneur rather than being a cold blooded businessman” (p. 239). Similar focus on the calculative subject positions of networking were highlighted across a range of cultural domains, such as music production (Haynes & Marshall, 2018; Scott, 2012) and television (Antcliff et al., 2007).

A study by Hoedemaekers (2018) highlighted the calculative, self-promotional capacities of freelance musicians who were “cultivating, maintaining and marketing a variety of different skills in order to get work” (p. 9). These workers were shown as flexible individuals who valued having a variety of skills in music, which allowed them to gain an ‘edge’ over their peers, as well as be able to ‘pitch’ themselves to clients. Musicians were marketers of their own trade, as they celebrated their own abilities to create new work opportunities through an “entrepreneurial attitude” (p. 9) that involved sensitivity to upcoming job opportunities and preparedness to cater for the demands of their clients and audience preferences. Hoedemakers noted that the musicians in the study were akin to ‘salespeople’ who used their direct practice not only as an opportunity for performing music, but also as a stage for advertising themselves and gaining new skills for future contracts. Outside performances, freelance musicians talked about conducting a range of PR activities, which included creating ‘pretty’ websites, keeping in touch with people, and actively approaching clients and venues for new work. Although workers navigated the tensions between artistic and economic self-positionings, they nevertheless often recognised the importance of the client. “A job implies an employer” (p. 11), placing employability

concerns at the centre of the work of cultural workers in music, which in turn necessitated one to act as an entrepreneur of the self.

The cultivation and development of individual skills as investments into human capital reflects workers' flexible outlook on work, in order to increase their employability prospects (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2009; Entwistle & Wissinger, 2006; Storey et al., 2005). However, these enterprising and aspirational practices of self-investment have been shown to be generally unpaid, constituting what Mackenzie and McKinlay (2020, drawing on Kuehn & Corrigan, 2013) referred to as 'hope labour'. Hope labour has been described as a form of "unpaid or under-compensated labour undertaken in the present, usually for exposure or experience, with the hope that future work opportunities may follow" (p. 2). In their study of worker subjectivity in a range of cultural sectors, such as music, performing arts, and design, Mackenzie and McKinlay showed that individuals often positioned themselves in economic terms as someone who could be improved through an accumulation of skills, abilities, and via work experiences. Gaining human capital for these individuals was an important aspect of their work, as it allowed them to be flexible and have a diversity of skills in relation to the market risks they faced. In particular, free labour emerged as a form of investment into human capital that could be "deployed and amortised in the future" (p. 10). Any work that was being conducted for free was recognised as a risk, but yet it was also constructed as something that would bring about future benefits, make one a better worker, and could be used to bring about potential economic returns. According to Mackenzie and McKinlay, the corollary of hope labour is in individualisation of responsibility, shifting any risks and accountability away from structural problems, such as the fault of the markets, towards the individual in the shape of self-critique. Other studies of cultural work have also pointed out the entrepreneurial tendencies of cultural workers, such as DIY musicians (Scott, 2012) or new media aspirants (Neff et al., 2005), who would exchange free or almost free labour as a resource to gain future economic profits or get one's work 'off the ground'.

Although cultural workers have been shown to take up a range of enterprising positions to enable economic sustenance, the picture of their subject positions appears to be more complex, going beyond the challenges of precarious work. A range of intrinsic motivations have been shown to serve as strong imperatives for the adoption of entrepreneurial positions in cultural work too. A wide corpus of academic research has

suggested that cultural workers often valued their freedom and autonomy in the workplace, which was seen as enabling control over individuals' lives (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017; Dobson, 2011; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006; Neff et al., 2005; McRobbie, 2002). As has been discussed earlier, the subjectivity of the artist has been presented as closely associated with the idea of creative autonomy, positioning such subjects as "that special, self-regulating being and 'free spirit' possessed of rare and precious gifts" (Banks, 2010, p. 3). However, as workers seek autonomy in the workplace, their strivings could also serve to contribute to an adoption of enterprise. Mackenzie and McKinlay (2020), for instance, averred that enterprising positions of cultural workers may be normalised through individual strivings for autonomy combined with economic motivations, where they would work for free or do low paid jobs "in exchange for self-determination in the future" (p. 13). The promise of future autonomy meant that workers had to "discount [current] structural inequalities, reproducing themselves as 'exploitable'" (p. 13). Risk in the shape of having no economic returns, as well as inducing high current financial costs, becomes pervasive throughout the life of a cultural worker. "Crucially, freedom [may be] not equated with choice, but rather with the freedom to act according to one's future calculations" (p. 14).

In another study, Neff et al. (2005) explored the proliferation of entrepreneurial labour in the work of fashion models and new media workers, pointing out the role of individual strivings for "autonomy, creativity and excitement" (para. 1). The authors pointed out that the new media and fashion industries have been constructed as 'hot' and 'cool' industries – a highly informal work pitted against the boredom and toil of 'corporate' employment enticing individuals to become entrepreneurial to be able to access and retain such work. These workers have expressed a "strong sense of autonomy" (p. 9), often referring to their ability to exercise workplace flexibility and freedom to shape their work patterns. "It's a really free existence. It's really quite amazing" (p. 9) – summarised one participant in this study. This vision of fashion and new media work aligned with conceptualisations of contemporary work in 'creative capitalism' constructed through the notion of creativity: "a new subject [who] is cooler, hipper, more urban, more tolerant, more caring and humane and, most importantly, more competitive" (Fougere & Solitander, 2010, p. 42).

However, these liberating constructions of work came with a caveat in a shape of workers' responsibility for their own success. As Miller and Rose (1990) suggested, the "government of work now passes through the psychological strivings of each and every individual for fulfilment" (p. 27). Aspiring entrants to the industries of fashion and media had to invest their own time and effort to gain new skills and pay for their own training and dancing classes to ensure that they were able to enter these 'hot' industries and remain there. These enterprising practices have been supplemented with a necessity for incessant networking, known as 'schmoozing', often conducted after working hours, becoming part of one's responsible work routine. As one participant of this study pointed out, highlighting the mediating role of individual strivings for fulfilment and self-realisation could be a strong imperative for enterprising work: "...one more time, one more chance, one more casting! Because this could be it! Maybe I'll go to London, and it will change everything, and it'll really happen" (Neff et al., 2005, p. 12).

Duffy and Wissinger (2017) further drew attention to the way other emotive aspects of cultural work as 'fun', 'passionate' and 'glamorous' may be instrumental in positioning of cultural worker as entrepreneurs of the self. Analysing a popular media coverage of social media careers of blogger, vloggers, and influencers over a 10-year period, Duffy and Wissinger noted that self-employed workers often constructed their work through vocabularies of 'love', being 'amazing', and simply "a dream job" (p. 4657). Such work seemed to have enabled them to follow individual passions and aspirations at work – to do what one loves and to realise their creative potential through work. In fact, these cultural workers avoided constructing their practice as work at all, and instead presented it as "a hobby they would pursue even without financial remuneration" (p. 4657). Despite these positive representations of social media work, individual love and passion for work appeared to act as a strong justification of long working hours and unremitting dedication to maintaining of enterprise. Furthermore, this passionate work was closely enmeshed with questions of individual autonomy and freedom. Social media work was seen as something that enabled individuals to exercise their 'authenticity' and remain 'true' to their identity, as they talked about expressing their own freedoms and opinions, but reflected a level of enterprise, as workers employed the same language for promotional purposes to appeal to their audiences too. There was a pervasive valorisation of autonomy, as these workers

“laud[ed] enterprising careers that enabled them to circumvent the bureaucracy and rigidity of a ‘traditional’ work environment” (p. 4661) echoing the anti-bureaucratic elements of enterprise highlighted by Du Gay (1994b). ‘Passions’ towards cultural work thus appeared to normalise these workers as entrepreneurs.

Duffy and Wissinger’s research fundamentally highlighted the effects of the romanticised aspects of cultural work in normalising acute individualisation and precarious labour conditions. In McRobbie (2016), creativity and ‘romance’ in cultural work is implicated in the networks of power, valorising a very productive notion of creativity as a path to self-realisation. “This motivation towards self-expressive work now intersects ... prevailing governmental discourses of business, entrepreneurship and self-organized work across this particular terrain” (p. 38). Strong emotional attachments to work and romanticisation of creativity have also been shown as a “bypassing mechanism” (McRobbie, 2015, p. 127) that could justify ideas of long-working hours, informality, and flexibility as normal and unchallengeable. In some cases, desire for pursuing passions may not only hide, but also actively encourage individuals to seek precarious work through circumventing stability and material security as the only viable way to achieve self-realisation (Umney & Kretsos, 2015). Thus, enterprising work in the name of fulfilment, passions, love, autonomy, and excitement, among other strong emotional aspects in cultural work of recent years could be seen as establishing the conditions of existence that hide structural issues of precarious work, exacerbate social and gender inequalities and informality, and deprioritise any possibility for collective or political action (Shukaitis & Figiel, 2020; McRobbie, 2016; Conor et al., 2015; McRobbie, 2015; Gill, 2014, 2002; Banks & Milestone, 2011; Taylor, 2011; Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Banks, 2007).

The discussion above has drawn attention to the uptake of enterprise in the domain of cultural work. It highlighted the role of precarious working conditions and individual aspirations for self-fulfilment through creative work across a variety of cultural sectors that necessitated an uptake of the position of the entrepreneur of the self. Long working hours, financial insecurity, informal recruitment practices alongside the allure of cultural work as a space of autonomy and passion have been shown to prompt workers to adopt an enterprising relationship to themselves as mini-businesses or products, to self-market and continuously invest time and effort in acquiring new human capital. These entrepreneurial workers often positioned themselves as flexible, constantly ‘on-

the-go' subjects, taking on a calculative outlook to the outside world to further their own economic positions and careers aspirations, leading to the individualisation of responsibility and redirection of attention away from structural issues that prevailed in such work. As such, cultural workers may appear as exemplar subjects of neoliberalism, reflecting the wider move towards enterprising work in other sectors (Banks, 2007; Du Gay, 1996). Yet, cultural work has also been shown as a site of discursive struggle. As the following discussion will illustrate, cultural workers should not be seen as passive 'recipients' of enterprise, but as people who could resist and reframe the neoliberal imperatives of enterprise by drawing on and engaging with a variety of alternative discourses beyond the economic imperatives of neoliberalism.

3.5 Resistance to Enterprise and Alternative Discourses of Cultural Work

If anything, art is... about morals, about our belief in humanity. Without that,
there simply is no art.

Ai Weiwei (as cited in Tate, 2024, para. 1)

Cultural work has come to be represented as an exemplar of enterprising labour, which unproblematically aligns itself with individual artistic and creative impulses for 'good work', yet it would be erroneous to assume that such governmentality is uncontested. As per Storey et al. (2005), one should be wary of assuming that individual workers are "to simply rehearse the discourses of identity that are dominant within their industry", as they may be capable of rejecting their "totalizing, unmediated constraints" (p. 1038, as cited in Alvesson & Wilmott, 2022, p. 622). The following discussion illustrates how existing research in the field of work and employment shed light on the complex discursive terrains of cultural work. More specifically, the discourse of enterprise should not be seen as a paradigmatic discourse within the domain of cultural work, as it could co-exist with, as well as be contested by alternative non-economic discourses in the production of worker subjectivity. Without the consideration of these configurations, any analysis risks creating one-sided, overly simplistic, and unrealistic accounts of cultural work.

The domain of cultural work can be seen as a site of struggle against enterprising work. Historically, cultural work has been portrayed as a field of ideological contestations, political activism, and radicalism, challenging dominant structures of power and giving voice to marginalised and oppressed groups of people (Janes & Sandell, 2019; Young, 2006; Farrell, 1997). It should then come as no surprise that these discursive configurations of culture continue to play an important role today, even as its workforce has been embedded within the contemporary structures of commercialisation, capitalism, and post-Fordist flexible individualisation. Recent studies shed light on the contestable nature of enterprise in cultural work, showing how individuals engage with non-economic discourses in their resistance to neoliberal governmentality. For example, the enterprising image of cultural workers as a rational-choice actor has recently been challenged. As discussed earlier, workers have been shown to act in an entrepreneurial, calculative way through practices of ‘active networking’ (Blair, 2009; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, 2007). Nevertheless, Coulson (2012) offered an alternative analysis of networking in cultural work, highlighting the role of non-economic discourses. The author’s study of musicians’ work did not find the kind of instrumental outlook of assessing network contacts that Blair’s research showed. Instead, Coulson suggested that within the less hierarchical and less structured nature of the music industry, workers often maintained their contacts over prolonged periods of time, “dealing with whatever comes at you first” (p. 256). This meant that networking was a less targeted activity, with no guarantees or expectations of future employment opportunities.

Furthermore, musicians constructed their networks through alternative vocabularies of collaborative relationships and friendships. New connections were forged, because they were important in terms of making music, rather than a promise of future work. Shunning the language of enterprise that envisaged others as a source of opportunity, musicians chose their networks based on whether they were “good to work with, socially and musically” (p. 256). A sense of community and a love for the work performed was integral to the subject positions of musicians, as these workers regularly supported each other, provided free lessons, offered material help and information, and encouraged new and existing members to expand their audience reach. Thus, a more complex vision of cultural work emerged predicated on collaboration, co-operation and friendships, “offering resistance to current notions of

enterprise that characterize flexible self-employed work as individualistic and competitive” (p. 257). In other words, the subject positions of musicians could be understood through collectivist discourses, rather than individualised notions of enterprise. Yet, these two discourses may not be seen as entirely antithetical to one another, as musicians have been shown to adopt a level of enterprise as a necessity to dealing with practical challenges of their work – albeit defining themselves as ‘accidental entrepreneurs’, as will be discussed further below.

In a study of crafts makers, Luckman (2018) highlighted how workers resisted entrepreneurial ideals of scalable growth by engaging with ethical and artistic concerns. Luckman suggested a complex picture of cultural work predicated upon a combination of artistic, passionate, and ethical concerns that formed a basis for challenging the idea of entrepreneurial success linked to practices of ‘scaling up’ and outsourcing once the business has become large enough. The study has shown that designers generally avoided entrepreneurial vocabularies in the positioning of themselves as cultural workers, and even when they did, they “summarily rejected” (p. 318) such language, keeping at bay any notions of large-scale growth or ‘becoming rich’. Crafts designer-makers were often preoccupied with a range of artistic and ethical dilemmas in their decisions against outsourcing of designs to larger-scale productions, expressing concerns that such practices may efface the ‘handmade’ feel of their products or lead to unethical production techniques. Many of these workers “did not wish to grow; for them the challenge was actually *not* getting (too) big, flying in the face of the neoliberal entrepreneurial agendas” (p. 319). Thus, to be a crafts maker as a subject position connoted a certain interplay of artistic and ethical discourses, based upon ideas of sustainable production practices, efficient energy use, thoughtfulness at every stage of crafts making, opting for repairing instead of replacing, as well as producing items that were ‘built to last’. Luckman’s study highlighted not only the opposing attitudes that cultural workers may take in relation to the logics of enterprise but also the conditions of possibility against which such defiant positions appeared to be constructed. This was particularly evident in the way designer-makers talked about being hesitant to grow, *specifically* because of the ‘neoliberal entrepreneurial agendas’ that they perceived necessitated economic growth. In other words, the discourse of enterprise could be seen as denying craft-

makers' subject positions as ethical workers, whilst simultaneously acting as grounds for the reproduction of these defiant subjectivities (Laclau, 1990).

Cultural work may in fact be understood as an other-centred domain of labour predicated on prosocial logics of care and compassion. As has been illustrated earlier, individual strivings for passionate work may go hand-in-hand with reproduction of neoliberal logics of enterprise (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017; McRobbie, 2015, 2016). However, as Luckman (2018) has shown, crafts makers appeared to do 'what they loved' without a recourse to entrepreneurialism, opting for more artistic and ethically conscious subject positions, solidarity, and a move away from "combative competition" (p. 320). In another study, Sandoval (2018) attempted to rehabilitate the function of passionate work in the cultural domain, showing how one's desire for 'doing what you love' can be shifted away "from a matter of individual transformation and competition into a practice of co-operation and social change" (p. 113). The author's research showed that cultural workers created and joined co-ops because they felt disenchanted by the wider structures of cultural work characterised by precariousness, individualism, and competitiveness, looking for spaces of more opportunities for collaboration and individual voice. Within these spaces, the vocabularies of passion were a "co-operative project" (p. 123) linked to workers' willingness to help and support each other precisely because of love of work. Furthermore, 'passion' had a 'compassionate' element to it, as it referred to making positive impact on other people, showing care and concern, and "[putting] people before profit ... [where] members try to be compassionate" (p. 124). Thus, passion as compassion had a collective dimension, as workers recognised their responsibility for one another, promoting a model of employment predicated upon principles of "compassion, care, solidarity and mutual support" (p. 124). Such languages of sympathy, understanding, forgiveness, and compassion are exemplar of resistance against neo-liberal rationality, offering "a form of collective self-care" (p. 125), opening opportunities for "alternative futures for cultural work" (p. 121) that may challenge the paradigmatic status of enterprise.

Alacovska and Bisonette (2021) suggested that cultural work should be understood through ethics of care. In their research into the cultural domain, they highlighted that workers' practices could be closely enmeshed with affection and caring. They identified three broad areas of cultural work within the domain of care. First, cultural

work was linked to questions of caring, whereby support from relatives and colleagues played an integral role in sustaining employment, particularly in question of childcare. Second, cultural work appeared to be predicated upon concerns about “the well-being and flourishing of their fellow-citizens and colleagues” (p. 146), whereby workers were actively involved in supporting other people, doing volunteer work, and being involved in unpaid labour for the purposes of the ‘common good’. Finally, Alacovska and Bisonette, pointed out that “creative work [was] infused in *relations of solidarity*” (p. 146) that involved practices directed towards benefitting local communities and being driven to do work due to a strong sense of duty and responsibility towards others. As such, this portrayal opened opportunities for understanding cultural work as a domain of caring work beyond enterprise. Whilst it is important to recognise that cultural workers’ concern towards others and a position of responsibility may be constrained by the need to satisfy the demands of commercial customers (Simpson & Pullen, 2018), the recognition of the ethics of care nevertheless help to draw a more complex picture of cultural work beyond its economised representations.

Complete contestation of enterprise appears to be uncharacteristic within the cultural work domain, as research also points to the more multifaceted and ambivalent nature of such work and a production of subject positions that may both encompass and transgress various discourses. For example, Antcliff et al. (2007) warned against binary representations of networking in cultural work as individualised competition versus cooperation. Although the authors research did not engage with the discursive nature of work, their study provided a valuable insight into the complexity of meanings in cultural work. Focusing on freelance work in the UK television industry, the authors suggested that workers may employ networks “to fulfil multiple and diverse functions” (p. 373). In this study, participants talked about creating networks that were akin to being ‘address books’, which would involve those contacts who could assist in finding future work. Thus, the motive for such networking emerged as economic, as workers used their connections to learn about new opportunities, gain job-related information, and “raise their profile” (p. 380) amongst potential employers. Yet, these workers also referred to networking as places of reciprocity and community, mutual support, sharing of knowledge, reinforced through anonymity on the Internet. Networking was also related to membership of professional groups, which did have some reputational

benefits, but generally were linked to upholding of professional standards, supporting each other, and collectively overseeing projects.

Storey et al. (2005) also shed light on the diverse uptake of the discourse of enterprise in cultural domain. They showed how workers positioned themselves as being flexible “mini, enterprising businesses” (p. 1045), but also noted that such individuals did not necessarily adopt a ‘complete’ image of the business, dissociating themselves from various business practices, like “tax, accounts and accountants” (p. 1045), and instead focusing on a narrow interpretation of enterprise linked to managing relationships and marketing of the themselves. Some workers may also reinterpret the meaning of enterprise away from its neoliberal meaning as a path to better work-life balance, such as being ‘enterprising’ in taking vacations and working fewer hours per week. “Achieving a desired state of lifestyle thus became a way of displaying enterprise and mastery” (pp. 1045–1046). In other cases, Storey et al. also suggested that cultural workers may actually be engaged in “playing at enterprise” (p. 1046), by interacting with a particular limited image of enterprise linked to mundane aspects of business, such as renting business offices.

Cultural workers may appear adamant not to be seen entrepreneurial or related to the world of business. For instance, although Coulson (2012) highlighted the collective, collaborative aspects of musicians’ identification, such workers were not devoid of enterprise. Workers’ behaviour was linked to a sense of individual responsibility - to being organised, to fulfilling obligations to others, instead of any reminiscence to business enterprise aspects, such as concerns with competition, self-interest, or economic growth. Yet, they also appeared to identify themselves as “accidental entrepreneurs” (p. 251), rather than entrepreneurs by choice, determined by the labour market situation rather than individual desire to establish a business. They did not see themselves as entrepreneurs, and instead equated parts of their work as a necessary ‘business-like’ behaviour, such as being responsible for own work, networking, and “making the most of their skills and opportunities” (p. 253). Yet, unlike the enterprising subjects described in the works of Du Gay (see Section 2.3.3) portrayed as individualised subjects of neoliberalism, Coulson drew attention to more complex manifestations of entrepreneurial subject positions enmeshed with other professional and collaborative discourses. Such subject positions involved identifying oneself as being a ‘musician’ first and foremost and seeking to have a ‘sense of responsibility’ in

relation to other colleagues and friends. Likewise, Haynes and Marshall (2018) noted a proliferation of entrepreneurial practices within the music industry that involved constant networking, strategizing and calculative planning, multi-tasking, self-promotion, and business-related prowess. For these workers “business and entrepreneurial skills are a normal part of [their] ... arsenal” (p. 467), appearing to reflect the idealised notion of the entrepreneurial self who must be “flexible, resilient, creatively solving problems and able to get by on a very little capital” (p. 467). Yet, these workers were hesitant to identify as entrepreneurs proper, rejecting being labelled as such individuals, albeit not completely shunning the idea of entrepreneurial behaviour as a routine aspect of their work.

Thus, it is possible to consider cultural work as a site of ambivalence, as workers may internalise and engage with both enterprising and non-enterprising discourses in the formation of their subject positions. For example, as previously shown, ‘hope labour’ was linked to enterprising practices of cultural workers, as they appear to invest in human capital for better economic future (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020). Yet, Mackenzie and McKinlay also showed that such positions were not one-dimensional and can include “an ambivalent mixture of competitive, conflicting and contradictory relations to self in the constitution of entrepreneurial subjectivity” (p. 3). Their research did confirm learning as a form of investment in the self, yet it also highlighted the way cultural workers referred to the intrinsic aspects of their work: doing free labour was a way of achieving “meaning, self-determination and autonomy” (p. 10), intermingled with their desire for social responsibility. Therefore, artists were positioned as both economic and non-economic subjects, as they both reified the primacy of art and creative autonomy in their work, but also retained ‘hopes’ that their work would be valued economically within the labour market. As Mackenzie and McKinlay summarised, the “figure of the artist or cultural worker ... appears as a deeply ambivalent subject, aware of the ethical importance of artistic autonomy and the intrinsic value of the creative process, yet at the same time attracted to entrepreneurial discourses of self-realization ... in line with market rationalities” (p. 16). Of course, regardless of the positions taken, the reproduction of precarious working conditions for cultural workers continues, as they must continue to navigate the individualised labour terrain in search of better pay and self-realisation.

3.6 Chapter Summary

The discussion above highlighted the reproduction of enterprising work within the domain of cultural work. It provided conceptualisations of ‘cultural work’ that went beyond the economised notions of ‘creativity’, as well as drew attention to the key characteristics of such labour domain linked to questions of contingent, precarious working conditions. This discussion then detailed contemporary attempts at shaping cultural work as an exemplar of enterprising work, showing the role of autonomy and self-fulfilment in making its workers more amenable to neoliberal governmentality. Subsequently, this chapter also showed how the discourse of enterprise has been made practical, highlighting the role of precariousness and emotive attachments to work in reproducing the entrepreneurial subject positions of cultural workers. However, as has also been highlighted, existing academic research has pointed to more complex reproductions of worker subjectivity that enable resistance, as well as reinterpretation of neoliberal imperatives of enterprise. As such, cultural work can be seen as a space of discursive ambivalence that may challenge conventional attempts at representing contemporary work and subjectivity as predominantly economic constructs (Du Gay, 1996). Within such work, various discourses vie for dominance in their attempts to define the reality of what it means to be a worker within the cultural domain (Parker, 1992).

Chapter Four focuses on the community arts practice which forms the focus of this study, as a predominantly non-commercialised area of cultural work. Against the wider backdrop of reproduction of and resistance to enterprise in cultural work, this discussion details the key principles and dynamics of community arts and considers whether and how the discourse of enterprise has been reproduced in this domain of work.

4 COMMUNITY ARTS WORK

4.1 Introduction

Existing academic research into the nature of work and employment has generally focused on the more commercialised sectors of cultural labour, as highlighted in Chapter Three, but has paid less attention to those areas of cultural work and creative activity that are mainly non-commercial and publicly-funded (Beirne et al., 2017; Beirne & Knight, 2004). One such understudied area of cultural work has been the domain of community arts practice, which is an empirical focus of this thesis. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the background on the nature of work and employment in community arts work and show how it has been considered as a domain of enterprise. First, Section 4.2 provides a definition of the term of ‘community arts’ used in this research and traces the genealogy of this type of work and employment. Then, Section 4.3 discusses the characteristics of work in community arts, the role of organisations and creative practitioners, and the reliance on public funding streams for sustenance. This is followed by Section 4.4 detailing the key principles of community arts work predicated upon notions of co-production, participation, community, and cultural democracy. Finally, Section 4.5 provides a review of the existing research that highlights the extent to which community arts has been considered as a domain of enterprising work.

4.2 Definitions and Genealogy of Community Arts

Community arts practice is unique from wider cultural work sectors that appear to be mostly driven by economic concerns and profitability, placing artists and creators as the centre of cultural production. ‘Community arts’ has been described as an “approach to creative activity ... [that] enjoins both artists and local people within their various communities to use appropriate art forms as a means of communication and expression

... adapting them to present day [social and community] needs and developing new forms” (Kelly, 1984, p. 1). Community arts can be considered part of the wider cultural work domain, as it engages in production of meaning through “images, symbols, signs and sounds” (Banks, 2007, p. 2) using a rich variety of traditional and contemporary media, from painting and drawing to music production and photography. The uniqueness of community arts appears to be in the way it aims to enable “ordinary people to take control of their lives and to play a part in shaping their world” (Boardman 1993, p. 66, cited in Beirne & Knight, 2004, p. 34) not only artistically and creatively, but also economically and socially. Such aims of community arts distance it from other commercialised sectors of cultural work, such as film and television production, commercial music, or design. As a result of the social focus of arts-based community initiatives, some commentators suggested that community arts organisations, in the spirit of Big Society, have now come to replace many social care and development functions within the community, the responsibility of which were traditionally assigned to and provided by the State (Leslie et al., 2020; McQuilten et al., 2020; Alston, 2016; Schubert & Gray, 2015).

Yet, it is important to recognise that community arts can be a contested and heterogenous area of work with a variety of alternative and competing terms used to denote such activity, such as ‘participatory arts’, ‘inclusive arts’, or ‘socially engaged art’. Any use of an umbrella term may simplify or misrepresent the rich variety of cultural and creative practices in community-settings, however, there remains a need to find one for the purposes of analytical clarity. Following Jeffers (2017b), the use of the term of ‘community and participatory arts’ may be less problematic, as it accounts for diverse cultural practices that relate to both providing access to collaborative production of art, as well as encompassing the questions of cultural democracy and wider need for social, political, and economic change in local communities and elsewhere. However, for the sake of convenience, this research will be using the term ‘community arts’ to denote both political and participatory aspects of such work. As will be further illustrated, participants in this study generally referred to their work as ‘community arts’, but also recognised the alternative terms used to denote such activity.

Attempting to map the history of community arts is challenging. Unlike other sectors of cultural work, there is a dearth of research or any definitive written genealogy of

such work. Its history is complex and appears to be enmeshed with the general development of cultural work. As Goldbard (1993) suggested, the history of community arts cannot be easily understood in a linear fashion and instead should be portrayed as “the lines of a meander than a map ... as a creek, winding its way through the plains and valleys of culture, here rushing over rocks and there reduced to a trickle” (p. 1). Though the genealogy of community arts work can be traced back several centuries, its contemporary roots can be linked to a distinct political movement in the UK from 1968 to 1988, during which time the term ‘community arts’ came into play in everyday use (Matarasso, 2013). The growth of the community arts movement in the 1960s and 1970s had been a result of countercultural sentiments, increase in radical political activity, individual desire for giving more power to people, as well as a response to a number of politically significant world events, such as the 1968 riots in Paris, the Prague Spring, the anti-war riots in the United States, and the civil-right protests in Northern Ireland (Jeffers, 2017a; Kelly, 1984). The development of community arts can also be placed within a wider movement of the rise of interest in the role of community, solidarity, and familial cooperation in industrial Britain, such as that studied by Michael Young at the Institute of Community Studies (Butler, 2015).

During this time, the goals of the community arts movement were never uniform, as various arts groups were more like “nomadic and anarchic tribe[s] that lived for most of the time in small groups ... coming together on ritual occasions to renew ... vows, plot against ... enemies and tolerate ... each other’s various eccentricities” (Moriarty, 2017, pp. 70–71). As Matarasso (2019b) commented, this movement was first and foremost a political project based on political ideas of improving the life of societies, rejecting art as elitist, as well as challenging the hierarchies of power and social inequities of contemporary capitalism. Kelly (1984) noted, that the community arts movement was about making democratic beliefs practical by “taking art ‘into the streets’ and ‘giving it back to the people’” (p. 22). As a result, there were many examples of community arts projects from performing in community settings and creating publicly accessible murals, to involving non-professionals in co-production of theatre plays, making documentaries about local working cultures, as well as promoting inclusive models of children’s play through art (Matarasso, 2019b). Community arts was often seen as being on the margins of traditional art, being performed in unconventional places and using unusual means, such as festivals,

murals, community printing sessions, creative writing, new media, punk music, DIY, as well as utilising established forms of artistic expressions (Matarasso, 2013).

Kelly (1984) has suggested that the community arts movement was underscored by three strands of activity. Firstly, it was grounded in “the passionate interest in creating new and liberatory forms of expression” (p. 25), such as the establishment of various art labs across the country that challenged social conventions and structures in arts and elsewhere. Secondly, the movement was characterised by artists moving away from conventional art spaces, such as galleries and into the streets, and trying to reach people through art in public places. Thirdly, community arts movement became synonymous with left-wing political activism and ideas of community development through the medium of art and creativity. This was evidenced in the work of artists practicing in local communities of Glasgow, London, and Manchester, attempting to create better living conditions for people as a whole (Matarasso, 2013; Kelly, 1984). During the same time in the early 1970s, community arts was becoming recognised as a movement institutionally as well. The key development here was the creation of The Association for Community Artists (ACA), which became fundamental in the development of the community arts as a coherent movement, which explored and lobbied for new funding opportunities to promote community arts, uniting artists nationally, and providing them with a platform to discuss issues of policy and practice (Higgins, 2007; Kelly, 1984).

Unfortunately, the coherent community arts movement met its demise in the late 1980s. As Jeffers (2017a) commented, it was experiencing mounting internal pressures based on differences of opinion between organisations about the vision, shape, timeline, and goals of community arts. Whilst the community arts movement of the 1970s was less hierarchical, the 1980s saw a sharp shift towards professionalisation and more structured, management-inspired, approaches to organisation of work in line with neoliberal logics of the Conservative government at the time. The new changes appeared to alienate artists, as these contradicted the ideas of individual autonomy, cultural democracy, social change, and activism. Moreover, as access to public money became restricted, community arts organisations were increasingly required to implement more robust organisational structures, be prepared to be ‘auditable’, and provide evidence of ‘money for value’, which forced many community arts groups and organisations to legally become companies with a charitable status (Alexander, 2018;

Jeffers, 2017a). These challenges were further supplemented by external pressures, such as the secession of The Association of Community Artists in 1987 and the transfer of public funding responsibility for community projects onto Regional Arts Associations, further diminishing available resources. The abolishment of left-leaning metropolitan authorities by the Conservatives, hastened the demise of the community arts movement (Matarasso, 2019b; Jeffers, 2017a). Finally, the promotion of the ‘culture of enterprise’ by Margaret Thatcher’s government in the 1980s, the move away from the welfare economy (Mabbett, 2013; Morris, 1991), and considerable arts public funding cuts (Alexander, 2018), meant that community arts organisations were forced to become responsible for their own survival. Such newly acquired responsibility connoted increasing reliance on private sources of income, which for many small community arts organisations was not always viable (Jeffers, 2017a).

During the 1990s the community arts field had undergone further dramatic change. Now embedded within the emerging neoliberal working culture, many artists found their values for cultural democracy, justice and empowerment misaligned with the Conservative politics of the time (Matarasso, 2019b). A new term of ‘participatory arts’ was now emerging, aiming to replace ‘community arts’. With increasing attention given to the notion of providing public access to art, evidenced in the language of Arts Councils, the participatory arts shift was seen by some as “gruesome examples of tokenist participation” (Clements, 2017, p. 108), aimed at merely employing art as a technical tool for access to individual creativity, rather than for community empowerment and social change. As Matarasso (2019b, p. 156) noted, the 1990s was a period of the predominance of the “language of remedialism ... separating [the discourse of participatory arts] from the rights-based approaches” of the earlier years. Community artists were encouraged to focus less on systemic, politicised, local issues and concerns, and more on questions of access amongst individual demographic categories based on sex, gender, age, religion, disability or social position (Matarasso, 2019b; Jeffers, 2017b; Matarasso, 2013). On the individual level, these changes in the structure of work and employment of community arts meant community arts workers were increasingly choosing to become self-employed, to attain the necessary level of individual autonomy and to ensure personal economic sustenance. On a policy level, they were emblematic of the neoliberal governmentality of community arts work that “saw individual enterprise promoted at the expense of shared enterprise” (Matarasso,

2013, p. 216), reimagining workers as embedded in the transactional culture of the consumer, rather than collaborative relationships.

With the election of the New Labour government in 1997 and the earlier creation of the National Lottery in 1993, community arts experienced new challenges, but also opportunities (Matarasso, 2019b). The newly established ‘creative industries’ experienced a dramatic increase in spending on culture. Just in England the spending increased from £195 million in 1997 to £230 million in the years between 2000-2001 (Hesmondhalgh, 2005). By 2010 that sum almost doubled, reaching £449 million a year (Matarasso, 2019b). The creative industries funding was further topped up by the proceeds from the National Lottery fund every year, amounting to a large sum of £1.6 billion per annum (between 2004-2011) (House of Commons, 2007; The Stationery Office, 2007, 2010, 2011). Although the rise of funding was based upon a new political environment that placed creative economy as a key economic contributor, most of this money was allocated to non-participatory cultural domains, such as museums, theatres, galleries, and popular art venues (Matarasso, 2019b). Jeffers (2017b) observed that the small size of community arts organisations and their “uneven quality” (p. 145) did not lend themselves well to be considered as being part of the ‘creative industries’. Any funding that did reach community arts organisations was positioned as an ‘investment’, rather than a subsidy, the effects of which needed to be measured, reported, and controlled against pre-defined business-like goals, such as audience and participant numbers, effect on local community heritage, employment, crime, and economic development contribution (Matarasso, 2019a; Jeffers, 2017b).

Despite the challenges that the community arts experienced, it nevertheless appeared to survive and thrive. In the UK, this work continues to be carried out by many organisations and individuals “finding nooks and crannies where they could flourish, burying invisible roots into subsoil ... dying away, only to re-emerge when hostile conditions changed” (Moriarty, 2017, pp. 75–76). In other words, despite the financial and regulatory difficulties that this sector experienced over the previous decades since the 1980s, community arts practitioners remain resilient in their attempts to prevail and sustain themselves. Some of the participatory aspects of community arts have been actively reflected in more commercialised areas of arts, such as theatres, art galleries and exhibitions that use audience participation to engage with the public in novel ways,

but without a dominant focus on principles of cultural democracy, collaborative participation and social change (Moriarty, 2017).

Community arts should also not be exclusively confined to the Western hemisphere, as its practices can be observed globally: from Eastern Europe to the steppes of Central Asia, to as far as Japan and Canada and beyond (Matarasso, 2019b). The survival and growth of the community arts sector has been possible due to the flexibility of organisations and individuals who were prepared to meet the challenges of the contemporary times within the labour market, adjusting their approaches to work accordingly (Matarasso, 2019b; Moriarty, 2017).

4.3 Characteristics of Work and Employment in Community Arts

A key characteristic of community arts work has been its general reliance on public funding for sustainability and income. In the US, for instance, public funding was a major contributor to development of community arts practice in the second quarter of the 20th century, where such funding was often dependent upon the current political atmosphere and dominant ideologies in relation to social welfare (Goldbard, 1993). In the UK, organisations delivering community and participatory arts, as well as self-employed freelance individuals, do commercially provide some of their services to ensure economic sustenance and sustainability, yet most of their work is funded through various sources, such as governmental and quasi-governmental bodies like the Arts Council of Wales or the National Lottery, private organisations, such as supermarkets and charities, and via trusts and other fundraising opportunities (The Federation of Groundwork Trusts, 2022; Arts Council England, 2022b; Arts Council of Wales, 2021; Moriarty, 2017; ASDA Foundation, n.d.; Tesco Community Grants, n.d.). In Wales in 2018-2019 alone, the Arts Council of Wales, which manages public art money from the Welsh Government and the National Lottery, has invested around £29 million in the work of its ‘Arts Portfolio’ members – a collection of 67 cultural organisations that help to deliver the strategy of the organisation, including access to creativity and community practice (Arts Council of Wales, 2022a, 2022b, 2019). Some studies highlighted that public funders have now become instrumental in setting up the

performance targets and evaluation based on number-driven metrics, which could have a detrimental effect on local community engagement (Beirne et al., 2017; Jennings, 2012; Rimmer, 2009). A similar reliance on external funding can also be observed in a limited number of other areas of cultural work that are not community or participatory-oriented, particularly the UK film and gaming industries, as well as not-for-profit performing arts sectors, such as ballet or theatre, which rely on grants and access to public money to develop new projects and expand their practice (Gov.uk, 2022a; Holden, 2007).

Although there appear to be links to volunteering within community arts practice (Elkins et al., 2022), such practice nevertheless has been primarily a domain of paid work and to be a viable option for a career choice (National Careers Service, 2023). The National Careers Service (2023), a government agency aimed at providing career guidance and support in the UK, identified community arts as a legitimate career choice and defined its workers as individuals who “help local communities plan and take part in activities like drama, painting and photography” (n.p.). The day-to-day tasks of these workers may involve a range of activities, such as identifying needs and concerns of local people, “develop[ing] new arts groups and activities”, “creat[ing] artwork and help[ing] others develop their ideas”, working on fundings options, and “promot[ing] activities through adverts, leaflets or social media” (n.p.). Those workers who are self-employed or freelance, are generally referred to as creative practitioners who work with cultural organisations to deliver art-related activities in local communities (Arts Council England, 2022c). Currently, it is not easy to specify exactly the number of people involved in community arts work in the UK, as the Office for National Statistics (2020) and the DCMS (2021) do not provide specific statistics on such work, bundling cultural work and its workers under the more generalised categories of ‘Arts, Entertainment and Recreation’, ‘Creative Industries’ and the ‘Cultural Sector’. Creative practitioners generally apply directly for funding to carry out specific time-limited projects in the community or are contracted by a variety of third-sector organisations, such as charities, community interest companies, associations, and partnerships, for short-term projects to carry out similar work.

Community arts organisations can be seen as key domains for organising and delivering community-oriented work. These organisations are often part of professional art networks, analysis of which provides a general estimate of the extent

of such work. In Wales, for example, at ArtWorks Cymru (2022), a partnership of participatory arts organisations, there were 28 organisations that were working in or involved with the development of community arts in Wales. Another organisation, ArtWork Alliance (2022) is a national alliance of organisations, individuals, and partnership networks that promotes “a collective voice for participatory arts” (n.p.). It encapsulates around 60 member-organisations, not all of which are exclusively involved in community arts. Yet, community arts practice is a niche area of cultural work, as in 2022 the overall organisational portfolio of Arts Councils across England, Wales, and Scotland that curate all cultural organisations not limited to work in the community was made up of 1,841 long-term funded organisations (Arts Council England, 2022a; Arts Council of Wales, 2019; Creative Scotland, 2022). It is also important to point out that ‘community arts’ is not the same as ‘social enterprise’. Although both take social concerns as their main objective, social enterprises are putatively business-oriented constructs, predicated upon entrepreneurial and market-oriented models of organisation and conduct, trading with an intent to generating profits and achieving economic growth for the purposes of re-investing or donating of these surpluses back into the community or for the benefit of the environment (Social Enterprise UK, 2022; The Arts Development Company, 2017; Swan, 2013). Whilst there may be no question about the value of such social enterprise for local communities, this community-oriented model appears to diverge from the logics of collective action and grassroots social change upon which community arts appear to be predicated (Crummy, 2017; Matarasso, 1998, 2013; Moriarty, 2017). Furthermore, community arts organisations are generally not established as businesses or have commercially-oriented intent to trade and generate profits or growth as part of an organisational model – a dynamic that is also noted in this study.

As discussed earlier, self-employed cultural workers have been portrayed as key to delivery of community arts work, often working with cultural organisations (Arts Council England, 2022c). In the UK, since the 1980s there has been a general move towards freelance self-employed work in community arts, generally as a result of the new bureaucratic requirements and obligations imposed by funding bodies that limited individual autonomy of workers within organisation (Jeffers, 2017b), but also as an effect of flexibilisation of cultural work in general. Self-employment is a type of a working relationship, where people are individually responsible for their work, can

shape their own working schedule, charge fees for the work they do, and provide their services or products to customers (Gov.uk, 2021a, 2021b). Self-employment is different from ‘employment’, where workers are contractually obligated to organisations to work certain number of hours per week, are paid regular salary, and have access to work-based benefits and rights, such as statutory sick pay, holiday and other types of leaves and protections against dismissal at short notice.

The reliance on self-employed workforce in community arts is not at all surprising, as it appears to reflect the wider dynamics of employment in cultural work in Britain. For example, recent employment figures provided by the DCMS (2022) (July 2021 – June 2022) suggested that almost half (46%) of those working in the cultural sector of the UK economy were reportedly self-employed (314,000 out of 682,000), compared to an estimated 13.3% of the UK’s total workforce that was considered as such (Gov.uk, 2022b), providing a snapshot view of the predominance of self-employment in cultural work. Currently, there are no official statistics on the extent of employment, both permanent and temporary, in community arts in the UK. However, a report commissioned by the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust (Burns, 2017) estimated that there were around 250,000 artists who were involved to some extent in delivering participatory arts projects across Britain. This statistic does not provide any information about the regional distribution of community arts workforce, yet it illustrates the proliferation of freelance employment in cultural work more generally. However, it is important to note that community arts work is not limited to self-employed or freelance creative practitioners, and also encompasses other roles in “the cultural production chain” (Pratt, 2005, p. 34), such as executives, creative directors, managers, and coordinators, who are employed on a variety of contractual terms to organise, oversee, as well as conduct art projects within local communities.

Like other sectors of cultural work discussed earlier, community arts can be linked to precarious working conditions (Jennings et al., 2017; Jeffers, 2017b; Jennings, 2012). In the UK, the persistent environment of economic austerity that ensued as a result of the 2008 financial crisis has had significant impact on the arts and culture sector, with community arts being affected the most, diminishing its access to public funds upon which such work has depended for the provision of community work and economic sustenance (Rimmer, 2020). Community arts workers, particularly those who identify as freelancers, have been shown to operate in the context of pervasive financial

insecurity. They may experience prolonged periods of unemployment, having to look for alternative ways of surviving, such as reliance on family or state support, or doing supplemental work outside the cultural domain. Their work may lack standardised pay scales or national standards for working conditions and professional development and training may not be readily available. Recruitment in community arts may be dominated by informality and personal recommendations, whilst workers could be at the whim of the availability of public funding and the current political environment. Freelance creative practitioners could be expected to work for free or low pay in exchange for a promise of gaining exposure and connections for future employment opportunities. When there is work, they have been shown to be exposed to work patterns, characterised by intense periods of overworking that risk burnout (Conor et al., 2015). Yet, despite the precarious working conditions, precarity appears to be seen as normal and accepted part of community arts work, which can be exacerbated further during times of crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic (Banks & O'Connor, 2021).

Cultural work of community arts is practised across a variety of physical and virtual spaces, such as urban environments, streets and parks (McLean, 2014), theatre venues (Beirne & Knight, 2004), and even dance floors (Houston, 2005), and the Internet. However, often this practice is conducted in workshop settings. In this study too, community arts workers often practised their work with local communities within confines of workshop spaces (see Methodology Chapter Five). Workshops can be defined as “an arrangement whereby a group of people learn, acquire new knowledge, perform creative problem-solving, or innovate in relation to a domain-specific issue” (Ørngreen & Levinsen, 2017, p. 71). In community arts, workshops have been described as “accessible, democratic space[s]” (Jeffers, 2017a, p. 47) for communities and artists to come together collaboratively. As Jeffers pointed out, community arts workshops should not be understood as structured and organised spaces, but instead they are places of creativity and co-production that can get “messy and noisy ... a little chaotic and haphazard” (p. 47). In other words, community arts workshops are places with fewer traditional hierarchies, allowing participants to co-create in a less organised manner, retaining democratic control over the production of art.

4.4 Co-production, Participation, Community, and Cultural Democracy

It is possible to identify four key principles that form the discursive field of community arts practice: co-production, participation, community, and cultural democracy. These four aspects appear to form a uniting logic that underpins the work of community arts. Co-production can be defined as a collaborative process of interaction between creative practitioners and community members who draw on each other's expertise and resources to accomplish various goals. In such a relationship, professional artists or creative practitioners have been shown to take the role of facilitating, rather than controlling, cultural production, thus shifting power towards non-artist participants (Verschuere et al., 2012; Realpe & Wallace, 2010). This collective approach has been noted across a wide array of sectors, such as education (Honingh et al., 2020), public administration and service delivery (Verschuere et al., 2012), policymaking (McGann et al., 2021), inclusive sports, exercise, and health research (Pettican et al., 2023) and academia (Ahonen et al., 2020). Within the domain of community arts, co-production can be considered a cornerstone of such work, whereby non-artists take centre stage in the art production process, as opposed to other sectors of cultural work where ordinary people can be merely positioned as audiences or 'passive participants' or recipients of culture (Goldbard, 1993). Thus, in community arts, cultural workers are positioned as agents that coordinate work with communities and share their knowledge to facilitate learning and change through art, developing individual skills, confidence and addressing long-standing community concerns (Crummy, 2017; Moriarty, 2017). Furthermore, by focusing on the collaborative and co-productive nature of the relationships between creative practitioners and community members, community arts practice discursively constructs a space of emancipation where individuals appear free to produce artifacts that can be relevant to their lives and their communities. This emancipatory space, however, can have its limits, often confined within the themes and directions established by funders, such as celebrating local histories, developing community resilience and enterprise in work and employment, or tackling crime and economic deprivation (see for example, Leslie et al., 2020; Alexander, 2018; Veal, 2017; Leslie & Hunt, 2013; Lombard, 2013).

The next key principle of community arts is participation. Following Moriarty (2017), community arts work has been predicated upon discourses that prioritise the

importance of enabling participation and access of individuals and collectivities, especially amongst those who otherwise would have been excluded. Thus, community arts may occupy an important role in enabling and facilitating cultural participation in the community. However, ‘participation’ can be a contested term, as it could be argued that all art, regardless of the nature of its production and delivery, is participatory to some extent (Helguera, 2011). Helguera (2011, pp. 14–15) offered a useful taxonomy in conceptualising participation in arts as four categories. Firstly, ‘nominal participation’, such as gaining access to art to passively observe and contemplate it. Secondly, ‘directed participation’, such as contribution to the creation of an artwork by sharing ideas or conducting a simple activity at an art exhibition like Yoko Ono’s 1961 ‘Painting to Hammer a Nail’. Thirdly, ‘creative participation’ that describes the provision of content for artwork under an artist’s structure, as well as taking part in the production of it. And lastly, ‘collaborative participation’, where responsibility for the content and production of cultural artefacts is shared through collaboration and dialogue with other people. Participation in community arts may, of course, encompass any of these levels of participation, but it is generally the latter levels of participation that are more characteristic of this type of work, enabling community members not only to take part in accessing arts, but crucially to collaborate with each other and creative practitioners in art production and eventually take authorship and ownership of the artifacts they themselves create (Moriarty, 2017).

Whilst community arts may engage with specific individuals, such work generally focuses on working with broader groups of people in the community. The term ‘community’ can be defined in a variety of ways, but can be generally understood along two axes, as geographically based community that is united through sharing and occupying of a particular space, and relationally-based community, predicated upon the level of human interconnectedness with each another (Gusfield, 1975). Following these conceptualisations, community arts work appears to focus on benefiting and empowering a wide variety of communities of people, such as those linked geographically, like members of an urban community, as well as to those sharing similar experiences, history, or demographic or cultural characteristics, such as that related to gender, disability, age, or health. As Matarasso (2013) has pointed out, the idea of empowerment became formative in the work of community artists as far back as the 1970s. Drawing on the idea that culture and creativity resides within, and not

outside communities (Goldbard, 1993), community arts can empower communities by providing the necessary organisational capacities for social cohesion, building new connections, enabling new skill acquisition, strengthening of existing social ties, promoting human rights, and fostering diversity and inclusion (Moriarty, 2017; Matarasso, 1998).

Community arts practice has been linked to effecting social change through the use of art and creativity (Crummy, 2017; Moriarty, 2017). For example, community arts practitioners have been involved in reshaping urban environments for the betterment of local communities, as was exemplified in the construction of the impressive Gentle Giant monument in Craigmillar, Scotland (McLean, 2014). ‘The Gentle Giant that Shares and Cares’ was a large 100-foot prone statue of Gulliver installed in Scotland’s Craigmillar – a place that historically experienced economic stagnation, social deprivation, and extensive riots throughout the 20th century. This sculpture was designed by a sculptor Jimmy Boyle in 1976 to act as part of a children’s playground. Boyle himself, who was a prisoner at the time, worked in partnership with the Craigmillar Festival Society (Denning, 2009). This installation was used by local community groups to inspire urban regeneration, policy change, and general improvements in the life of the local community. Unfortunately, the 1980s riots turned the installation into an area of graffiti, and by early 2000s The Gentle Giant fell into a state of disrepair, attracting vandalism, and was eventually decommissioned in 2011 (Perry, 2020). In another example, community arts in South Africa challenged inequalities and social injustices of colonialism and apartheid through urban regeneration efforts and active participation of local communities and authorities with an aim of eliciting “affective and collective insurgent citizenship, and for creating deeper social cohesion” (Sitas, 2020, p. 836).

Overall, community arts work has been grounded in ideas of achieving cultural democracy within the community and beyond. Cultural democracy is a concept that can be traced back to the writings of Rachel Davis DuBois, a 20th century educator pioneering intercultural education, supporting the value of sharing amongst different members of American society as an integral part of the democratic process (Graves, 2010). The concept later evolved into the idea that individuals and groups should be able “to choose to be active participants rather than just passive receivers of culture” (p. 11). For Goldbard and Adams (1990) there are three key components of cultural

democracy. Firstly, it is about equality, where diverse traditions should co-exist without dominating one another, leading to cultural diversity. Secondly, participation is essential, as individuals are encouraged to freely express themselves through any means available; censorship must be lifted. And thirdly, decision-making in public life should be facilitated through a democratic process. Applied to community arts works, cultural democracy is “the right and capability to participate fully, freely and equally in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and create, publish and distribute artistic work” (Matarasso, 2019b, p. 77). The idea of cultural democracy thus pervades community arts’ principles of participation, empowerment, and social change, advocating for cultural plurality and improved access to art and creativity as a political project of democracy.

The principles discussed above appear to be snapshots of what constitutes community arts work. In practice, community arts work may encompass all or only some of the aspects of the principles of co-production, participation, community, and cultural democracy, the extent of which is bound to specific contexts, aims and goals of communities, organisations, and funders. However, it is important to note that the empowering principles of community arts should not be seen as completely free from the economic imperatives of enterprise. The role of empowerment has been made explicit in studies outside the cultural work domain, detailing a discursive construction of individuals as autonomous, flexible, creative, and free subjects as organisational technology of power, eliciting more responsiveness amongst workers to demands of contemporary capitalism (see for example, Ivanova & von Scheve, 2020). As the discussion in Section 3.3 illustrates, the participatory, empowering orientation of community arts has also been closely linked to enterprising logics of neoliberalism, employing arts and creativity as paths to enabling local communities to become more active, responsible, self-sufficient, and in essence, enterprising citizens able to meet the challenges of contemporary economic life.

4.5 Enterprise and Community Arts Work

Current academic research into the nature of work and employment in community arts, and in relation to the reproduction of the neoliberal discourse of enterprise, appears to be very limited. Unlike existing studies into the proliferation of and resistance to enterprise in commercial areas of cultural work (see Chapter Three), analysis of community-oriented cultural work tends to focus on the area of social enterprise, rather than community arts work (see for example, McQuilten et al., 2020; Swan, 2013; Swan & Atkinson, 2012). Against this backdrop, the discussion below reviews the small pool of existing scholarship on the manifestations of the discourse of enterprise in community arts work, by first looking at how community arts appear to be implicated in the reproduction of entrepreneurial logics within local communities, followed by existing analyses of enterprising subjectivity of community arts workers.

4.5.1 *Governing Through Community Arts*

As community arts organisations and workers carry out projects in the community, they have been shown often to follow the pre-set agendas, goals and aims of the funding agencies, connoting a range of interventions in line with the dominant political environment of the time. As Taylor (2003, p. 66, as cited in Jennings, 2012) noted, community arts organisations became “an instrument of the state, the authorised pedagogue who summons the people and tells them how they should behave and think” (p. 166). Taking this into consideration, studies have shown how community arts reinforced the neoliberal agenda through constructing community members as ‘active’ citizens. For instance, in their analysis of graffiti prevention efforts in New South Wales in Australia, Lombard (2013) highlighted how state authorities used ideas of enterprise to govern the practice of graffiti among young individuals. Tracing the history of graffiti in urban areas as a widespread and problematic practice over the course of the 20th century, the authors noted a shift in governmentality approaches from ‘graffiti as vandalism’ that criminalised this practice to ‘graffiti as graffiti prevention’ that de-emphasised its criminal aspects through various arts-based

intervention schemes. Focusing on the subjectivity of the graffiti 'writers', the aim of such interventions was to empower [graffiti writers] and "to enfranchise [them by] ... giving them greater access to citizenship rights" (p. 262). For example, one of such interventions, the NSW Graffiti Trainee Scheme, aimed to deliver community arts workshops to writers of graffiti and to reduce illegal use of aerosol art by enabling young people to realise their potential and interest in graffiti and creativity in general. By training 20 writers, who themselves were previously part of other anti-graffiti interventions, the workshops promoted development of individual enterprising capacities, with a focus on promotion of active and responsible citizenship, for future employability, as well as providing them with opportunities to become convenors of workshops themselves in their respective communities. As Lombard pointed out, community arts projects, such as the NSW Graffiti Trainee Scheme, can be seen as exemplar of neoliberal governmentality, because they use the notion of the responsible citizenship to construct subjects of graffiti as primarily economically interested entrepreneurs of the self.

Likewise, other forms of community art interventions have also been linked to the reproduction of neoliberal logics. Leslie et al. (2020) explored the role of social circus as governmentality of 'at risk' youth, which aimed producing subjectivities of "active, enterprising citizens" (p. 315). Focusing on Canada in particular, the authors showed how Cirque du Soleil's Cirque du Monde used circus art to govern individuals by fostering a production of self-motivated, self-regulated subjectivity and to steer them away from welfarist notions of dependence. Aiming to "prepare youth for ... instability" (p. 321) of the outside world, including that within the labour domain, risk-management has become a central tenet of this form of governmentality. It inverts the notion of risk from the 'outside', such as doing drugs that leads to adrenaline and pleasure, towards the notion of risk on the 'inside', such as pleasure, excitement, and adrenaline through controlled circus acts. Additionally, social circus encouraged an acquisition of human capital, such as "punctuality, scheduling and efficiency" (p. 322), as well communication skills with a goal of preparing youth for a full participation in school life and the employment domain. Through this construction of 'at risk' youth as enterprising 'active citizens', social circus appeared to reinforce the existing structures of neoliberalism. Other studies (Veal, 2017; Leslie & Hunt, 2013) have similarly drawn attention to the role of community-based arts programmes in fostering

entrepreneurial subjectivities within the community, leading to acquisition of human capital for employability, inculcation of individualised responsibility, fostering of a competitive outlook, strengthening of individual resilience, and shunning of the culture of dependence in the spirit of “pull[ing] yourself by the bootstrap” (Leslie & Hunt, 2013, p. 1183).

4.5.2 *Neoliberal Subjects of Community Arts*

Whilst community arts have been employed as a disciplinary mechanism within local communities, there appears to be a dearth of research on whether and how the discourse of enterprise may be implicated in relation to work and employment itself. One way in which the few available studies draw attention to the reproduction of neoliberal logics is linked to the precarious context and public funding dependence of community arts organisations and practitioners. For example, Rimmer (2020) analysed organisational resilience efforts in the post-economic crisis period, focusing on three community arts organisations that embraced the market-based principles of enterprise. Prompted by a pervasive lack of public funding after 2010, community arts organisations were shown to act like enterprises. This involved establishing new business development positions that would drive organisations towards more economic engagement with funders and adopting more business-like models of conduct to attract more money through assessing of the markets, pitching to clients, and being more ‘strategic’, as well as generally commercialising services and becoming more customer-oriented. For Rimmer, such organisational changes were evidence of the overall move towards a “broad capitulation to the neoliberal agenda” (p. 310), which not only enabled these organisations to survive in the stormy economic conditions, but also threatened their original goals for more autonomous community development and engagement (see also, Jennings, 2012; Rimmer, 2009).

In their ethnographic exploration of grass-roots community initiatives by queer and trans people of colour, Chin (2021) traced the link between public funding programmes of art and promotion of entrepreneurial subjectivity. The author focused on Unapologetic - a community arts organisation formed by individuals within a

burlesque scene with an aim to promote cultural democracy and better access and participation to cultural production and consumption amongst marginalised communities of people of colour, queer people, and individuals with disabilities. The precarious working conditions within which this organisation operated meant a higher reliance on public funding that necessitated adopting a certain entrepreneurial outlook on work. Chin noted that the cultural funding initiatives in Toronto in particular exemplified state attempts at governing the cultural domain as a space of business, equating notions of creativity with economic goals and budgetary contribution. Funds allocated by the Toronto Arts Council, for instance, often followed a putatively neoliberal agenda, shifting the role of money recipients from “simply receiving” to “an active cultivation of employable skills” (p. 1376) both amongst cultural workers and target communities.

Against this backdrop, Chin further pointed out that grassroots arts-based organisations, like Unapologetic, can be placed ambivalently between a desire for collective and social action and a necessity to be entrepreneurial to survive. To understand this Chin offered a concept of ‘sacrificial entrepreneurship’ as “a process by which individuals may behave as entrepreneurs but refuse individual financial profit” (p. 1380). Although the author does not extensively detail how such sacrificial entrepreneurship was enacted, he noted that workers at Unapologetic often had to find creative solutions to attracting sources of funding and employing business approaches, such as using flexible pricing to get higher paying audiences. Yet, these workers also appeared to challenge the individualising logics of self-interest by foregoing personal profit, such as using higher pricing in general, or compromising their personal wellbeing by being prepared to work hard to keep themselves and their community initiatives afloat. Chin summarised that community arts, through the notion of sacrificial entrepreneurship, can thus be seen as simultaneously reproducing and opposing the logics of enterprise. The community artist, therefore, can be seen to emerge as an ambivalent subject.

Likewise, Jennings et al. (2017) also drew attention to the precarious work conditions of community artists and the ways in which they coped with it through business-like behaviour. The authors pointed out how community artists in Northern Ireland experienced significant cuts to public funding, being financially insecure, and having to work for free or for low pay, thus often describing themselves as “struggling to

survive” (p. 17). Despite these negative working conditions, artists rarely exited their trade, remaining resilient in the face of these challenges. One such reason, the authors cited, was adoption of commercial models of conduct, which shifted some of their economic reliance on public funding streams onto individual participants within the community and allowed them to sustain themselves entrepreneurially. Other ways included seeking private sponsorship and investments, all of which reflected what the authors called the ‘business model’ of work. Yet, despite the proliferation of enterprise in this work, the authors noted that these community artists and organisations generally preferred collaborative approaches to economic survival. This was evidenced through the forming of collectives, sharing resources with each other or providing them at low costs (*i.e.*, studio spaces of technical expertise) and sharing income with less paid or accomplished community artists. As Jennings et al. suggested, such model of work allowed them to challenge the pervasiveness of insecurity, positioning “collaborative creativity [as] ... essential for survival” (p. 22). Whilst this study did not engage with the theory of enterprise or any other discursive approach to analysing of work in community arts, it provided an illustrative glimpse of the way workers may engage with alternative discourses in dealing with precarious work beyond entrepreneurial outlook.

4.6 Chapter Summary

The discussion in Chapter Four highlighted a lack of academic research into entrepreneurial work and employment in community arts practice. It first offered a definition of ‘community arts’ and traced the genealogy of this type of work, linked to the emergence of the community arts movement in the UK, the attempts at redefining such work away from its collective and socially oriented roots with the rise of neoliberalism in the UK, and highlighting the current state of such work. This chapter further detailed the characteristics of work and employment in community arts, drawing attention to the role of organisations and freelance creative practitioners as key to this practice. Following this, further discussion shed light on the role of vocabularies co-production, participation, community, and cultural democracy as guiding principles of community arts practice. This chapter concluded with an

overview of existing academic research, drawing attention to the reproduction of the discourse of enterprise in community arts. Here, community arts have been largely shown as a tool of reproducing enterprising subjectivity within predominantly marginalised communities, drawing on notions of responsible citizenship. A few studies, have also provided a limited indication of the shape and form of enterprising work in community arts, drawing attention to how workers appeared to engage with the tools of business to remain resilient.

Any further study of enterprising discourse in community arts practice necessitates use of methodological approaches that can provide an effective way to understand how entrepreneurial logics are reproduced and resisted through discourse. As such, the Methodology Chapter Five that follows engages with the Foucauldian Discourse Analysis approach, extended through an ethnographic outlook on research. These two approaches enabled the study to account for complex, ambivalent, and contextually specific manifestations of enterprising subjectivity within the domain of community arts practice in Wales.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

This study addressed the following two research questions:

3. Does a discourse of enterprise pervade the cultural work of community arts in Wales?
4. Does an enterprising subjectivity get reproduced in community arts practice?

The aim of this chapter is to outline the methods used and the methodology that underpinned this research. Section 5.2 discusses how this research was guided by the wider onto-political position on studying of discourse in community arts. Following this, Section 5.3 presents how the analysis of enterprising work in community arts work necessitated the use of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) as a methodology. In particular, this section explores how FDA's concern with analysis of texts, a focus on discursive construction of objects and subjects, and its role at the interface of power/knowledge acted as guiding principles for this research. Section 5.4 details how an ethnographic approach to studying community arts complemented FDA, drawing attention to the main tenets of ethnography that helped to expand the analytical reach of this study. Section 5.5 discusses the research design of the study, followed by Section 5.6 that addresses the rationale for and approach to participant recruitment. This section also highlights how field relationships were managed, as well as detailing the profile of research participants. Section 5.7 discusses the phases of research and data collection. Section 5.8 details data collection methods. Then, Section 5.9 focuses on approaches that guided and supported the analysis of collected data. Section 5.10 considers the ethical and safety considerations of this research, followed by a chapter summary in Section 5.11.

5.2 The Onto-Political Position on Research

Chapters Two, Three, and Four presented how the discourse of enterprise emerged as a form of governmentality in the field of contemporary work and employment. This involved a review of how enterprise was produced, reproduced, and resisted by cultural workers, including those working in community arts practice across professional and research literatures. Many of these studies considered the concept of enterprise as a contextually bound, historically situated, and discursively shaped construct with implications for organisational practice and individual subject positions of workers. To further analyse the production of the discourse of enterprise in community arts work, FDA has been chosen as an approach to examining whether and how the discourse of enterprise permeated the cultural domain of community arts.

Before elucidating the strengths of FDA for this research, it is important to recognise the wider position of this study – the general ‘worldview’ – that lay behind the methodological choices made in analysing enterprising discourse in community arts (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This research follows a Foucauldian-inspired worldview to studying discourse and the production of worker subjectivity that can be broadly termed as ‘onto-political’. The onto-political worldview implies a “*politicized* conception of reality” (Oksala, 2010, p. 447) that is understood as incorporated in power relations and discursive “struggles over truth and objectivity” (p. 445). By drawing on the onto-political position developed by Foucault, this thesis examines how the nature of reality is established in historically contingent, locally specific struggles between various discourses and rationalities, particularly in relation to the neoliberal governmentality of enterprise. The application of this onto-political position is detailed further in Section 5.3, providing a discussion on how FDA was employed in this research.

5.3 A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Approach

FDA is an approach to studying discourse and the formation of subjectivity, inspired by the scholarship of Michel Foucault, which has been actively promoted through a variety of academic works, notably by Parker, Willig, and Hollway (Willig, 2008a, 2008b; Parker, 1992; Hollway, 1989). In analysing discourses that permeated the cultural work of community arts, the key focus of this study was not on exploring discourse as text linked to the structural dynamics of language and questions of syntax or grammar. Instead, FDA has been chosen as it enabled sensitivity to the interconnections of power and knowledge, and in particular how discourse may shape the social reality of work and employment (Sam, 2019). FDA as a methodology is primarily concerned with understanding language and practice and how they may constitute the social reality and subjectivity of individuals (Willig, 2008b). It acknowledges that discourse shapes reality, or how individuals see things and identify as particular subjects, and that this is linked to questions of power (Parker, 1992). In this study, FDA helped to problematise taken-for-granted notions and assumptions of community arts workers, attempting to uncover the subtle ways and differences in which discourse in the workplace can be produced, made practical, or resisted (Wooffitt, 2005).

FDA has been employed extensively within studies of work and employment in the cultural domain, but has largely been absent in studies of community arts practice. In relation to cultural work, researchers often use Foucauldian concepts to expose the links between discourse and power. For example, the Foucauldian approach to analysis has been used in understanding the marginalisation of older workers in television production as ‘unattractive’ (Ursell, 2000), the role of cultural policy in the construction and governing of ‘creative industries’ as profitable (Banks, 2007), the proliferation of ‘mythologies’ of self-realisation as technology of power in beauty social media blogging (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017), the subject positions of fashion models as entrepreneurs, commodifying their looks as products to be sold on the labour market (Entwistle & Wissinger, 2006), or the role of autonomy and risk in the governing of cultural workers in music, performing arts and design as ‘hope labour’ through the logics of investments (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020). Whilst there is currently no standard way of doing FDA (Sam, 2019), by adopting this approach

developed by Parker (1992) and Willig (2008b), it is possible to identify several key methodological principles that informed and guided this research: discourse and analysis of texts, construction of objects and subjects, and the link between discourse, power, and knowledge. This is discussed below.

5.3.1 *FDA and Analysis of Texts*

The key focus of FDA is concerned with discourse, and as such it is important to identify where such discourse can be located from a research point of view. According to Waitt (2005), FDA breaks with conventional approaches to textual analysis, such as semiology or content analysis that attempt to interpret research texts unproblematically as “a vehicle of communication about the world” (p. 165). Instead, the uniqueness of FDA is in its ability to shed light on how certain texts may have an effect on the fabric of the social “to uncover issues of power relationships that inform what people think and do”. Parker (1992) pointed out that discourses are to be located within ‘texts’. He defined texts widely as “delimited tissues of meaning reproduced in *any* form that can be given an interpretative gloss” (p. 6). Such definition is helpful, because it can overcome the problematic division between linguistic and extra-linguistic features of discourse (see Section 2.2.3), enabling the study to consider a whole variety of data. “Speech, writing, non-verbal behaviour, Braille, Morse code, semaphore, runes, advertisements, fashion systems, stained glass architecture, tarot cards and bus tickets” (p. 7) all can be viewed as texts with links to discourse, and therefore open to interpretation and analysis. Such a wide view of texts as amenable to FDA was useful to this research, because it aligned well with this study’s diverse data collection methods, enabling it to effectively trace the peripatetic nature of community arts workers and how they engaged with vocabularies of enterprise. More specifically, FDA has been employed in relation to interviews, participants diaries, observations, as well as documents provided by participants themselves, helping to draw attention to how community arts workers positioned themselves as entrepreneurial subjects through these texts.

5.3.2 *Construction of Objects and Subjects*

Using an FDA approach entailed looking at how objects could be given a certain kind of reality through language and discourse. As Parker (1992) points out, discourse constructs different versions of reality and discursive objects within it, the representational aspects of which can be viewed “as coercive as gravity” (p. 8). This is because as individuals speak and think about various objects, the mere act of this practice brings these objects into reality as something that can be talked about and acted upon. In using FDA then, this research was prompted to consider questions of representation through a focus on “discursive constructions” (Willig, 2008b, p. 115) of objects. Discursive constructions refer to a variety of ways in which texts describe various objects, such as love, people, family, motherhood, looking for “shared meaning rather than lexical comparability” (p. 115), locating these constructions in relation to various wider discourses. Against this backdrop, this research was concerned with how community arts workers engaged with the discourse of enterprise and the extent to which they invoked various discursive constructions, such as entrepreneurship, competition, or instrumental networking. The ways in which participants objectified elements of enterprising discourse through statements, practices, and assumptions enabled a close examination of how these discourses were part of everyday work of community arts.

Whilst discourses construct objects in a variety of ways, they also influence the production of subject positions. This is an important point, because it sensitised this research to a recognise community arts as a domain that makes available a range of subject positions for workers to adopt. As has been previously discussed (in Section 2.2), governmentality research drew attention to how individual workers have been constructed as a certain type of subject through discourse. Discourses provide a range of resources for individuals to draw upon in the process of the formation of their subjectivity - a “vantage point” (Willig, 2008a, p. 102) from within which they make sense of their reality through common vocabularies, images, and ideas that “make up the wider social and cultural contexts” (Taylor, 2007, p. 113) of workers’ lives. Thus, FDA is concerned with identifying how discourses may provide such individuals with various subject positions that they occupy or identify with. People may be addressed through texts, such as advertisements, job descriptions, lifestyle magazines

about health, to take on certain roles, such as caring for family members or becoming entrepreneurial, connoting a range of rights and duties that one may or may not be presented with as a particular subject. This awareness of the constructive nature of discourse sensitised this research to identify whether and how community arts workers viewed themselves as entrepreneurial subjects and how such positionality could be resisted through discourse.

5.3.3 *Discourse at the Interface of Power and Knowledge*

A fundamental principle of the FDA approach is recognising the role of discourse at the interstice of the ‘power/knowledge’ complex. Such recognition was instrumental not only in identifying the shape and form of the discourse of enterprise that emerged within community arts, but also in examining how it was entwined with the production of particular knowledge and power dynamics in such work. The concept of knowledge is critical to an FDA examination of enterprising work in community arts, because it sheds light on the status of reality and what it means to be a cultural worker in community arts, drawing attention to local contradictions, exclusions, and opportunities such construction of knowledge connotes. Knowledge is “a function of power” (Richardson, 1996, p. 282), it is “one of the defining components for the operation of power in the modern world” (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 203). The kind of knowledge that Foucault directed this research related to the composite term *‘pouvoir-savoir’*, or ‘power/knowledge’ (see for example, Foucault & Gordon, 1980; Foucault, 1978). “[I]t is the kind of knowledge that is ‘recognised as true’, ‘known to be the case’ ... [which] can only exist with the support of arrangement of power” (2011, p. 56). For Foucault there is no question of discovering the ultimate truth, or observing its innate characteristics, but instead knowledge and truth should be seen as socially and historically produced phenomena that are entwined with the question of power.

Discourse then emerges as a fundamental part of the nexus of power/knowledge. As Foucault (1978) pointed out, “it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together” (p. 100). He illustrated this in his own focus on a variety of discourses, such

as of sexuality, scientific reason, or criminology (Foucault, 1978, 1980, 1991a). Discourse can both support the operation of power, but can equally act as grounds for resistance: “[it] transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart” (Foucault, 1978, p. 101). Against this backdrop, this study considered the role of discourse at the intersection of power/knowledge in community arts and how discourse manifested itself as “a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies” (p. 100). Adopting FDA as a methodology involved focusing on what can be uttered and made silent in community arts, what is allowed and disallowed, the positionality of participants in the force relations of governmental power, and the context of these situations. Such theorisation of discourse was essential because it helped to recognise the dynamic, contested, and political function of discourse in the construction of knowledge and reality of work and subjectivity in community arts domain, exposing the power dynamics of such work apropos the discourse of enterprise.

5.4 An Ethnographic Outlook

The following discussion further develops the methodological position of this research, by illustrating how an ethnographic outlook complemented FDA in studying community arts work. Here, ethnography helped to overcome some of the drawbacks of FDA by attending to contextually specific, local manifestations of discourse. Whilst FDA appears to be a useful approach to analytics of power and governmentality, such analysis has been shown to produce overly generalised accounts of work and employment detached from “actually existing spaces and subjects” (Brady, 2011, p. 266) because of its top-down perspective on discourse often developed through analysis of archival or documentary research of official texts (see for example, Foucault, 2008; Dean, 1999). Although, recent studies of cultural work have provided a more focused, contextually-bound analysis of analytics of power and discourse (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020; Duffy & Wissinger, 2017; Ursell, 2000), the ‘top-down’ readings of governmentality can be observed in the study of enterprise within the domain of work and employment, particularly that in the writings of Du Gay (1994a, 1994b, 1996, 2004; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). To avoid this

overgeneralisation of the role of the discourse of enterprise in community arts, this research engaged with ethnography's 'bottom-up' approach to analysis of community arts practice. Such an approach incorporated a context-specific, grassroots focus on the engagements of individuals with the discourse of enterprise through statements made in interviews, participant diaries, observations, and documents related to their everyday work. By attending to how the discourse of enterprise pervaded the work of community arts and the subject positions it connoted, it was then possible to relate these findings to the wider move towards enterprising cultural work in general.

As such, this context-specific perspective turned the attention of the research to "the micro-operations of power, [necessitating] sensitiv[ity] to local struggles and the achievement of local solutions" (Tamboukou & Ball, 2003, p. 4). This research was concerned with what Foucault (1991b) has referred to as the "witches' brew" (p. 81) of practices of community arts workers – those areas of the social where neoliberal governmentality met subjectivity and resistance. As Brady (2011) pointed out, a "'bottom-up' perspective in ethnography helps to preclude the attribution of a false coherence to new political rationalities and programs of governance ... depicting things in our present as strange and avoidable" (Brady, 2011, p. 267). Against this backdrop, the following discussion details how this ethnographic bottom-up approach enabled this research to account for the discursive complexities of community arts practice that challenged and operationalised the pervasive nature of enterprise. This involved engaging with ethnographic principles of immersion, multiplicity, and reflexivity as detailed below.

5.4.1 Immersion in the Field of Study

According to Scott-Jones (2010), ethnography encourages researchers to "immerse themselves within a cultural setting" (p. 7) of their participants. As Forsey (2010b) pointed out, ethnographic research enables "a detailed, in-depth description of everyday life and practice" (p. 567) through close contacts with participants' lives and "listen[ing] deeply to and/or observ[ing] as closely as possible" to their values, beliefs, and everyday practices. Ethnography committed this study to forms of active

engagements with research participants and prompted it to stay close to the field of research, helping to establish longer-term, ongoing, and meaningful relationships with participants. This immersion in the field involved data collection that went beyond ‘snapshot’ constructions of community arts work through analysis of participant interviews. Instead, immersion was achieved through attending of and participating in various workshops and art events organised by participants of this study to gain deeper understanding of the everyday nature of work and employment in community arts and extend the knowledge about the prevalent discourses of work in the construction of entrepreneurial subjectivity. However, it was important throughout the study that immersion in the field alongside participants was understood to result in a researcher’s interpretation of entrepreneurial work and subjectivities of community artists, rather than providing a ‘complete’ authoritative account of their practice from their perspective (see Section 5.4.3 on reflexivity).

5.4.2 Accounting for Multiplicity

The major critique that is directed against studies of neoliberal governmentality is based on the premise that such studies produce monolithic accounts of discourse, overlooking the multiplicity of alternative discourses and rationalities that may come into play (Brady, 2014, 2011; Fournier & Grey, 1999). Bröckling et al. (2010), for example, noted two tendencies in governmentality research that either present research as repetitive historical cycles of political rationalities, such as the move from liberalism to the welfare state and to neoliberalism, or produce studies “that distill the always identical rationalities, strategies, and technologies of neoliberalism” (p. 16). Both variants of governmentality research, they continued, could “become repetitive, with the idea of where the argument is heading present so to speak before the reading” (p. 16). In the field of contemporary work and employment, such research has been particularly evident in the writings of Du Gay (as discussed in sections 2.3.2-2.3.3), who generally presented a one-sided version of contemporary work and employment predominated by neoliberal rationality, failing to acknowledge the role of non-economic discourses that could co-exist or act as viable grounds of resistance against the discourse of enterprise (Fournier & Grey, 1999). As Rose et al. (2009) noted, the

challenge of studying neoliberal governmentality is in the risk of overemphasising the paradigmatic status of enterprise, producing accounts of a “more or less constant category that can be used both to understand and to explain all manner of political programs across a variety of settings” (p. 21) acting as a ‘cookie cutter’ for empirical analysis.

By conducting FDA informed through ethnography, it was possible to avoid producing such ‘cookie cutter’ research, by shedding light on the multiplicity of discourses that challenged the paradigmatic status of neoliberal enterprise in the workplace. As Clifford (2010) pointed out, in ethnography “[w]hat is at stake ... is an ongoing critique of the West’s most confident discourses” (p. 10). Therefore, throughout this study a continuous critical position against the paradigmatic theorisations of enterprise as one such ‘confident discourse’ was maintained, attending to a “discomfort with [its] polemics, generalities and recycling of familiar narratives” (Brady, 2014, p. 28). The strength of this approach was that it helped avoid taking things for granted and thus further interrogated whether and how community arts workers positioned themselves as entrepreneurs of the self, showing that their subject positions went beyond economic and rational concerns. Therefore, instead of viewing participants as simply pawns of neoliberalism who practiced their work and constructed their subject positions as passive recipients of enterprise, ethnography enabled this research to view them as ambivalent subjects of work who constructed their specific versions of reality in a variety of complex ways. The result of this approach is presented in the Findings section (Chapter Six), which illustrates the locally specific shapes and forms of the discourse of enterprise in community arts work linked to other non-economic discourses that both acted as grounds for resisting, as well as supporting of this discourse.

5.4.3 Reflexivity

Taking an ethnographic outlook on research problematised the subject position of the researcher within the field of community arts through a reflexive stance on data collection and analysis. By adopting a social constructionist mode of reflexivity, this

study was viewed not as something that can uncover the ‘true’ nature or meaning of community arts works, but instead as a process and a product of interpretation and construction of knowledge, taking into consideration the role of wider contexts and backgrounds of both the participants and the researcher (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2017). As Clifford (2010) noted, ethnography is “always caught up in the invention, not the representation of cultures” (p. 2). In this sense, this research challenged the traditional representation of ethnographers as “sympathetic, authoritative observer[s]” (p. 9), and recognised that just like the participants themselves the process of research is also implicated in the complex relations of power. Against this backdrop, it was necessary to remain constantly aware that all stages of this study were products of personal interpretation when making choices about what topics to focus on and which ones to reject. These choices are inevitably based to some extent on the researcher’s own individual and professional history, opinions, feelings, knowledge of literature, and the socio-historic position, rather than being a purely objective reporting of findings from the field (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Emerson et al., 1995).

However, any interpretation of data was not simply reflective of personal idiosyncrasies or choices made during the analysis stage, but fundamentally was linked to a construction of knowledge and a reflection of various discourses that were in play during that process (Parker, 1992). Reflexivity in this research called for a constant “awareness of the theoretical assumptions, the importance of language and preunderstandings” (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2017, p. 11), as well as attentiveness to the role of the researcher in the operation of power and discourse in forming conclusions and building of analytical theses. It also necessitated an awareness of how this research may reproduce certain suppositions about cultural work, such as exactly those that were being held under the investigation (Krause-Jensen, 2013; Becker, 1967). To manage this, the personal values, norms, beliefs, history, and contexts that influenced and guided the theoretical and methodological choices were carefully recorded in the researcher journal (see Section 5.8.5).

Taking a reflexive stance through ethnography also involved a recognition of the political dimensions of this research (Scott-Jones, 2010). Several commentators have noted that ethnography is concerned with enabling and empowering various groups of people that may often be seen as marginalised or neglected in academic research (Knauff, 2017; Tamboukou & Ball, 2003). Scott-Jones (2010), for instance, have

averred that ethnography may provide voice to participants, giving them an opportunity to ‘speak up’ and tell the stories about their lives, which could later serve as grounds for social change at the level of policy-making. These political dimensions of ethnographic research became prominent in this study as well. This is not to claim that the purpose of this research was explicitly activist in nature to “help marginalized or subordinated people” (Knauff, 2017, p. 8). Such a view would have been problematic, because it would have reproduced a particular reality of community arts work as ‘powerful’ or ‘powerless’ – an issue that FDA attempts to avoid. Nevertheless, one unexpected consequence of this study was that it had been understood as an opportunity by few of participants to “speak for themselves” (Boyle, 1994, p. 163), and tell the stories about their work that they felt were important (Heller, 2008). In this way, this study was not only serving the purpose of answering its research questions and gaining insights into the nature of work and employment in community arts, but it also appeared to enable participants to actively employ this research as a technology of power. The excerpt from an interview below provides an illustration of this point:

Hollie: And also we’re quite good at stepping in the background so that the participants get the credit for it, so sometimes we are a bit invisible.
Josie: Um, so I think it is when people are interested in kind of researching, I think it’s important to be part of that process. And yeah it’s kind of like I think you talked about kind of um raising profile of community arts.
Hollie: And we we we are involved in other research projects in community arts as well. Different aspects of it, and yeah I mean, if we don’t get involved who are you going to ask? You know there’s not that many community arts organisations. If we’re going to have a healthy, vibrant sort of future for community arts, we need good research projects like yours.
...
Josie: Also, I think ... a really good point as to how many people know that it is a kind of a career-path ... into the community arts. There’s no like a really, I don’t know, not many would necessarily know about us, a bit under the radar perhaps.

Excerpt 1: From Hollie and Josie Group Interview

The example above provides a good illustration of how some participants had a certain interest, or a ‘stake’, in taking part in this research. Talking about feeling ‘invisible’ and neglected as community artists in research, they spoke about the study as an opportunity to promote and disseminate information about the work that they did, to share stories about their own experiences as workers, and to fundamentally contribute to improving the future of community arts practice. These accounts were also not free from the local force relations of power, influence, and political interests of participants. As participants talked about their experiences in community arts, they also appeared

to draw on this research as a discursive resource to construct an image of their work as lacking the necessary attention from the wider community and framing the discussion in relation to the emancipatory possibilities of academia that could help increase awareness about community arts. Thus, this example highlighted the importance of reflexivity that enabled awareness of the power dynamics to be accounted for during the processes of data collection, reflection, and analysis.

5.5 Research Design

This study necessitated a robust and flexible approach to research design and to addressing the research questions. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) suggest that in focusing on experiences of research participants, research can become riddled with uncertainties, challenges and problems that cannot be easily predicted. As such, there may be no ‘off the shelf’ strategies and each research design must fit the idiosyncrasies of research. Heller (2011) also noted that part of ethnographic critical purchase is in the way such research sensitises one “to be prepared to make mistakes and have to repair them, and to have to make difficult choices and understand their consequences” (p. 42). Following these calls, this research adopted a flexible research design to account for the practical contingencies that may arise throughout the study. Such a design made it possible to adapt, adjust, and modify approaches to data collection and analysis as new insights emerged (Maxwell, 2004). The following section shows how this flexible design addressed the research’s questions, focusing on the boundaries of the study and the directions of the research activity.

5.5.1 Research Boundaries

From the beginning, it was essential to determine the boundaries within which the research would be conducted. Ethnographic research design usually calls for studies, which “look more seriously at interlocking practices, shifting alliances and new forms

of connectivity” more broadly (Garsten, 2013, p. 144; Garsten & Nyqvist, 2013a; Gusterson, 1997). Although community arts practice can be understood as an area of work with unique and recognisable features, such as participatory modes of work and a focus on cultural democracy (see Literature Review Section 4.4), embarking upon studying this area of work was complex, as it encompassed focusing on a whole range of organisations and creative practitioners across the UK. As such, there was a need to clearly demarcate the boundaries of this research to make this study practically viable. By localising this research geographically to Wales, this study aimed to encourage further academic discussion on the manifestations of enterprising work in local contexts, whilst recognising its implications to the nature of contemporary work and employment more broadly. However, it was also a pragmatic choice that enabled an easier access to physical spaces, such as cafes, exhibitions venues, and workshop halls, for face-to-face interactions with participants, while remaining flexible during the Covid-19 travel restrictions under which this research took place.

Attempting to gain initial access to community arts workers as participants, it became quickly apparent that many of them led a peripatetic lifestyle across a range of spaces, rarely being bound to one place. This meant a recognition that community arts could not be easily bound to a particular location or organisation and that researching them meant a more flexible understanding of field boundaries. Furthermore, as the Covid-19 pandemic imposed limitations on face-to-face contacts, particularly earlier in the study, many of these participants were often home-based. Thus, a research design was developed that allowed moving across a range of sites and places, such as workshops in different organisations, exhibitions, interviews in cafes and art studios. In a way, each of study participants were seen as separate research sites with their own stories to tell, often situated in temporary physical spaces, such as workshops, but sharing a common interest in serving the communities through art and creativity. In effect, doing fieldwork in community arts recalled what Hannerz (2006) referred to as “being there...and there...and there!” (p. 30). Finding effective ways of reaching participants and gaining insight into their working lives, meant there was a need for a flexible and mobile research design (a more detailed discussion on field access can be found in the Section 5.6).

In addition to this flexible research design, the boundaries of this study were contingent upon three additional elements: degree of access to participants,

temporality, and serendipity. Firstly, the selection of participants was generally dependent upon the extent to which they could be accessed. Considering the dispersed nature of community arts work, none of participants were generally bound to a particular site, and therefore there was not one specific place for recruitment or data collection. To account for this, efforts were directed at recruiting potential participants across a range of places, both physical and virtual. This was generally conducted through direct ‘cold emailing/messaging’ of community arts organisations and separate creative practitioners via online professional networks and social media, as well as utilising snowball recommendations later in the study (See Participant Recruitment, Section 5.6). It was through establishing connections with participants and gaining knowledge about their enterprising work, that it was possible to slowly determine the boundaries of fieldwork as a peripatetic, flexible construct that was not originally obvious at the beginning of this research.

Secondly, as many of participants were mobile, whether because of the nature of their creative practice, or due to collaborating across a range of community-related projects, they were often dispersed across multiple sites. These sites were not stable constructions, but could instead be seen as “short-lived phenomena” (Hannerz, 2003, p. 210) – such as workshops and exhibitions, classes and projects, situated within particular local contexts and were limited in time, highlighting the temporal aspect of field boundaries. This meant that data collection was not preplanned and was contingent on the schedules of participants and availability of opportunities, rather than something that could be organised definitively in advance. Here, serendipity was an important aspect in drawing the research boundaries too. As the domain of community arts work was being explored, the uncertain, unpredictable, and contingent nature of work influenced the constitution of field choices (Garsten, 2013; Garsten & Nyqvist, 2013b; Hannerz, 2006). Thus, to follow the contemporary forms of discourse in community arts, it was necessary to ensure that the research design was flexible and mobile enough, entailing a “heightened attentiveness to twists and turns in the field and an openness to the unexpected” (Garsten & Nyqvist, 2013b, p. 245) at every stage of this research.

5.5.2 *Not Just Community Artists: A Focus on a Variety of Professional Roles*

The research design recognised that community arts is a complex field driven by a variety of individuals in various professional roles and organisations. As discussed in the Literature Review, there are currently no official statistics on the number of freelance practitioners in the UK. Some reports (Burns, 2017) estimated around 250,000 individuals being engaged in community-related work practices. As also has been noted, community arts appears to be constituted by a myriad of organisations, which are responsible for applying for grants to carry out projects in their respective communities. Public funders, such as the Arts Council of Wales, or the National Lottery Fund, are crucial sources of funding for these individuals and organisations, often guiding and monitoring the work community arts.

As such, this study focused on a wide spectrum of professional roles in “the cultural production chain” (Pratt, 2005, p. 34) of community arts. By looking at the work of community arts as a ‘production chain’, it was possible to recognise that such work was carried out by a variety of individuals who were directly involved in working with the community, such as creative practitioners, as well as those involved in managing and organising such work, such as artistic/creative directors and executives, project managers, arts coordinators, and funders. Excluding the latter group of professional roles would have run the risk of producing a skewed representation of community arts practice, which is why a range of roles were included in the research design (Garsten & Nyqvist, 2013b).

5.5.3 *Directions of Research*

Considering this study’s interest in exploring how discourses emerged and were drawn on by various individuals in community arts, a methodological strategy of “studying through” (Wright & Reinhold, 2022, p. 101) has been chosen. The notion of ‘studying through’ helped to avoid viewing the research field of community arts as made up of “hierarchical relationships” (p. 101) that can be either studied ‘up’ or ‘down’ (see for

example, Nader, 1972). Instead, it involved following the production and reproduction of discourse within and across the cultural work of community arts, such as in the relationship between the organisations and funders, or creative practitioners and their situations as precarious workers. This approach also meant preparedness from the researcher to envisage the research field beyond binary representations and necessitated moving between participants, spaces, and methods of data collection in the construction of the discursive terrain of community arts work. Importantly, such an approach to research design necessitated “political and epistemological reflexivity ... an awareness of the wider historical and political context in which actors and events [could be] framed” (2022, p. 102).

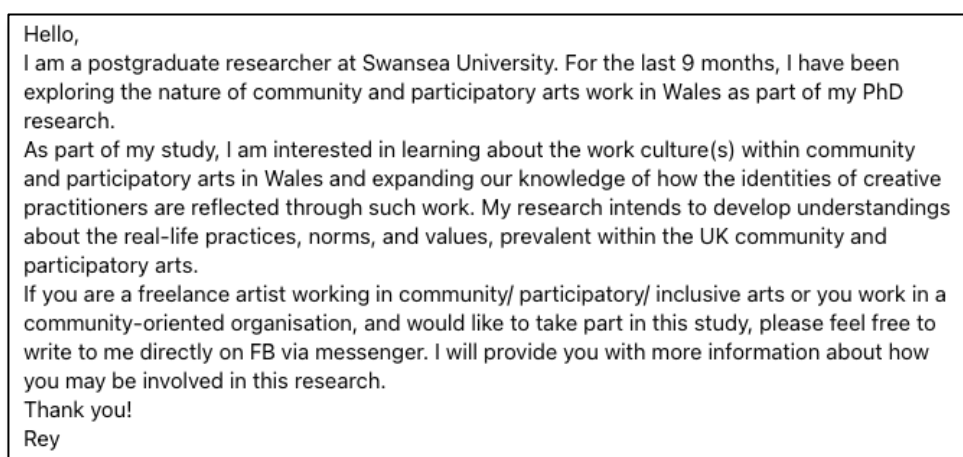
5.6 Participant Recruitment

This section discusses the recruitment strategy for participants. The current state of the community arts domain in the UK has been described as fragmented and complex with no fixed boundaries. This is in contrast to a primarily cohesive movement of the 1970s and 1980s in the UK predominated by larger community arts organisations, such as ‘The Pioneers’ in Wales, who were based in Cardiff (Clements, 2017; Jeffers, 2017a). In doing this research, it was at first not obvious where to commence this study, who to approach, and what the research boundaries may be. Potential participants were often mobile individuals generally not tied to any one specific organisation or locality. Initially, attempts were made to contact participants from a previous Master’s study who could suggest participants for this research. As no suggestions of participants came forth, online recruitment was used to attract interest of potential participants.

The advantages of using online recruitment have been previously noted in social research (Fileborn, 2016). In this study, online recruitment has been used to purposively reach out to potential participants, which involved sending out a general call to take part in this study. This approach proved to be successful in recruiting initial participants who later recommended other prospective informants. Curiously, some of the success of these recruitment efforts could be explained by congruence with the language used by community arts ‘callouts’, often posted by organisations in social

media to advertise new work or available funding. It then appeared that reaching out to potential participants via social media was something that could help reach a wider audience of community arts workers and be recognised as normal and ordinary. A brief outline of the study was posted on several community arts Facebook groups and was also emailed to members of online Welsh arts networking websites (see Figure 2), asking people to express their interest in participation through either a direct message or via email. In correspondence with potential participants, the key requirement for participation was that they were involved in paid community and participatory arts work in Wales, which encompassed both freelance and full-time positions. This approach allowed the criteria for participation be narrowed, excluding those individuals who were volunteers.

After receiving several initial responses online, a detailed Study Information Sheet (see Appendix 1: Study Information Sheet) was sent out, which provided additional information about the study - the research focus, the duration and methods of data collection, and ethical aspects related to consent and data handling. During this study, only one participant was recruited directly during one of the field observations. After gaining initial interest via email, interview meetings with participants were organised either face-to-face or via Zoom, where they were asked if they had any questions about the study information sheet. After again explaining the purpose of the study, participant anonymity, their rights of access to data, and the output of their involvement, they were then asked to give their informed and explicit consent to take part in the interview and be recorded for research purposes of this study before proceeding. The ethical dimension of participant consent is discussed in Section 5.10.

A screenshot of a Facebook messenger message. The text is as follows:

Hello,
I am a postgraduate researcher at Swansea University. For the last 9 months, I have been exploring the nature of community and participatory arts work in Wales as part of my PhD research.
As part of my study, I am interested in learning about the work culture(s) within community and participatory arts in Wales and expanding our knowledge of how the identities of creative practitioners are reflected through such work. My research intends to develop understandings about the real-life practices, norms, and values, prevalent within the UK community and participatory arts.
If you are a freelance artist working in community/ participatory/ inclusive arts or you work in a community-oriented organisation, and would like to take part in this study, please feel free to write to me directly on FB via messenger. I will provide you with more information about how you may be involved in this research.
Thank you!
Rey

Figure 2: Purposive Call for Participation on Social Media

As data collection progressed, purposive recruitment was supplemented with snowball suggestions from participants. After conducting each interview, participants were asked to suggest anyone else who would potential be interested in taking part, thus further aiding in participant recruitment. As a result, many of these participants provided further recommendations and details of other individuals working in community arts in Wales, who were then contacted directly by the researcher via email and invited to participate in the study. There were also a few participants who reached out directly via email, showing their interest to take part in the study after a recommendation from their peers. The overall diagram of participant recruitment is presented in the Figure 3 below. It also includes individuals who provided supplementary data about community arts work, as discussed further in this section.

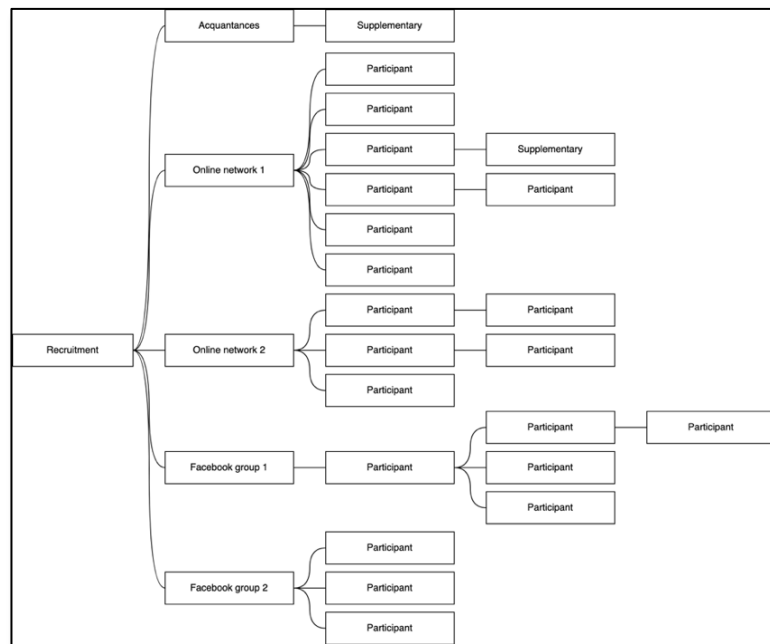


Figure 3: Participant Recruitment Diagram

As this research engaged with ethnographic methods of data collection, not limited to interviews, existing participants were also asked if they would be interested in taking part in further data collection, such as the participant diaries and field observations. They were asked about this at the end of each interview, and if they were willing, a follow-up email invitation was sent that included the additional Study Information Sheet (See Appendix 2: Further Data Collection Invitation). This information sheet made explicit the reasons for collecting additional data, explained the methods used,

reiterated the ethical and legal dimensions of this study, and invited them to take part, thus ensuring ongoing, explicit, and informed consent. Participants who were interested in keeping a diary or be observed reached out directly via email to further discuss the timeline and scope of their involvement.

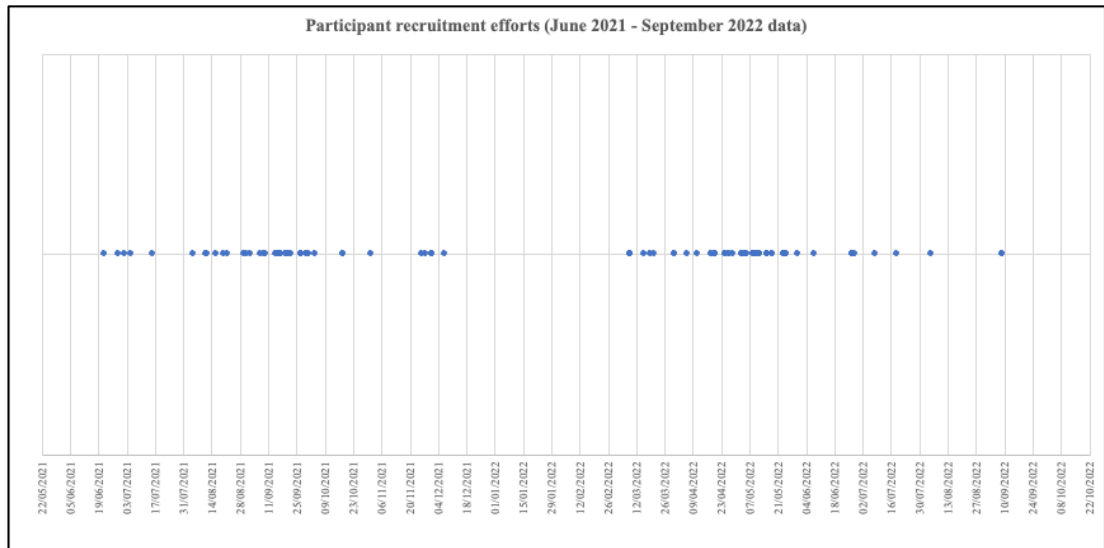


Figure 4: Illustrative Timeline of Participant Recruitment Efforts

Overall, recruitment efforts were not confined to specific timeframes, as the research involved continuous and flexible engagement in identifying and recruiting individuals to take part in this study. Figure 4 above provides an illustration of the points in time at which recruitment and selection activities were conducted, which involved reaching out to potential participants, conversing with them, and obtaining their consent. This graph is based on the entries made in the researcher journal (see Section 5.8.5), as well as the Participant Management Tool (discussed below). Actual data collection was conducted at different times, based on individual agreement with each informant. Participant-generated data, such as emails and other forms of documents were excluded from this graph, as these forms of data were generally sent by participants without being requested, and therefore were self-generated. Participant recruitment was conducted between June 2021 and September 2022, illustrating the continuous nature of recruitment which ran concurrently to other research activities during the same period.

However, recruitment was not a straightforward process. It necessitated an array of activities to attract and maintain the interest of participants and ask them to dedicate

their time and effort to this study. Access to the field was never complete or assumed after initial correspondence with participants, but instead it was characterised by “punctuated entries” (Thedvall, 2013, p. 106). This involved continuously negotiating and re-negotiating entry to the field with every step taken (Moeran, 2013). Figure 4 earlier highlighted the efforts needed for recruitment using emails, calls, social media messages, and other forms of correspondence, with only occasional breaks for data analysis. As such, there was a critical need to track everyday research activities related, but not limited to, participant recruitment to ensure effective management of these relationships as they developed and to contribute to a smooth running of the study overall (Thomas & Hodges, 2010; Thomas, 2009). To aid this process, a Participant Management Tool was devised, which was a simple Excel spreadsheet that recorded and traced all correspondence with participants, as well as all types of data collected and analysed. An example of this tool is provided in Appendix 3.

Overall, the ongoing attention to maintaining access enabled recruitment of a broad range of individuals for the study, yielding a wide corpus of primary data as a result. Basic information about the participants and the scope of their involvement is summarised in Table 1 below. Pseudonyms have been used to ensure participant anonymity and confidentiality. These participants all identified as working within community and participatory arts practice with only one participant explicitly describing themselves also as a socially engaged artist and as an inclusive arts practitioner. Data collected from some individuals was not included in the final analysis, as these people did not qualify as community and participatory arts workers. This included a volunteer in the community and a headteacher of a local school. However, they provided valuable supplementary points of reference about the nature of work in community arts and helped in getting sensitised to some of the key issues pervading such work early in the research.

Table 1: Participant Profile

Participant	Role	Data collected
Alex (suppl.)	Volunteer	Interview
Carmen	Artistic director	Interview, documentary
Catherine	Chief executive	Interview
Chloe	Artistic director	Interview, participant diary, observations
Chris	Director	Interview
Demi	Freelance creative practitioner	Interview, participant diary, observations
Dorothy	Freelance creative practitioner	Interview, documentary, participant diary

Hollie	Creative director	Interview, participant diary
Hugh	Freelance creative practitioner	Interview, documentary, participant diary, observations
John (suppl.)	School headteacher	Documentary
Josie	Assistant creative director	Interview, participant diary
Keira	Freelance artist	Interview
Layla	Community arts coordinator	Interview, documentary, observations
Lois	Freelance creative practitioner	Interview, documentary, participant diary, observations
Lucia	Artistic/creative director	Interview
Meghan	Part-time/freelance creative practitioner	Interview, documentary, participant diary
Nicole	Freelance artist	Interview
Paula	Funding manager	Interview
Poppy	Freelance creative practitioner	Interview, documentary
Sophie	Freelance creative practitioner	Interview, documentary, participant diary, observations
Elsie	Arts manager	Interview

5.7 Data Collection

Data was collected over a period of 13 months, between June 2021 and November 2022. Over this time, data collection was conducted in two general phases. In phase one, a small corpus of data was collected from interviews (n=11) that enabled identification of initial themes in relation to discourses and subject positions in community arts. This enabled a ‘progressive focusing’ of initial findings into phase two of this research that involved more detailed interrogation of all data and the application of FDA (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Hammersley, 2006). The data that was collected and analysed during phase one also aided in developing and refining strategies and techniques for further data collection, such as the interview schedule.

Whilst phase one of this study was determined by a generally open-ended, broad approach to data collection and analysis, which focused on the general rationalities, discursive themes, practices, and subject positions in community and participatory arts practice, phase two was much narrower in its scope. During this phase, more data was collected using interviews, participant diaries, and observations. The focus of research was narrowed progressively from the wider themes identified in relation to community arts work towards the enterprising aspects of participants’ working lives, as well as seeking to shed light on the discursive constructions of cultural work along the lines

of alternative discourses of collaboration and care. At this point, all data initially coded in phase one was also re-coded to reflect the shift in focus. It was during this phase that data collection design was extended longitudinally to account for discursive variation and change in practices and activities over a longer period of time (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007), as participants were recruited to take part in the solicited diary study (see Section 2.3) that reflected manifestations of discourse over a longer periods of time. The collection of data concluded as data analysis reached saturation and ceased to generate new themes and analytical codes in relation to entrepreneurial work of community arts. The summary of the two phases of data collection is illustrated in the Table 2 below:

Table 2: Two Phases of Data Collection

Research phase	Timeframe	Data collection
Phase One	June 2021 - February 2022	Interviews, documents (emails, photographs, blogs, organisational strategies), observations and field notes, researcher journal reflections/memos
Phase Two	February 2022 – November 2022	Participant diaries, interviews, participant-generated documents (emails, photographs, blogs, organisational strategies), industry related documents, observations and field notes, researcher journal reflections/memos

In total, over the period of 13 months, data collection yielded approximately 21 hours of interview recordings, 19.5 hours of field observations, 7 participant diaries (25,266 words), 13 participant-generated documents (emails, organisational documents), and reflective researcher journal entries (48,500 words).

5.8 Methods

The dispersed nature of work practices in community arts required a variety of approaches to data collection. As discussed earlier, community arts workers often spent considerable time moving from one space to another, and frequently they worked across various projects and spaces simultaneously, as well as networked and self-promoted in their free time. In fact, some part of participants' work was generally confined to private sites, such as homes, as these individuals planned and prepared

their work and looked for new employment opportunities. The wider context was also important, as some of the data collection was conducted during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, which presented health and safety challenges, limiting face-to-face interactions, movement between geographical locations, and conducting long-term observations. By principally drawing on interview data, supplemented through a range of other data collection methods, such as participant diaries, observations, and participant-generated documents, it was possible to overcome some of the challenges of researching the work of community arts and benefit from the advantages each of these methods offered in shedding light on the discursive terrain of community arts work. This is discussed below.

5.8.1 Reflexive Interviews

Interviews were the principal methods of data collection for this study. Berger and Luckman (1991) highlighted the importance of spoken language in everyday human life, “originat[ing] in and [having] its primary reference to everyday life” (p. 53), shaping and communicating reality as experienced by individuals. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) highlighted the role of interviewing in ethnographic research as capable of drawing out individual accounts about people, their understanding of reality, the meanings they may ascribe to what they do in everyday work and life, as well as the forms of discourse and wider contexts within which their stories may be framed. Importantly, despite the seemingly innocuous character of the interview as something that intends to draw out narratives about a person’s own life and work, this research, in line with FDA, recognised the technological aspects of the interview in the constitution of the self. To draw on Atkinson and Silverman (1997), the interview in this research has been seen as a process of “inventing [of] the self” (p. 319). This process of invention - of construction through discourse - was useful in shedding light on the work of community arts. It helped to see the interview not as a method of representing reality, but as a device or technology through which participants constructed a particular version of their reality and took up positions as specific types of subjects (see Findings Chapter).

In practical terms, the interview method was chosen for two specific reasons – analytical and practical. First, interviews helped to engage in a dialogue with participants to draw out statements on a range of topics related to their work. These statements were later analysed discursively (see Section 5.9.5), focusing on how they constructed the image of their work, how they portrayed their relationships with colleagues and partners, and importantly, the subject positions they occupied in relation to the topic of enterprising work. Second, interviews at the initial stages of this research helped with familiarisation in the research field - its key structures, issues, and challenges, which were important in formulating questions and determining the coding schemata (see Section 5.9.3). At the initial stages of research, insights gained from interviews helped in developing and refining the data collection methods, such as the types of questions to ask and themes to focus on, as well as determining the effectiveness of some of the interviewing approaches, such as the style of questioning, location of interviews, and the use of technology. Interviews also helped develop rapport with participants, which will be discussed further below. Although most of the interviews were conducted in-person, a small number of conversations were held online via Zoom. The choice of the mode of interviewing was guided by practical contingencies, such as the location of participants, their work schedules, and health and safety concerns during the Covid-19 pandemic. A small number of interviews (n=2) were also conducted in group settings, as some participants proposed to have their colleagues take part in the study as well.

Interviews were an important method, but collecting them required prior preparation in advance (Adams, 2015; Bell, 1993). Researching community arts in this way highlighted that induction and deduction was both present during that process. Before the commencement of the data collection stage, it was necessary to ensure the researcher's good understanding of the key issues and challenges within the field of cultural work and community arts practice, which involved extensive familiarisation with the relevant academic and professional literatures to develop questions that made sense to participants and also in alignment with the study's interest in exploring the enterprising work in community arts. This also involved initial 'imagining' of community arts as an object of research and thinking through the 'macro' and 'micro' contexts within which it may be situated, such as the social, cultural, political environments and how these may influence workers' particular situation. These

preparations enabled a more confident stance towards conducting interviews in a professional way, contributing to further knowledge about the work of community arts.

This study adopted a 'reflexive interview' method. Methodological literature tends to make a distinction in interviewing between 'structured' and 'unstructured' approaches, advocating one over the other depending on the nature of the research project (Adams, 2015; Bryman, 2012; Knox & Burkard, 2009; Bell, 1993). Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) suggested that all interviews have some form of a structure, due to being products of social occasions. Instead, they offer a more effective way of looking at interviewing by choosing between "prestructured" and "reflexive interviewing" (p. 117) methods. The former interview design involves asking specific questions, the wording of which is prepared in advance, which are asked in an exact sequence, and are the same for all participants. The reflexive interviewing method appeared to be a more fitting choice in this study for generating participant verbal accounts in relation to their work. Conversely, reflexive interviewing does not require preparation of exact questions and instead involves a more general preparation of topics to explore with participants. There was no specific sequence of questioning and a flexible approach was used that "[allowed] the discussion to flow in a way that seem[ed] natural" (p. 117).

The use of a reflexive interview method was essential for building rapport at the beginning of interviews and allowing the participants to feel at ease, rather than feel like they were being 'interrogated' through rigid, structured questioning. In this way, it was possible to both direct the discussion through asking specific questions or seeking clarification, as well as allow participants to take the conversation in unexpected directions. This is, of course, not to say that the reflexive interviewing approach was simply an informal conversation without any plan or direction. It involved "an active listener" (p. 118) perspective from the researcher that continuously assessed the interview to ensure that what was being said related to the research agenda, whilst staying sensitive to the actual context of the interaction. Overall, then, the reflexive interview method enabled this research to remain open to novel themes, contexts, and perspectives from the participants, whilst staying constantly prepared to ask questions in relation to enterprising work and its alternatives, if the conversation went 'off track'.

In practical terms, a schedule of topics and potential questions for discussion was developed to assist the interviewing process. The interview schedule was an important tool that guided the line of questioning during interviews, but also provided enough flexibility for the participants to tell their stories in their own way (Knox & Burkard, 2009). Figure 5 shows an example of an interview schedule and the scribbled notes made during the actual conversation with a participant. Here, the reflexive method enabled the flexible, contingent, and unpredictable nature of the interview to become apparent. At the beginning of the interview, general topics were developed for discussion. However, as the interview unfolded and more interesting themes and directions emerged, there was a need to ask additional questions, as reflected in the jottings from the interview. Yet, the interview schedule never stayed the same from one interview to the next, but was updated after each conversation in the field, and re-focused with new questions and topics to incorporate and account for what has already been learned for the purposes of future interviews. These points were reflected in the researcher journal entry, as shown in Figure 6.

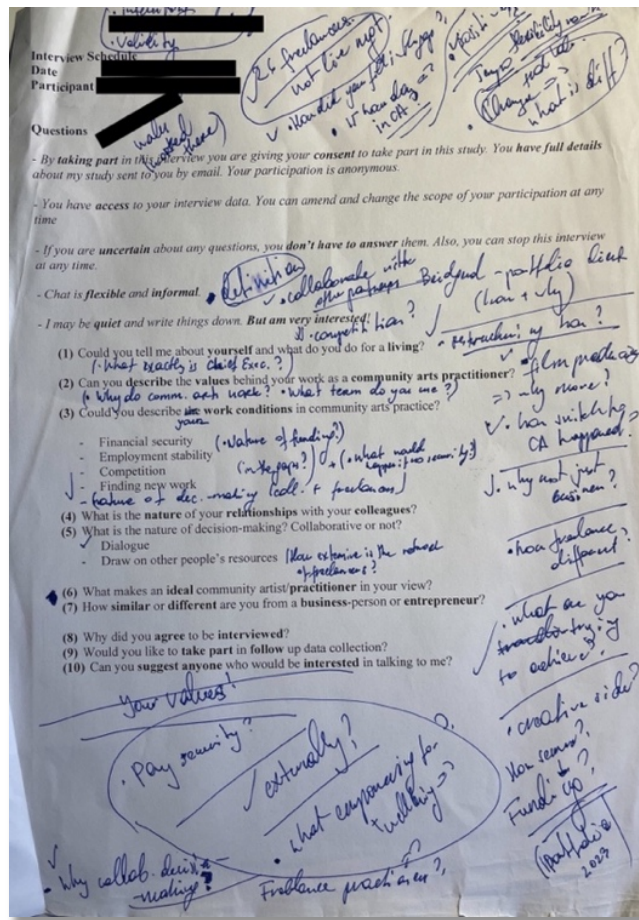


Figure 5: Example of Interview Schedule

So, during this interview I decided to change my questions strategy. I was still keeping in my mind that I should explore the general areas – values, work conditions, etc., but I decided not to look at my questions, and certainly not follow the interview schedule in a structured way. What I did was to ask the first question – asking about the person and what they do for a living, but letting the participant speak for as long as possible and ask small questions when opportunity presented itself. The first question would then be followed by another one about person's values and motivations for work – which are already pretty connected to the one before – thus allowing the participant to talk about themselves as a worker, as an artist, rather than as someone talking about work. I noticed with [REDACTED] she was really happy to go in a fairly extended story about her work, her history, her values after the first two questions. In fact, I noticed that if I did not follow up with relevant questions and tried to cover some of the other topics on my list this created very dry, almost stuttered responses – not good.

Figure 6: Researcher Journal Entry, September 2021

In general, the questions in the schedule were formed around five broad areas. The first area was introductory, which aimed to set the scene for the interview, inform the participants about the purpose of the conversations and obtain their explicit and informed consent. The second area was related to biographical information, gaining insights into the working lives of community arts workers, their current and previous employment, as well as the decisions that led them being where they were. The third area of questioning was around the nature of working conditions in community arts, to draw out narratives related to the advantages and challenges of working in this sector of cultural work, and in particular the kind of practices that they employed in everyday life. The fourth set of questions involved going deeper through subjectivity-related questions to understand the subject positions of participants and how they identified as community arts workers. Finally, the fifth area was dedicated to wrapping up the conversation, as well as gauging their interest in participating in further data collection (solicited diaries and observations) and their consent to be contacted in relation to this. At this stage, participants were also asked to provide snowball recommendations for further recruitment by emailing the researcher after the interview, as well as being given the chance to ask any other questions they might have. Participants were further provided an opportunity to email the researcher with any information they would like to add or amend in relation to their interviews, which some of them did (see Section 5.8.4).

All interviews were digitally recorded, using a mobile phone, which allowed the audio component of conversations with participants to be captured in their totality (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Using handwritten notes alone risked losing

considerable data and would have necessitated choosing which key conversation points to write down in the moment, as well meaning that considerable extra time and resources needed to be dedicated to “correcting, rewriting, reconstructing, or editing” of such handwritten data (Bucher et al., 1956, p. 360). A digital recording device, such as a phone, helps the researcher to keeping attention on interviewees without the unnecessary distractions of constantly jotting things down and planning next questions (Adams, 2015). A second recording device (Olympus digital voice recorder) was also used as a backup to account for possible issues that may arise with the first device (see Appendix 4 for researcher journal reflections on technical difficulties), such as low battery charge, unresponsive phone apps, or low quality of recordings. Prior to each interview, participant consent was obtained to be digitally recorded. As the digital recording devices were very small, they did not appear out of place when positioned on the table in front of participants and this discreetness appeared to help put them at ease right at the beginning of interviews. Several interviews (n=8) were conducted and recorded using an online video conference call software (Zoom), as well as recorded digitally using the second recording device. Though none of participants declined to be digitally recorded either in-person or virtually, all of them were provided with an alternative option of being recorded via handwritten notes.

Whilst digital means were primary to recording interview data, they were partially combined with a manual approach of notetaking too. Opdenakker (2006) pointed out that keeping brief notes during interviews may be useful for a number of reason, such as ensuring that all topics have been covered, in case there was a problem with the recording device or if there is a “malfunctioning of the interviewer” (section 2.1 para. 3), such as forgetting what questions to ask. In the case of this study, although a backup recording device was used, handwritten notes had a variety of purposes (Figure 7). First, as interesting themes emerged during interviews, it was possible to quickly note down some of the questions to ask participants, aiding short-term memory in the face of a large amount of often unfamiliar incoming information. Second, the notes from the interviews were later used for analytical purposes as well, highlighting the ‘fluid’ distinction between collection of data and analysis (Nash, 2017). These jottings were used to reflect (see Section 5.8.5) on initial impressions, key themes, and theoretical linkages that emerged from interviews in the researcher journal analytical memos.

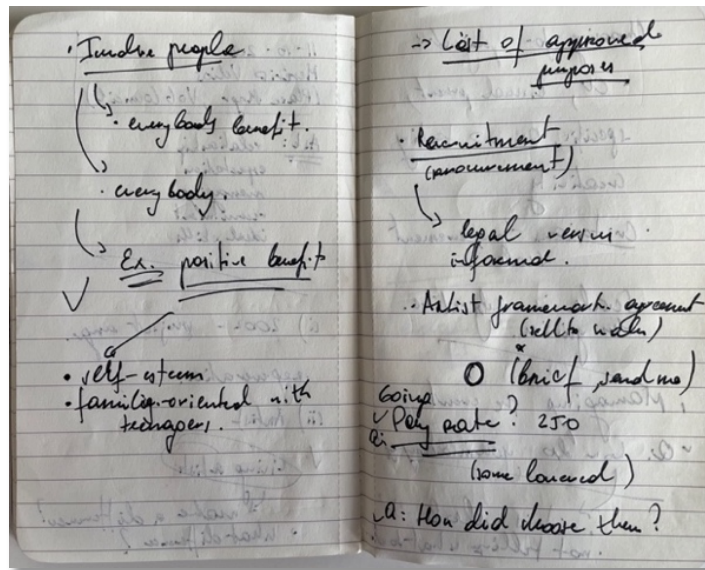


Figure 7: Example of Handwritten Notes

All recorded data were safely and securely handled in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act (2018) (GDPR) and stored on a password-protected device, with backups uploaded to a password-protected cloud storage (iCloud and Swansea University's OneDrive account). Access to these digital domains was only available to the researcher. An alternative copy of all participants data was uploaded to a USB memory stick, which was encrypted and kept secure within the researcher's home.

5.8.2 Participant Diaries

In addition to reflexive interviews, participant diaries were used as a method of generating further knowledge about the discourses pervading the work of community arts (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Whilst diaries have extensively been used in sociological research as a type of a log to be kept by participants to report on their day-to-day activities, usually in a structured way (Zimmerman & Wieder, 1977), in this research they were employed to enable participants both to flexibly record and reflect on the routines of their working lives. The use of solicited participant diaries formed an effective method of collecting data about less obvious aspects of individuals' lives that may not come forward as easily during interviews, providing participants with an opportunity to reflect upon their working experiences and understandings of

themselves as workers (Harvey, 2011; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). This method differed from reflexive interviews as a method of data collection, as it provided participants with an opportunity to generate accounts in their own time and in their own style, capturing their reflections on things when they happen (Snowden, 2015).

Participant diaries enabled insight into the more mundane, day-to-day routine activities of community arts workers, which could be obscured during interviews (Jacelon & Imperio, 2005). Considering the peripatetic lifestyle of many of the participants of this study, the benefits of using the diary method was of considerable value to this research. Of course, it is not to say that the diary method would, or even could, shed a light on individuals' 'true' understandings of work (Harvey, 2011). Instead, such an approach provided rich points of data collection on the discourses implicated in the networks of power in the contexts beyond the interview spaces, such as the home, in between workshops, or during meetings with partners, which later was analysed and compared in relation to other methods used in this study (Foucault, 1982a). An example of a participant solicited diary is provided in the Figure 8 below.

6th – 9th June
A large proportion of this week has been focused on operational work – I have been working on updating our Safeguarding Policy. I have benefited from the support of [REDACTED] in this process – it has been useful to draw on their expertise. Advice received from this team has helped me to realise that the original policy needs to be separated into two documents – a safeguarding policy and a code of conduct.
I have passed the draft documents on to [REDACTED] and will also run a final draft passed [REDACTED] representative before officially signing off with the Steering Group. (N.B As [REDACTED] is the lead local authority in the [REDACTED] partnership, all of our work falls under their corporate policies, however we have created our own “operational guidelines” that are specific to our work).

I have also created a draft “[REDACTED]” for our newly formed Advisory group. I am hoping that the document will clearly define the purpose of the group and set out a framework for meetings.
I will send the document out in draft form so that members can contribute and shape it at the next meeting (scheduled for 21st June).

I feel like I have encountered lots of frustrations this week!!!! Summarised below:

1) I agreed a project plan with a partner and subsequently booked artists for the agreed dates. However I was then told that the project would need to go out to tender and I would need to submit a formal application. This is a standard procedure, but we are normally asked to complete this

Figure 8: Example of Solicited Diary Entry by Josie

It is important to recognise the relationship of the participant diary method to the questions of power/knowledge. Following Foucault (1978, 2005), the participant diary, alongside the interview method, can be seen as a ‘confessional’, becoming a technical device through which participants are called to bring forward those more

hidden, private aspects of their lives – fears, desires, hopes, and everyday struggles. The participant diary as a confessional becomes an area of power relations that produces discourse and knowledge about subjects by the subjects themselves. It becomes reflective of the process of self-formation, producing a particular ‘truth’ about the subject that speaks through the medium of writing, seeking to attain “a certain mode of being” (Foucault, 1997, p. 294). But this process necessitates reflexivity, as the ‘confession’ is not unidirectional, and must involve a listener – or the researcher – to whom it is addressed. As Foucault (1978) noted: “The truth did not reside solely in the subject who, by confessing, would reveal it wholly formed ... present but incomplete, blind to itself, in the one who spoke, it could only reach completion in the one who assimilated and recorded it”.

The participant diary method was used to follow up with some participants after initial interviews. After the initial analysis of data that was collected during the phase one of this study, it was possible to identify a range of themes of interest in the interview material that merited further exploration. After completing each interview, participants were invited to record their daily reflections related to their work, focusing on four areas: (1) Everyday challenges and solutions at work; (2) The nature of decision-making; (3) Relationships with colleagues, other workers, clients, as well as the role such relationships may play in their work; (4) Reflections on the actions they undertook (or not) and why. These four areas served as a general guidance for participants, and they were free to record any additional information they thought could be valuable to the study, thus adding a level of spontaneity, making this form of data collection appear less ‘contrived’. To ensure equity and to accommodate for a range of individual abilities, the participants were informed that the solicited diaries could be made using a range of media that they felt comfortable about, such as in writing, using audio/video recording, and photography. All participants who took part in the diary study chose to make their entries electronically in a written form. To minimise a risk of research malaise (Nicholl, 2010), they were asked to make at least two entries per week and keep their reflections over a period of four weeks, with no minimum word count required. Approximately 37% of participants elected to take part in this form of data collection, in addition to other forms of data provided (n=7).

5.8.3 *Observations*

Participant observations were used to supplement data collected using interviews and participant diaries. In ethnography, observations have often been used for data gathering, but they have been generally less common in Foucauldian-inspired studies. Yet, it is possible to identify a range of Foucauldian studies that employed observations across various subject fields, such as political geography (Brady, 2021), child protection and safeguarding (Taylor et al., 2016), education (Valério et al., 2022; Mifsud, 2017; Dixon, 2013), Central Asian (Koch, 2013) and Middle Eastern studies (Lalancette & Mulrennan, 2022; Doğruel & Leman, 2009), marine policy (Ringer et al., 2018), and early childhood (Bollig & Kelle, 2013). In these studies, observations were integral to shedding light on social practices of individuals and the forms of discourses that emerged across various domains. Likewise, participant observations in this study were helpful in generating supplemental insights on discourses of work in community arts practice. Observations for this study were primarily performed during community arts workshops, but a few observations were also conducted in other spaces, such as exhibitions and community ‘taster’ sessions.

As Forsey (2010a, p. 66) pointed out, ethnographic research should not be simply about a practice of observing participants, but fundamentally needs to be a process of “engaged listening” (p. 66). For Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) the interview method should not be the only way to generate oral accounts in the field, but the researcher should seek to gain access to those locations where some of the conversations may occur unsolicited. Against this backdrop, by conducting participant observations, such as during workshops, it was possible to remain sensitive to conversations happening during these events that helped this research draw out practices linked to enterprising work. Furthermore, to borrow from Goffman (1959), by conducting observations it was possible to gain access to the ‘backstage’ of community arts practice, or to all those areas outside direct practice, such as preparing for workshops, talking quietly to colleagues in the periphery, and chatting on the way to and from community-oriented events. Such knowledge was invaluable for this research, as it further expanded the understanding of how participants constructed the image of community arts practice.

Whilst interviews were a principal method of data collection, participant observations were essential to gaining insights into how community arts work was performed in practice, as well as informing and guiding other data collection methods. As part of the progressive focusing approach (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Hammersley, 2006), participant observations were not a separate stage of data collection, as they often happened concurrently to other methods of data collection. By taking part in community arts events, both as a researcher and a member of the public participating in drawing, painting, printing, writing, and other activities, it was possible to gain a wider understanding of how such work was conducted in community arts in practice, the role of creative practitioners, and the relationships between organisations and artists. Additionally, participant observations also guided the development of other data collection methods, helping to create more meaningful and informed questions during interviews.

In practical terms, a notepad was used to record field observations. Prior to each observation, all members of the public participating in workshops were informed about the nature of this research and that any observation was directed towards creative practitioners only. Although no one did so, these members of the public were also provided with an opportunity to express their unwillingness to be part of the observation, at which point data collection would have ceased immediately. To be less obtrusive, observations were jotted down in a small notebook when the opportunity presented itself, although it was not always possible to remain completely unnoticed. Photography was also used to capture the context of observations – the area in which workshops were organised, the types of materials used in classes, as well as the art produced. Immediately after completing observations, a tape recorder was used to capture initial thoughts in addition to the jottings already made. The notepad jottings, images, and audio recordings later aided in recall of observations and assisted in formulation of fieldwork reflections in the researcher journal (see Section 5.8.5). These reflections were important to developing further understanding and interpretation of data, as well as informing and guiding data collection. Figure 9 below illustrates how the data collected during observations was used to feed into analysis and further data collection.

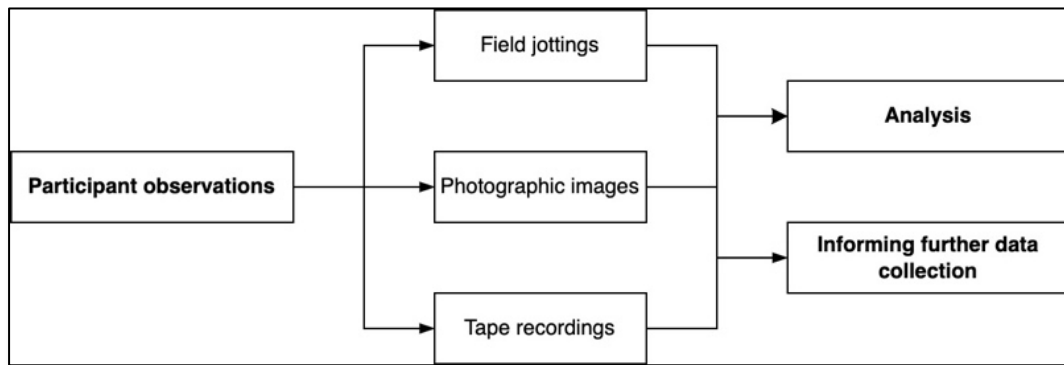


Figure 9: Participant Observation and Data Collection

5.8.4 Participant-Generated Documents

Whilst the primary corpus of participant data was formed through interviews, and further extended with the help of participant diaries and field observations, documentary data generated by participants was also analysed. During the interviews, participants were offered an opportunity to email the researcher any additional information they wanted to add or amend in relation to their interviews, as well as any other data they thought could be useful for the study. Such data was predominantly made up of emails sent by participants, but also included photographs and industry-related documents. These data helped to further contextualise the study and shed light on the discourses that participants drew on in the formation of the entrepreneurial selves through FDA. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) pointed out the value of using documentary artefacts in social research, as it could provide valuable information about the context of the study, as well give access to types of data not usually obtainable through other methods, creating new analytical avenues. In a similar vein, throughout the data collection stage, a variety of materials from participants, such as emails, photographs, as well as industry-related documents, provided additional information about the nature of community arts work, clarified points which had already been made in interviews and observations, and added new points of knowledge about individual perspectives as community arts workers.

5.8.5 *Researcher Journal*

The ‘researcher journal’ was a fundamental tool that assisted the data collection and analysis in this study. Following Hammersley and Atkinson, the researcher journal acted as “a running account of the conduct of the research” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 151), which helped to “retrace and explicate” (pp. 151-152) decisions and actions related to research design and the development of analytical themes. Generally, the use of the researcher journal in this study was similar to what Wheeler (2017) summed up as a process of “four Rs: reflecting, recording, relating and ranting” (p. 103). Here, the researcher journal was used throughout the length of the study to continuously reflect upon the choices made in the field, the development of relationships with participants, and how the researcher’s own history and personal experiences may have shaped the way the data was understood and interpreted. The preliminary findings from fieldwork were also continuously related within and across each other, and in relation to existing theorisations of enterprising work. This process of fieldwork reflection and relating is discussed in Section 5.9.1. On a more day-to-day basis, the researcher journal allowed recording of the choices and decisions made in relation to the development of analytical positions, the construction of the study’s design, the logic behind the selection of data collection methods, and the daily efforts of establishing and managing relationships with participants. This scrupulous record-keeping also helped shape the structure and content of this Methodology Chapter. Although the fourth aspect of researcher journaling, ‘ranting’, did not form part of analysis in this study, it nevertheless served an important outlet to voice and deal with existing frustrations, confusions, and anxieties experienced during the duration of this research, especially considering the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic had at the time.

5.9 Data Analysis

The analysis in this study was a multifaceted, ongoing process that underpinned the research. Generally, data analysis could be understood as a range of these interrelated activities: (1) Fieldwork Reflections; (2) Interview Transcription; (3) Coding, Memo-

Writing, and Diagramming; (4) Progressive Focusing; (5) Doing FDA; and (6) Triangulation. None of these stages were linear and were often conducted in a ‘messy’, iterative ways: following data collection and preceding it, running concurrently to, as well as separately from each other, as research activities went back and forth between the data collection and analysis stages (Gobo, 2008; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Gill, 2000). These features of analysis are discussed below.

5.9.1 *Fieldwork Reflections*

Continuous reflections on collected data were important in gaining new knowledge about community arts work and helping develop themes for further analysis. During the active phases of research, which involved collecting primary data in the field, reflections were kept in relation to experiences and initial impressions from fieldwork, which were captured in the researcher journal (as discussed in Section 5.8.5). These reflections were akin to descriptive ethnographic fieldnotes, yet they also had a level of rudimentary analytical purchase. At the initial stages of research, they were used to seek understandings about the key aspects of community arts, the nature of employment in this domain, and the key roles involved in such work. As the research progressed, the role of reflections shifted to identifying key discursive themes in the language and practices of participants, which later assisted in developing the coding schema and memo-writing. For example, fieldwork reflections were often used after each interview. These reflections often focused on several elements, such as identifying the context within which the data collection was conducted, the place and time, the topics that appeared to be interesting, as well as potential analytical methodological implications.

Figure 10 below provides an illustration of this approach to fieldwork reflection after an interview with a participant:

<p>10-09-2021 Fieldwork + Methods. Meghan 1st interview (started 10:30. Length – 1 h 22 min). <i>Cafe noise, change of interviewing strategy, Themes – helping people, mainstream arts antagonism, non-active networking, precarity (pay, family support, pandemic)</i></p>
--

Meghan and I scheduled our meeting at [Coffee House] for 10:30 on Wed September 9th. [Town in Wales] is a fairly large town East from where I live in [Village in Wales]. It would take me about 40 minutes to get to my location and park my car. I left a little earlier, because I wanted to make sure that I have enough time to choose an appropriate seating further away from noisy people and coffee machines (which are pain in the ass when trying to listen to a participant).

...

So, during this interview I decided to change my questions strategy. I was still keeping in my mind that I should explore the general areas – values, work conditions, etc., but I decided not to look at my questions, and certainly not follow the interview schedule in a structured way. What I did was to ask the first question – asking about the person and what they for a living, but letting the participant speak for as long as possible and ask small questions when opportunity presented itself. The first question would then be followed by another one about person's values and motivations for work – which are already pretty connected to the one before – thus allowing the participant to talk about themselves as a worker, as an artist, rather than as someone talking about work. I noticed with Meghan, she was really happy to go in a fairly extended story about her work, her history, her values after the first two questions. In fact, I noticed that if I did not follow up with relevant questions and tried to cover some of the other topics on my list this created very dry, almost stuttered responses – not good.

So, what are some of the themes that came across as most obvious in my conversation with Meghan. First, it is her complete love of doing arts as a way of contributing to wellbeing of communities. She was aware of the value of arts as a way of helping other people for many and always felt that this is what she really wanted to do. She had some other option – becoming a professional ballerina and focus her career on solo performance (although she did do some solo work), but nevertheless it is the community aspect of work that she seems to return to. Second, there seemed to be a quite clear antagonism against the 'mainstream arts' – the individualized, competitive, materialist side of arts that she really felt negative about. To her, doing arts as a way of developing the 'already talented' students felt just not right, but also she felt that the whole mainstream arts sector had the values that she did not share. Third, and connected to the previous point, Meghan pointed out that community arts practitioners' 'community' is very small, and that everyone knows each other. These are all interconnected islands of people, and that they are passionate about helping other people through art. For Meghan, although she was aware of the networks of community practitioners and other stakeholders, she never felt the need to go out and actively network herself and ask for opportunities. The final theme is insecurity – Meghan was very passionate about her work and contributing to lives of other people, but she also lived a very precarious existence ...

Figure 10: Example of Post-Data Collection Field Reflections

The excerpt above illustrates the fieldwork reflections made after an interview with Meghan. It draws attention to the development of a range of themes that appeared to underpin that particular interview, such as 'helping people', 'mainstream arts antagonism', 'non-active networking', and 'precarity'. The development of these themes, although still in their infancy at this stage, later played a fundamental role in developing the coding approach and the analytic frame in relation to identifying discursive constructions of entrepreneurial work in community arts to be interrogated through FDA. Furthermore, the above reflections highlighted some of the methodological implications of the interview with Meghan, drawing attention to the

challenges of conducting interviews in noisy café environments. This reflection later aided in the development of further interviewing techniques that avoided noisy places (such as sitting next to a coffee machine). Similar reflections were done after each interview and observation, as well as other stages of research, such as the interview transcription (as discussed below in Section 5.9.2).

5.9.2 Interview Transcription

Parker (1992) noted that text in either written or spoken form “renders ... discourse ‘visible’ ” (p. 6). Likewise, the transcription of the interview data into a written text form was an important part of the analytical stage in this research. The benefits of recording and transcribing interviews have been made explicit by Heritage (1984), who averred that such approaches could act as an “essential corrective to the limitations of intuition and recollection” (p. 238). By turning interview data into written text, the researcher is provided with a more convenient way to examine certain parts of speech, allowing for additional scrutiny or enabling re-examination, so that new insights emerge or are reused in subsequent research. In this study, interview transcription enabled access to and analysis of collected interview data conveniently and efficiently during the coding and discourse analysis stages. Nevertheless, though Heritage argued that recording and transcribing of interviews could “minimize the influence of personal preconceptions and analytical biases” (p. 238), such an opinion conceals the more complex nature of the transcription process in the research. Potter and Wetherell (1987) argued that transcription could aid the researcher in closely scrutinising language as discourse, warning not to treat this process as an unproblematic activity, but instead to consider it as “a constructive and conventional” (p. 165). Roberts (1997) further suggested that, just like talk, transcription is a social act, as researchers have to evaluate language and make decision on how to represent it textually. As such, transcription reflects the researcher’s choices and beliefs, which are socially constructed, about how an audio recording should be turned into text, and this could have significant implications on the accuracy, readability, and the representation of participants’ speech (Ochs, 1979). Thus, considering these points, transcription formed an integral part of this analysis too, connoting a range of decisions

which needed to be reflexively accounted for before starting to turn the interview recordings into text.

Before commencing transcription of audio material, it was necessary to determine what type of transcription method would best suit the methodological approach of this study. Bucholtz (2000) identified two general approaches to transcription as being ‘naturalised’ and ‘denaturalised’. The naturalised transcription method is “the process of transcription [that] is made less visible through ... the privileging of written over oral discourse” (p. 1461). Such transcription focuses on the language patterns employed by participants in conversation using various notation approaches, to highlight features, such as taking turns, overlapping speech, and response tokens, prominently used in conversation analysis through use of a set of textual conventions (Oliver et al., 2005). On the other hand, a ‘denaturalised’ transcription approach is grounded in the researcher’s interest, not in the structure and the mechanics of language to communicate ideas, but instead in the meanings of ideas themselves, and thus appears to be better suited for FDA. A denaturalised approach to transcription aims to provide “a verbatim depiction of speech” (p. 4), and is less concerned with representation of individual accents and involuntary vocalisations, but instead with capturing of “the meanings and perceptions created and shared during a conversation” (p. 4).

As this research was focused on the constructive nature of language and discourse, the denaturalised approach to transcription appeared better suited for transcribing the interview recordings. This is not to say that unique linguistic elements, such as local accents, involuntary vocalisations, overarching speech, and response tokens, were absent in the speech of participants. However, including these aspects risked detracting from the aim of the research, introducing an additional layer of bias and preconceptions in the construction of transcripts. Against this backdrop, this study adopted the Vienna Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE) (VOICE Project, 2007) transcription convention as presented at the beginning of this Thesis. An example of a transcript is shown below in Figure 11.

150 **Chris:** Um, I think to me there's there's just thinking about it briefly, 2 ways of looking
151 at that question. There's the personal, what are the advantages to me, and the um being
152 my own boss. I mean that is an interesting expression, isn't it, being your own boss. I
153 mean, yes I can, there's no one telling me to do work. However, if I want the company
154 to be successful, there's certain things I need to do even if I don't particularly want to
155 do them. So, there's there is a kind of drive there, there's an extrinsic factor that pushes
156 me to do. Because if you're working with clients, if you are working with people who
157 you've said I will provide them with service, our (service) standard by a particular
158 time, then that's becomes the boss. Um, but maybe that's a little more metaphysical
159 than practical, but nonetheless I am driven to do things by extrinsic factors that perhaps
160 I would prefer not to do. But nonetheless, being my own boss in the throwaway sense
161 of the phrase is something that is very appealing, very appealing to me. Um, I get to I
162 get to have much more control over the hours that I work, where I work, how I work.
163 I choose, I also have the opportunity as well to choose jobs with the, if I pick an artist
164 for a job, then I can choose to be involved in that project as well to an extent that I
165 have control over. And I really get a lot of satisfaction in being able to be involved. I
166 mean it is definitely the [REDACTED] that I spend the bulk of my time doing at the
167 moment. And the satisfaction that I get, I think it comes back to the question that you
168 asked about, 'What are the benefits', was it was that the question?
169 **RS:** Yes, yes

Figure 11: Example of Interview Transcript with Chris

All interview recordings were transcribed manually using Microsoft Word. A number of commentators highlighted the advantages of using automated transcription software (Bokhove & Downey, 2018; Moore, 2015), such as reducing effort needed on part of the researcher, expending less time, and generating preliminary themes quickly and sometimes automatically. Automated transcription quickly produces draft transcripts, often in the matter of minutes, that can be manually edited later, as opposed to the time-consuming and costly process of manually transcribing of audio recordings. Nevertheless, this study opted for manually transcribing interviews because this method was not just a mechanical process of turning words into text, but was also part of analysis of data (Gill, 2000). By listening to the audio recordings, and typing things out, manual transcription helped to improve sensitivity to field dynamics – the way questions were asked, the order of questions, interruptions made, and the type of responses received. The methodological value of such an approach cannot be underestimated, as such knowledge was used to improve the interview technique as the study progressed (Widodo, 2014). Concurrently, listening to the audio data invariably prompted the research to orientate to the data not simply as an occasion of conversation, but as a text where the researcher's position shifts from the interlocutor talking to the participant to an outsider listening in on the conversation. This change

of positionality heightened sensitivity to the dynamics within the text and guided analytical reflections, which were noted in the researcher journal (Bolden, 2015).

5.9.3 *Coding, Memo-Writing, and Diagramming*

Coding was used as a way to organise and aid analysis in identifying key themes and discursive dynamics for further close scrutiny using FDA (Waitt, 2005). To make sense of all the data collected throughout the course of this research (interviews, participant diaries, observations, and participant-generated documents), a qualitative coding approach was used to thematically categorise collected data and subsequently aid in the development of analytic themes. According to Charmaz (2006), qualitative coding is the process whereby segments of text are labelled, so that they are “simultaneously categorize[d], summarize[d], and account[ed] for” (p. 43). In the analysis of data from community arts practice, two specific approaches to coding were used: ‘open coding’ and ‘focused coding’. With open coding, data was coded line-by-line, helping to identify and develop new ideas, themes, and any other issues related to discourses of work in community arts and the way participants identified as particular types of subjects. At this stage, it was important to remain open to all possibilities in the data, identifying as many codes as possible, even if they appeared not directly related to the research questions or were not entirely relevant within and across data sets (Charmaz, 2006; Gill, 2000; Emerson et al., 1995). However, considering the reflexive ethnographic stance that guided the research, it is important to recognise that the codes developed were not neutral and were contingent upon the researcher’s existing knowledge of community arts practice, the experiences in the field, and preconceived “theoretical sensitivities and commitments” (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 151).

During the focused coding stage, as core themes developed, the coding schema were further reviewed by merging and rearranging categories that emerged earlier to further interrogate data, excluding those codes that appeared no longer relevant (Charmaz, 2006; Emerson et al., 1995). At this point a smaller number of codes was developed with particular focus to areas of community arts work related to enterprise and ways

of resisting it. Appendices 5 and 6 provide an illustration of these codes across all data sets, as they developed through the open to focused coding stages. It clearly highlights the ‘messy’ process of coding, as it moved from a whole array of loosely related categories to more thematically coherent and meaningful codes. At both stages of coding, reflexivity was essential to recognising how the emerging codes were reflective of wider discourses linked to enterprise both from the positions of participants, as well as the position of a researcher.

At this point in analysis, coding was used concurrently with theoretical memos (Charmaz, 2006; Emerson et al., 1995). Theoretical memos were a type of reflection that analysed parts of collected data discursively – how objects were constructed, what were the links within and across data sets, how participants positioned themselves in relation to enterprising discourse, and the shape and form of alternative discursive formations. As these theoretical memos developed, they eventually formed the basis of the Findings Chapter. At both stages of coding, nVivo (QRS International, 2022) qualitative data analysis suite was used to create, organise, and store codes digitally. Importantly, this electronic software was not used to automatically generate analytical insights, but instead it was employed to support the coding process. It provided an efficient and quick way to query and navigate across codes and data sets (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013), which would not have been possible using more conventional, slower manual methods of managing codes (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Once the focused coding stage was completed, the discourse analysis approach was applied to key codes within data to explore how community arts workers engaged with the discourse of enterprise (See Section 5.9.5).

Diagramming was also an essential aid in the analysis stage (Seale, 2012; Charmaz, 2006). The diagramming approach was crucial, as it allowed visualisation and representation of the connections between codes, identifying core themes, helping improve the coding schema, and aiding in the writing of memos. Considering the breadth and variety of data collected, diagramming also helped to efficiently navigate and sort through the developing codes, as well as provide a ‘bigger picture’ of data for further analytical purposes. Essentially, diagrams provided an opportunity “to see the relative power, scope, and direction of the categories ... as well as the connections among them” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 118). For diagramming, both handwritten and

computer-generated diagrams and mind maps were used. The examples of these visual aids are presented in Figure 12.

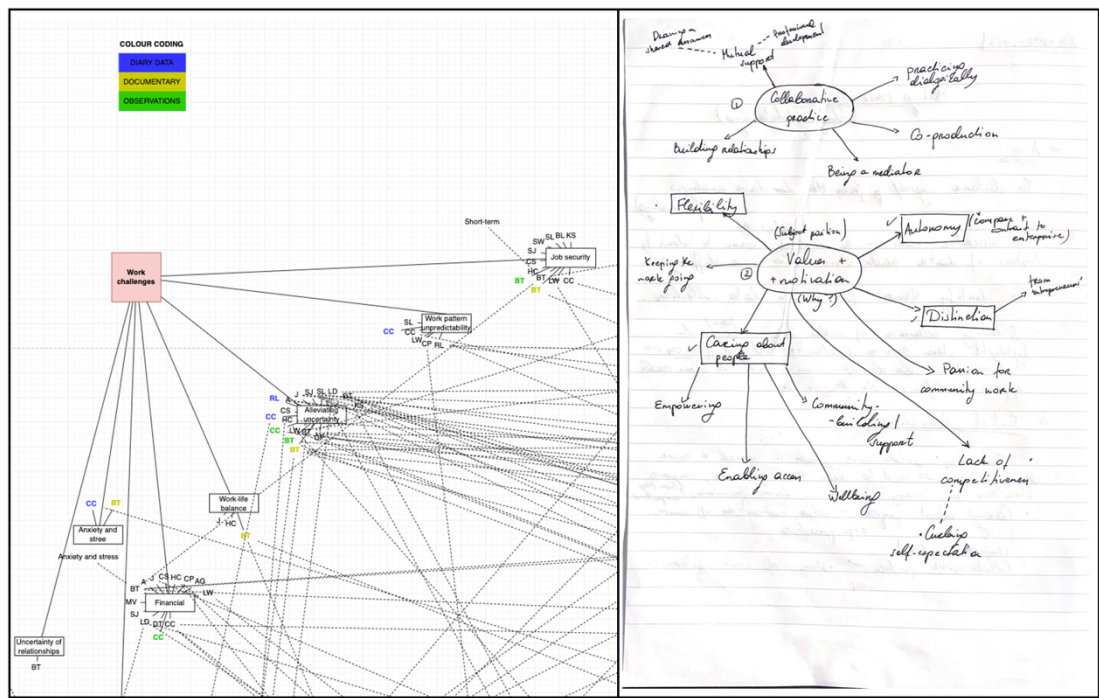


Figure 12: Examples of Digital (Left) and Manual (Right) Diagrams

5.9.4 Progressive Focusing

Progressive focusing was fundamental to the overall approach to data analysis. This concept is predicated on the idea that developing research questions and subsequent analytical insights in qualitative research is not a static, linear process (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012; Hammersley, 2006). Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) pointed out that ethnographic research should progressively focus over time, being similar to a “funnel” structure” (p. 160), with themes and insights becoming more specific and refined over time in relation to the research problem. Progressive focusing was a guiding principle in the non-linear design of this study. As discussed earlier, analysis permeated the entirety of the research, from entering the field to final stages of discourse analysis and write-up. Such analysis connoted using a variety of analytical approaches, such as daily fieldwork reflections protocolled in the researcher journal,

transcription of audio material, coding and memo-writing, and FDA. At each of these stages, a deeper understanding of key issues was developed related to the work of participants, helping the research become better sensitised to which forms of data were particularly relevant. Additionally, the more data that was collected, and the more analysis that was performed, the more robust the data collection techniques became, because they were predicated upon the knowledge and insight gained iteratively from the field.

5.9.5 Doing FDA

Section 5.3 discussed the methodological implications of FDA to this research. The discussion below illustrates how FDA was operationalised in practice as an approach to analysis. This stage in analysis followed the focused coding and memo-writing stages, and its aim was to interrogate participant data as texts to shed light on how community arts workers produced, reproduced, and resisted the discourse of enterprise and what subject positions they adopted in relation to this discourse. Following the focused coding of data, six areas of interest were identified. These areas were (as discussed further in the Findings Chapter): the question of competition, autonomy, workers' flexibility and adaptability, the calculative outlook of participants, entrepreneurial self-identifications, and the discourse of caring about. These six broad areas were not simply topics or themes to explore, but were linked to the question of enterprise, shedding light on the kind of discursive objects that participants brought forward in relation to these areas, the discursive constructions they connoted, the links to wider discourses of work they implied, and the forms of subjectivity they called for. In doing so, the approaches to doing FDA, as offered by Parker (1992) and Willig (2008a, 2008b) were particularly useful. This is explained further below.

The first stage of FDA involved identifying how participants constructed various discursive objects and how such constructions were linked to wider discourses. This meant looking for those discursive objects that were often associated with the discourse of enterprise, such as competition, entrepreneurship, business, and self-interest. The aim was to identify if these objects were also present in the talk of the

study participants, and if they were, in what ways participants constructed such objects to shed light on the similarities and differences to what is already known about enterprising work. Following Willig (2008a), both implicit and explicit references to these objects were sought, as well as any other alternative vocabularies that may have been used in relation to them. At this point, the key concern was to look for the “shared meaning rather than lexical comparability” (p. 115) and the reality that such meanings established. Having identified these constructions, they were located in relation to the discourse of enterprise or any other wider discourses, looking for what ‘reality’ these constructions referred to and communicated, their conditions of possibility, and the rationalities that permeated such constructions.

As discursive constructions of objects within the participant data were identified, and such constructions were related to wider discourses, the next step in discourse analysis involved highlighting the subject positions they connoted. Following the principles laid out in Sections 2.2 and 3.3.2, the analysis focused on looking at how discourses made available particular ways of being for community arts workers, such as the societal roles called for, the rights and duties made available to them, what was considered appropriate or inappropriate behaviour, and whether participants took up those positions or resisted them. This also involved looking at the binaries of subject positioning – all those different ways in which participants compared themselves against what they considered as ‘others’, making their positions contingent upon those ‘others’, shedding light on the ‘dislocated’ nature of subject positions (as mentioned in Section 2.2) (Laclau, 1990). Furthermore, discourse analysis explored how such subject positions were not just a matter of identification (Dean, 1999), but also how they “open[ed] up or close[d] down opportunities for action” (Willig, 2008a, p. 117). In other words, such analysis involved looking at the practical implications of discourse and how various constructed realities of work made particular practices as legitimate. Focusing on the practical implications of language within texts was important, because it highlighted the crucial role of discourse within the power/knowledge complex, aiding in the understanding of the force relations of power and the reproduction/resistance of governmentality within the community arts practice.

Conducting FDA involved asking a variety of guiding questions when interrogating texts for discourse and subject positions. These question were adopted from Thomson

(2011) and Willig (2008a) as presented below. These questions were not asked in the same sequence or in their entirety, but they were helpful nevertheless in directing data analysis:

- How is an object constructed? What are the different ways in which an object is represented? What is considered as truth or a norm? What is made visible and what is made invisible? What is considered as common-sense and what is problematised?
- What discourse does this construction suggest? What picture of the world such discourse connotes? Are other discourses employed to legitimise or conform such construction?
- What is the function of such talk? What action does it orient towards?
- What kind of subject is made available through this discourse? What roles/behaviour are the individuals called to adopt? What is considered appropriate or inappropriate? Desirable or undesirable? Healthy or pathological? Allowed or disallowed? Normal or abnormal?
- What can be said and done through the subject position offered? How is discourse itself reflected extra-linguistically? What behaviour is considered legitimate and what is not? What construction of practice is supported?
- Who gains and who loses from using these discourses? What is at stake in promoting such constructions of reality? Is there resistance and in what forms it manifests itself? Is there evidence of ‘action upon action’?

The questions above were important in shedding light on whether and how community arts workers positioned themselves as entrepreneurial subjects. They enabled close investigation of objects, such as flexibility, rational calculations, networking, and competition that participants brought forward and the discourses they drew upon in constructions of these objects. Importantly, such an approach to analysis helped to build understandings of how participants engaged with competing economic and non-economic vocabularies, drawing attention to the nature of governmental power in community arts and the discursive struggles and contestations it connoted. A worked example of FDA analysis is presented in Appendix 7.

5.9.6 *Academic Rigour and Triangulation*

Considering the rich variety of data collection methods employed, ensuring academic rigour was an essential component of this study. To do so, a method of triangulation was used to gain insights into the discourse and forms of knowledge about the self in community arts work. Traditionally, triangulation has been employed in qualitative studies to check validity of interpretations deriving from particular data collection methods to overcome weaknesses of single data collection methods (Denzin, 1989a, 1989b; Campbell & Fiske, 1959). It has also been used as a way of assembling diverse forms of complementary data to create a more ‘complete’ interpretation of phenomena akin to a jigsaw puzzle (Erzberger & Kelle, 2003). All these approaches assume a single reality and truth that the researcher seeks to uncover through triangulation, or that there is a way to determine that some constructions are more valid than others (Hammersley, 2008). However, as Flick (2018) pointed out, drawing on a social constructionist frame, triangulation should not be viewed as a way of validating findings, but as a way of gaining rich insights into the way “knowledge [is produced] on different levels ... go[ing] beyond the knowledge made possible by one approach and thus contribut[ing] to promoting quality research” (p. 445). Similarly, Fielding and Fielding (1986) pointed out that combining methods in qualitative research should essentially be about enriching analysis, and not about trying to find or establish ‘objective’ truth and reliable facts. Kockeis-Stangl (as cited in Flick, 1992) called for open mindedness in research through triangulation, which could produce “no uniform picture but rather one of a kaleidoscopic kind” (p. 179). Such approaches to triangulation are reconciled well with FDA, as they avoid making definitive claims about the validity of data, and instead recognise the contingent, constructive nature of knowledge produced through research.

Thus, in this research triangulation enabled shedding light on discursive regularities across the range of data collected, such as interviews, observations, solicited diaries, and participant-generated documents, looking for how participants engaged with the discourse of enterprise and how they positioned themselves as entrepreneurial subjects. As has been shown in each individual method section, each approach provided a unique perspective on the participants’ lives, generated in different contexts and in different ways, exposing variation in discursive constructions. Triangulation of

collected data attempted to highlight what Heller (2008) has referred to as the “slice of experience” (p. 250), where each form of data was in a way just one slice amongst many stories told by the participants about themselves, expressed in a rich variety of ways. Such triangulation involved looking for recurring themes in collected data, similarities and differences within and across each data set, as well as remaining continuously sensitive to ways in which certain constructions and discourses were less explicit or visible in particular sets of data.

5.10 Ethical and Safety Considerations

It was important to carefully consider the ethical and safety questions of conducting this research. This involved thinking about the potential consequences of research activities and the risks and harm they could cause (Thomas, 2009; Bell, 1993). First Stage Ethical approval was obtained from Swansea University in May 2021, which established that the research design conformed to the ethical standards of research for Swansea University. However, it is important to recognise that ethical and safety considerations in research must go beyond bureaucratic processes (see for example, White, 2007) and ‘box-ticking exercises’ to gain approval of the Research Ethics Committee – or what Guillemin and Gillam (2004) called “procedural ethics” (p. 263). Instead, ethical considerations must permeate the entirety of the research from the moment of entering the field to the point of writing the manuscript and related journal articles publications. This necessitated reflexive awareness of how researcher positionality (as discussed in Section 5.4.3) does not remain separate from the process of production of knowledge about this sector of cultural work (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2017; Krause-Jensen, 2013; Clifford, 2010; Parker, 1992; Foucault, 1978; Becker, 1967). This reflexive outlook linked well with the study’s Foucauldian-reading of research ethics that connoted “continual scrutiny [of] prevailing ethical and methodological ideas – both those ingrained in institutional norms and practices *and* [author’s emphasis] their own intuitions about what is good or bad, right, or wrong” (Hammersley & Traianou, 2014, p. 229).

It is necessary to consider practical elements of ethics, and in particular the important principle of ‘doing no harm’. Without a serious consideration of this principle, no researcher can or should proceed, as to do so would risk inducing harm to the people they study, and place their research in disrepute (Israel, 2006). One of the key aspects of research ethics concerns the duty to those people who are being studied, ensuring protection of their right to participate in research freely without being forced or coerced (Hugman et al., 2011). As illustrated in Section 5.6, participant recruitment and data collection were complex activities that involved constant and continuous awareness of the question of consent. At each point at which the data was collected, consent was never assumed as ongoing and had to be negotiated again. As Hammersley and Traianou (2014) put it, participant autonomy is fundamental. They discuss how researchers are called upon to obtain consent from participants, providing them with the freedom to decide their involvement in research, as well as being given an opportunity to decide what parts of their lives can be studied, through what means, and how findings will be disseminated and made public. As such, this notion of participant autonomy was central throughout this study.

Obtaining consent was not simply about informing participants about what this study is and how data would be collected, but it involved clearly communicating the ‘process’ of this research and how participant data would be used in the future and the kind of relationship it connoted (Hugman et al., 2011). Each participant was asked to actively ‘opt-in’ to the research, as well as decide the extent of their involvement (Thomas, 2009). In workshops and other public events where there were non-participant individuals, such as members of the community, they were made aware about the purpose of this study and the data collection methods used, providing them with an opportunity to express any concerns or questions. Each participant was informed that they had full access to the data they provided, which they could alter at any time, or withdraw their participation altogether, until the publication of the thesis, although none of them did. Thus, in negotiating access to the field, participants were given full control and freedom over their involvement in this study.

Another aspect of the ‘do no harm’ mentality involved consideration of how research activities could endanger the physical and mental wellbeing and safety of participants. As Israel (2006) commented, “[e]thical behaviour helps protect individuals, communities and environments, and offer the potential to increase the sum of good in

the world” (p. 2). In research, the ‘do no harm’ mentality is a fundamental principle of “ethics in practice” (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004, p. 264) that includes actions to minimise harm. In this study of community arts, this involved a constant assessment of how the research, such as the methods of data collection or the presentation of data, could impact the lives of participants and the people around them. For example, when choosing the topics to focus on during the interviews, it was necessary to consider whether the interview questions were meaningful and relevant to participants’ working lives, rather than driven by a sole desire to contribute to the development of theory of enterprise (Hernández et al., 2013). The questions were framed to encourage emic accounts from the field, rather than forcing etic constructions of community arts in ways that could stereotype participants in simplistic terms, such as specific socio-cultural groupings, or not be relevant, important, or interesting to them. This involved more general questions about the nature of work of participants and how they would define it, allowing them to bring forward concepts and ideas on their own, combined with more direct questions about the scope of their work as enterprising individuals. Furthermore, a ‘do no harm’ mentality also involved an awareness of avoiding asking questions in ways that may cause unnecessary distress or risk undermining the wellbeing of participants. Additionally, the question of minimising harm was particularly pertinent during the Covid-19 pandemic, which meant that the risk of each in-person interview and workshop needed to be assessed to ensure that there was no health hazard to participants and other community members. This involved strictly following the UK Government health advice and the regulations on conducting research during the global pandemic by Swansea University.

Another area concerned with the minimising of harm was ensuring the confidentiality of participants. Here, participant names were changed to ensure their anonymity and randomly generated pseudonyms (via Google) were used to replace the real names of participants. Any references to places of employment and any other real places were omitted for non-traceability reasons. This was important, because as participants provided personal and often confidential information about their views on organisations they worked with, their colleagues, employers, partners, funders, their relationships with their families, as well as expressed their concerns about the security of their work, such data could inevitably expose them to harm, risking their relationships with colleagues and diminishing chances for future employment (De

Vaus, 2001). All collected data, of course, needed to be protected from potential data breaches, and thus it was securely stored and locked away in a secure cabinet, whilst all digital information was kept on password-protected devices and encrypted on Cloud storage using a secure two-factor authentication method. All data was handled in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), as implemented in the UK Law through the Data Protection Act (2018).

‘Ethics in practice’ was a complex process, not free from potential challenges. Here, one particular example from fieldwork provides a good illustration of this point. In March 2022, following an interview with Chloe, I invited her to take part in the next phase of data collection via email. Chloe quickly responded to me expressing her interest and offering me an opportunity to attend one of her sessions once she was back from a holiday break. In about two months after the initial conversation, I was invited to a one-on-one workshop between Chloe and another member of the community, which was planned for the second week in May. The session would include playing music, doing a pantomime, primarily using assistive technology, also known as Augmentative and Alternative Communication or the AAC. Chloe’s client, as it was explained to me, was nonverbal and a wheelchair user who used AAC to communicate using ‘eyegaze’ technology and head movements. Perhaps due to my ignorance and lack of experience working with individuals with additional needs, I made a quick presumption that gaining consent from Chloe’s client could be a difficult task. Although I already agreed to attend the next day’s session, I wrote back to Chloe expressing my concerns about the ethics of the situation and informing her that I would not be able to attend, as shown in the edited email below:

To: [Chloe]
Cc:
Sent: Wed, 11 May 2022 09:12:42 +0000
Subject: Re: Community arts research

Hi [Chloe],

I hope your day is going well. Really sorry for writing to you about this last minute.

I was thinking about questions of consent regarding the upcoming session with [the client]. I noticed that this session is more of a one-to-one therapy, rather than a public community/participatory/ inclusive arts session. I need to make sure that I have explicit and informed consent from [the client], his carers (if he’s underage, especially), and the organisation that commissioned this session. This means that they all need to be aware about the intentions of my research, even though my focus is primarily on your practice. I think gaining consent could be

difficult at such short notice. Because of this, I am afraid I will have to give this session a miss, although I really appreciate you inviting me over. Would that be okay with you?

...

Really sorry about it, I should have communicated this to you early on. I just want to make sure that I do this thing right, in order to avoid any potential issues down the road. However, I would love to hear about any other community-related events that you are going to be involved in.

I am happy to discuss this further if you want to.

Kind regards,
Rey

Excerpt 2: Email to Chloe

The excerpt above highlights how I brought in a number of assumptions into the field: I assumed that Chloe's client was potentially unable to give consent and was perhaps underage, which they were not. I further assumed that the session was more akin to a therapy, which it was not either. I thought it was important to gain consent of other people beside the client themselves. In her response, Chloe rightfully provided a frustrated response, pointing out my lack of understanding of nonverbal and AAC users, expressing her exasperation with me as a researcher after all the time she dedicated to me during the previous interview. Defending her client, Chloe made a case that her client had full mental capacity and was as cognitively able as any other neurotypical 20-plus year-old individual. Using the assistive technology, her client could easily communicate with other people and had used AAC extensively to produce creative works for several years now. Chloe also pointed out that her client personally consented to my visit, and she made it explicit that I should further educate myself to avoid any future misapprehension about clients such as hers.

In many ways, of course, Chloe was correct to point out my ignorance as a researcher, and I believe I should have broached the subject of ethics more carefully right from the beginning. However, being in the field right in the moment, it was not always possible to make the 'perfect' and 'correct' decisions at all times, shedding light on the dilemmas of everyday research practice – all those routine, daily, often unplanned and unexpected ethical issues, or what Guillemin and Gillam (2004) referred to as the "microethics" (p. 266) of research. The situation just described shed light on such 'microethics' of this research, showing how ethical considerations could become points of contestation and conflict, risking relationships between the researcher and

participants. However, there is no easy solution to such dilemmas. A rigorous research design necessitates constant awareness that all decisions may have an impact on others, and most of the time it must require being ‘overly cautious’ for the sake of minimising harm. Thankfully, the issue with Chloe was promptly resolved after a lengthy apology on my part and obtaining consent from her client at the beginning of the session, but it nevertheless highlights the complex status of ethics in everyday field practice, which sometimes could lead to unexpected consequences and uncomfortable, but ethically and analytically important, conversations.

5.11 Chapter Summary

The above discussion showed how FDA and ethnographic methodologies widened the analytical purchase of this research and provided new perspectives on studying discourse and subject positions in community arts work. Taking into consideration the constructive function of language in reproducing the dynamics between knowledge and power (Foucault, 1978), this study sought to explore how the discourse of enterprise pervades the cultural work of community arts and whether it produces enterprising subjectivity. It set out to shed light on the constructive nature of discourse in the production of realities of community arts and to open a discussion on the forms of resistance against the neoliberal governmentality of enterprise. By employing an ethnographic outlook on methodology, the analytic reach of FDA has been extended, allowing critical investigation of discourse from a bottom-up, locally situated perspective. This chapter has detailed the complex, multi-sited research design, which necessitated a flexible approach to conducting community arts fieldwork. It described how the focus on analysing discourse in local contexts of community arts warranted the use of multiple methods of data collection to generate new insights into the diverse ways the social world of community arts can be discursively constituted (Flick, 2018). To understand the significance of the collected data from fieldwork, this chapter described how an analytical approach to studying discourse permeated the entirety of this research, from writing everyday field reflections to conducting a detailed analysis of texts using FDA.

The Findings Chapter that follows presents the analysis of empirical data collected throughout this research, showing how the discourse of enterprise emerged in the cultural work of community arts workers and focusing on the diverse ways that participants engaged with this form of neoliberal rationality. It also explores how community arts professionals adopted a position of the ‘entrepreneur of the self’ (Foucault, 2008) and how they drew on alternative, non-economic vocabularies in constructing particular alternative realities of their work. Drawing on the analytic strengths of FDA, coupled with principles of ethnography, the following chapter shows how the discourse of enterprise was not separate from other non-economic discourses that pervaded the work of community arts. These discourses formed the basis for both resisting the neoliberal imperatives of enterprise, as well as operationalising it as something that can be acceptable in line with the prosocial subject positions of community arts workers.

6 FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

This Findings Chapter considers the data collected from community arts workers located in Wales. It examines how the discourse of enterprise pervaded the cultural work of community arts, shedding light on the reproduction of enterprising subjectivity amongst its workers. The analysis of data identified five areas within which enterprising work of community arts was made most visible: (1) competition/competitiveness, (2) autonomy, (3) flexibility and adaptability, (4) calculative outlook on work, and (5) entrepreneurial self-identifications. The aim of this chapter is to trace these areas to highlight how community arts workers engaged with the discourse of enterprise.

Section 6.2 examines whether and how participants considered themselves as competitive individuals. It illustrates that although competition emerged as a pervasive topic throughout participants' accounts, they generally avoided presenting themselves as competitive individuals, drawing on alternative non-economic discourses to reinterpret the meaning in competition away from its neoliberal individualised bases. Section 6.3 then shows how autonomy and responsibility formed a fundamental aspect of entrepreneurial work of community arts, generally reproduced within the context of binary oppositions against bureaucratic forms of control. Section 6.4 discusses how the vocabularies of workplace flexibility and adaptability were presented by community arts workers as a prerequisite for dealing with precarious working conditions. Section 6.5 details how participants engaged with a calculative outlook on their work, followed by Section 6.6 that considers how they positioned themselves as entrepreneurial subjects, constructed along alternative non-economic discourses. Finally, Section 6.7 draws attention to how community arts workers drew on prosocial and compassionate vocabularies as key discursive resources in the positioning of themselves as caring individuals, challenging the paradigmatic status of enterprise. This analysis of community arts work draws attention to the role of alternative non-economic discourses that appear both to reproduce the power dynamics of neoliberal

enterprise, and to make possible production of alternative subject positions as grounds for resistance and reinterpretation of entrepreneurial forms of work.

6.2 Competition and Community Arts

As noted in the Literature Review Chapter, competition appears to form an important aspect of the neoliberal rationality of enterprise, promoting the primacy of competitive thinking as a fundamental individual quality within the domain of work and employment (Davies, 2014; Read, 2009; Donzelot, 2008; Foucault, 2008; Green et al., 2008; Keat, 1991a). It is the aim of this section to analyse how competition was produced, as well as resisted by participants of this study. The findings of this section are presented in three parts. First, it discusses how participants constructed competition as a pervasive feature of community arts, detailing its links to the question of precarious work. Then, it shows how participants produced ‘acceptable’ versions of competitiveness that blended enterprise with the discourse of ‘caring about’ the community. Finally, this analysis draws attention to the languages of caring and collaboration that acted as grounds for resistance against individualised notions of competition and competitiveness.

6.2.1 A Pervasive Sense of Competition Against Other People

Participants in this study made routine and frequent references to the topic of competition. These accounts generally referred to competition as being a ubiquitous feature of their work. For example, Demi made the following point:

...you are always in competition with somebody, there’s always that competition there which is good, because it keeps you on your toes @@. ...

Excerpt 3: From Demi Interview

According to the excerpt above, Demi referred to competition as being pervasive in her work as a creative practitioner. She recognised that she was always “in competition with somebody”, which she jokingly referred to as being “good”, because it prompted her to always be prepared and alert for any situations that may occur in her work. Furthermore, as Demi talked about the prevalence of competition, she also constructed it in relation to other people and as a practice that involves competing against others. There was also a sense that such form of competition appeared to be common occurrence throughout the work of community arts workers, thus being presented as necessary and unavoidable.

The recognition of competition as an activity that involved being set against other people was in fact a common occurrence throughout many accounts of participants in this study. For example:

RS: So what’s your relationship with other artists? Is there any competition?

Poppy: Yes, I mean, when you know when when there’s a job advertised obviously you know you’re up against other people and Um Um but yeah mostly it’s, you know, um friendly you know. We’re trusting each other and you know yeah.

Excerpt 4: From Poppy Interview

The above excerpt shows how competition can be constructed as being linked to other people within the workplace. Poppy, who was a freelance creative practitioner, offered an image of competition as one’s awareness of being “up against other people” in the field. According to her, this competition was present during recruitment. However, unlike Demi, who earlier claimed that competition required constant preparedness, Poppy was at pains to not actually be seen as a competitive person, highlighting the “friendly” environment between artists and “trusting” relationships between each other. As the subsequent sections will show, participants in this study generally avoided individualised construction of competition, and offered their alternative reinterpretations of this practice that legitimised it within the work of community arts.

Similar to Poppy, Chris recognised the existence of competition as a common occurrence in community arts:

... I mean I think if we can do SWAT analysis, then the T, the Threat bit, would be other people who provide similar services to what we do. Who provide workshops, do murals. So, yes, absolutely, absolutely there's competition. Um, I think my business partner is more concerned about competition than I am. Because I think there's enough pie to go around. ... I think he's more, he's more focused on how can we get more pie, and I'm more focused on how can we enjoy the pie that we've got better. And I think there's just two different ways of looking at the situation. But yes absolutely there's competition ...

Excerpt 5: From Chris Interview

Using a more business-oriented vocabulary than Poppy, Chris stated that there was competition from other organisations in situations when they provided similar work, which he considered as a "Threat" to his work. However, Chris avoided being identified as someone who condoned such competition. Comparing himself to his business partner, who was running a separate commercially oriented business not linked to community arts work, Chris drew on a language of sharing and collaboration. He pointed out that unlike his partner, he was more interested in 'sharing the pie' of funding across community arts, rather than seeking 'more pie'. Here, there also emerged a sense of 'otherness', as Chris constructed the image of himself as a particular type of caring individual in comparison to his work-peer. Such contingent self-identifications were evident throughout many accounts of participants, particularly in relation to worker autonomy as discussed in Section 6.3.

Unlike the accounts above, another participant, Sophie, linked competition to the question of precarious working conditions:

So, um I would say that it's unusually competitive in community <@> arts </@> @@@. Um partly I suppose because resources are quite scarce and also because people run similar stuff. And also, you know, more recently as well because the way the Arts Council is looking at the community arts and the way people are funding themselves you'll find organisations who weren't historically sort of community facing also applying for the same money, because they know it's there and that you know everybody are trying to kind of survive, I suppose. Um so some people we have really great relationships with and you know we'll be going for the same pots of money, but we'll read each other's applications and kind of comment on them and all that kind of stuff and um some organisations we just don't talk to @@@ or like have more of a kind of estranged relationship with.

Excerpt 6: From Sophie Interview

Here, Sophie points out that work in community arts was “unusually competitive”, suggesting that it has become a ubiquitous feature of work. Reflecting the language of Chris, Sophie said that competition was the result of the abundance of people and organisations offering similar work within the community. Additionally, she confirmed that there was a scarcity of available resources that led to competition between people, but also that competition was prompted by new ways of public funding that attracted other cultural organisations to apply for the same pots of funding allocated for community-oriented projects. For Sophie, this increase in competition was a result of precarious work, as she suggested that “everybody [was] trying to kind of survive”. Yet, she also reiterated that not all relationships within community arts were predicated on competition, highlighting that there were some organisations with which her organisation had no connections or had “estranged relationship[s]”, whilst others could be based on collaborations and mutual support.

The Table 3 below summarises how these participants constructed competition as a pervasive feature of their work, drawing attention to this practice as something that involved competing against others for funding and within the labour market:

Table 3: Constructions of Competition as Pervasive

As being set against other people	“... when there’s a job advertised obviously you know you’re up against other people ...” (Poppy, interview)
As a result of precarious work and lack of resources	“... because resources are quite scarce ... because everybody are trying to kind of survive” (Sophie, interview)

6.2.2 Ambivalence And ‘Healthy’ Competitiveness

Despite the representation of competition as pervasive, participants were generally critical towards being seen as particular kinds of competitive individuals. The analysis of data indicated that participants often identified themselves as competitive subjects, but to a point that their subjectivity was enmeshed with a discourse that can be termed as ‘caring about’. This discourse was generally linked to prosocial concerns about benefiting the community members and community arts organisations (this is discussed in more detail in Section 4.7). Participants often engaged with these

vocabularies to reinterpret and reframe competition away from neoliberal notions of self-interest and individualisation concerns. For example, Sophie was asked whether she considered herself a competitive person, she said the following:

Sophie: I think all artists are [competitive] to a certain level I think ... I mean we could all just go and get jobs doing something else, just to make art as our hobby if we wanted to, but we're not – that doesn't satisfy us. We're doing this sort of mad lifestyle to be able to sort of do more than that, I guess.

RS: So, in which way are you competitive?

Sophie: Um ... maybe it's not competitive, maybe it's arrogant @@@ <@> somewhere in there </@> ... So I want I want our projects to be well-funded, and I want people to kind of know ... we're good at what we do and that um that work that we do is really good quality and that ... the people who we work with are actually getting something out of it ... and feel more like they're part of a community in um, yeah. So I guess in that way.

Excerpt 7: From Sophie Interview

In the excerpt above, Sophie asserted that competitiveness was a characteristic feature of the life of artists. She pointed that being competitive appears to be an innate characteristic of artists looking for self-fulfilment through art beyond being a hobby. Whilst it could appear that Sophie as an artist herself was competitive, she nevertheless remained ambivalent about considering herself as such, drawing on alternative vocabularies to present herself as “arrogant” instead. Unlike the representations of enterprising subjects as self-interested individuals in existing academic research (see Section 2.3.3 in Literature Review), this ‘arrogance’ lacked any form of individualised self-interest. Instead, it was associated with caring about the work that the participant did and the community she worked with. In particular, she believed that by being ‘arrogant’ she wanted to ensure that her organisation could get the necessary resources for their work, that projects were funded well, and that it benefitted the people they worked with, promoting the sense of community.

Sophie's ambivalence towards competitiveness, was also reflected in accounts of other participants, as they offered their own ‘acceptable’ versions of competitiveness. For example, in the excerpt below competition appeared to be reframed away from ideas of actually competing against other people:

I'm not, I'm not competitive. I'm ambitious, and I think that's different. I'm ambitious for the work that we do and that um and the organisation. I'd like to see us grow; I'd like our profile to be higher ... I want us to be known because we're good. ... So, I'm competitive like within ourselves ... So, we're always making the money go further, we, we've got a summer street party coming up in two weeks, and we can't afford to cater it. So, basically I've put myself through a food hygiene course, and I'm like running a barbeque ... [and] a bit of everything, because we wanted it to be fun and cheap and all of those things. So, yeah, that's where I think the competition is within ourselves to be better. I'm not really competitive with anyone else ...

Excerpt 8: From Catherine Interview

Like Sophie, Catherine remained ambivalent in describing herself as being a competitive worker. On one hand, she pointed out that she was not competitive at all, and instead referred to herself using alternative vocabularies as an “ambitious” person. Such ‘ambitiousness’ connoted one’s desire to contribute to the development of the work of her organisation, such as promoting its growth, profile, and popularity. On the other hand, Catherine did not completely avoid the idea of being competitive, referring to herself as “competitive within”. Similar to being ‘ambitious’, the notion of being “competitive within” combined a range of enterprising practices, such as ability to better utilise available resources, being flexible and proactive in solving any challenges, multi-tasking, and developing new skills. However, unlike the business-like principles of competition that could involve activity in opposition to other people and organisations, Catherine pointed out that she was “not really competitive with anyone else”. Competitiveness in this case was a set of individual and collective characteristics that, as in the example of Sophie earlier, could enable one to provide better work in the community. Thus, there was a sense that Catherine engaged with caring vocabularies as a justification for enterprising work, yet she appeared to reject competition linked to individualism and antagonism.

However, participants were not always ambivalent in their positions towards competition and some clearly articulated their stance towards this practice. These workers promoted visions of competition and competitiveness that they deemed acceptable by drawing on vocabularies of collaboration, sharing, and care. For instance, Hugh said the following in relation to competition:

RS: So, um is there any competition?

Hugh: Yeah there's there's competition. Um, I I'd like to think there's a healthy competition

RS: What does it mean 'healthy'?

Hugh: That we all, may the best, may the best creative practitioner win, may the person who is best suited, you know. ... there's an X amount of jobs, there's X amount creative practitioners, and hopefully we'll all get a chance bite into bite of the same kind of bit of cake and stuff. So, I haven't experienced any particular negativity in that sense.

Excerpt 9: From Hugh Interview

Like many other participants, Hugh recognised that competition pervaded the work of community arts. In the excerpt above, he constructed competition as acceptable and to which he referred to as a "healthy competition". Unlike Catherine, who legitimised competition by combining various enterprising practices without any recourse or reference to other people, for Hugh competition did indeed imply competing against other people in the labour market. He did recognise competition as a necessary practice, particularly within the precarious lives of creative practitioners seeking limited job opportunities in the labour market, but it was by no means portrayed in negative terms. Talking about 'healthy competition', Hugh brought forward an image of community arts as a place of equity, where people should succeed in competing against each other through their merit and abilities in getting new work. Taking a collaborative point of view, he recognised that jobs were limited in the labour market, and advocated sharing amongst each other so that everyone would "get a chance [to] bite ... the same kind of cake". Furthermore, echoing Poppy's point, Hugh suggested that he had not experienced any "particular negativity" in relation to competition in his work.

As Hugh made a point that 'healthy' competition involved no negativity between workers, Chris echoed a similar construction in his interview:

RS: So, are you yourself competitive?

Chris: Um, yes yes, yeah ... I am driven to succeed and I want to do the best that I can in a number of situations, and I like to win. But, I think that just comes with a caveat in that that not at the expense ... I love to win in situations that are structured. So, if you are playing a squash game, for example, that's a structure, you go into that and there are very distinct and clear rules against what you have to compete against your opponent with. In life, I don't want to win at the expense

of other people. Life is much more complicated than a structured game. ... So, yeah, winning at the expense of other people is not something that I want to do.

Excerpt 10: From Chris Interview

Like Catherine’s account earlier, Chris constructed competitiveness as a set of enterprising characteristics of a community arts worker, such as a drive to succeed, a desire to do best in any situation, and willingness to win. Yet, for Chris there were limits to such an enterprising position, as he shunned the idea of winning against other people. Competitiveness was legitimised as an acceptable practice only to the extent that it involved doing no harm to other individuals. For Chris, winning through competition could be acceptable only if it was a part of a structured situation, such as playing a game with clear rules and expectations. Thus, he presented himself as a caring individual, because he shunned any idea of “win[ning] at the expense of other people”, once again presenting competition as lacking any self-interest and individualised concerns.

As Table 4 below illustrates, community arts workers appeared to present a particular acceptable image of competition and competitiveness, legitimised along vocabularies of caring.

Table 4: Ambivalent Constructions of Competition

<p>Reinterpreting competition by drawing on alternative vocabularies of caring about the community</p>	<p><i>“...maybe it’s not competitive, maybe it’s arrogant ... I want I want our projects to be well-funded, and I want people to kind of know ... we’re good at what we do ... the people who we work with are actually getting something out of it...” (Sophie, interview)</i></p> <p><i>“I’m not competitive. I’m ambitious ... yeah, that’s where I think the competition is within ourselves to be better. I’m not really competitive with anyone else” (Catherine, interview)</i></p>
<p>Shifting the meanings of competition away from self-interest and any struggle against other people. Promoting ‘do no harm’ mentality.</p>	<p><i>“ ... Yeah there’s there’s competition. Um, I I’d like to think there’s a healthy competition” (Hugh, interview)</i></p> <p><i>“...I don’t want to win at the expense of other people.” (Chris, interview)</i></p>

6.2.3 Resisting Competition: Vocabularies of Collaboration and Care

As the rest of this section indicates, there were participants that appeared to completely resist the idea of competition as a defining feature of their work and subjectivity. Like the examples earlier, these participants offered visions of work by drawing on alternative non-economic discourses of collaboration and caring about. For example:

RS: Is there any form of competition between yourselves [and colleagues] ... between you and other partners?

Hollie: We don't like competition, we we we like partnership. I mean we can always do things better together.

(further on in the interview)

... to be honest, to be honest if we had a problem, we'd probably go to [our partners] as first port of call. You know, because they are the ones who understand what we do, they do it themselves.

Excerpt 11: From Hollie Interview

In the above excerpt, Hollie shunned the idea of competition as acceptable in the workplace by engaging with a collaborative language. Using a collective 'we' when talking about competition, she suggested that her organisation was averse to the idea of competition as a defining feature of her work. She talked about partnerships as a preferred model for work that was grounded in collaboration. Here, partnerships were something that allowed one to "do things better together" and were portrayed as mutual support mechanisms and a "first port of call" in case of any issues. These partnerships were also imbued with ideas of camaraderie and commonality of experiences between community arts organisations.

In another example, Elsie talked about not being competitive by highlighting the supportive aspects of such position too:

RS: Are you competitive?

Elsie: No @. Not really ... I'm always very good natured ... I'm always happy for the other person, let's say. ... I've got a friend who is competitive ... [if] it doesn't go their ways ... they are very upset and annoyed and I don't understand that. ...

(further on in the interview)

... I don't really see anybody else as a competition, I just see if we can work together. ... You have to give everybody a leg up, rather than take the ladder away.

... I think it's a very small community, whatever it's arts, whatever it is round here, that you've got to be involved and be a team-player, otherwise you know, what's the point in being in that community really?

Excerpt 12: From Elsie Interview

Like Hollie, Elsie also did not consider herself as a competitive person. She was at odds with a form of activity that could involve competing against other people. Counterposing herself in relation to her friend that she considered a competitive person who would get “very upset and annoyed” if things didn't go to plan, Elsie considered herself as “always very good natured” and “always happy for the other person”. She was at pains to highlight that she did not consider anyone as a competition in her work too, and like Hollie, advocated for collaborative modes of working. Such collaborative work involved supporting each other and, echoing Chris's account earlier, not causing harm, recognising the importance of being a team-player as a defining feature of working in and being part of that community.

Whilst some community arts workers engaged with the discourse of collaboration in resisting competitiveness, others generally drew on the discourse of caring about to do so. For instance, Meghan said the following:

... I don't enjoy working with people who like think they are the best I'm gonna challenge ... that competitive side of the dance world and the ballet world. ... what I found at [Dance organisation] was that I met people who seemed to really value you for who you are and didn't feel competitive, but always embraced person at whatever stage they're at. And there's not bitchiness, and there's not <@> backstabbing </@>, and there's not like, it's just, looking after people. Care. Care, kindness, support, but using dance as a vehicle for for for that. For that like better quality of life for everyone. ... I'd rather look out for someone's wellbeing, ... be respected and you know taken care of in in some reciprocal <@> relationship </@> ... I don't enjoy competitive work at all.

Excerpt 13: From Meghan Interview

In the above excerpt, Meghan expressed her dislike of what she termed the “competitive side of the dance world and the ballet world”. For her competitiveness was something that involved animosity against other people, or what she termed as “bitchiness” and “backstabbing”, which she was prepared to challenge throughout her

work in community arts. The participant reflected on her experiences in moving away from traditional sectors of cultural work towards community dance, where she pointed out that such work “didn’t feel competitive” and people were accepted for what they were. Such a work environment for Meghan was predicated upon compassion towards each other. Thus, drawing on the language of caring about and echoing Chris and Elsie examples, she pointed out the principles of “care, kindness, support” as formative in her professional practice. She asserted that she preferred to care about other people’s wellbeing through her work with a hope that such care will be reciprocated, rather than be competitive.

For some participants the issue of competition was very important, in that they actively portrayed themselves as caring individuals. For instance, in an email sent by Poppy following an interview with her, she made an extensive statement against the competitive nature of the corporate world:

You asked me about my motives, and I have been trying to think of a way of explaining it. I guess I am just naturally an Ubuntu person (the philosophy, not the computer software!) ... I have always wanted to live in a horizontal world, where everyone is valued and respected, rather than a vertical world, where everyone competes and judges, and always struggles towards what they perceive as upwards. If you haven’t come across Ubuntu, here are a few quotes :

ubuntu is not, “I think therefore I am.” It says rather: “I am a human because I belong. I participate. I share.” In essence, I am because you are. A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, based from a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished. Desmond Tutu

we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others Obama

I find this in the world of community art and I am very comfortable in it. ... I am much happier working bottom up rather than top down.

Excerpt 14: From Poppy’s Email

The email above was unsolicited, which perhaps highlighted the particular importance that the participant assigned to being portrayed as a caring individual. Like Meghan’s account earlier, Poppy took a clear anti-competitive position in relation to herself as a community arts worker, referring to herself as an ‘Ubuntu’ person, and highlighting

her desire to live in non-hierarchical world where everyone was valued and respected. Here, the notion of ‘Ubuntu person’ appeared to act as a strong discursive resource upon which Meghan was drawing in her attempt to position herself as a caring subject. By doing so she differentiated herself from the image of competitive ‘others’ outside the community arts domain who were portrayed in negative terms as judging and constantly-struggling-upwards individuals. Echoing the accounts of Chris, Elsie, and Meghan, Poppy further advocated for no animosity or struggle against other people, and promoted ideas of openness, availability, and affirmation towards each other as important aspects of one’s subjectivity. She also pointed out that being an Ubuntu person involved a recognition of the interdependence of people in a “greater whole”, where any harm done to one will have repercussions to all. According to Poppy, this positionality was something that she felt “very comfortable” about.

The above accounts shed light on various ways in which participants resisted the ideas of competition by drawing on the discourse of caring about, as well as collaboration:

Table 5: Resisting Competition

Supportive collaborations as partnerships for better work	<i>“... partnership ... we can always do things better together.” (Hollie, interview)</i>
No animosity. Collaborative work for the sake of community	<i>“You have to give everybody a leg up, rather than take the ladder away. ... a very small community ... that you’ve got to be involved and be a team-player” (Elsie, interview)</i>
Advocating for valuing each other, acceptance, and human interdependence	<i>“I have always wanted to live in a horizontal world, where everyone is valued and respected ... “I am a human because I belong. I participate. I share. ... he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished”” (Poppy, interview)</i>

6.2.4 Section Summary

The discussion above illustrated how community arts workers engaged with the notion of competition and competitiveness in their work. It showed that competition was portrayed as a pervasive feature of community arts work, as participants talked about it being present in many aspects of their professional lives. This competition often

implied competing against other people and organisations within this sector of work. It was also generally constructed as a deleterious practice, involving rampant individualisation, winning at the expense of other, and animosity towards other people. Such discursive constructions of competition were also linked to precarious working conditions within which workers were often embedded. Yet, participants in this study were at pains to not be seen as competitive individuals if it meant inducing harm, being negative towards other people, and taking advantage of them, thus reducing the meaning of competition away from neoliberal notions of individualism and self-interest. As this section showed, there were some workers who were ambivalent in relation to competitive positionality. They talked about being competitive because of their desire to create art, yet they rephrased such positions by drawing on alternative vocabularies that connoted the desire to benefit their organisations, provide work of high quality, and serve the members of the community.

There was also talk of competition that was deemed ‘acceptable’, showing how community arts workers legitimised competitive subject positions by combining enterprising vocabularies with alternative discursive resources of care. Here, to be competitive meant a range of individual qualities aligned with wider vocabularies of enterprise that connoted being flexible, proactive, multi-tasking, and constantly learning, but directed towards serving the community and providing better work without any belligerence or competition against other people. Participants spoke of a ‘healthy’ competition, which reframed individualised aspects of competition towards collective principles of equity, merit, and sharing. Yet, as it has also been illustrated, there were participants who openly resisted being considered as competitive subjects. They engaged with alternative non-economic discourses in their aversion to competition, disputing the models of work that could lead to detrimental effects on other people. Offering a vision of community arts work based on principles of partnerships and community cohesion, these workers extolled collective values for the purposes of doing better work and advocated supporting one another. Furthermore, this collaborative discourse appeared to co-exist with languages of caring about other people within the community and in the workplace. Within such discourse, community arts subjects positioned themselves as compassionate individuals who valued each other and recognised the interconnected and interdependent nature of community arts work.

6.3 Autonomy and Control in Community Arts

Section 2.3.3 of Literature Review illustrated how the discourse of enterprise envisaged contemporary workers as autonomous and responsible subjects (Du Gay, 1996; Rose, 1992). The following section aims to explore how community arts workers engaged with the notion of autonomy in the workplace. It shows how participants discursively constructed the topic of autonomy, where they talked about being in control over the shape and pattern of their work. In particular, it illustrates how the language of autonomy was reproduced in binary oppositions against work outside community arts deemed as too bureaucratic and too structured. Such analysis also details how autonomy emerged as a ‘bounded’ discursive construct, presented as one’s workplace freedom limited within the organisational confines, instrumentalised for the purposes of eliciting better work. This discussion also sheds light on the role of alternative discourses in the reproduction of autonomous subject positions in community arts practice.

6.3.1 *Autonomy As ‘Being in Control’*

The language of autonomy featured prominently throughout many accounts of the participants in this study. Workers often talked about themselves as being in charge of the work they did, presenting an image of community arts as a space of workplace autonomy. For example, when discussing the benefits of working in community arts compared to other sectors of work, one participant said the following:

... I have complete control over my time and when I do things ... I have had some full-time jobs in my life and I find them very difficult to be on someone else’s kind of watch ... [you] have to be at your desk at a certain time and leave at certain time and tell someone you’re taking your lunch and, I I find it mind blowing that people do it, @@@. ... I find really odd like you can’t just like get up and go @@@ @ <@> for whatever reason </@>.

Excerpt 15: From Sophie Interview

In the excerpt above, Sophie extolled the autonomy she believed she had in her work. She talked about being able to freely determine the shape and pattern of her work schedule, saying that she had “complete control over [her] time and when [she] did things”. As she reflected on the scope for the autonomy she had, she engaged with a language of binary oppositions, as she compared her work with ‘other’ traditional full-time jobs outside the cultural domain of community arts. Reflecting on her previous work experiences in full-time employment, Sophie pointed out that she found it “very difficult to be on someone else’s kind of watch”, highlighting the controlling aspects of traditional employment. According to Sophie, within such ‘other’ forms of employment one would appear to lack control over their work, would have to abide by strict time schedules imposed from management, and would have to seek permission from superiors to leave or take time off. For Sophie, such lack of workplace autonomy was unacceptable and she found it a “really odd” way of working. By drawing on the language of binary opposition against traditional forms of employment, Sophie appeared to present a vision of community arts as a space of autonomy – an emancipatory area of work that enabled its workers to determine the schedule of their work, remaining free from external supervision and close management often associated with bureaucratic work hierarchies.

Another participant, Meghan, also talked about being autonomous at work. However, unlike Sophie, she drew attention to another dimension of autonomy beyond freedom to determine her own work patterns:

... when I started doing [community arts] work [with senior people] I really enjoyed that, cos I didn’t have to deal with the kind of um the schoolteacher stuff. That I could just work out how to engage these older adults who are suffering in different ways to give them a bit of um light lightness and to bring them some joy ...

Excerpt 16: From Meghan Interview

Meghan appeared to draw on a language of autonomy that referred to one’s ability to freely shape the wider nature of work. Speaking about her enjoyment of working with older people, Meghan pointed out that she did not have to “deal with the kind of ... schoolteacher stuff” as part of her work. Although she did not clarify what she meant

by the “schoolteacher stuff”, this excerpt nevertheless appears to suggest that unlike teachers, Meghan considered herself in a position of relative autonomy, being able to freely determine how to conduct workshops within the community without any control from above. Thus, like Sophie earlier, Meghan also reproduced the language of autonomy within a context of binary oppositions. Within this construction of autonomy, there appeared to be two discourses at play. On one hand, there is a link to the discourse of enterprise, as Meghan positioned herself as a responsible subject who is solely in control of her work. Yet, such responsible construction of autonomy was also co-terminus to caring language, as Meghan linked autonomy to individual concerns about benefiting her local community. As Section 6.7 later illustrates, such caring positionality was formative of many accounts of community arts workers.

One participant also spoke of having freedom in determining how to do their work, but located autonomy more widely outside the space of a workshop and linking it to a question of variety:

... so theatre to me [is] a love. ... but actually the idea of performing the same thing over and over more than three times, I’m like ah, who’s got time ... I don’t think I’d want to do, you know I could just go do within theatre or dance, but actually I like the variety. I don’t want to work on just one art form. ... I mean I could do anything. We look at doing a project around you know stone carving, which we’ve never done before. You know so you could always experience and merge new things and do different things, and that’s quite exciting.

Excerpt 17: From Elsie Interview

According to the quote above, Elsie celebrated autonomy in her work. Echoing the earlier constructions by Sophie and Meghan, Elsie made references to autonomy through drawing on the language of binary opposition against working in other sectors of employment. Although she highlighted her passion for theatre – an area of cultural work where she had considerable professional experience prior to starting work in community arts, Elsie pointed out that she still preferred working in community arts, due to the autonomy it offered. She portrayed work outside community arts as something that was repetitive, mundane, and limited in the choice of creative forms and approaches. This type of work was something that Elsie did not appear to enjoy. Instead, in her role as a community arts manager, she stated that she “could do

anything”, presenting an image of community arts as something freer and more desirable. She pointed out that unlike other sectors of cultural work, such as theatre and dance, she liked the “variety that her job offer[ed] her”, exalting having creative freedom for “experienc[ing] and merg[ing] new things”. Thus, like Meghan’s account earlier, Elsie celebrated having an ability to determine and choose how to create community arts work. She believed that such autonomy would not have been available in any other jobs, and highlighted the variety of experiences that such work could offer.

The three examples discussed above illustrated how community arts workers talked about autonomy in their professional practice, as highlighted in the Table 6 below. Here, autonomy emerged as one’s ability to control one’s own working schedules and approaches to doing work:

Table 6: References to Autonomy

Freedom to shape and control own work patterns	“... I have complete control over my time and when I do things ...” (Sophie, interview)
Freedom of how to carry out work, access to variety of experiences	“I could do anything. ... which we’ve never done before” (Elsie, interview)

As the discussion suggested, autonomy was often discursively constructed within binary oppositions towards ‘other’ jobs outside the community arts domain. The data analysis has revealed such oppositions were generally present in many participants’ accounts, as they portrayed community arts as a domain of workplace autonomy and envisaged themselves as free subjects. A typical way in which these binary oppositions emerged were linked to comparing community arts work to teaching:

... I don’t love it [regular teaching] that much, I actually got more out of a kind of community arts ... and creating something that way rather than school structure of. There’s not a lot, you know there’s not a lot of drama going on in a drama lesson ... you kind of became really you know convoluted lesson plans.

Excerpt 18: From Chloe Interview

In the above excerpt, Chloe highlighted her preference of working in the community arts over being a teacher. Here, she constructed regular teaching outside community arts as something that was bound by bureaucratic structures of schools that she

believed negatively impacted upon art education. The participant pointed out that in schools “there’s not a lot of drama going on in a drama lesson”, and where learning was limited by “convoluted lesson plans”. Though Chloe did not directly reference autonomy, this binary opposition against the ‘other’ jobs in the teaching sector provided a vision of community arts work in positive terms as a space for work autonomy, less structure, and a more suitable areas for practicing art.

Layla also highlighted the bureaucratic aspects of teaching, but she also engaged with a caring language:

... Um, so I did the teaching but then yeah it just didn’t suit cos it was um as everyone says with teaching it was a lot of paperwork and it was very formal. And then when I did the first job that I did with the community arts it was just a better fit, like it was just like felt way more comfortable, less formal but also really valuable ... just rewarding cos people want to be there, they volunteer to be there, you know you are not making them be there. And a lot of the time it’s because they’re coming from a difficult place, so if you can make that better it’s perfect ...

Excerpt 19: From Layla Interview

Like Chloe, Layla expressed her preference of working in community arts, as she compared it to her previous experience in teaching. She talked about teaching as something that did not “suit” her, highlighting what she averred as bureaucratic aspects of this work due to excessive paperwork and high levels of formalism. Layla pointed out that she felt that working in the community arts was “more comfortable” and less formal than teaching. Thus, she also constructed autonomy as something that involved less formality and bureaucracy, and by proxy, an area of work less amenable to hierarchical control. On one hand, through such binary opposition Layla portrayed her work as something that was less formal and bureaucratic, and therefore a more autonomous space. Yet, she also made explicit the prosocial aspects of community arts work, as she pointed out that her job was more “valuable” and rewarding than teaching. She highlighted that unlike the context of a school room, community arts benefited actually local community members who wanted to attend workshops. However, it is also important to note that despite the idealised representation of work as a space for autonomy, the participant remained ambiguous on the less autonomous and more bureaucratic aspects that many cultural organisations faced in relation to strict

requirements for reporting to funding providers and government partners (Alexander, 2018).

Another way in which participants employed binary oppositions in the construction of autonomy was linked to the question of creativity:

I'm working a lot in primary schools now ... but under my own narrative and my (way) of doing it. I don't have to ... the teachers are so confined by the legalism of the current teaching system they just don't have the time or the permission – that's another big word – permission to actually be creative.

Excerpt 20: From Hugh Interview

The references to autonomy were more prevalent in Hugh's account compared to Layla's. In the above excerpt, Hugh reflected on his experience of working within the education system. Although, unlike Layla and Chloe, he did not work as a teacher before and was instead involved in the education system as a community artist, he nevertheless highlighted what he believed were overly bureaucratic aspects of teaching. Here, he referred to teachers as being “confined by the legalism” of the education system that he believed limited workers from expressing their creativity freely. Within this bureaucratic system one either lacked time to be creative, perhaps due to the workload of teachers, or must seek ‘permission’ from their superiors to exercise their creativity, thus having no access to autonomy. Drawing on this negative portrayal of the teaching profession, Hugh thus portrayed his work as a direct opposite of such work. He pointed out that he was an autonomous agent, and that he did his work “under [his] own narrative and [his] way of doing it”, reflecting Elsie and Meghan's discussion of workplace autonomy earlier in this section.

These various ways of talking about autonomy in comparison to teaching were instrumental in the production of autonomous subject positions of community arts workers. They appeared to act as a point against which community arts work can be compared and presented in a positive light. The Table 7 below highlights how community arts was constructed as a domain of work that enabled one to be autonomous and in control in binary oppositions against teaching:

Table 7: Constructions of Community Arts work in Opposition to Teaching

Teaching has too much structure that can be detrimental to autonomy	"... school structure ... convoluted lesson plans." (Chloe, interview)
Teaching is too formal, bringing less value to people	"... teaching ... lot of paperwork and ... very formal. ... community arts ... less formal but also really valuable community arts ... was just a better fit ... felt way more comfortable, less formal but also really valuable" (Layla, interview)
Teaching lacks creativity; requires one to seek permission	"I'm working a lot in primary schools now ... but under my own narrative and my (way) of doing it.... teachers are so confined by the legalism of the current teaching system, they just don't have the time or the permission ... to actually be creative." (Hugh, interview)

6.3.2 Bounded Autonomy

So far, the discussion above illustrated how participants extolled the value of autonomy in their work and positioned themselves as emancipated subjects. Yet, there were some participants who also recognised that such autonomy had limits. These participants were generally in the position of management, rather than being freelancers. Within their accounts, autonomy was 'bounded' by bureaucratic, legal, and contractual confines of organisational life. For example, one participant recognised the role of funders in shaping the extent of autonomy in the workplace:

We've got a business plan. ... there are targets ... there is a plan of things that we need to achieve each year. ... [targets] agreed with the Arts Council as well ... But there is also some flexibility to how those targets are achieved ...

Excerpt 21: From Josie Interview

In the excerpt above, the language of autonomy emerged as one's ability to be flexible in achieving organisational targets. Josie recognised that there was a range of responsibilities according to which her organisation operated. These responsibilities included business plans with various objectives, yearly plans of things to achieve, as well as targets agreed with Arts Council of Wales, which was a key funder of projects. Autonomy in this case was not completely absent but was presented as one's "flexibility". Here, this flexibility connoted being free in doing things but only to the extent that such actions were directed towards achieving organisational objectives. The

language of ‘flexibility’ as one’s autonomy to adapt to the organisational demands was a prevalent feature throughout many accounts of community arts workers, as discussed in more detail in Section 6.4.

Like Josie, Elsie also recognised that she was confined by organisational boundaries, but explained that these boundaries were just a guideline:

... we’ve also got a strategic qualities plan, we’ve got a Welsh language plan, we’ve got an artistic policy. So when we’re doing things they are probably being in response to that. ... there’s a general framework and then I’m left to do it, you know, it don’t say ‘We want you to do this here, now, where, what’. That’ll just be that kind of agreement ...

Excerpt 22: From Elsie Interview

Elsie talked about being ‘bounded’ by a range of legal and organisational objectives, targets, and goals, such as the organisational strategy, the Welsh language plan, and the policy on artists. She pointed out that her work was conducted in response to these confines, but unlike Josie, she suggested that these boundaries were not static but were rather just “a general framework”. This ‘general framework’ appeared not to prescribe exact ways of doing things and was more of an “agreement” within which workers operated. In other words, Elsie still portrayed the work of community arts as predicated on notions of autonomy, yet she did not envisage it as a completely free area of work, but also as something that can be bureaucratically contained. However, this autonomy was a productive concept, as it appeared to be fully directed towards achieving the goals of community arts work.

Whilst community arts workers were generally ambiguous on the role of autonomy in achieving of organisational objectives and targets, one funder explicitly recognised the importance of instrumentalising freedom as a path to achieving better results at work. This highlighted the productive aspects of autonomy within the workplace:

... So, I’m not telling them [the artists] exactly what to do, I’m telling them what we’re trying to achieve. So, there’s a framework, so for instance there might be a specific subject or theme I want them to address in their project. Um, so I’ll give you an example. We commissioned um an animation company ... and I wanted them to create an animation about the dock office, which is a really lovely old building in [Town in Wales], quite a big big building... So the artists ... did their

own research ... And they did a lovely animation [with a local school community] ...it was quite a lovely exploration of that journey of of coal. So I didn't specify 'Oh I want you to do an animation about the journey of coal' – that was that was the artists, you know. You gotta give that freedom, um you gotta trust that the artists they they have their own creative practice, and you've got to let them do it, and let them get on with it.

Excerpt 23: From Paula Interview

In the excerpt above, autonomy had a particular technological slant. As Paula talked about autonomy in the workplace, she employed it to encourage individual creativity and achieve better results within the community. Here, Paula explained that working with creative practitioners did not connote “telling them exactly what to do”, but instead it involved setting out rough guidelines, or a “framework”, for achieving goals and objectives of organisations. Providing one example, Paula talked about working with a community arts organisation commissioned to create a project with a local school about a dock office. Paula was at pains to highlight that she avoided being a controlling individual. She stated that artists must be trusted and be given enough freedom to just “get on with it” to realise their own creative practice, which could lead to more imaginative results. Therefore, unlike Elsie and Josie, who recognised being free within the confines of work to a certain extent, Paula provided an inverted version of autonomy as something that can be used for the purposes of achieving organisational goals.

The Table 8 below summarises the constructions of autonomy as being bounded by organisational confines. Within these versions of autonomy, one could be in control and free only to the extent that such freedom could achieve the various goals and objectives of work. Any other representation of autonomy appeared to be absent from these accounts:

Table 8: Bounded Constructions of Autonomy.

As being confined by legal and administrative structures imposed from above	<i>“... there's a general framework and then I'm left to do it” (Elsie, interview)</i>
As something that could encourage workers to be more effective in the workplace	<i>“You gotta give that freedom ... [the artists] have their own creative practice, and you've got to let them do it, and let them get on with it.” (Paula, interview)</i>

6.3.3 *Section Summary*

This section illustrated how community arts workers discursively constructed the notion of autonomy as an integral part of their work. Generally, community arts workers appeared to be autonomous subjects, as they talked about being in control of determining the shape and patterns of their work schedules, enjoyed having an opportunity to conduct their workshops in the way they saw fit, as well as celebrating the variety of creative options they had at their disposal. Considering these emancipatory constructions, these workers portrayed community arts as a space of workplace autonomy (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Banks, 2010), which they believed was not to be found to the same extent in other non-creative areas of work. These autonomous subject positions were generally reproduced by drawing on a language of binary oppositions, often in relation to teaching. Teaching was presented as a bureaucratic space, which confined its workers within unnecessary structures and formality, having a detrimental effect on expressing one's creativity, as well as bringing value to people. Thus, these binary oppositions were instrumental in portraying community arts work as everything that teaching was not – a space of autonomous work where people were in control and not bound by unnecessary legalities and structures. Thus, like enterprising selves, these workers were critical of the bureaucratic forms of work, calling for more dynamic approaches in the workplace that can be achieved through autonomy.

However, whilst the language of 'autonomy as control' was characteristic generally amongst those workers who identified as freelancers or creative practitioners, those who were in positions of management talked about autonomy as something that was 'bounded'. Here, few participants pointed out that they could exercise their autonomy only to the extent that it was confined within the organisational boundaries – its goals, targets, plans, and objectives. Despite the various portrayals of autonomy, these constructions suggested a link to the discourse of enterprise, as workers appeared not only as autonomous, but also as responsible subjects. Unlike traditional artistic discourses predicated upon the idea of artists as free subjects unconcerned with anything but 'art for art's sake' (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011), autonomy in community arts appeared to be productive and technological in nature, reinforcing workplace power relations. This section also illustrated that autonomy was entwined

with alternative non-economic discourses, where being in control was not simply an individualised project of self-profiting but was constructed as something that could be a path to benefiting communities and bringing value to peoples' lives.

6.4 Workers as Flexible and Adaptable Subjects

Chapter Two showed how existing academic research highlighted the notion of responsibility reproduced through the discourse of enterprise, whereby workers appeared to be expected and encouraged to be flexible and adaptable in the face of challenges they faced in the workplace (Ilcan, 2009). In the domain of cultural work in particular, artists have been enticed to think 'outside of the box' and to be flexible to realise their best potential (Pyykkönen & Stavrum, 2018; DCMS, 2001), with such flexibility being a characteristic feature of workers' subjectivity (see for example, Hoedemaekers, 2018; Entwistle & Wissinger, 2006; Storey et al., 2005). The discussion that follows illustrates how community arts workers also engaged with the language of flexibility, constructing it as a practice of carrying out a diverse variety of tasks in the workplace, an ability to adapt to the needs of community members, as well as individual capacity for exercising quick thinking in solving any problems that may occur at work. Here, the discourse of enterprise appeared to underpin these constructions of flexibility, whilst also being co-terminus with other discourses of precarious work and caring about the community. However, although flexibility was a common characteristic of community arts work, there was a difference in the way it was presented amongst different groups of participants.

6.4.1 Flexibility as Multi-Tasking and Adaptability

Participants in this study often talked about being flexible in managing their everyday work. One way in which flexibility emerged in these accounts was linked to a practice

of multi-tasking. For example, one participant highlighted the flexible aspects of her work in the following way:

... you have to be very flexible and you have to you have to kind of be okay with that. ... it is incredibly stressful trying to stand on top of these things because we run everything, like every single thing. This space that we're sitting in, we paid the rent and we applied for the Council rates like reduction, we like fix the tap if it's dripping, we put the rubbish out, we do the Instagram, we hire the artists, we make sure that everyone is feeling happy, you know, talk to the neighbours, and you know interact with them. We also run the studios around the corner, so that's the similar think when a cat has killed the pigeon we gonna go and clear it up or whatever, we installed the pond, you know, every everything it like, we do everything @@@.

Excerpt 24: From Sophie Interview

In the excerpt above, Sophie talked about flexibility as a fundamental part of community arts work, portraying it as something that was “incredibly stressful” and involved “run[ning] everything”. In her account, flexibility emerged as an activity of multi-tasking deemed a necessary part of managing a community arts organisation, which involved doing a variety of everyday tasks, from negotiating Council tax reductions, doing routine maintenance work, fixing things in the office, to managing Instagram accounts, hiring artists, and liaising and interacting with the local community and neighbours. When talking about flexibility in the workplace, Sophie did not just talk about her own position as a flexible self, but employed a collective language, suggesting that multi-tasking was a necessary part of everyone working in her organisation. As Sophie spoke from the position of a flexible subject who must assume responsibility for the everyday work of the organisation without any obvious recourse to external support, such an enterprising position may not be entirely surprising, as flexibility may be anticipated in the role of managers running an organisation. Yet, from the excerpt above there was also a sense that this flexible management was an out of ordinary, albeit necessary, practice.

Flexibility as a multi-tasking activity often emerged in accounts of creative practitioners who used a more individualised language of responsibility in relation to their work than those participants employed on a contractual basis. For instance,

Meghan spoke of flexibility in the following way, linking it to the question of precarious work:

Um, I applied for a Universal Credit, once Covid set in, because um all of my care home work just stopped. And I was doing a lot at that point.... you have to put on so many hats. Cos you, as an independent freelancer you you have to be able to do the work yourself, you have to be able to make the links, talk to the different people, at the different levels, you have to be able to write up reports about it, you have to be able to budget, you have to be able to think about its value, you have to think about the quality of what you're teaching, you have to think about what they need. Don't know, it's just like loads of areas that you have to be skilled in.

Excerpt 25: From Meghan Interview

In the excerpt above, Meghan drew on the language of precariousness, as she reflected on the challenges that she faced as a creative practitioner, drawing attention to the fragile security that such work connoted. There was a sense that pervasive insecurity of freelance work was particularly evident because of the Covid-19 pandemic and its detrimental impact on the labour markets. As Meghan talked about the effects of Covid had on her and other workers in community arts, she positioned herself as a flexible subject, stating that one had “to put on so many hats” working as a freelance worker. Here, flexibility connoted a subject position akin to a self-reliant entrepreneur, who must be responsible for their own survival and must multi-task across a range of areas. This could include networking and connecting with other people, writing reports about workshops, budgeting, creating value and ensuring work quality, as well as understanding the needs of community members and clients. Meghan also presented this flexibility as common-sense, normal, and expected elements of being a freelance practitioner. Unlike Sophie, who earlier talked about multi-tasking from a collective point of view and presented flexibility as a variety of activities to maintain the life of an organisation, for Meghan this flexibility emerged as a project of individual responsibility – as something that was just ‘part and parcel’ of the everyday work of creative practitioners.

Like Meghan, another creative practitioner, Demi, also spoke of a necessity to multi-task as part of being a creative practitioner. However, such flexibility was a necessary characteristic for economic survival in the life of a creative practitioner:

... when you're doing workshops, that's your bread and butter. So that's what brings in the income. And um being an artist you ... have so many different hats, marketing, administration, um advertising. ... it could be ... looking at applications ... just keeping an eye out to see what opportunities are coming up. It's about creating your opportunities ... So at the moment I only have one workshop with [a community arts organisation], and another one ... with [town name], but that's also in the pipeline. And then I'll do my own work as well, setting up my own Etsy account, doing my exhibition here, I sell my products next door as well, so I got greeting cards and things like that. So, you gonna have a multiple, you can't just look at one thing, you got to look at different avenues and different sources of income. ... you can't just be an artist, you gotta you gotta get out of there, you gotta push your work, you gotta get people knowing. So, it's the same as any kind of business, really.

Excerpt 26: From Demi Interview

Demi used enterprising language in positioning herself as a flexible subject. She recognised that her workshops in community arts were her “bread and butter”, meaning they were an important source of income. Like Meghan, Demi spoke of having to be flexible as part of the everyday responsibility of a creative practitioner and talked about having “so many different hats” in her work. By ‘different hats’, Demi referred to flexibility as a multi-tasking activity, such as doing marketing, admin work, advertising, working on job applications, as well as “keeping an eye” on any new work opportunities that may come up. For Demi, this flexibility also connoted proactively “creating your [own work] opportunities”, such as having various job projects on the go, as well as doing ‘side hustles’ outside the community arts, such selling own products and doing art exhibitions. Drawing on the discourse of enterprise, Demi created a sense of herself as an entrepreneurial subject who was responsible for own survival within the precarious work of community arts through differentiating her revenue streams, spreading out the risks associated with attracting income, and functioning like “any kind of business”.

Flexibility as multi-tasking was not only evident in interview accounts but could be traced in participant diaries too. For example, an analysis of Hugh's participant diary illustrated a diverse range of flexible activities that he drew attention to as part of his everyday work as a creative practitioner. Here, over the period of three weeks, Hugh reflected upon being involved in many projects that differed in focus and art style,

such as leading creative writing groups, organising school art webinars, editing films for festivals, conducting animation workshops, planning community circus events, and leading ‘paint and tell’ sessions with vulnerable adults. Hugh’s diary brought attention to two general areas of his work. First, he pointed out the day-to-day activities related to conducting art sessions within the community. He reflected on the practices that such work involved, such as liaisons with organisers, facilitation of and co-facilitation of projects, as well as doing regular debriefs to get feedback about his work to improve future delivery of sessions. Outside the creative sessions/workshops, Hugh’s diary also contained many references to other types of activities, which involved constant networking with potential employers and funders, doing Zoom calls to discuss prospective projects, and attending conferences to build connections. In-between these and other activities, Hugh wrote about having “admin days”, which involved “chasing unpaid invoices”, as well as cleaning his studio. Against this backdrop, Hugh’s diary presented him as someone who was ‘wearing many different hats’, as Meghan and Demi earlier noted. Hugh’s experience shed light on the constant flexibility and multi-tasking that such work necessitated, which also involved taking his own responsibility without a recourse to help or support from others. Thus, Hugh emerged as an entrepreneurial subject who actively self-managed and was self-reliant as a necessary part of the work of freelance creative practitioners.

Apart from flexibility constructed as a multi-tasking activity, some participants spoke of their ability to adapt to various situations within the workplace. For example:

... you’ve got to really sort of um um take your time with people. I think you also having to deal with many different sort of skill levels and many personalities within your within your workshop as such. Because I think so I think you’ve got to really learn to adapt to different characters as well. But I really like that kind sort of um that sort of a situation when perhaps you don’t know how things are going to go as well, because it’s people. ... Somebody might not like it, or you know somebody might love it. ... there’s lovely that sort of satisfaction when somebody sort of says to you in the end ‘Oh I’m thrilled, I’m gonna go home and I’m going to carry on with this’. And you know you’ve given them something new to do. You know something new to sort of step in to as well, which I find really really satisfying. Yeah. Really very rewarding ...

Excerpt 27: From Lois Interview

In the above excerpt, Lois spoke of an importance of being able to adapt to working with people during workshops. This adaptability connoted being patient when working in the community and “take your time with people” whilst working with a variety of individuals with different skills and personalities. Such adaptability necessitated adjusting her own style and ways of communication with the members of the community. Whilst Lois talked about being flexible and adaptable, there was also a sense of caring about the community she talked about. Here, there was a recognition of diverse characteristics that community members bring with them to the space of the workshop, to which one needed to “learn to adapt” as an important part of an artist’s work. Community members were presented as not simply customers who must be catered for and whose satisfaction must be sought for individual profit. They were not portrayed as people who bring economic value, and a potential for repeat custom, in the future. Instead, for Lois, adapting to the needs of community participants was linked to compassion about the community. She highlighted the personally rewarding aspects of such work – something that she found “really really satisfying”. As such, the discourse of caring about was drawn upon by the participant as grounds for her own flexibility.

Another participant, Paula, who worked as a funder, spoke of adaptability at problem-solving, which she believed was an important characteristic of a successful creative practitioner:

... very good people skills and flexibility and being I think being really good ... really calm with people, they don’t um they don’t panic – they’re sort of very adaptable, very good at problem solving, and if they’re in a situation where something wasn’t as expected or it could be the weather, the weather just hasn’t worked out and they were meant to do something outdoor or it could be anything. But they don’t they don’t, they’re good at coming up with a plan B or you know they’re sort of flexible and adaptable, I think that’s that’s the key thing, you know, in the community artists– not not to panic. And to always have you know something else to offer.

Excerpt 28: From Paula Interview

Like Lois earlier, Paula highlighted the importance being able to work with people in the community. Here, she talked about a necessity to have “very good people skills” and “being really good ... really calm with people”. Being prepared to face any

challenging situations without panicking was portrayed as important. For Paula, a good creative practitioner must be what she termed “flexible and adaptable”, which involved being “very good at problem solving”. However, unlike Lois earlier, Paula did not talk about adaptability only in relation to working with people and adjusting to them, but instead constructed it as something that involved a capacity for ‘problem-solving’. Here, problem-solving connoted one’s ability to adapt to unexpected situations and find quick solutions, “coming up with a plan B” when necessary, thus acting enterprisingly. For Paula, a flexible and adaptable person would always have “something else to offer”, suggesting that being enterprising at work was an expectation and a necessity to ensure that work was done well. A similar flexible outlook was observed during Chloe’s workshop. This workshop was a one-to-one creative session with a member of a community, directing a production of a pantomime using assistive technology in May 2022, as highlighted in observation vignette 1.

The session included a range of activities that Chloe and her client did together, from discussing the shape and form of a Christmas play to doing a music quiz. It was right at the end of the session that Chloe’s flexibility was made apparent to me, reflecting the accounts of participants discussed above. At the completion of our session, I helped Chloe to pick up her various tools and a guitar to put it back into her car. I noticed that many of these things, including the guitar – which caught my interest during the workshop due to myself being an amateur musician - she did not actually use. This prompted my curiosity about the purpose of having the guitar at the session and Chloe told me that she never knew exactly how her community arts sessions might go and therefore she needed to be flexible, and always be prepared to cater for the needs of her community members. Sometimes, she said, participants may be doing one task slowly throughout the whole session, but other times, they could ‘storm’ through the material, which could leave nothing else left to do in the end. As Chloe noted, she carried more things with her in case she needed to come up with more activities ‘on the go’.

Observation Vignette 1: Chloe

This image of flexible and adaptable self was not restricted to freelance workers, as few participants managing community arts organisations also referred to their ability for problem-solving ‘on the go’. For instance, Josie wrote this in her participant diary:

The artist leading the session on Thursday morning had to cancel after receiving a positive Covid test. [A colleague] made decision to ask a poet who is based in [Town] and who we have worked with extensively if she was available to cover. She was able to join us with approximately 20 minutes notice and did an

incredibly good job of leading the workshop. Organisers couldn't believe how calm we were – even when we didn't have a replacement, we were preparing to run the activity ourselves as a last resort. This is a good reminder that we are resourceful!

Excerpt 29: From Josie's Participant Diary

In the above excerpt, Josie drew attention to her position as a flexible subject, as she gave an example of flexible problem-solving in her work. In particular, she reflected on one recent example from her work where a creative practitioner could not attend a workshop due to illness. Josie highlighted that she and her colleague were able to quickly come up with an alternative plan within a very short timeframe, inviting another freelancer to lead the session. Josie drew attention to being prepared to run the session together with her colleague “as a last resort”. In essence, Josie positioned herself and her colleague as adaptable, enterprising subjects, as she talked about having to use quick thinking, swiftly find solutions to challenges on the go, and refrain from panicking – something that Josie termed as being “resourceful”. Such presentation of herself as a flexible individual echoed closely the portrayals of ‘ideal’ creative practitioner who must be flexible and adaptable in problem-solving at work without panicking, as reflected in the account of Paula earlier, illustrating the widespread reproduction of flexibility across variety of roles in community arts.

Josie's colleague, Hollie, also talked about being flexibly resourceful at work in relation to the same event described above, drawing on a very similar language of flexibility. But she also engaged with vocabularies of caring about the community she worked with:

Later, the person co-ordinating the artists' registration area said she was astonished at how calm we were when our artist dropped out at the last minute. It didn't occur to us to panic - maybe it helped that we had designed the workshop - or it might have been the fact that we are used to thinking on our feet ...

[further on in the diary]

With community arts, it is really important to be reliable, always turning up, if this is what has been agreed. Often our participants don't have the sort of opportunities ... and our sessions might be the only creative activities available to them. Generally, if one of our contracted artists has to drop out, we will either find another artist, or lead the session ourselves, rather than disappoint that

community. We always have a few simple creative activities and materials to hand and are good at pulling together and having a hands-on role when needed. ...

Excerpt 30: From Hollie's Participant Diary

Like Josie and Paula, Hollie drew attention to very similar aspect of flexibility linked to workers as problem-solvers, who must not panic and must find solutions quickly. Hollie talked about herself and her colleague as enterprising subjects - or as people for whom it “didn’t even occur ... to panic”, highlighting that they were “used to thinking on [their] feet”. However, unlike Josie, Hollie drew on a language of caring. Here, she talked about the need to be flexible and be prepared to solve any challenges that may occur during workshops in relation to supporting the communities they worked with and doing everything they could “to be reliable [and] always turning up”, so as to avoid “disappoint[ing] that community”. As such, Hollie painted an image of an idealised community arts worker as a flexible subject who must be resourceful in finding ways of working in the community regardless of the situation. Such an attitude appeared to be important to working with community members who generally lacked access to creative opportunities in their regular lives. This discourse of enterprise was concomitant with the discourse of caring about, reproduced in relation to benefiting local community members without any recourse to self-interest.

Some participants also highlighted that they actively sought gaining new skills to become more flexible in adapting to preferences of community members, and problem-solving any issues that may arise in their work. For instance, Hugh noted the following:

... if somebody said oh [Name] we’ve got a big wall that needs a mosaic on it, I’d say great I’ll do that, even if I’ve never done a mosaic before. You know, I’m going home to research how to do the mosaics, ask around ... So, it’s more of a problem-solving thing, I think, than a creative thing ... So, if somebody’s saying ‘Ok I’m gonna do music’, and few of them said ‘(I don’t want to do) music’ to me, I can say ‘Ok what about filming?’, ‘Oh yeah I can do filming’, ‘Well (making film is really easy), we can make it work’. So, it’s kind of just happen, it organically grown ...

Excerpt 31: From Hugh Interview

In the above excerpt, Hugh talked about adapting to community members as part of his work. Like previous accounts by Paula, Hollie, and Josie, Hugh referred to being flexible as one’s ability to adapt to the needs and preferences of his community members. However, he also presented adaptability as something that must be actively sought. He was prepared to tackle any challenges that he may face in his workplace and expressed his willingness to do art forms that he was not familiar with before, pointing out that he often dedicated his own time and effort to expand upon his “skillset”. Thus, Hugh positioned himself as a flexible, entrepreneurial subject who must be self-reliant and be able to gain the necessary skill flexibility for the purposes of working effectively in the community. Although Hugh did not explicitly draw on the discourse of caring about when talking about expanding his skillset in this particular excerpt, he nevertheless often engaged with prosocial vocabularies, presenting himself more broadly as a caring individual. Later in the interview Hugh explained that he really enjoyed working in the community, highlighting that he was driven to do such work to provide better access for people to creativity and to offer inspiration to create art, particularly amongst vulnerable groups of younger individuals.

Table 9 provides a summary of various ways in which participants talked about being flexible in their work, drawing attention to the discourse of enterprise within the context of precarious working conditions, as well as highlighting the role of alternative non-economic discourse of caring about in the formation of worker subjectivity:

Table 9: Constructions of Flexibility

As a multi-tasking activity, presented as necessity, reproduced within the context of precarious work	<p>“...trying to stand on top of these things because we run everything, like every single thing” (Meghan, interview)</p> <p>“...you can’t just be an artist ...you gotta get out of there, you gotta push your work, you gotta get people knowing. So, it’s the same as any kind of business, really” (Demi, interview)</p>
Adapting to the needs of community members	<p>“...you’ve got to really learn to adapt to different characters as well. ... you know you’ve given them something new to do. You know something new to sort of step in to as well, which I find really really satisfying” (Lois, interview)</p>
Problem-solving on the go as a sign of caring about the community	<p>“...they’re good at coming up with a plan B or you know they’re sort of flexible and adaptable, I think that’s that’s the key thing, you know, in the community artists— not not to panic” (Paula, interview)</p>

	<p><i>“...we will either find another artist, or lead the session ourselves, rather than disappoint that community. We always have a few simple creative activities and materials to hand and are good at pulling together and having a hands-on role when needed. ...” (Hollie, participant diary)</i></p>
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6.4.2 Section Summary

The discussion detailed how community arts workers generally portrayed themselves as flexible individuals. Participants in this study often talked about doing a variety of tasks in order to sustain the work of their organisations and support themselves financially. These workers highlighted how they needed to adapt to their community members, as well as talking of having to exercise quick thinking when faced with challenges at work, of remaining calm and finding alternative solutions to problems when needed. It appeared that community arts workers reproduced the discourse of enterprise, as they positioned themselves as flexible, adaptable, and problem-solving individuals. For some of them, flexibility connoted active investments in their own skillsets, to be able to adapt to the needs and preferences of their community members. Yet, the discourse of enterprise was not produced in isolation, and often coexisted with other discourses. As the findings above suggested, participants who talked about a necessity to multi-task often related this activity to issues of financial security and economic sustenance, thus drawing upon the language of precarious work. On the other hand, those workers who talked about having to adapt to various situations in their workplace, to gain new skills, and to problem-solve ‘on the go’, generally portrayed this activity as directed towards benefiting the community, thus engaging with languages of caring about.

The data analysis further suggested that there also appeared to be a ‘We/I’ discursive split in the constructions of flexibility. Here, workers who were not creative practitioners, and were instead employed in a management capacity, drew attention to flexibility being a collective endeavour within their organisations. These participants often linked being flexible to benefiting the people they worked with, as well as a necessity for sustaining their organisations, but they rarely acknowledged that such

flexibility was their individualised responsibility. When they talked about having to be flexible and adaptable at work, they generally spoke in the name of their whole organisations. However, participants who were creative practitioners used a more individualised language of enterprise, as they talked about their own responsibility in being flexible and adaptable. For these workers, flexibility emerged as a part of their self-management in the context of precarious work, yet they also linked it to their concerns about the community. Talking from a position of enterprising selves, therefore, these workers were often akin to small businesses or enterprises who were solely responsible for their own work and had to fulfil a diverse variety of activities in maintaining their work that went beyond just being artists or only delivering art sessions in the community. Despite these differences across roles, the language of flexibility was nevertheless generally widespread, portrayed as a fundamental part of the work of community arts.

6.5 Community Arts and a Calculative Outlook on Work

Existing academic scholarship theorised the discourse of enterprise as absolutising a particular notion of the self as a *homo economicus*, whereby individual workers are envisaged through an “investment-costs-profit” (Foucault, 2008, p. 242) economic model of subjectivity. For such an entrepreneur of the self, life is to be construed as an investable opportunity to gain advantage amidst the world of competition, necessitating a position of a “calculative rational choice actor” (Peters, 2001, p. 61; Read, 2009; Foucault, 2008; Du Gay, 1996). Within the domain of cultural work, this calculative subjectivity has been noted to emerge within the context of precarious work and the competitive nature of labour markets (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020; Haynes & Marshall, 2018; Blair, 2009; Antcliff et al., 2007; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). The current section sets out to extend these studies of cultural work, by showing whether and how community arts workers positioned themselves as calculative subjects. It illustrates the calculative vocabularies that were most apparent in the areas of recruitment and retention, in partnering for funding opportunities, and in job searching. Yet there was a marked difference in the way such subject position manifested itself between those workers who were in a position of organisational management and those

identified as freelance creative practitioners. The former group of workers have been shown to be actively engaged in alternative discourses of caring and collaboration, whilst the latter group employed a more individualised language apropos work precariousness, adopting calculative positions as a necessity for their economic survival.

6.5.1 Calculations, Collaborations, and Caring

The analysis of data sheds light on the use of calculative, future-oriented language amongst this study's participants. One way in which this language emerged was amongst workers who managed community arts projects, as they talked about questions of recruitment. For example, one artistic director at a community dance organisation said the following when discussing development opportunities for their workers:

... I think at the simplest level ... it's just about wanting to retain them in [County name in North Wales], in part, selfishly, to work on our programme. But also, you know, we don't have lots of artists making work in [County name], and we're culturally poorer for that. So, if we could support dance artists based here, to make their work and to have this rich career, we all benefit from that, you know, as audiences, as participants. That's what we want. ... also, you know it is difficult for us to recruit, so, it's difficult for us to recruit core team here, because of where we are.

Excerpt 32: From Carmen Interview

According to the excerpt above, there is a sense of Carmen positioned as a calculative, rational-thinking subject of enterprise. Here, she reflected on running a development programme for freelance community dancers, as a form of investment into the future to retain these workers with her dance organisation. On one hand, Carmen highlighted what she referred to as a 'selfish' reason for development of her workers, as she noted difficulties of recruiting and retaining of labour force within her organisation – an organisation which was located in a sparsely populated part of Wales. Yet, her calculative language appeared to be devoid of individualised reasons beyond that of benefiting her organisation. Fundamentally, Carmen appeared to be at pains to portray

her workplace as a wholly ‘selfish’ space. Beyond the “simplest level” of investing into the skills of freelance artists, the participant made a disclaimer that developing artists had an extraneous purpose too, whereby the calculative language of enterprise appeared to be enmeshed with a language of caring about the community. For Carmen, the purpose of developing workers was to attract and retain more artists to the rural part of Wales for the purposes of contributing to the cultural life of her region and benefitting its people, audiences, and community participants. From this point of view, artist development was no longer constructed as a practice that was only beneficial to the organisation, but as something that could bring value and advantage to other people more generally.

Another participant also engaged with the language of calculations. However, unlike Carmen, she envisaged creating work opportunities for other artists as an opportunity for networking and benefiting the work of her organisation:

RS: Um, do you network?

Sophie: Um, yeah. We actually we network ourselves when we create working opportunities for other artists as well, because it’s um it’s really important for um well for our own development, I suppose, because community arts just like all other arts aspects changes all the time and the way that people talk about it changes all the time So to be a part of that and understand what’s going on it’s really important ... yeah, so it’s important for us like... that we’re kind of having conversations with people. I don’t know if it’s like straightforward networking, but it’s definitely keeping in touch @@@@ yeah.

RS: So what’s the ‘straightforward networking then?

Sophie: In my head, it’s like going to a conference and then having drinks afterwards @@@ @@@, that what I assumed what networking is @@, yeah like, I don’t know, giving your business card to someone ... [*later on in the interview*] So people would come to us because they like the projects that we run ... actually we have a library upstairs ... that’s kind of another way of us networking and supporting other projects because we’ll buy publications from organisations that are putting things out kind of very small scale or like artists-run organisations. Um, so there’s like networking in lots of different ways for us.

Excerpt 33: From Sophie Interview

As Sophie spoke about creating work opportunities as part of her work in managing a community arts organisation, she adopted a calculative, forward-looking position. Here, she spoke about establishing new work opportunities for artists as a chance for networking. Such networking was portrayed as practice of communicating and

interacting with artists during projects to gain new knowledge about their work and the nature of community arts within the context of work that was “chang[ing] all the time and the way people talk about it change[d] all the time”. Here, Sophie took up a position of enterprise, as she referred to creating work opportunities for artists as a chance for networking that she saw as important and beneficial for the “own development’ of her organisation. Similar to Carmen’s example earlier, this calculative language nevertheless lacked individualised basis, as Sophie primarily spoke from the collective ‘we’ position, directed towards gaining new insights from artists to better understand the work in the community. The participant also appeared to distance herself and the work of her organisation from what she referred to as “straightforward networking”. This form of networking connoted business-like socialising at conferences and “having drinks afterwards”, as well as giving business cards to people. Instead, Sophie talked about a form of networking as “keeping in touch”. Detracting further from the calculative language of networking and recruitment, Sophie engaged with the discourse of caring about, as she linked networking to supporting colleagues by buying up publications from other organisations and artists and displaying them publicly. Thus, Sophie engaged with a calculative language in relation to networking predicated upon notions of peer support.

The use of calculative language of enterprise was not always linked to questions of recruitment and networking with artists. One way in which such language also emerged was linked to questions of partnering and creating connections with other organisations. For example:

... we’ve just sort of found each other at the summer ... and they’ve [another community arts organisation] got loads of fantastic ideas. And again ... it sounds awful to sort of say that there’s a strategic thinking behind that, because ... when a lot of what you do is funded, but they [the partnering organisation] want to get into a disability market ... they kind of found us, because that’s an area that we’ve got a lot of experience in. So, I’ve put together a specific grant for them for the Summer of Fun Welsh government project um fund that I ended up doing quite a few Summer of Fun projects with different local authorities. ... Um so we’ve done loads of sessions, some of them on Zoom, some of them in person, over the last two years, three years, so I know the individuals and I know those that would benefit you know, because the [Organisation name] they are a local authority they can’t really afford to fund enough sessions that would make a difference to these

individuals. . . . So, yeah it is very much a funding field is yeah can be a landmine
...

Excerpt 34: From Chloe Interview

In the excerpt above, Chloe discussed partnering with another organisation that she connected with during the summer. Here, she positioned herself as a calculative subject, as she referred to partnering as having “a strategic thinking” behind it. This ‘strategic thinking’ implied building partnerships with other organisations that have access to funding opportunities in order to be able to run own projects. For Chloe, the funding field within her work was “a landmine”, meaning that like for many other participants in this study, it was never stable, secure, or guaranteed. Therefore, a calculative, strategic thinking on partnering appeared to be a “necessity” for Chloe to gain access to better funding opportunities. Yet, partnering with other organisations was not construed as a one-sided practice, but rather as a form of exchange. On one hand, it may appear that partnering was an economic exchange, but the participant pointed out the collaborative aspect of partnering. Here, she highlighted that by offering access to “a disability market” to her potential partners, and gaining access to further funding, she hoped that she could benefit her local community by supporting community arts projects focused on engaging with people with additional needs. Like Carmen and Sophie, the calculative subject position that Chloe occupied in relation to strategic thinking in partnering was devoid of individualised purpose. Drawing on caring language, Chloe did not talk about gaining any individual monetary gain, but instead highlighted that partnering could provide access to those people in the community who could most benefit and for whom community arts projects could “make a difference”.

Chris constructed partnering with other organisations as paths to gaining access to funding and better resources too, but sought to highlight the less instrumental aspect of such relationships:

RS: Um what about partnering with other organisations? I thinking you mentioned that you do ... so how does it work and why do you partner with other organisations?

Chris: Um, I mean the partnering, I suppose it could be official partnering, in that we might go for a funding bit together. Sometimes it makes sense to join up with another organisation who can offer something that we are unable to offer or who

has, or who has participants that um a funding body wants to support, and then we can come in and say we can offer this service that is not being able to be provided by this organisation. So, there's there's partnering at the official level. But again more fundamentally, I mean feel like and I'm not trying to be flippant, I just feel like every time we work with an organisation it's a partnership. There's a relationship in the partnership we develop. Um, you know your understanding who you're working with, understanding what they are looking for, makes for an easier outcome or makes it easier to do the job that you've been asked to do, to provide a service you've been asked to provide. So, when we are um doing our job, I feel that we are in partnership with all those organisations. And that to me entails finding out about the people, individuals, the history, you know if there's time to find out about the history of the organisation. Um, so you understand where they are coming from, how they've reached where they are. Um again ... it's a time limited endeavour. It necessarily has to be. But, um I think partnerships just naturally grow out of the way that I try and do business.

Excerpt 35: From Chris Interview

In the above interview quote, Chris used a calculative language, which was also enmeshed with collaborative vocabularies. The participant echoed Carmen's account, as he drew attention to the beneficial role of partnering with other organisations – or what he termed as “official partnering”. Such partnering was portrayed as a path to overcoming a lack of resources and improving one's opportunities for gaining funding to run projects. However, the account above also illustrated that Chris did not only portray partnerships through an instrumental, rational-thinking lens. Going beyond the ‘official partnering’ level, Chris pointed out that at “a more fundamental level”, he preferred partnering to be developed over time that involved “understanding who you're working with [and] ... what they are looking for”. For Chris any partnering with organisations appeared to be constructed as relationships, rather than any form of business-like exchanges. These relationships often necessitated a dialogical outlook on work by getting to know each other well and to “understand where they [the partner] are coming from” for the purposes of doing better work and providing a better service in the community. Thus, there emerged two versions of partnering – one that emerged as a rational, calculative way of doing work that could enable better organisational access to resources and public funding, and another that implied building more meaningful relationships for the sake of doing better work in the community. It is the latter that appeared to allow Chris to position himself as a non-calculative subject.

Like Chris and Chloe, Catherine talked about partnering and collaborating with other organisations as fundamental part of gaining new work in community arts, but she highlighted the role of these relationships as essential to the survival of her community arts organisation. Such language combined a calculative outlook on partnering with a collaborative discourse that went beyond individualised self-interest:

... We wouldn't survive without partnership and collaboration. ... So, recently we did a project with [Youth] club I secured the funding, it was to work with young people. I didn't have direct access to young people, so I went to them and they went 'Oh yeah that would be amazing'. And now we are talking about putting an event in the summer together. ... 15 years ago partnership was 'are you working in partnership', and you would tick a box, barely spoke to the people until the end when you all have to write a report. And I have noticed now that there's it's much more collaborative. If we are working in partnerships with someone we'll have monthly meetings, we'll have weekly check ins. We know the people we are working with rather than it being an abstract CEO of another organisation. And that, everybody gets more out of that. You know, we are worth more than the money we're putting into that.

Excerpt 36: From Catherine Interview

In the excerpt above, Catherine considered partnering from a calculative point of view, referring to working with other organisations as fundamental to 'survival' of her organisation. Echoing the earlier accounts of Chloe and Chris, she pointed out that partnering enabled her organisation to gain access to resources and clients that they lacked access to, such as attracting young members of the community, to run funded projects and develop future work. However, she also highlighted what she deemed as a changing nature of partnerships in community arts that connoted more integrated, meaningful relationships with other organisations. Drawing on a collaborative and caring language, Catherine's account resonated with Chris's constructions of the nature of partnering, as she talked about more engaged partnerships with other organisations that involved 'knowing' each other beyond "an abstract CEO of another organisation". Furthermore, such collaborative partnerships were presented as beneficial for everyone, where "everybody gets more out of that [relationship and everybody is] worth more than the money" put into projects. Here, therefore, partnering was not only presented as an instrumental way of gaining access to funding and resources of other organisations for the purposes of generating work, but primarily as more integrated, collaborative relationships where everyone was 'better together'.

This mutually beneficial ‘better together’ view on work was made explicit by Hollie, but as she highlighted the “symbiotic” nature of relationships in partnering:

... we’ve got a very unusual set up here, ... we have a symbiotic relationship with another arts organisation. ... when I was senior arts development officer in [Town in Wales], I started a digital storytelling programme ... initially they [another digital storytelling organisation] were based in the same building ... and we got to the stage where they were having a lot of problems ... [like] trouble paying their rent and we had a really big office. And we just thought ‘Oh why don’t we share an office?’ And then it was ‘Why don’t we share some of the staff?’, because we need an administrator, how do you say, administrator, and finance officer couple a days a week, ‘Why don’t we just employ that person to do ours as well?’ So, that sort of grew and so now we have um a community promotions officer and an administrator who work quite a lot of the time with us, but they are actually [another organisation’s] staff. And that also means we have the flexibility of being ... connected to an organisation ... specialising in digital arts So, we got a get-out-of-jail-free-card mechanism that if there’s things we can’t do, they can do. ... we thought well what would be an attractive offer to them is that they have the accommodation for free. But they also do things like all our websites and the IT provision, because that’s their expertise. ... And I now realise ... we were very early in creating a community hub. And um we always sort of had an open policy for artists, if they wanted to borrow our equipment, they want to use our photocopier or have a hot desk, or just tell us an idea ... We also have some artists who have worked with us quite a bit over the years who sometimes when we get really struck for time ... we’ll employ them as a project manager, project coordinator. ... it means we have more staff when we need staff, but not when we don’t ... [But] It also creates a little bit of stability with ... freelance artists.

Excerpt 37: From Hollie Interview

The above excerpt provides an illustrative example of workplace relationships constructed as beneficial opportunities from a calculative perspective, enmeshed with languages of collaboration and caring. It describes a situation of partnering between Hollie’s and another organisation. On one hand, the account highlighted Hollie’s position as rational thinking, as she reflected on establishing a “symbiotic relationship” with a digital storytelling organisation that she worked with in the past, but which recently has been located in the same building as Hollie’s organisation. Hollie explained that as the other organisation faced economic difficulties with keeping up the rent, she and her colleagues provided “an attractive offer” of sharing the space with that organisation in exchange to gaining access to flexibility in terms of recruitment for various roles needed in her organisation. Fundamentally, Hollie pointed out, that her organisation acquired a “get-out-of-jail-free card” by gaining access to expertise

and knowledge when her organisation needed it, such as building of a website page and providing IT solutions. Although, this symbiotic relationship can be seen as constructed through a calculative lens, Hollie nevertheless drew attention to its more collaborative aspects that went beyond ‘market-like’ exchanges, by comparing these relationships to being akin to “a community hub”. Such a community hub was presented as a collaborative and caring space that had “an open policy for artists” outside her organisation for sharing equipment and other resources with them, as well as providing them “a little bit of stability” when they needed.

The Table 10 below summarises the diverse, but also ambiguous ways in which community arts workers adopted, as well as countered, the calculative language of enterprise. It shows that participants adopted a calculative outlook in relation to recruitment and retention of workers, as well as apropos attracting funding and gaining access to organisational resources they lacked through establishing connections with other organisations and partnering. However, this calculative language was never straightforward or bound within the principle of the markets. Across these accounts, calculations lacked individualised bases and were directed predominantly to ensure sustainability of work and provision of better projects in the community. These constructions were often enmeshed with alternative discourses of caring about and collaborative work, as participants positioned themselves not as exclusively rational-thinking, instrumental subjects, but rather as individuals who wanted to give back to the community and support their peers.

Table 10: Ambiguous Calculative Positions

<p>Calculative outlook and caring about the community and peers in recruitment and retention</p>	<p><i>“.. it’s just about wanting to retain [artists] in ... selfishly, to work on our programme. But ... we don’t have lots of artists making work and we’re culturally poorer for that. ... we all benefit from that, you know, as audiences, as participants” (Carmen, interview)</i></p> <p><i>“We also have some artists who have worked with us ... we’ll employ them as a project manager, project coordinator. ... it means we have more staff when we need staff, but not when we don’t ... [But] It also creates a little bit of stability with ... freelance artists” (Hollie, interview)</i></p>
<p>‘Strategic partnering’ and collaborative, mutually beneficial relationships</p>	<p><i>“...it makes sense to join up with another organisation who can offer something that we are unable to offer or who has ... participants that ... a funding body wants to support But again more fundamentally, ...every time we work with an organisation it’s a partnership. ... a relationship in the partnership we develop. ...</i></p>

	<p><i>understanding who you're working with, understanding what they are looking for, makes for an easier outcome or makes it easier to do the job that you've been asked to do" (Chris, interview)</i></p> <p><i>"We wouldn't survive without partnership and collaboration ... [But] we are worth [together] more than the money we're putting into that" (Catherine, interview)</i></p>
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As the following section will show, freelance creative practitioners also employed calculative language in relation to their work, yet such language was more individualised and had fewer links to discourses of care or collaborative work.

6.5.2 *Freelance Practitioners, Creating Own Work Opportunities, and Precarious Work*

The data analysis highlighted a marked difference in the calculative positions of non-freelance and freelance participants in this study. Like those participants who worked in management capacity, creative practitioners often employed the language of calculations. Yet, their subject positions were generally linked to questions of precarious work, with fewer references being made to caring about community or peers and collaborative work. One way in which such a calculative stance emerged was in the way creative practitioners talked about being individually responsible for establishing their own work opportunities. For instance, Hugh drew attention to the role of networking in his work as a freelancer, talking about building connections akin to weaving a spider's web:

Hugh: ... and unfortunately funding is 6 months here and 2 months there, it is very short-term. ... so being a freelancer you are always just sailing and and looking. And um at the mercy of what the funding is going through. Um so, I'm in a position now where I spent a lot of time trying to make myself known and visible to the mental health wellbeing

RS: How do you do this?

Hugh: Networking. Literally crawling through the Internet, finding who is doing what, pick up the phone, having conversations, turning up to networking conferences, all that kind of stuff. Which is all great, but none of that is paid for.

RS: But you still go out and network?

Hugh: Yeah, yeah. ... making sure that you are ... open all the time for, and not turning down work. ... if someone would be offering you work you will try and make it work, try and fit it in.

RS: Any work?

BT: Um, cos you never know where that work is gonna lead to as far as a new contacts ... the work I'm doing now with the college was a was a brand new network to be involved in. So, I was very-very keen to make that work and had to move a few things out of the way to make space for that to come in, and I managed to do that. But it was very important for me, because now because of that they offered me another art course another group of people and this is very much a network I want to be involved in... Um but also trying to make connections between them and say the [College name] project I'm doing, cos I know if I can start joining some of the dots together myself that makes me part of that loop, part of that triangle... which means then when things happen in any part of that spider's web, building spider's web, if anything gets to happen in any part of that I get to know about it and I can react to it.

Excerpt 38: From Hugh Interview

The above excerpt highlights the rational, calculative subject position of Hugh as a creative practitioner, produced in the context of precarious work. Here, the participant pointed out that his work as a freelancer was often insecure and unstable. Echoing the accounts of many freelance workers in this study, Hugh pointed out that he was generally “at the mercy” of public funding streams that were never long-term and were generally haphazard in their availability. Within such context of precarious work, one needed to be “sailing and ... looking” for new work, taking on a flexible position to be visible to the community they were working with to stay afloat. Hugh stated that he needed to constantly network by “crawling through the Internet, finding who is doing what, pick up the phone, having conversations, turning up to networking conferences” – work that was often unremunerated. As such, one key aspect of dealing with precarious work was to actively create own work opportunities. Here, Hugh pointed out that he was “open all the time” for accepting any work that was being offered to him. Avoiding any work was out of the question, as he believed that any new work also meant establishing new contacts that could potentially lead to more work in the future. In one recent example working on a new contract at a college, Hugh said that he was “very-very keen to make that [project] work” out, which necessitated him to actively rearrange his working schedule, and essentially to cater for the preferences of his customer. The calculative position of Hugh was apparent, as he talked about “building spider's web” of connections between various stakeholders, such as

community arts organisations and funders, that he said enabled him to be “part of that loop” and stay constantly aware if any future work came up.

Such references to calculative networking were also made apparent during an observation of an exhibition organised by Hugh, as discussed in the observation vignette 2. The exhibition was a culmination of series of community arts workshops, showcasing various pieces of arts created by members of the community. The participants of those workshops were those who are or were experiencing homelessness, and therefore art was employed as a way to enable them to express their creativity, individuality, and capture something interesting about their lives.

After chatting to various people who visited this exhibition, and looking at the paintings, I sat down with Hugh in another room on top of one of the tables, our legs hanging, chatting to each other in a very relaxed manner. Hugh was drinking a cup of coffee, whilst I was asking him questions about this exhibition and his future plans. He told me how busy he was, as he was running several projects and workshops with various clients over the period until Easter. I told him that he must be pretty organised to maintain his work. He said that he was absolutely fine at that particular moment, as he was used to that kind of active lifestyle, but an interesting point he made was that in following months he expected to have no guarantee of work. Everything was going to suddenly stop and that it was “a really scary thing” for him. Hugh said that because of that he needed to have a calculative outlook on work through networking actively for more work opportunities. He said he was nevertheless going to have a little break to ‘recharge his battery’, but it seemed networking will be essential part of his work. Here, it appeared that Hugh was an enterprising subject, not only because he networked with a hope of gaining new employment opportunities, but also in the way he constructed himself as an active subject of work: he was acutely aware of the need to constantly be looking for work and establish own opportunities to ensure economic survival.

Observation Vignette 2: Hugh

Like Hugh, another freelancer adopted a calculative subject position when talking about networking in relation to job insecurity too:

RS: And what would you use your networking for? What would be the prime reason?

Lucia: Oh, I wanna learn what other people are doing. I’m really interested in learning what other people are doing, and bringing that in. But also, opportunities.

RS: What sort of opportunities?

Lucia: Opportunities to be offered money @@@@, you know, maybe like oh like ‘you do this, we need somebody to do this, so we can pay you to do this’.

And, you know, people don't know what I do, so I should tell people what I do so they might pay me to do what I do, yeah.

RS: And the money is what for?

Lucia: Living. It's it's, you know, food, Um, petrol, Um a mortgage. I'm sixty I have no pension. Um, it's fine, but if I got sick I don't have any resources, so I have to keep thinking 'Am I, have I got enough to keep me going?'

Excerpt 39: From Lucia Interview

According to the excerpt above, Lucia constructed networking in two different ways. On one hand, she presented networking as an opportunity for self-development to “learn what other people are doing” and use that knowledge to bring into her own practice as an artist. Yet, Lucia also acknowledged that networking was important for creating “opportunities to be offered money”. Talking from a position of a calculative self, Lucia highlighted the need to share information about herself to other people through networking with a hope that someone will offer her work in the future, reflecting the earlier account produced by Hugh. Yet, despite the individualised nature of Lucia's account, her calculative position lacked any focus on satisfying own self-interest. Lucia was indeed a calculative subject in establishing new connections through networking, but such calculations were necessary to achieve the bare minimum for economic survival – to generate enough income to pay for food, fuel, mortgage, and other everyday expenses. Here, she pointed out that being an older person, she lacked any financial security, such as access to state pension, or any other resources, prompting her to be constantly aware of whether she had “enough to keep [her] going”.

As the discussion above highlighted, creative practitioners appeared to adopt a calculative language, as they reflected on creating own work opportunities with an outlook for supporting themselves financially amidst the environment of precariousness. Within such accounts, some workers also appeared to be personally responsible for their work:

... [I am] spending quite a bit of time in meetings as well. So, I had meeting with the ... group ...and formulating ideas and potential workshops. And there's also, I'm gonna have meeting with the [a local Council] for hopefully doing workshops in the summer So, hopefully I'll be able to put in some workshops with that. So it's establishing, looking at the future, where is the income gonna come from.

Being self-employed, basically being self-employed you constantly look for that sorts of income. So, at the moment it's all things in the pipeline. ...

RS: Well, when your plans don't work out, how do you deal with this?

Demi: When it doesn't work, just go back to the drawing board and look at different ways at how to tackle things, um, learn from mistakes, um um just look at new ways of what can I do now, what happened before. ... Obviously I am also an independent freelance artist, I'm only accountable to myself. Then always, whenever I have any workshops or any kind of involvement with an organisation, I always I always request feedback. Um and I always say negative or positive. And you know that's that's how I learn, really. That's how I can make changes.

Excerpt 40: From Demi Interview

Demi appeared to be an enterprising subject, as she presented networking as a path towards creating future work opportunities, highlighting the individual responsibility it connoted. For Demi networking had a primarily economic, rational purpose of "looking at the future" opportunities. Here, such 'looking at the future' emerged as active practice of the creative practitioner, involving attending various meetings with funders and potential employers with the hope of creating future work. This calculative outlook on networking was enmeshed with the discourse of precarious work, as Demi pointed out that she needed to "constantly look for that sort of income" as a freelancer, being prepared to adapt to any challenges in the workplace and keeping all potential work in the pipeline. As with some of the participants earlier, Demi appeared to be constantly working on creating her own work opportunities by strategically meeting with various stakeholders that could reap future rewards in the shape of remunerated work. This point was made visible during an observation of her work in the community, as discussed in the observation vignette 3. Here, the practices of 'creating your own work opportunities' were particularly apparent during several observations of Demi's community arts workshops. Whilst these community arts workshops were primarily directed towards working with people at creation of a range of artifacts, from printmaking to drawing, these workshops also appeared to act as 'backstage' networking opportunities between creative practitioners.

During one of the printing sessions with Demi, I noticed that she and few of her peers, creative practitioners, who also attended these workshops to support her often chatted quietly to each other, as community members were making their prints. I became interested in the nature of such chats, as this was something happening consistently from one workshop to another, regardless of who were coming to visit. Upon listening closely, it became obvious that the chats that Demi was having with her peers were actually

forms of networking, where she was ‘creating her own working opportunities’ that she mentioned during her interview. Often, she asked her peers if she could integrate some of her future workshops with other events at different organisations they were organising, thus scoping new work for herself. For instance, at the end of one of the workshops Demi had a chat with a creative practitioner working in theatre settings who came to visit the workshop too. Having heard that this practitioner worked across several organisations in participatory settings, Demi asked him whether she could get their contacts with organisations they worked with to learn more about their work, as she was very interested in the type of work they did. As such, this quiet chat, like many others, highlighted an example of the subtle calculative networking attempts that was happening in the ‘backstage’ of workshops.

Observation Vignette 3: Demi

The enterprising position of freelancers, however, may connote being responsible not only for the success, but also for the failures of own work. Going back to the interview excerpt earlier with Demi, the participant drew on the language of calculations, as she constructed failure as an opportunity for future improvement. Reflecting on the approaches to dealing with work when things don’t go to plan, Demi explained that she tried to “learn from mistakes”. This ‘learning from own mistakes’ connoted going “back to the drawing boards” and re-evaluating what went wrong and how work can be improved in the future. This is not to say that Demi always took all the blame, as earlier in the interview she did in fact acknowledge that there could be issues outside her control. Yet, as the above excerpt illustrated, she seemed to position herself as fully responsible for finding ways to rectify any challenges without references to external support, such as always requesting feedback from clients and members of the community after projects to make necessary future changes. Demi, like many other creative practitioners in this study, was “only accountable to [herself]”, thus making responsibility for work, and any potential for blame, her own.

The Table 11 below summarises the calculative positions of freelance participants. It illustrates a wider reproduction of the discourse of enterprise amongst freelance participants who constructed their work as a space of workplace insecurity that necessitated taking individual responsibility for creating their own work opportunities through networking:

Table 11: Freelance Workers as Calculative Subjects

<p>Accepting any work proactively with an outlook for future opportunities</p>	<p>“... open all the time for, and not turning down work. ... cos you never know where that work is gonna lead to as far as a new contacts” (Hugh, interview)</p> <p>“... [I am] spending quite a bit of time in meetings as well ... formulating ideas and potential workshops” (Demi, interview)</p>
<p>Workplace precariousness and calculative networking</p>	<p>“Unfortunately funding is 6 months here and 2 months there, it is very short-term. ... so being a freelancer you are always just sailing and ... looking.” (Hugh, interview)</p> <p>“... people don't know what I do, so I should tell people what I do so they might pay me to do what I do, yeah. ... I'm sixty I have no pension. Um, it's fine, but if I got sick I don't have any resources, so I have to keep thinking 'am I, have I got enough to keep me going?' (Lucia, interview)</p>
<p>Calculations and individual responsibility for failure</p>	<p>“When it doesn't work, just go back to the drawing board and look at different ways at how to tackle things I'm only accountable to myself.” (Demi, interview)</p>

6.5.3 Section Summary

The discussion above highlighted how community arts workers may indeed be considered as calculative subjects, yet it also showed that the discourse of enterprise was produced differently across freelance and non-freelance participants. As this study has shown, non-freelancers – or those participants who generally worked in organisational and management capacities – employed a calculative language in relation to questions of recruitment and retention of workers and gaining of funding opportunities for projects. Here, these participants generally talked about ‘selfishly’ investing into the development of artists to retain them, where networking was seen as an opportunity to gain new knowledge and insights into their work. They also ‘strategically’ partnered with other people and organisations to gain access to funding streams and organisational resources they lacked. In these accounts, calculations did not have any individualised characteristics and were closely linked to alternative discourses of collaboration and caring about, as workers generally spoke from

collective positions to benefit the work of their organisations, their communities, and their co-workers.

Yet, whilst the discourse of enterprise appeared to be legitimated within the context of sharing and caring, for freelance creative practitioners rational planning and calculative outlook was generally fundamental to economic survival. Lacking any structures of support to fall back upon, pervasive financial insecurity, and job uncertainty necessitated individuals to be actively involved in creating own work opportunities. Such creation of employment opportunities often meant accepting any work with a calculative outlook for making new connections, bringing future work in, and generating income to deal with workplace precariousness. These calculations also connoted personal responsibility and continuous evaluation of own mistakes to minimise future chances of failure. However, although the discussion above portrayed creative practitioners as calculative selves, they were not entirely economic subjects concerned with own self-interest and success. For a significant few, calculative networking was presented as a necessity to ensure the bare minimum for survival and to be able to continue in the sector of work that they really enjoyed. As the rest of this Findings Chapter will illustrate, both freelance and non-freelance participants were never entirely economic subjects of enterprise, as they often drew on vocabularies of caring about the communities and their peers as discursive resources in the positioning of themselves as caring individuals.

6.6 Not Quite Entrepreneurial: Against the Economic Representations of the Self

The findings in sections 6.2 - 6.5 highlighted how the discourse of enterprise pervaded the accounts of community arts workers, shedding light on how participants engaged with notions of competition, autonomy and responsibility, flexibility and adaptability, and rational calculations in the workplace. Considering that the discourse of enterprise takes the subject of the entrepreneur as a model for contemporary work and employment (Foucault, 2008; Du Gay, 1994b, 1996; Keat, 1991b), the following analysis looks into whether and how the study's participants actually identified themselves as being entrepreneurial or as businesspersons. First, it sheds light on how

workers produced an image of an entrepreneur/businessperson as a money-making, self-interested individual, which they deemed as unacceptable subject position in community arts work. Then, it discusses how some participants nevertheless identified as being entrepreneurial by drawing attention to the role of caring vocabularies in the reproduction of enterprising subject positions. This discussion shows the ambivalence of entrepreneurial subject positions, as workers appeared to selectively accept certain individual enterprising qualities, whilst they were also eager not to represent themselves as individuals related to the world of business.

6.6.1 Unacceptable Vision of the Entrepreneur: The Economic Self-interest

Participants in this study often reflected upon whether they identified as being entrepreneurs or businesspersons. As they did so, they discursively constructed an image of an entrepreneur who was self-interested and motivated by monetary rewards in work. Yet, they often engaged with caring language as grounds for resisting the pecuniary world of business and entrepreneurship, presenting such world as incompatible with the values of and motivations of community arts. For example, in her discussion about being considered as a businessperson, Sophie said the following:

RS: Would you consider yourself a businessperson?

Sophie: I'd love to be a businessperson, but I don't think I am We are very good at spending money @@ <@> but we're not good at making it </@> @@@@.

RS: ... why don't you consider yourself as a businessperson?

Sophie: Um I think the two worlds are quite separate there's the motivation for being a businessperson I think is different to the motivation from wanting to run a community organisation.

RS: So, what are these motivations?

Sophie: I think I mean because I'm not a businessperson I don't really know but I think in general you want to make money ... to me in my head a businessperson is someone who wants to be successful in making money by trading in some way. We don't really we don't really trade other than I guess cultural kind of stuff yeah.

Excerpt 41: From Sophie Interview

As the above excerpt suggests, Sophie presented an image of a 'businessperson' linked to money-making activity. Sophie constructed the image of the businessperson in both

positive and negative terms. On one hand, the participant highlighted that she would “love to be a businessperson”, communicating an idea that being able to make money could be a desirable individual trait. Yet, on the other hand, Sophie was also at pains to distance herself from actually being identified as being such a businessperson. Reflecting on why she did not consider herself as a businessperson, Sophie created a binary opposition between what she termed the “two worlds” of business and community arts. Here she suggested, whilst once again reiterating that she was “not a businessperson”, that to be such an individual meant to be motivated by and “want[ing] to make money” and that such money-making activity is to be done through commercial activity of trading. By proposing such definition of a businessperson, Sophie also offered a subject position of a community arts worker that was distinct from the world of business. She noted that her organisation did not trade in anything but “cultural kind of stuff” – something that she believed businesspeople do not generally do. By drawing on such binary oppositions, Sophie highlighted that money-oriented activity of businesspersons was incompatible with the work motivations for community arts organisations. As further highlighted in Section 6.7, Sophie explicated her motivations as a community arts worker, as she talked about being passionate about art and wanting to promote cultural democracy within the community she worked at.

As Sophie linked being a businessperson as incompatible with the motivations of community arts, another participant also highlighted how an entrepreneurial focus on economic growth may go against the values that underpinned the community arts work:

RS: ... Do you consider yourself entrepreneurial?

Chloe: Um, probably to a degree. I mean we have a business model that we ... want to build on, and um (.) I wouldn't say (.) yes and no. It's not being entrepreneurial at the sort of cost of what our core like pains and morals are, so I wouldn't kind a go 'Oh we can get um we can go into such and such store and sign-up X amounts of kids to whatever project'. But actually that wouldn't fit our remit that we wanna engage those that aren't actively engaging in the arts, you know.

Excerpt 42: From Chloe Interview

Unlike Sophie who clearly stated that she did not consider herself and her organisation linked to the world of business, Chloe was more ambivalent about it. On one hand, she reflected upon being entrepreneurial “probably to a degree” and talked about having “a business model” that guided the direction of her organisation. In particular, Chloe reproduced the discourse of enterprise in her discussion of being entrepreneurial, linking it to the ideas of corporate and business tools characteristic of the world of business enterprises as part of her work in community arts. Yet, she did not fully embrace enterprise, resisting the image of the entrepreneur linked to an idea of indiscriminate commercial activity and growth. She believed that such entrepreneurial behaviour was incompatible with the “pains and morals” of her work. Here, there was a sense that Chloe presented a particular moralised version of her community arts work predicated upon engaging marginalised individuals in art activity, rather than eliciting any economic self-gain.

One participant linked being entrepreneurial to harmful effects it could have on people around, which must be avoided at all costs:

I think I am [entrepreneurial] to some degree. I think I am I jokingly call myself a captain of industry. I sit on the, I’m a director of 4 companies. So, by objective measures I am what some people would describe an entrepreneur. But, it’s the for me it’s crucial distinction, success for me does not come at the expense of other people. The capitalist system is predicated on exploitation ... The things that we do will cause harm. ... Um, but yeah, I try and minimise those things happening, and success for me it cannot be success if other people lose out. And when I say lose out it’s not like losing in a game of chess. If other people lose in opportunity to self-actualise themselves in their lives. My winning can’t come at the expense of other people. Winning for me is the rising tide that lifts all people. Winning for me isn’t better than or having more than my fellow humans.

Excerpt 43: From Chris Interview

The earlier excerpts by Sophie and Chloe highlighted how workers were ambivalent in their identification as businesspeople and entrepreneurs. They drew upon the binary oppositions between the work of community arts and the domain of business predicated upon motivations of generating income and seeking economic growth. In a similar vein, Chris was ambivalent in terms of considering himself as being entrepreneurial. He presented two constructions of this position. On one hand, he stated that he was entrepreneurial “to some degree”, as he talked about being a “captain

of industry” who oversaw the work of four organisations. On the other hand, he also shunned the idea of being entrepreneurial in a particular way. According to Chris, he resisted an idea of being entrepreneurial if it connoted competitive success and winning at the expense of other people, linking this position to the ideas of a capitalist system that he deemed was “predicated on exploitation” that may lead to harm to other people. Instead, the participant advocated for a version of success, drawing on the discourse of caring about, that must not come “at the expense of other people”, but instead act to support those around him.

Table 12 summarises how participants constructed businesspersons and entrepreneurs as subject positions incompatible with community arts:

Table 12: Unacceptable Constructions of Entrepreneurs and Businesspersons

As motivated by money-making incompatible with community arts	<i>“I’d love to be a businessperson, but I don’t think I am. We are very good at spending money ... but we’re not good at making it” (Sophie, interview)</i>
As driven by indiscriminate interest in economic growth	<i>“...we can go into such and such store and sign-up X amounts of kids to whatever project ...” (Chloe, interview)</i>
As harmful to other people, which must be avoided	<i>“The capitalist system is predicated on exploitation ... The things that we do will cause harm” (Chris, interview)</i>

As the discussion so far illustrated, few workers in this study were ambivalent in identifying themselves as entrepreneurs or businesspersons, as they produced and resisted the discourse of enterprise. Here, these participants were at pains to highlight that they were not enterprising if it involved being motivated by money, self-interest, and inducing harm to people around them. For a few of these workers, enterprise was incompatible not only with their own subject position but was also portrayed as a collective feature in the work of community arts. As the following section will highlight, there were some participants who did not shun identifying as entrepreneurial/businesspersons outright, offering alternative entrepreneurial subject positions deemed acceptable or compatible with the work of community arts.

6.6.2 *Acceptable Vision of the Entrepreneur*

Community arts workers did not want to be seen as self-interested, money-oriented individuals, yet they did not always completely shun the position of the entrepreneur. The analysis of data revealed how some participants recognised entrepreneurial positions as acceptable in their work, drawing attention to legitimisation of money-making, as well as evoking a more complex image of the entrepreneur linked to certain aspects of the world of business. For instance, Catherine pointed out that being entrepreneurial in community arts could involve making money for the purposes of benefiting local communities:

RS: What is different then between being entrepreneurial in the community arts and being entrepreneurial let's say out there in the business world out there selling goods and items and service? What do you think the difference is between these two types?

Catherine: Oh profit. Just profit money. ... Um that's not to say we don't want to make money. ... for instance, a primary school that just paid us to deliver [a project] to every child in the school that's amazing. ... for every school child in that school which is about 200 of them it costs them about 2,000 pounds. So ... we make money to wash our face. ... we cover our costs and then we might make 50 pounds to put into the coffers so that we can do something when we haven't got some money for it. But we're not about making profit. ... if people wanna pay us we'll absolutely take that money cos it means we can do more, it's all driven back into the community.

Excerpt 44: From Catherine Interview

In the excerpt above, Catherine presented two versions of what it meant to be entrepreneurial in the domain of business and within the community arts practice. She highlighted that being entrepreneurial in business meant wanting to generate profits as an end goal. Although she highlighted the difference between the world of business and the world of community arts based on attitudes to profit, she did not avoid the commercially oriented aspects of work altogether. Drawing on the discourse of enterprise, she pointed out that making money commercially was acceptable in certain situations. For example, she identified that by working in primary schools her organisation was able to attract additional funds commercially, but she made it explicit that such funds helped support organisational costs and fund other projects within the community. This was something that she referred to as “mak[ing] money to wash

[their] faces”. Like Sophie, Chloe, and Chris, the participant did not want to be seen as a self-interested entrepreneur. She reiterated that her organisation was “not about making profits”, and that any money generated commercially was “driven back into the community”. Such representation of entrepreneurial behaviour suggest that the discourse of enterprise was co-terminus with vocabularies of caring about, whereby one’s desire to benefit local communities legitimised a certain level of profit-oriented attitude to work.

Catherine also noted a need to have a business ‘state of mind’ as part of her work, shedding light on constructions of being entrepreneurial that could involve more than just commercial activity:

Um, you need to be empathetic, but you need to be business minded. There’s a lot of people that work in the arts that are artists and don’t understand business. And if we are not professional, it just reflects badly on everybody. ... Um, but for me it’s the sort of passion for the people but with that sort of business head. If someone were to take my job and they just been like a community artist and didn’t understand business planning and spreadsheets and, it would quickly dissolve to the ground. ...

Excerpt 45: From Catherine Interview

Drawing on a language of enterprise, the participant advocated for the importance of being “business minded”, stating that there was a lack of “understand[ing] [of] business” amongst many workers in the arts sector. She advocated using a “business head” as part of her work, which she believed was an essential sign of being “professional”. Catherine produced a very different version of business not linked to individualistic, self-reliant, autonomous images of the entrepreneurial self. Instead, she related such positions to corporate actuarial languages, where to be ‘business minded’ connoted understanding and practicing mundane everyday business processes, such as doing business plans and using spreadsheets. Without this actuarial outlook on work, Catherine stated that the organisation “would quickly dissolve to the ground”, assigning a particular significance to this form of working. Like Chloe who claimed that community arts were separate from the world of business, Catherine also created similar distinction, as she noted that many artists “don’t understand business”. However, for Catherine the two worlds must not be separate, and instead the subject of an artist appears to be in need of help from the business world – business approaches

are there to provide a level of security and safeguards for these workers. Here, the discourse of enterprise appeared to be enmeshed with the ethics of care, as the participant highlighted that she needed to be “empathetic” yet also be “business-minded”, have “passion for the people”, but also have “that sort of business head” when working.

Catherine further clarified about what she meant by being ‘business-minded’, drawing attention to the business aspects of work and the role of care in the reproduction of enterprise:

... Um, I think I’m entrepreneurial and I think that is something that you have to be in the arts. But I think it’s about, um, it’s about understanding the systems and processes aren’t bad. Artistic and creative people sometime can be a bit ‘Oh, we don’t need to do that’. But safeguarding and contracts and the amount of freelance jobs I’ve had where I didn’t have a contract like blew my mind. So, something we do is we give people contracts, so they know the parameters that we expect of them. And it makes everybody’s life easier, cos if they don’t meet our expectations we can say ‘You signed a contract’. Um yeah I think it’s that sort of understanding why the business side ‘Oh but they are really businessy, like they want to see my insurance and they wanna see this like’ yeah to cover you and to cover us cos you’re going into an environment working with vulnerable people that’s why we have the processes in place is to protect everybody and to make sure that we’re still here.

Excerpt 46: From Catherine Interview

According to Catherine, to be ‘business-minded’ meant to be entrepreneurial. She reiterated that community arts workers were inherently apathetic or even resistant to enterprise and advocated for the importance of “understanding the systems and processes” that she believed were not “bad”. She expressed her surprise at what she believed was a lack of contracts and safeguarding in cultural work in general and advocated for the use of contracts in the workplace. She pointed out that contracts set out clear expectations at work, assign responsibilities to parties, provide a necessary level of safeguards amongst colleagues and in target communities, as well as ensure future organisational sustainability. On one hand, such contractual language aligned with the aspects of the discourse of enterprise concerned with constructing of people in the workplace as business units with clearly delineated responsibilities. Here, by envisaging the workplace contractually, Catherine shifted the responsibility away from the organisation towards individual workers, saying that it would make “everybody’s

life easier”. Yet, on the other hand, such contractual language was closely linked to the discourse of caring about her peers, as Catherine talked about the importance of having contracts as something that could provide necessary safeguards and protections for everyone in the workplace and within the community.

When discussing what it meant to be entrepreneurial, some participants spoke of actively taking initiative and exploiting new opportunities at work:

RS: So um do you yourself ever feel entrepreneurial?

Nicole: Um, well I started art actually because I wanted because I felt there was a gap and I wanted to support more people to make work. So, I suppose that is entrepreneurial in that sense it didn’t exist before I did started it. But, I don’t feel entrepreneurial as a like a businessperson, I don’t feel like an entrepreneur ... I think that’s not the motivation. Yeah.

Excerpt 47: From Nicole Interview

Like many other participants in this study, Nicole was ambivalent about her position as an entrepreneurial person. For her, being entrepreneurial connoted seeing new opportunities in the workplace and identifying opportunity gaps, as well as doing something that “did not exist before”. This suggested a production of the discourse of enterprise linked to the image of entrepreneurs as proactive individuals full of personal initiative and who exploit opportunities that may present themselves (See Section 2.3.3 in Literature Review). Yet, like the participant accounts earlier, the discourse of enterprise was produced in relation to the language of care too. Here, similar to Chloe in particular, Nicole appeared to employ a caring language to distance herself from the world of business. To be entrepreneurial appeared to be both accepted and shunned. On one hand, it was presented as certain individual characteristics necessary to provide support within the community by identifying gaps in the market and grasping new opportunities. On the other hand, the discourse of caring about was employed to hedge against being seen as a business-oriented person, as the participant pointed out that she was enterprising only for the purpose of helping more people and artists to do work. Therefore, the entrepreneurial subject was presented as a malleable concept – it was both attached to and detached from the world of business, where characteristics of the entrepreneur were germanely selected to fit the specific purposes of community arts (Cohen & Musson, 2000).

In another example, Layla also talked about exploiting new opportunities, but shunned being motivated by making money:

RS: So how similar or different do you think you are from a businessperson?

Layla: Um, I think that there's more of a um, there's more of an emphasis in my work as a moment and I don't know whether it is after Covid, there's more emphasis to make it more of a business. And I'd noticed that after Covid. And I think that um personally me I do a lot of it for the love, I do a lot of it for um like I'll always go a little bit above and beyond to to make stuff work. Um, so I don't think I'd got I haven't got a business mind in the way that I'm money-focused, but I think I'm I can see opportunities, so I guess in that way, so I can, yeah, um.

Excerpt 48: From Layla Interview

Layla reflected on what made her similar or different to a businessperson, as she pointed out that there was an increased emphasis in her work to act like a business. There is a sense that 'business' was portrayed as a norm and a solution to challenges of community arts work. The entrepreneurial, business-oriented position was reflected in the way Layla referred to herself as someone who "always go[es] a little bit above and beyond" and "see[s] opportunities" to make things happen. Yet, she also added a disclaimer that there were limits to this entrepreneurial subjectivity in the way that she was not 'business-minded' in terms of being "money focussed". As such, this self-representation as a businessperson appeared to efface parts of the individualised, self-profiting aspects of neoliberal enterprise, whilst reaffirming other features of the business world as acceptable. Furthermore, the self-fulfilment that the participant appeared to extract from her work was in the passion that she had for her work, acting as a strong imperative in the reproduction of entrepreneurial subjectivity.

So far, it has been illustrated how community arts workers considered themselves as enterprising subjects, generally reproduced in relation to the discourse of caring about. Yet, there was another way in which some participants engaged with the discourse of enterprise, as they presented being entrepreneurial as a necessity amongst creative practitioners. Consider the following excerpt, for example:

RS: Do you think you might be similar to being an entrepreneur?

Lois: I think you've got to be quite entrepreneurial. And especially if you are kind of doing doing workshops and things, and you need to change that often as well. Which is what entrepreneurial is got to be that sort of always kind of looking for

the next thing or looking for new interesting things to do or. So, I suppose you have to be quite um maybe a little bit forward thinking sometimes. Um a little bit ahead of your game. Um then you know you also got you know obviously a lot of people have been responding to the pandemic creatively as well and you know and that is still ongoing too you know. So you always got to be looking at what's going on as well. Which is what artists and designers do anyway. ...

RS: Um you said that you are similar but is there anything different from being an entrepreneur. Cos in my mind when I think about entrepreneurs or being entrepreneurial you kind of get this world of business

Lois: I'm I'm I'm not business-oriented. I'm not very good. At the end of the day, you know you've got you've got to adopt that sort of. ... So you do have to have an element of kind of like um and a lot of artists find it very challenging to kind of price their work or to say um 'Yeah this is what I want for this workshop'. You know there are organisations that set a standard rate, like the Arts Council of Wales ... So, yeah, if somebody asks you 'How much are you going to charge for that?' then you can say 'Well I'm basing it on the advice from the Arts Council of Wales, and that's the artist daily rate as such'. So, it kind of gives you those sort of parameters to work in. ...

Excerpt 49: From Lois Interview

Unlike the examples used previously in this section, Lois did not explicitly engage with the discourse of caring about, as she talked about being enterprising. The participant, who worked as a freelance artist for many years, but recently moved away from commercial work and joined community arts domain, drew attention to entrepreneurial characteristics necessary as part of the everyday work of creative practitioners. Unlike, Catherine who claimed that artists were lacking entrepreneurial tendencies and therefore were in need of enterprise, Lois pointed out that being entrepreneurial was a normal and necessary part of the everyday life of artists and designers, particularly as they responded to the effects of the pandemic. In this case, to be entrepreneurial connoted one's active involvement in work to be able to find new employment opportunities and respond to current challenges. Staying "a little bit ahead of your game" was an important aspect of such subject positionality. Yet, Lois also untangled the flexible, autonomous, self-reliant aspects of entrepreneurial subjectivity from the world of business, as she suggested that she was not "business-oriented" in an economic, profit-oriented sense. There appeared to be a presentation of a community artist as an entrepreneurial subject, but one that was incapable of doing commercial activity, such as pricing their own work when negotiating with potential clients. In this case, the central authority figure – the Arts Council – was presented as

a template for pricing strategies in the workplace, shifting the onus of responsibility away from the individual's work.

Table 13 summarises how the discourse of enterprise was reproduced by community arts workers. It shows that participants often talked about themselves and their colleagues as being entrepreneurial or having business-like qualities. Here, it appeared that a significant few of them selectively drew on business aspects that they deemed appropriate to their work. For those participants who were working as freelance practitioners, being entrepreneurial was seen as a necessity. Yet, such entrepreneurial subject positions were not fully predicated upon the market-based logics of enterprise and were generally reproduced in relation to alternative discourses. One such discourse that predominantly pervaded the accounts was the discourse of caring about people and communities they worked with. In all these examples participants were ambivalent about their positions as entrepreneurial selves, as they both recognised having certain qualities of entrepreneurs/businesspersons as important and shunned the idea of being considered as self-interested, money-oriented individuals:

Table 13: Community Arts Workers as Entrepreneurial Subjects

Money-making as acceptable to support community arts work	<i>"... we'll absolutely take that money cos it means we can do more, it's all driven back into the community"</i> <i>(Catherine, interview)</i>
Using corporate approaches and contracts to ensure organisational survival and peer support	<i>"If someone were to take my job ... [and they] didn't understand business planning and spreadsheets ... it would quickly dissolve to the ground."</i> <i>(Catherine, interview)</i> <i>"... we have the processes in place is to protect everybody and to make sure that we're still here ..."</i> <i>(Catherine, interview)</i>
Being flexible and proactive as part and parcel of community arts work	<i>" ... what entrepreneurial is got to be [is] that sort of always kind of looking for the next thing or looking for new interesting things to do ... obviously a lot of people have been responding to the pandemic creatively ..."</i> <i>(Lois, interview)</i>

6.6.3 Section Summary

The findings above illustrated how the subject of the entrepreneur/businessperson was constructed and accepted by community arts workers. As has been shown, participants

constructed an image of an entrepreneur primarily concerned with self-interest, money-making, and economic growth, as well as highlighting the insidious aspects of entrepreneurship that could lead to harm and exploitation of other people. These participants generally considered such subject position as unacceptable and incompatible with the values and motivations that underpinned their work in the community, and instead offered alternative and 'acceptable' versions of being entrepreneurial/businesspersons. Workers legitimated doing commercial work and generating money for the purposes of driving it back into the community, employing corporate approaches in the workplace and implementing of contractual relationships for the purposes of supporting co-workers. They spoke of taking initiative, exploiting opportunities, and going 'above and beyond', as long as it supported the people around them and the communities they engaged with. Within these constructions, the discourse of caring about appeared to act as grounds for legitimation of the acceptable entrepreneurial self - as a subject position compatible with the prosocial aspects of community arts.

The following discussion illustrates how this discourse of caring about local communities and peers was pertinent not only in relation to the reproduction of enterprising subject positions, but appeared throughout many accounts of community arts workers, forming a fundamental basis for worker subjectivity.

6.7 The Discourse of Caring About

So far, this Findings Chapter examined how the discourse of enterprise was deployed by community arts workers through references to being entrepreneurial, competitive, autonomous, flexible, and calculative selves. The data analysis has revealed that the discourse of enterprise was co-terminus with alternative non-economic discourses, which both acted as grounds for reproduction of, as well as resistance to, enterprising subjectivity. As discussed earlier in Chapter Four, community arts work has been portrayed as aiming to achieve a variety of prosocial goals within the community, such as improving participation and access to arts and creativity, addressing community needs, empowering individuals and groups of people, promoting positive social

change in the community, and advocating for ideas of cultural democracy (Matarasso, 2019b; Crummy, 2017; Jeffers, 2017a; Moriarty, 2017; Beirne & Knight, 2004; Goldbard, 1993). Likewise, the rest of this chapter illustrates how the discourse of caring about frequently pervaded participant accounts, as these individuals engaged with prosocial vocabularies that underpinned their subject positions as community arts workers. This section also draws attention to wider aspects of the discourse of caring about, showing how participants also portrayed their work as a political project of cultural democracy, based on ideas of inclusivity, improved access to arts and creativity, and promotion of opportunity for the benefit of local communities.

6.7.1 *'Genuine Care' in Community Arts*

As this study has shown, for many participants care, compassion, and personal concerns for the wellbeing of local communities and peers were seen as fundamental aspects of community arts work:

RS: So, if you were to say there are skills needed in your trade, what would be those skills?

Nicole: ... Yeah, genuine care

Keira: Genuine care, yeah. So that kind of what resonates between people, um like other ways of looking at things, consider that

Nicole: Being truly embedded in a space and caring about it, rather than just sort of viewing from the outside ... it's important

Excerpt 50: From Nicole and Keira Interview

In the above excerpt, Keira and Nicole drew attention to the importance of what they called “genuine care” in their work. For Keira, such ‘genuine care’ connoted doing work that “resonate[d]” with people they worked with. On the other hand, Nicole spoke of ‘genuine care’ as proximity to local communities. Drawing on a language of binary oppositions, she positioned herself as a caring subject who was “truly embedded” in that local community and was “caring about it”, as opposed to “viewing [it] from the outside”. As such, both Keira and Nicole constructed an image of

community arts predicated on ideas of caring about people they worked with and being part of that community whilst doing so.

Catherine also drew on the language of caring, but unlike Keira and Nicole she did not talk about proximity to communities, and instead linked caring to the question of precarious work and individual motivation:

... I don't know a participatory artist that doesn't care about the people they are working with. Like you are not making lots of money, why are you doing it if you don't care?

Excerpt 51: From Catherine Interview

Catherine highlighted that a caring attitude was a fundamental part of those who were working in participatory settings. When talking about caring, the participant constructed an image of work that was based on prosocial logics of care, highlighting that she didn't know "a participatory artist that doesn't care about the people they are working with". This production of the discourse of caring about was concomitant with a discourse of precarious work, as Catherine also mentioned that people tend not to make "lots of money", but they continued working within this precarious area of cultural work. For Catherine, caring about people emerged as a justification for doing community and participatory arts, which was strong enough to overcome the financial insecurity of work.

The above discussion suggested that caring about people was presented as a reason for doing community arts work. This caring discourse pervaded a significant number of participant accounts, as they reflected on the reasons, drives, and motivations, as well as values for working in community arts. They generally talked about wanting to benefit the members of the community and the people around them:

RS: So so if you were to summarise what really motivates you in your work, what would it be?

Lucia: ... I think I really like seeing ... it's about how you can work to make things happen. ... So, I can see that a creative act can change a circumstance and change a set of circumstances. And it's not just about society, it's about individuals and it just can make a difference. And it can make things better. ... it's about that clicking together and seeing those sets of things, and when they

work, and when this creativity is used and it's actually works together, you can really see a change – and that's so exciting.

Excerpt 52: From Lucia Interview

Lucia did not make a direct reference to 'caring' when talking about the motivations for working in community arts, yet she made implicit references to benefiting people in the community. She pointed out that as part of her work she liked to "make things happen" through creative work and that a "creative act can change a circumstance ... [or] a set of circumstances", drawing attention to the transformative power of art. Lucia stipulated that community arts work was not "just about society", and instead suggested that it could have a positive effect on individuals, "make a difference", and generally "make things better" for them. There was also a sense that caring about the community was portrayed as personally rewarding for Lucia, as she not only highlighted the benefits that such work may bring to individuals, but also talked about seeing a change through creativity as "exciting" and something that she "really like[d]".

Like Lucia, Meghan also talked about wanting to benefit members of the community as her motivation to work in the community arts:

...although I trained at ballet school in my hometown, um when I was in my teens as well as theatre performances and stuff, pantomimes, I did a project with a dance animateur ... and it was the first time I was introduced to inclusive dance. ... And at that point I decided I didn't want to be a ballet dancer ... this made much more sense to me in terms of its value or in terms of the value I could bring to where I live. ...

[further on in the interview]

Um, I, so like I suppose I particularly enjoyed doing the old work, because um to see people with dementia who really um quite quite um inwards, and maybe struggling with pain. But through finding the music that they like and through ... touch ... [you] would make a connection with them and then you would have their attention ... and they would engage maybe you know for the full 45 minutes of activity in whatever way they can. And to me that is bringing like a vital part of quality of life to their week, um, that they wouldn't get if I wasn't delivering that session.

Excerpt 53: From Meghan Interview

Meghan highlighted her decision to work in community arts based on her early career experience in inclusive dance. She explained that when she was younger doing inclusive dance prompted her not to pursue professional ballet dancing – a career for which she was professionally trained. For Meghan, this career move from commercial arts to community arts “made much more sense”, because she believed that it brought ‘value’ to the community she lived in. Here, like Keira’s and Nicole’s accounts earlier, the participant used a language of proximity in relation to benefiting the community, as Meghan stated that she wanted to bring value to where she lived. In her current job as a dance practitioner, delivering dance sessions to older individuals diagnosed with dementia, Meghan explained that she enjoyed working with people. She pointed out that using various approaches, such as the media of music and touch, she was able to engage these individuals with dementia, “bringing ... a vital part of quality of life” to them, which they would have had less access to if she “wasn’t delivering that session”. Thus, as subject who cared about her community members, Meghan talked about prioritising her work over any individual career aspirations, drawing attention to the positive impact that such work may have on the quality of life and wellbeing of the people in the community.

Layla made a different presentation of the valuable aspects of working in the community, as she focused on alternative ways of benefitting people:

... I think especially since Covid thing that I really value going into work and seeing these people. And like doing something that’s quite positive. Um, so yeah um that that’s what drives me is people, really. Um, and like I said earlier the art is great and that is partly what it’s all about, people are learning like it’s lovely to see people learning new skills, like that’s that’s a drive, that’s a pleasure to be able to have those skills and pass them on onto someone else, that’s a big part of it. Um, but I think the kind of community spirit, as well since I don’t wanna say since Covid but it completely changed since Covid, because we started having smaller groups, then we got to know the participants better, got to know them better. Um, and they became more of like a small collective, a small group of artists, where they were kind of really had each other’s backs, you know really like it’s quite nice. Yeah, just turning into a different vibe, and I think yeah knowing that I had to go every week and support people was the drive.

Excerpt 54: From Layla Interview

There are similarities in how Layla’s account echoed Meghan’s interview. Both accounts suggested that participants cared about their work and the people that they

worked with. The two participants talked about the role of community arts in having a positive effect on people, and they also pointed out how such work motivated them to be in this area of employment. More specifically, Layla drew attention to how she was ‘driven’ by people and how she “really value[d] going into work ... [and] doing something positive”, such as sharing or passing on the skills within the community. However, rather than focusing on the therapeutic effects of art and creativity and the impact on the wellbeing of individual people, Layla drew attention to the collective aspects of her caring work and the way community arts was linked to community-cohesion and community-building. Here, she produced a binary image of community arts work and care. On one hand, she recognised that “art [was] great” and that it could advantage people by passing on new skills to them – something that she found personally rewarding. Yet, on the other hand, she highlighted another aspect of community arts work linked to the collective aspects in her work. She pointed out that, particularly after Covid, as a result of her work there emerged a “community spirit” that characterised the relationship between artists and participants, which she found “quite nice” and prompted her “to go [to work] every week and support people”.

Poppy acknowledged being motivated by helping people through arts, but also linked such caring position as an inherent aspect of herself:

RS: So, what really drives you and motivates you?

Poppy: Well, I’ve just always been interested in arts. I’m I’m a visual person that that sort of just makes sense to me, always has. Since I was a child I’ve been drawing and doing things and like I say I love to share with other people. I love to to Um see people who’ve who’ve completely switched that side of themselves off, sort of opened it up a bit again and feel energised by it. ... so I’m sort of a bridge between what the group of people would like to do, but they haven’t a clue how to set about it and they’re terrified of it. ... it’s really satisfying, you know, it’s it is <@> satisfying </@>.

RS: What why why, can you tell me why you care about people? ...

Poppy: I just do. I just do. Always have.

Excerpt 55: From Poppy Interview

In the excerpt above, the participant drew on the discourse of caring about the community, as she talked about being motivated to benefit the people she worked with, to energise them, and encourage their interest in art and creativity. Poppy positioned herself as an intermediary, or what she called a “bridge”, between people in the

community wanting to do art activity and any other organisational aspects, so that people can “have some fun” in her workshops. She also presented herself as a fundamental part of bringing creative experiences to community members who “haven’t a clue how to set about [doing art] and they’re terrified by it”. Furthermore, Poppy portrayed her caring position as something inherent, as she said that she always cared about people in her work. Here, she talked about naturally being interested in arts, and that since she was a child she loved creativity and “shar[ing] with other people”. Employing a language of passion, she stated that she loved benefiting other people and seeing how art could have a positive effect on their confidence and energy levels.

Although the general corpus of data suggested a deployment of the discourse of caring about in relation to community members, there was one participant who explicitly talked about benefiting and supporting her colleagues and peers on the inside of their organisation:

... We work with, sometimes we have like 26 freelancers that we are working with at a time, um and you don’t necessarily line manage them, but you want to make sure that they are looked after. ... Um, but we pride ourselves, a lot of our work is in wellbeing that we do for our community. And I’m I’m really passionate about looking after our staff, um, and our freelancers as well, cos I want to live the values that we work. ... I still have expectations on getting their job done and meeting deadlines, but I’m not strict on working 9 to 5 or. Um, I just want people to ask for help, you know if they need it ... The living your values internally that you are projecting externally is really important. ... we are very open and honest with each other about if we are having a bad week or a bad day or a bad hour. ... our sickness policy is a fairly standard sickness policy, but the board and myself have no problem overriding it and saying ‘Okay you should be on a half pay now but we are not going to do that, we are just going to pay you. Just get yourself better’. If anybody is feeling down we offer 6 sessions with a councillor that we pay for. All our freelancers get the opportunity to work um to have non-managerial supervisions ... We put in core hours, so everybody works 10 till 4 on the days they are in, and they can make up the rest of their hours however works best for them and their family. Um, silly things like, if you are going to the hairdresser it’s really hard to get an appointment on a Saturday, so I say ‘Make the appointment, tell me you are going, if you can’t take your work phone stay in touch’. Because you get more from people by allowing them to have a life ...

Excerpt 56: From Catherine Interview

Speaking about working with freelancers, Catherine avoided a managerial subject position, as she explained that she did not directly line manage her workforce. Using the language of caring she talked about “mak[ing] sure that [colleagues and peers] are looked after”. Such ‘looking after’ emerged as a range of supportive practices, aimed at providing better work autonomy to workers, giving them help when they ask for it and generally believing that it was important to live the “values internally that you are projecting externally”. There were still certain expectations of work that were required of her workers, but within these boundaries she drew attention to giving people considerable individual freedom, thus reflecting the accounts of ‘bounded autonomy’ in Section 6.3. Further in the interview, Catherine provided more examples of caring about her peers, as she talked about providing financial support to workers on sick leave, making available free counselling sessions, and creating opportunities to freelancers to be involved in non-managerial supervisions. Workers were also portrayed as individuals who could shape their working days flexibly outside the core hours they worked, so that they could accommodate their family and personal responsibilities. By talking about supporting her staff – or ‘looking after’ them, Catherine positioned herself as a caring subject, but unlike the previous participant accounts that talked about feeling rewarded and fulfilled by supporting and benefiting the local communities, Catherine also acknowledged the technological aspects of such care as governmentality, as she recognised that one could “get more from people by allowing them to have a life”.

Another participant, Hugh, talked about his motivations for his work as an active political act of positively engaging with disadvantaged communities:

... I got to forty and is that kind of what am I doing with my life ... and I realised that I enjoyed being an artist, but I always wanted to change society around me, I wasn't happy with the way things were. And I knew that the power of art is a very profound thing to put into someone's life particularly in a kind of a low socially economic areas I worked in, was around in. So, I set up a charity to allow me to get funding to go with people who really need it, to put some hope and some creativity in their lives. ...

[further on in the interview]

... my passion and my work is for ... people struggling with mental health and those who are in very low socio-economic conditions. Work I am currently doing with the homeless is perfect for me Um, cos they got the lot – they got no

money, they got nowhere to live, they have mental health problems, they have addictions. That for some reason I feel very comfortable with that environment.

[further on in the interview]

... I wanted to come into that bubble and gently disturb that bubble, to say that there's a bigger thing out here ... It's scary as shit but it's really exciting ...

Excerpt 57: From Hugh Interview

Hugh expressed his prosocial concerns for people he worked with, not as being driven or motivated' by people in the community, but as his "passion" aimed at bettering the socially and economically disadvantaged communities. Using a more political language, he averred that he "always wanted to change the society around [him]", which he believed could be achieved via the medium of art. Hugh stated that art was a "a very profound thing" that could benefit other people's lives, particularly those in what he called were in "low socially economic area". Talking about his previous work in setting up a community arts charity, Hugh explained that he was able to apply for funding opportunities that supported those people who "really need[ed] it", aiming "to put some hope and some creativity in their lives". Although Hugh's charity was no longer in existence, he reiterated his continued passion for working with people who were "struggling with mental health and those who were in very low socio-economic conditions". Later in the interview he said he wanted to come and "gently disturb" the "bubble" within which he believed many of these people lived to show that there were "bigger things" out there.

Table 14 below illustrates the various ways in which the language of care underpinned individual motivations for working in community arts. Within these accounts, community arts workers portrayed themselves as people who deliberately chose to work in participatory settings to benefit individuals, as well as local communities. As participants produced the discourse of caring about people, they remained silent on any other motivations beyond benefiting people, such as monetary rewards or career aspirations, and for some, caring about was a strong enough imperative to be in community arts despite precarious working conditions.

Table 14: Caring About and Working in Community Arts

Wanting to benefit people and make a positive difference in their lives	<i>“And it’s not just about society, it’s about individuals and it just can make a difference...” (Lucia, interview) “... to me that is bringing like a vital part of quality of life to their week, um, that they wouldn’t get if I wasn’t delivering that session” (Meghan, interview)</i>
Inherently caring about people	<i>“Since I was a child I’ve been drawing and doing things and like I say I love to share with other people” (Poppy, interview)</i>
Caring about as a political project	<i>“I realised that I enjoyed being an artist, but I always wanted to change society around me, I wasn’t happy with the way things were” (Hugh, interview)</i>

6.7.2 Caring About and Cultural Democracy

As participants engaged with the discourse of caring about, they talked about being driven and motivated to benefit people in their work, but they also engaged with ideas of cultural democracy (See Section 4.4 for discussion on this concept). Here, these workers promoted the ideas of equality, accessibility of art and culture, and they recognised the importance of empowerment through creativity. In addition, they advocated for opportunity and better access to art and creativity, which they believed were important to the communities with whom they worked. For instance, these two excerpts below highlight the caring positions that community arts workers occupied in relation to questions of promoting creativity in the community:

... I also feel so strongly that people should be creative and not be and not be judging themselves all the time, as well. ... it doesn’t have to be sort of amazing perfect thing or you know that we all should be able to express ourselves. I think it’s missing a lot within our education that um you know maybe you didn’t do art because you weren’t really good at it or something you know. And I really strongly believe that that everybody can can do something ...

Excerpt 58: From Lois Interview

So, for [my organisation], the Community Interest Company, the statement was to provide creative opportunities for children, young people, and marginalised and disadvantaged groups.... we are legally constituted to provide those services and it’s something that really motivates me in the work that I do to to find people, to be able to give them those creative opportunities. I believe that creativity is fundamental to being human. And I also think it is an everyday tragedy that those

opportunities to huge sections of society, the huge sections of the community that I live in, just aren't as available as I believe they should be.

Excerpt 59: From Chris Interview

According to the quotes above, both participants expressed their individual concerns and caring about the communities they worked with, as they promoted the idea of creativity for everyone. Lois, for instance, counterposed her work to conventional art education, arguing that such education negated potential individual creativity. Drawing on a language of inclusivity, she pointed out that she strongly believed that everyone can be creative. She promoted an idea of cultural democracy, as she made explicit that creativity must not be limited to just few talented people but that it could be expressed in various ways and must be made accessible to everyone. Likewise, Chris employed the vocabulary of equality, as he constructed creativity as being integral to human life. In the above example, he recognised that his own organisation was legally obliged to provide art and creative opportunities to children, young adults, and marginalised and disadvantaged groups. Yet, such focus on the provision of creative opportunity was not simply a legal requirement to him but was also something that he said personally motivated him. In particular, in his defence of access to creativity as “fundamental to being human”, Chris noted that there were inequalities of opportunity within his local community, which he believed was “an everyday tragedy”.

In another example, Sophie shed light on the importance of removing any barriers to participation in arts and creativity within the community. Unlike Lois and Chris, Sophie did not talk about creativity as an integral part of everyone's lives, but instead drew attention to how a certain ‘ethos’ of accessible arts pervaded all aspects of the work of her organisation:

This week has mostly been meetings and admin. [Name] and I, who co-run [the community arts organisation] with [Name], had a planning meeting about the upcoming open day at the community darkroom... It's a totally un-funded part of our work, but we want the ethos of the rest of the project (including people who otherwise wouldn't be able to take part, due to social or economic reasons) to carry through. ...

[further on in the diary]

At 1pm we head down to set up the space which means tidying the garden, sweeping, cleaning the toilet, putting biscuits on plates etc. ... It's been a long time since we had any public events but we get into our stride fairly quickly. The first two people ... are serious photographers who want to essentially find out what's in it for them. This is fine, something we're used to, but it can be tricky to explain the ethos behind [the organisation] to people who come from a completely different place. Some people only understand things to be functioning if they make enough money to run, which obviously makes sense in one way, but in other ways it can lead to excluding people who can't be part of that system due to illness, unemployment, caring responsibilities etc. ...

Excerpt 60: From Sophie's Participant Diary

In this diary entry, Sophie wrote about organising a photography community darkroom open day, as an opportunity to attract interest from photographers and general public in the community. Right from the onset, Sophie drew on the language of accessibility, as she made explicit that the event she was organising was to be run according to a wider organisational 'ethos'. This reference to 'ethos' presented the work of community arts as predicated not on money-making principles, like the world of business enterprises, but rather on ideas of accessibility and equity. Sophie provided an account of how the open day went, as she recalled talking to two professional photographers that visited the event, highlighting the difficulty of communicating her organisational ethos to them. Here, photographers were constructed as people outside the community arts, bringing in commercial values that were distinct from the work of her organisation. Sophie was at pains to resist the idea of working for the sake of making money and made explicit that such work could exclude community members because of a variety of reasons, such as caring responsibilities, unemployment, or illness. In other words, running the space commercially would have created barriers for accessible art production, which risked violating the principles of benefiting the community upon which her organisation was based. Such a prosocial position was made evident during the observation of the same event too, as highlighted in the observation vignette 4 example below.

Upon arrival at the event, I had a quick chat with Sophie, as she apologised for not returning my last email about taking part in the participant diary study. She offered to give me a quick tour around the facilities – which was a separate space that she managed outside her studio on the high street. This was an enclosed area with a little covered seating area on the left, a bench with a table and a little garden, which I later learned was a community garden run by members. On the right, there were more things – a caravan, a table with various teas, biscuits and oranges, as

well as a table with sign-up information. Further to the right there was an extension to the building, and the actual building had a large, warehouse-like door. There was also a set of stairs that took you to the first floor where workshop spaces were located. Sophie took me to the community dark room, which was a room, with a little storage room at the end. The walls have been painted black and the lights were special red light. There were six enlargers. Sophie told me that the community dark room has been closed for almost two years, because of the Pandemic, and they were reopening it. She made the point that in her local community such space was rare and was generally affiliated to commercial spaces or universities, which were difficult to access. The idea of this community darkroom was that anyone from the community, or even outside it, can come and have access to equipment that was rarely available for the general public to enjoy photography – including doing community-related workshops. Importantly, such space was to be used at very affordable prices, or even free, to the public. Sophie told me, that if her community members had any difficulties accessing these facilities financially, her organization would find ways to help the members financially. As such, it appeared that such community darkroom space was a space of cultural democracy that aimed to enable better access to creative activity and appeared to be positioned against other commercial spaces that lacked such ethos of accessibility.

Observation Vignette 4: Community Darkroom

It appears that cultural democracy was presented as a fundamental part of community arts work, but for some participants it was also something that must be actively advocated for and promoted. For instance, one participant used an interventionist language, as she talked of intentionally challenging barriers to better access to art activity:

RS: So, um what really motivates you in your work?

Chloe: Um, I would say like as a company, and the company is me and my wife, um she's more the technology, health, disability side of things and I more of the arts <un> xxx </un>. We come together with the same ethos of wanting to make the arts accessible everywhere regardless of their age, um, ability, background, sexuality, you know, religious beliefs, anything you know, there there's no barriers there. So, whatever the barrier is put before us (were) to find a strategy or an intervention to kind of go 'no, that's not a barrier anymore', and (I find those around us). So, that's the driving forces ... it is it's for any community, not just specifically for someone who is non-disabled or someone who is white British, you know. ... tearing down those barriers for people that think theatre is just for middle-class white communities ...

Excerpt 61: From Chloe Interview

Like Sophie, Chloe was running a small community arts organisation and she also talked about a specific 'ethos', which echoed the 'ethos' of Sophie earlier. This ethos

was predicated upon the idea of making art accessible to all people, regardless of their age, abilities, history, sexuality, and religion. However, Chloe’s excerpt suggested a particular critical stance, as she resisted the idea of art as an exclusive practice. She critiqued the image of art as a place for “non-disabled or someone who [was] white British”, calling for purposefully challenging and “tearing down those barriers”. As such, Chloe presented an image of her work as a political project that was also a manifestation of resistance against forms of creative work that excluded people based on various individual characteristics.

Table 15 below highlights the general ways in which these participants took up non-economic subject positions, as they engaged with the discourse of caring about and referred to questions of cultural democracy:

Table 15: Caring About Communities and Cultural Democracy

Creativity must be for everyone	“I believe that creativity is fundamental to being human” (<i>Chris, interview</i>)
Promotion of the ethos of accessible arts	“... we want the ethos of the rest of the project (including people who otherwise wouldn’t be able to take part, due to social or economic reasons) to carry through” (<i>Sophie, participant diary</i>)
Actively challenging barriers to creativity	“...tearing down those barriers for people that think theatre is just for middle-class white communities ...” (<i>Chloe, interview</i>)

6.7.3 Section Summary

The above analysis attempted to shed light on how participants produced and engaged with the discourse of caring about that underpinned their constructions of work and subject positions. It showed that such discourse was featured consistently throughout the accounts of community arts workers and that it was linked to individual motivations for choosing to work within the community arts sector generally. Here, the caring subject positions of participants connoted references to making a difference within the community through art and creativity, such as aiming to positively impact wellbeing, fostering community cohesion, and promoting community building. For few of these participants, caring about their communities was considered as an inalienable part of their subjectivity and an important reason for working in

community arts, despite being embedded within contexts of precarious work. Proximity to communities was often defined as important, as workers generally did not only talk about wanting to help anyone, but portrayed such work as either personally meaningful or because they were embedded within those communities already and expressed affinity with them. Moreover, the analysis pointed out how this language of people-orientation amongst participants was linked to questions of cultural democracy, whereby workers promoted the ideas of creativity for all, making art accessible, and intentionally challenged the barriers to arts and creativity. These participants actively sought to highlight the ‘ethos’ of community arts, depicting themselves as those who wanted to strengthen access to art and creativity within the community in opposition to the commercialised and money-oriented vision of work outside community arts. As the Discussion Chapter will indicate, such production of caring discourse was indicative of participants’ governmentality attempts that constructed the image of their work based on alternative, non-economic notions of caring, compassion, and collaboration, against the representations of their work through individualised and competitive business logics of enterprise.

6.8 Chapter Conclusion: The Discourse of Enterprise and Alternative Discourses

This Findings Chapter explored the ways in which the discourse of enterprise pervaded the cultural work of community arts, highlighting whether and how an enterprising subjectivity has been reproduced. The discussion above identified a complex and ambivalent uptake of the discourse of enterprise amongst community arts workers, suggesting a link to alternative, non-economic discourses as grounds for the reproduction of and resistance to entrepreneurial forms of work and subjectivity. In particular, the analysis of collected data highlighted five general ways in which the discourse of enterprise appeared to be most visible. First, the notion of competition pervaded the accounts of community arts workers, as they constructed such practice by drawing on individualised languages of self-interest and self-gain and linking it to commercial world of business. Second, individual autonomy within the workplace emerged as an important element of community arts work, portrayed as one's ability to be in control over one's own work, such as determining schedules and ways of delivering projects in the community, as well as connoted individual responsibility generally directed towards achieving organisational goals. Third, within such form of autonomy, entrepreneurial flexibility in the shape of one's ability to multi-task and adapt to the challenges within the workplace appeared to be essential to entrepreneurial positions of participants. Within such constructions of flexibility, community arts workers were portrayed as responsible and self-disciplining subjects who must tend to the sustenance of their organisation, as well as to their own economic survival. Fourth, the findings also highlighted the proliferation of calculative vocabularies in the accounts of community arts workers, linking future-oriented languages and rational thinking with individual attempts at gaining particular beneficial results. Yet, this data also showed that participants rarely engaged with the kind of utility-maximising, 'investment-like' vocabularies of *homo economicus* highlighted within the existing theorisations of the discourse of enterprise (Foucault, 2008; O'Malley, 1996). Fifth, the findings also explored how participants linked entrepreneurs and businesspersons to the world of enterprises and presented them as those who are involved in commercial activities of buying and selling, motivated by economic self-interest, profit, and a desire for economic growth.

However, as the study findings showed, the uptake of enterprising subjectivity was never a straightforward matter, highlighting the ambivalent positions that many participants in this study occupied in relation to neoliberal imperatives of enterprise. In particular, the data presented above attested to the variety of ways in which community arts workers germanely engaged with notions of entrepreneurial work, adopting and adjusting them to fit their particular situations. Crucially, enterprise was never the only discursive resource available to community arts workers, as they drew on alternative non-economic discourses in the formation of themselves as ethical and caring subjects of work. One such notable discourse was linked to languages of caring about that was underpinned by individual motivations for benefiting their communities and promotion of ideas of cultural democracy. By drawing on the discourse of caring about, community arts workers showed evidence both of resisting aspects of enterprise that they deemed unacceptable in their work, and advocating for more collaborative, supportive, caring ways of working, whilst also legitimating certain types of competitive behaviour. By shifting the meanings of competitive work away from its deleterious and negative connotations of competitive struggle within the labour markets towards a possibility of competitive subject positions, workers reconciled the prosocial aspects of community arts work with certain entrepreneurial practices, such as flexibility, active involvement in work, and multi-tasking. Further, the study has also shown that the proliferation of entrepreneurial autonomy and responsibility in community arts was never uniform. Here, freelance creative practitioners celebrated the autonomous aspects of their work constructed in distinction against 'other' jobs outside the community arts sector, whilst non-freelance participants highlighted the 'bounded' aspects of autonomy that drew attention to the responsabilisation of workers through freedom. Whilst participants generally valued the autonomous nature of their work, they also often engaged with notions of flexibility in the workplace. As this study has illustrated, the reproduction of flexibility was closely enmeshed with alternative vocabularies of precarious work and caring about, with some difference across freelance and non-freelance roles.

Overall, this study has pointed out a common reluctance amongst community arts workers to be portrayed as entrepreneurial subjects linked to the world of business and commerce. Instead, they actively engaged with the discourse of caring about in the presentation of themselves as caring, compassionate, other-oriented, supportive, and

collegiate individuals. The discourse of enterprise was not completely effaced in the formation of worker subjectivity, as workers considered a range of entrepreneurial practices, such as generating income, understanding business processes, identifying new work opportunities, and going ‘above and beyond’ as part of their everyday work in community arts. Yet, such discourse was often in close proximity to prosocial logics of care through which participants actively created a particular positive image of their work and themselves, and where any entrepreneurial work was directed towards benefiting local communities and peers. Against this backdrop, Chapter Seven now considers the implications of these findings against existing empirical research into cultural work, opening opportunities for further development of theorisations of the discourse of enterprise in contemporary work and employment.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

Existing theorisations of enterprising work point to a range of individual entrepreneurial aspects, such as autonomy, responsibility, self-reliance, competitiveness, and a calculative outlook on work as key features of worker subjectivity (Foucault, 2008; Du Gay, 1996; Keat, 1991b). Recent studies have highlighted how the discourse of enterprise has become integral to “underpin[ning] formation of the cultural worker-self” (Banks, 2007, p. 47). For example, the proliferation of neoliberal modes of work has been presented as a pervasive feature of cultural work, prompting workers to act as products or mini businesses (Entwistle & Wissinger, 2006), portrayed as self-reliant and responsible for their own success and failures that necessitate active management of the self (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2009; Storey et al., 2005). These workers have been shown to actively network and self-promote to improve their chances for future employment (Hoedemaekers, 2018; Blair, 2009; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, 2007), as well as envisaged as calculative, rational individuals gaining new knowledge as investments in their ‘human capital’ (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020). Other studies have noted the alluring promise of self-fulfilling, autonomous jobs that prompts cultural workers to accept precarity, “reproducing themselves as ‘exploitable’” (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020, p. 13) and reinforcing the power relations of neoliberal enterprise that establish the image of the entrepreneurial self as a blueprint for worker subjectivity (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017; McRobbie, 2015, 2016; Neff et al., 2005).

Although such studies have been essential in drawing attention to the proliferation of the neoliberal logics of enterprise in cultural work and to the potential for self-exploitation, they appear to downplay the more complex ways in which enterprising work is enmeshed with alternative non-economic discourses. Consideration of the role of these alternative discourses is important, as it opens new possibilities for understanding entrepreneurial work beyond deterministic theorisations of neoliberal enterprise (Fournier & Grey, 1999). Analysis of ethnographically collected data within

community arts in this study highlighted a complex discursive terrain permeated by entrepreneurial languages of competition, autonomy, flexibility and adaptability, responsibility, and rational calculations. It echoes the claims that the discourse of enterprise does indeed appear to be a characteristic feature of cultural work (Banks, 2007), extending its reach into the generally non-commercialised, publicly funded domains of community arts. Yet, this research also indicates that understanding the production of the discourse of enterprise in the cultural work of community arts necessitates sensitivity to alternative vocabularies, particularly of precarious work and caring about the community, as important supplements to existing logics of enterprise. These alternative vocabularies act as grounds for production, reproduction, and resistance to neoliberal logics of enterprise, whilst also challenging its paradigmatic status.

The following discussion thus considers how the enterprising work of community arts relates to wider dynamics of work and employment, adding new knowledge about the multifaceted workings, shapes, and boundaries of entrepreneurial subjectivity. Sections 7.2 – 7.5 highlight the empirical contributions of this study in terms of extending current understandings of enterprising discourse in the under-researched area of community arts work. This involves looking at how participants aligned their subject positions along entrepreneurial vocabularies of competition, autonomy, flexibility, and rational calculations. Section 7.6 relates these to wider theory, by recognising the role of alternative discourses in the reproduction of and resistance to neoliberal logics of enterprise and how they can open up possibilities for more complex, contextually-bound analysis of enterprising work beyond antagonistic visions of current enterprise theory (Du Gay, 1996, 1994b; Gay & Salaman, 1992).

7.2 Acceptable and Unacceptable Competition

Previous efforts to map out the shape and form of enterprise in contemporary work and employment focused on the promotion of competition as a fundamental principle drawn from the domain of business. Linked to the idea of “the *homo oeconomicus*-entrepreneur ... as entrepreneur of himself [*sic*], has only competitors” (Donzelot,

2008, p. 129), enterprising workers are presented as individualised subjects concerned primarily with self-interest and economic struggle against other people within the labour market (Read, 2009; Donzelot, 2008; Foucault, 2008; Keat, 1991b, 1991a). As this study has shown, community arts workers do appear to draw on vocabularies of competition as they reflect on the nature of their work, recruitment within the labour market, and the availability of public funding to support projects in the community. They recognise that competition is pervasive, as freelance workers and community arts organisations compete for new work opportunities and scarce funding. As such, this study echoes similar findings highlighted in existing research, showing that the vocabularies of competition widely pervade the broader sectors of cultural work, requiring workers to adopt a competitive outlook (Sandoval, 2018; Naudin, 2015; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, 2007; Storey et al., 2005). Such competition appears to be reproduced within the context of precarious work and a lack of opportunities for funding and employment in community-oriented work (to be discussed further in Section 7.6).

Yet, as has already been noted across other sectors of cultural work (Luckman, 2018; Sandoval, 2018; Naudin, 2015; Coulson, 2012), the findings of this research also show that workers can be hesitant to be seen as competitive subjects associated with the world of business work. As has been discussed, this ‘unacceptable’ competitive subject position manifests itself as being in a constant economic struggle against other people and having to win at their expense, taking advantage, exploiting, and inducing harm to others, whilst having an attitude of animosity towards other individuals. In other words, such a construction of a competitive worker echoes the mainstream representations of successful entrepreneurs and business leaders as often being seen ‘narcissistic’ and ‘psychopaths’ (Pfeffer, 2021). For many participants of this study, being such an entrepreneurial subject appears to go against their individual values and the ethos of community arts work based on prosocial notions of caring, collegiality, equity, and support (Crummy, 2017; Kelly, 1984; Moriarty, 2017; Beirne & Knight, 2004).

However, the language of competition is not completely effaced in community arts. As this study has shown, workers construct and reframe images of competitive selves that are deemed compatible with the prosocial ethos of community arts. This research has also shown that workers in the community arts sector of cultural work appropriate

the features of enterprise most useful to them, rather than being unreflexively constituted by neoliberal logics, similar to the findings by Cohen and Musson (2000) in relation to entrepreneurs. Such findings echo and augment existing research into cultural work (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020; Haynes & Marshall, 2018; Coulson, 2012; Storey et al., 2005). These studies illustrated that creative workers may adopt enterprising aspects of work if they aligned with their particular workplace situations, rather than blindly following the imperatives of the markets in search of economic growth and career success. In this study in particular, workers appear to produce a ‘reverse discourse’ of competition (Foucault, 1978), whereby they employ the same vocabulary of enterprise, but orient it towards non-economic, prosocial goals. For instance, this has been illustrated in how participants have drawn on alternative vocabularies apropos competition, making available subject positions, such as ‘arrogant’, ‘ambitious’, and ‘competitive within’. These discursive alternatives to individualistic competition enable an alignment of competitiveness towards sustaining organisational work, making the quality of community projects better, and bringing advantages to local communities. Thus, such competition lacks the individualised characteristics of self-interest and desire for success often noted in many other industries of cultural work (Wallis et al., 2019; Kleppe, 2017; McRobbie, 2016), but not abandoned completely. The community arts workers in this study appeared to manoeuvre within the conditions of possibility of neoliberalism without negating or precluding competitive positionality, and actually allowing it to help maintain and prioritise the prosocial aspects upon which community arts appears to be principled (Matarasso, 1998, 2013, 2019b; Crummy, 2017; Jeffers, 2017a; Moriarty, 2017; Beirne & Knight, 2004; Goldbard, 1993).

7.3 The Productive Aspects of Autonomy

Existing studies define enterprising work as predicated upon values of autonomy, envisaging people as enterprising selves who aspire to be in control, be independent and self-reliant, take responsibility for their own actions, and “find meaning in existence by shaping ... life through acts of choice” (Rose, 1992, p. 142; Du Gay, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). One way in which this autonomous position is acted

out relates to the idea of individuals portrayed as ‘sovereign consumers’, who exercise their autonomy by “looking to ‘add value’ in every sphere of existence” (Du Gay & Salaman, 1992, p. 627). Tracing the organisational developments starting in the latter part of the 20th century, such scholarship highlights the replacement of traditional centrally-controlled, bureaucratic relationships towards the culture of the customer as a paradigmatic model for relations in the workplace (Rose, 1999b, 1999c; Du Gay, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). As such, workers are envisioned as reflexive, self-steering individuals for whom “paid work and consumption are just different playing grounds for the same activity; that is, different terrains upon which the enterprising self seeks to master, better and fulfil itself” (Du Gay, 1996, p. 65). The ethic of the enterprising self and the sovereign consumer is “radically utilitarian in its individualism” (Heelas, 1991, p. 78). The findings in this study do show that community arts workers indeed engage with the language of workplace and creative autonomy, which is often seen as characteristic of cultural work (Simpson & Pullen, 2018; Umney & Kretsos, 2014; Dobson, 2011; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Banks, 2010; Gill, 2007; Neff et al., 2005). The autonomy of community arts workers emerges through references to participants being in control over the shape and form of their own work schedules, retaining freedom of choice and access to creativity in workshops, and generally having the ability to work “under [their] own narrative” (Hugh, interview data). Independence thus appears to be presented as a much-vaunted characteristic of community arts work and as something that is valuable to its workers.

However, this research does not find evidence of the language of consumption in relation to participants as autonomous subjects. It concurs with Vallas and Cummins (2015) that the theory of enterprise must now go beyond the conception of the ‘sovereign consumer’ and consider other discursive developments as a basis for understanding the nature of work and employment in community arts. The findings show that workers indeed personally celebrated autonomy in their work, talking about it as something they “really enjoyed” (Meghan, interview), found “quite exciting” (Elsie, interview), loved, and found “way more comfortable” than any other work outside of community arts (Chloe, interview). For many, autonomy was portrayed as a personally fulfilling aspect of work. Yet, these manifestations of autonomy had little in common with the “radically utilitarian” (Heelas, 1991, p. 78) image of the enterprising/sovereign consumer who seeks to exercise their autonomy and freedom

as individualised projects of self-fulfilment, self-mastery, and self-betterment no different from the field of consumption (Du Gay, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992).

What this study suggests is that the language of autonomy within community arts appears to be enmeshed with individual references to caring about people, whereby, to exercise freedom and control is no longer solely about consumer-like self-fulfilment, but is turned towards benefiting the local community. To exercise autonomy and choice then, is about navigating the intricacies of the terrain of cultural work and finding ways for bettering the community, contributing to the wellbeing of its individuals, bringing joy to their lives, introducing new creative experiences, and improving the spaces of community arts workshops. By drawing attention to the autonomy of community arts linked to vocabularies of caring, this study connects with notions of creative autonomy that go beyond individualised, commercial aspects of enterprise (Banks, 2010).

There is a marked difference in the way the language of autonomy emerged across different groups of participants in this study: freelancers and non-freelancers. For the former group, their autonomous subject positions were generally produced in binary opposition to jobs outside the community arts domain, echoing the broader scepticism towards bureaucratic forms of government within the discourse of enterprise (Florida, 2004; Du Gay, 1996; Rose, 1999c, 1999b). Reflecting the findings in other sectors of cultural work (McRobbie, 2016; Dobson, 2011; Gill, 2007), freelance participants in this study engage with the autonomous language of control, choice, and independence contingent upon the ‘bureaucratic other’ outside community arts. This ‘bureaucratic other’, envisaged by participants as roles like teachers or full-time employees ‘stuck’ under control of their bosses, is also imagined as an undesirable position. To be the ‘bureaucratic other’ is to lack the autonomy that is much vaunted by freelance workers and to lack control over the shape and form of work, bound within hierarchical management structures. Such an un-autonomous worker is further constructed as having to be at the mercy of their superiors to have “permission to be creative” (Hugh, interview), finding themselves involved in Tayloresque (1915) repetitive and boring work, as well as confined within rigid organisational structures, paperwork, formality, and the legalism of bureaucracy that hamper their creativity further.

Against this backdrop, the autonomous positions of freelance participants are therefore constituted relationally, supporting the notion that subjectivity in community arts is a ‘contingent’ construct (Du Gay, 1996; Laclau, 1990) - a dynamic noted in other sectors of cultural work that present traditional ‘nine-to-five’ jobs as ‘boring’ and ‘banal’ (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017; Taylor, 2011; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006). The conditions of possibility (Foucault, 1978) of such autonomy are thus constituted in an antagonistic power relationship of community arts with the ‘outside’ world of work and employment. Through these relational representations of the self, freelance artists construct idealised visions of community arts space as autonomous, independent, creative, and unrestrained space of choice, whilst offering a view of any other domains as controlling, hierarchical, uncreative, and constraining.

However, unlike their freelance counterparts, non-freelance participants generally compared themselves less to other industries and instead recognised that they were not completely unrestrained in exercising their autonomy. As Cohen and Musson (2000) put it, people do not “construct their realities independently, unfettered by social, cultural and institutional constraints” (p. 44). Participants employed on a contractual basis and involved in positions of management appear to draw on a particular language of autonomy as ‘bounded’ by organisational, institutional, and legal constraints placed upon them and their organisations. Various constructs, like business plans, yearly targets, goals, policies, and general frameworks present a contextual limit to the form and extent of individual freedom and enterprising self-reliance. Furthermore, whilst freelancers straddle the competitive labour domain where autonomy, self-reliance, and flexibility appear to be important in dealing with precarious working conditions, non-freelancers appear to be embedded within the institutional constraints of community arts organisations due to their reliance on public funding for their sustenance. Thus, there appears to be a situation reflective of “The Faustian bargain” (Alexander, 2018, p. 29) made between arts organisations and state institutions. Here, revenue streams from funding organisations, such as the National Lottery fund or Arts Councils, are presented as integral to ensuring organisational sustainability, pay for staff and recruitment of creative practitioners for projects, as well as allocating resources for running projects in the community. However, as this study shows, there is also a general recognition that such money brings in certain ‘obligations’ that impose limits to individual autonomy. Freedom is therefore understood as one’s capacity to act

within the boundaries of institutional constraints imposed by funders, often connoting achievement of targets set out by and reflective of the current neoliberal political system in Britain, thus instrumentalising workplace autonomy for these community arts workers.

Overall, the findings suggest that autonomy functions as a technology of self-government, setting out the conditions of possibility that confine and orient workers towards being productive subjects in achieving the prosocial goals of community arts. It is 'productive' in a sense that it acts as a strong imperative, guiding the conduct of community arts workers towards achieving the goals and objectives of their work (Foucault, 1980). It disciplines workers to act as self-reliant, responsible, and often institutionally compliant individuals reflecting and further reproducing the neoliberal ideas of contemporary subjects of work. Any other accounts of autonomy beyond being directed towards achieving the prosocial goals of community arts were virtually non-existent: freedom was not a complete absence of control, but a sense of the self being able to exercise one's own autonomy in achieving work objectives. Thus, these findings support the notion of Rose (1999b) that autonomy never means 'complete' freedom, but instead it connotes "a double movement of autonomization and responsabilization" (p. 476). In this sense, this study points to the technological character of vocabularies of autonomy in community arts (Rose, 1999c, 2017), which appear to confine and direct the autonomous strivings of cultural workers towards being productive, responsible, and in essence entrepreneurial subjects of work, even if it may entail insecurity and uncertainty (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017; McRobbie, 2002, 2016). However, as this discussion further illustrates in Section 7.6, it is important not to reduce the work of community arts to solely business-oriented principles of markets, necessitating a consideration of alternative visions of enterprise reframed along non-economic discourses.

7.4 Entrepreneurial Flexibility

As community arts workers draw on the language of autonomy, they appear to engage with notions of flexibility as a defining feature of their work. The existing scholarship

draws attention to the responsabilising aspects of enterprise that necessitate a particular type of “flexible citizenship” (Ilcan, 2009; Ong, 1999, p. 6). This form of flexibilisation connotes engagement with self-steering, dynamic capacities of people, in every aspect of life - education (Guirdham, 1992), religion (Hunter, 2004), and the workplace (Du Gay, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992; Bagguley, 1991). This research contributes to knowledge within the generally understudied area of cultural work in community arts, by offering new understandings of how such workers appear as flexible subjects of enterprise. As this study has shown, community arts workers indeed tend to draw on vocabularies of flexibility reminiscent of ‘task flexibility’ or ‘labour process flexibility’ in organisational studies (Hill et al., 2010; Bagguley, 1991; Atkinson, 1985), which involve having a capacity for performing a variety of different tasks and using a diverse range of skills related to fulfilment of work responsibilities. Community arts workers position themselves as flexible individuals who, like entrepreneurs, must be solely responsible for the conduct of their work and multi-task across a variety of work spheres. This could involve a range of activities, such as applying for funding opportunities, liaising with customers, networking with and marketing to potential employers, running advertisements, maintaining physical working spaces, writing and submitting reports to funders, branching out to other forms of cultural activity to generate income, and generally “creating your own opportunities” (Demi, interview). This flexibility of community arts workers is to be acquired and maintained through “cultivating, maintaining and marketing a variety of different skills” (Hoedemaekers, 2018, p. 9) for the purposes of employability.

Although, as this study has illustrated, flexibility appears to be a characteristic feature of community arts, it seems to be particularly prominent in accounts of freelance creative practitioners. Whilst existing research into cultural work shows the reproduction of flexibility as linked to individualised strivings and protean attitudes to self-actualisation, empowerment, and success (Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020; Wallis et al., 2019; Duffy & Wissinger, 2017; Dobson, 2011; Banks, 2007; Neff et al., 2005; McRobbie, 2002), this study instead finds links to the precarious work of creative practitioners. The neoliberal model of the entrepreneur of the self (Foucault, 2008) is reinforced in the data, as freelancers make references to the “effective management of the self” (Entwistle & Wissinger, 2006, p. 782) reminiscent of the world of business, borne out within the contexts of financial insecurity, resource deficits in running

community projects, the deleterious legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, and constant labour market competition. The discourse of precarious work appears to be implicated in the reproduction of flexible subject positions of freelancers who must ‘create their own opportunities’ (Demi, interview), echoing and augmenting a small corpus of previous studies in cultural work where flexibility has been shown as a necessary response to insecure working conditions (Hoedemaekers, 2018; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2009; Storey et al., 2005). Left on their own to face the vicissitudes of post-Fordist labour markets, the “responsibilizing ethos” (Ilcan, 2009, p. 223) of enterprise is acutely apparent for community arts workers, as they have to self-discipline and tend to their own economic and professional sustenance individually, without an existence of or recourse to external authority or support. This point is further explored in more detail in Section 7.6.1.

In emphasising the role of precarious discourse in reproduction of entrepreneurial flexibility, this research does not seek to portray enterprising work as reproduced exclusively within the context of precarious employment of freelancers. The study has also shown that community arts workers across the board engage with flexible vocabularies linked to compassionate, caring aspects of the work they performed. Concurring with Alacovska and Bissonnette (2021) that cultural work can be seen as a “labour of care” (p. 146), being flexible in community arts can be understood as being discursively linked to prosocial vocabularies of caring about the community, rather than always related to self-centred, individualised vocabularies of the marketplace. A prominent way in which this has emerged is in relation to workers adaptability to the needs and wants of community members that necessitate being patient, resilient, and resourceful entrepreneurial subjects. This adaptability directed towards benefiting the community has been shown in the way participants talk about the necessity to be calm and not to panic in the face of challenges, be “good at coming up with a plan B” (Paula, interview) for the sake of delivery of projects in the community, and find flexible ways of promoting skill development, individual wellbeing, and a sense of belonging in the community. Thus, this study shows that community arts workers do not simply adopt an “amoebic-like” (Storey et al., 2005, p. 1048) outlook on work to flexibly cater for the needs of their customers and employers (Entwistle & Wissinger, 2006). Instead it stipulates that worker flexibility is in close proximity to the ethics of care and individual desires to benefit local

community, going beyond the economic logics of customer satisfaction within the commercial organisational domain (Du Gay, 1996).

7.5 Beyond the Rational, Utility-Maximising Subjects of Cultural Work

As discussed in the Literature Review, existing Foucauldian studies of neoliberalism tend to draw attention to the production of workers as calculative subjects of enterprise (Foucault, 2008; Peters, 2001; O'Malley, 1996). Within contemporary work and employment, workers are envisaged as a *homo economicus* who act according to the “the economic model of supply and demand and of investment-costs-profit” (Foucault, 2008, p. 242). Such economic subjects of enterprise must see every action made as “an investable advantage in a competitive world” (Houghton, 2019, p. 621), aiming to gain the necessary human capital to make a future income possible” (Foucault, 2008, p. 224). Within the domain of cultural work, the proliferation of calculative enterprising subjectivity is also apparent, as studies have highlighted the rational-choice calculations of cultural workers who attempt to maximise their own economic utility, pursue work as a vocation, be successful, and have better employment opportunities (Hoedemaekers, 2018; Blair, 2009; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, 2007; Mackenzie & McKinlay, 2020; Neff et al., 2005). This study contributes further to these understandings of the calculative subjectivity of cultural workers, by extending analysis to a sector of work outside the commercial cultural domain. It shows that, for community arts workers, calculations can be important aspects of their everyday work, made visible as future-oriented, forward-planning actions, such as attempting to gain access to new employment, funding, resources, and useful knowledge about their work, often through practices of networking and partnering.

However, in line with the critique against monolithic representations of enterprising work (Christiaens, 2020; Fournier & Grey, 1999), the study does not find evidence that community arts workers portrayed themselves as utility-maximising labour market entrepreneurial actors who make strategic ‘investments’ into the “preservation, reproduction and reconstruction of one’s own human capital” (Gordon, 1991, p. 44). Neither did this study confirm risk minimisation strategies often linked to

entrepreneurial identities (Foucault, 2008; O'Malley, 1996). If community arts workers were indeed calculative actors, as Foucault and other have envisaged, then such rational choice understandings of their work would likely prompt their quick exit from the precariousness of community arts work towards more secure forms of employment (Christiaens, 2020). This study nevertheless shows that community arts workers appear to be fully dedicated to their work, often for many years, despite the precarious working conditions they face.

The important contribution that this study makes is highlighting the role of alternative discourses in relation to the calculative subject positions of community arts workers. To portray a community arts worker exclusively as *homo economicus* risks detracting from the multifaceted manifestations of enterprising work, downplaying the 'non-calculative' languages of collaboration and 'caring about' as important in the reproduction of workplace subjectivity (Christiaens, 2020). For Mackenzie and McKinlay (2020) the cultural worker "appears as a deeply ambivalent subject" (p. 16) who on one hand reifies creative autonomy and the intrinsic importance of creativity, whilst also being "attracted to entrepreneurial discourses of self-realisation". It is true that these community arts workers did indeed appear to be 'deeply ambivalent subjects' that negotiated conflicting discourses and drew on contradictory languages in the positioning of the self. Yet, this ambiguity appears not to be imbued with individualised self-interest or concerns about the primacy of art or creative success. Their calculative positions can be understood as mere plans for the future with no guaranteed results. These workers forge connections and partnerships with an outlook for coping with precarious working conditions and find ways to support and sustain themselves and the work of their organisations, as well as to provide more opportunities for supporting peers and benefiting the local community.

It would be erroneous to suggest that community arts workers may simply employ non-economic discourses as a 'camouflage' to avoid being seen as "cold-blooded business[people]" (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, p. 239). Community arts workers construct versions of calculative conduct that they deem acceptable, involving the vocabularies of business enterprises, such as active forward-planning and networking, economic exchanges of resources, and mutually beneficial partnering. Yet, they combine such entrepreneurial vocabulary by drawing on seemingly opposing discursive resources of collectivism and collegiality, such as community-oriented

languages of mutually beneficial, ‘symbiotic’ (Chloe, interview) relationships, collectivist ‘better together’ (Catherine, interview) modes of partnerships, and caring attitudes towards fellow peers and the community. Workers appear to ‘pick and choose’ (Cohen & Musson, 2000) compatible elements of enterprise, such as active work, networking, self-promotion, forward-planning, economic exchanges, whilst shunning those elements deemed inappropriate for the work of community arts, such as self-centrism, individualism, economic growth orientation, profitability, competition. The production of such discourse ensures economic sustenance of community arts work amidst the uncertain labour market conditions, and may help to uphold the wider, ethically oriented purposes of community arts linked to ideas of support and mutual care.

However, unlike their employed counterparts who talked about the role of networking and partnerships as paths to caring and collaborative work, freelance participants appear to be positioned more visibly as “marketers and entrepreneurs of their own labour” (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, p. 237). As this study has indicated, guided by their relative insecurity in the workplace, freelance practitioners position themselves as calculative and active subjects of enterprise who are acutely aware of their job insecurity and dedicate themselves to the project of building new networks and relationships with an outlook for creating better work opportunities. Such calculative, enterprising outlook portrayed as a necessity within the context of pervasive insecurity has already been noted in wider commercial sectors of cultural work (Wallis et al., 2019; Butler & Stoyanova Russell, 2018; Kleppe, 2017; Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Lee, 2012; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010; Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Gill & Pratt, 2008; Gill, 2007; Batt et al., 2000; Bourdieu, 1998). Yet, in emphasising the calculative aspects of community arts work within the practice of networking in particular, it is important to note that such calculations appear to be different from the constructions of networking in wider commercialised areas of cultural work – those that envisage workplace relationships in utilitarian, competitive, rational-choice, economic terms (Blair, 2009; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, 2007). This study does not claim that the language of collaboration or caring was absent in the formation of the subjectivity of freelance workers, as indeed it has been shown that creative practitioners often portrayed themselves as ethical, caring, and compassionate individuals. As Section 7.6 further illustrates, alternative non-economic languages

were integral in the constitution of the subjectivity of community arts workers in opening possibilities for alternative visions of entrepreneurial subjectivity.

7.6 Neoliberal Enterprise and Its Alternatives

This study responds to calls by writers such as Fournier and Grey (1999) to consider the role of alternative non-economic vocabularies in the production of and resistance to the discourse of enterprise in the domain of work and employment. Existing theorisations of enterprising work, particularly those in the works of Du Gay, appear to allocate a paradigmatic status to the entrepreneurial forms of subjectivity permeating every part of the society on the basis of which the nature of work is determined and judged (Foucault, 2008; Du Gay, 1994b, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). However, as Fournier and Grey noted, such a view of enterprising work appears to be problematic, as it downplays alternative discursive resources available to workers, thus presenting the neoliberal rationality of enterprise as a *fait accompli*. As such, alternative discourses have been shown to play an important role in the constitution of workers' subjectivities, including those within the domain of cultural work (Luckman, 2018; Sandoval, 2018; Morgan & Wood, 2014; Coulson, 2012; Antcliff et al., 2007). This is not to say that Du Gay - a key proponent of the theory of enterprise - is fully negligent of the role of other discourses. He clearly articulates the role of bureaucratic discourses in the formation of and as grounds for resistance against the proliferation of neoliberal forms of work. This is notable in his defence of the bureau against the all-encompassing, efficiency-oriented, economic logics of enterprise as incompatible and indeed detrimental to the ethical and democratic role it plays within the public sector (Byrkjeflot & Du Gay, 2012; Du Gay, 1994a, 1994b, 1996). However, despite highlighting the importance of the public bureau against the flexibilisation attempts of political elites, Du Gay appears to provide limited consideration of other, alternative discourses. As such the account of workplace subjectivity appears overly deterministic, being "trapped within the dualism of enterprise *or* bureaucracy" (Fournier & Grey, 1999, p. 118). Although in his analysis of contemporary organisational reforms, Du Gay (1996) attempts to reconcile enterprise with the possibility of alternative subject positions, such analysis remains

silent on how enterprise came to occupy such a privileged and contested position, nor explains how other discourses may co-exist alongside it (Fournier & Grey, 1999).

Against this backdrop, this research draws on empirical data analysis to theoretically contribute to the understanding of the role of alternative vocabularies in the production of, resistance to, and co-existence with the discourse of enterprise. It shows that although the entrepreneurial language featured consistently within and across the accounts of community arts work – a dynamic that has been made apparent throughout Sections 7.2-7.5, neoliberal enterprise by no means retained a privileged position. This was exemplified in the way community arts workers employed alternative discourses that appeared to both reproduce and resist the power effects of neoliberal enterprise, opening opportunities for alternative subject positions that accounted for individual values of caring about, as discussed below.

7.6.1 Precarity and Operationalising Enterprise

As has been illustrated, the relationship between entrepreneurial and non-entrepreneurial vocabularies appears to be complex, going beyond economic versus non-economic binary oppositions. Alternative discourses may not only form “a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy” (Foucault, 1978, p. 101) – as in the case of individual compassion for the community and prioritisation of collective forms of working over competition – but they can also transmit and produce the power of enterprise in community arts work. The proliferation of the language of insecurity and financial uncertainty observed in this research confirms the link between the discourse of precarious work and the production of the neoliberal subject. Other studies of cultural work have tangentially pointed out the link between the reproduction of entrepreneurial logics and precarious work (Chin, 2021; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, 2007, 2009; Entwistle & Wissinger, 2006; Storey et al., 2005), and thus this research adds to these insights by showing that precarity may play an important role in the reproduction of enterprise.

Theoretically, Foucault discussed operationalisation of enterprise by focusing on the role of risk and danger (Masquelier, 2019). Positing that enterprise has become a “the formative power of society” (Foucault, 2008, p. 148), the imperatives of the markets have led to normalisation of fear. To “Live dangerously” (Foucault, 2008, p. 66) has become a motto of everyday life, conditioning workers to see their life through the prism of fear. This ‘fear’ acts as grounds and “motive for the constitution of the responsible, reliable, and rational self” (Lemke, 2012 as quoted in Masquelier, 2019, p. 138). Indeed, this constant awareness of the pervasiveness of financial insecurity was noted in this research too, ‘hanging low’ over community arts workers in the shape of concerns for economic sustenance, job uncertainty, the blurring of work and private lives, lack of access to resources to run projects, lack of financial stability, and general preoccupation with economically ‘surviving’. The entrepreneurial labour of workers, such as active involvement in creating work opportunities, competitive outlook on work, acceptance of profit-making to support projects, and flexibility then appears to be governed by individual strivings to overcome the challenging and ‘risky’ aspects of their work in the shape of precarity.

However, this study also highlights that the uptake of precarious language in the production of enterprising subject positions was not uniform across all participants. Notably, although precarity was generally accepted as pervasive, it was in the accounts of freelance creative practitioners that the link between enterprising work and job uncertainty was made most prominent. Following Masquelier (2019), making sense of these differences can prove problematic if viewed through a Foucauldian understanding of enterprise, as Foucault presented an image of a subject that “exercise[s] their freedom and negotiate[s] the imperatives of the market in a uniform manner” (p. 141). Contending with this position, Masquelier pointed out that one should take into consideration “how social agents conduct themselves as entrepreneurial subjects ... [by] adequately recognizing the extent to which one’s economic (and cultural) resources shape one’s own experience of precarity” (2019, p. 141). This study provides support to this position on the reproduction of enterprise. The difference in the uptake of entrepreneurial subject positions in relation to precarious work appears to be contingent upon the different roles and privileges of participants in community arts. Where freelancers appeared to be working in the context of precarious employment - they find themselves with fewer protections than

in more traditional forms of employment (Vallas & Cummins, 2015), and a lack of corporate control and support structures necessitate individual responsibility and reflexive self-management (Entwistle & Wissinger, 2006). There appears to be evidence of uneven distribution of insecurity across the cultural work of community arts, where the power of enterprise is felt most prominently across those workers with least social and economic protections, having to bear the responsibility and blame for their own working conditions or risk failure (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017; Banks, 2007; Neff et al., 2005). Finding themselves in more precarious positions than their counterparts, with no stability or certainty of employment amidst neoliberal forms of work, creative practitioners are compelled to resort to enterprising, flexible, active, self-reliant, resourceful, and calculative work. As such, this study also adds to the understanding of precarity and entrepreneurial forms of work noted across freelance workers in other areas of cultural work too (Morgan & Wood, 2014; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007, 2006; Entwistle & Wissinger, 2006; Storey et al., 2005), showing that creative practitioners may adopt entrepreneurial positions out of necessity (Albinsson, 2018).

7.6.2 Don't Call Me Entrepreneurial: Resisting the Business Logics of Enterprise

Existing studies of cultural work point to the predominance of individualised, competitive, entrepreneurial subjectivities of creative labour (Hoedemaekers, 2018; McRobbie, 2016; Blair, 2009; Banks, 2007; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, 2007; Storey et al., 2005). However, such outlooks on cultural work risk overlooking more complex and diverse aspects of worker subjectivities in community arts shaped through alternative non-economic vocabularies. As this study has shown, workers in the community arts sector were often ambivalent in their uptake of entrepreneurial subjectivity. On one hand, participants accepted enterprise as a means of sustaining their work, achieving more effective delivery of projects, and having a positive impact in the community. On the other hand, if the success of neoliberal governmentality is a matter of individual 'identification' with the neoliberal subject (Dean, 1999), then as this research has shown, community arts workers were generally hesitant to be associated with particular economic images of businesspeople and entrepreneurs. Few

studies of cultural work outside community arts have made similar observations, highlighting the reluctance of workers to be seen as ‘properly’ entrepreneurial and be associated with the ideas of money-making and profit-seeking (Albinsson, 2018; Haynes & Marshall, 2018; Coulson, 2012). They also highlighted individual opposition to the ideas of entrepreneurial growth and “combative competition” (Luckman, 2018, p. 320) through partaking in more collective, collegiate, and ethically-oriented practices. Indeed, the current study shows similar reluctance in cultural workers to be defined as ‘fully’ entrepreneurial, because to be such an individual is equated with generating money through commercial activity, buying and selling, being motivated by profit and economic growth, and prioritising self-interest at the expense of others.

It is not to say that this reluctance to be associated with the ‘money-making entrepreneur’ meant a complete rejection of money. Participants did indeed recognise the necessity to sustain themselves economically, as well as to ‘make money to wash their faces’ (Catherine, interview) reminiscent of ‘reluctant entrepreneurs’ described in the study of musicians by Haynes and Marshall (2018) or ‘sacrificial entrepreneurs’ in the analysis of community arts work by Chin (2021). The findings of this study however contribute to showing how this ‘reluctance’ against profit-seeking, competitiveness, selfishness, and growth-orientation was made visible through languages of caring about that formed the basis for resistance against the commercial constructions of the entrepreneur. Unlike previous studies that generally drew attention to the predominance of artistic positions as integral to defying such an image of the entrepreneur (Luckman, 2018), in this study the motto of “Care, kindness, support” (Meghan, interview) was placed front and centre by community arts workers as a form of resistance against being classified as entrepreneurs or business people. These workers – most of whom also identified as being artists, even if they were involved in management of community projects rather than direct work with communities – did not appear to draw on artistic resources in accepting or defying entrepreneurial self-identifications.

Unlike commercialised sectors of work, the discourse of caring about formed a fundamental part of these workers’ attempts to be seen as non-entrepreneurial subjects. The discourse of caring about appears to act as a resource that community arts workers draw upon, not only to resist ideas and practices of entrepreneurial labour, but to show

that relational concerns towards others may form a key element of individual subjectivity. This includes a desire to change people's lives, bring value to local communities, promote sharing of knowledge and support, and practice cultural democracy through fostering access to art and creativity in the community (Matarasso, 2019; Goldbard & Adams, 1990). Similar findings have been observed by Alacovska and Bisonette (2021), who proposed that "creative work represents a distinct form of other-centred work, or labour of care, in which interpersonal connectedness, relationality and attentiveness to the vulnerability of others are fundamental characteristics of work" (p. 146). Against this backdrop, this study confirms that the cultural and creative work of community arts does indeed present 'a distinct form of other-centred work', but also that such discourse is integral to the ethical formation of worker subjectivity. This research further extends such conceptualisations of other-centred work by showing that caring about could be a political project that necessitates one's active involvement in the production and distribution of care amongst fellow citizens and peers – a position diametrically opposed to the money-making, competitive, self-reliant image of the entrepreneurial self. Thus, the paradigmatic status of enterprise appears to be challenged, where it may no longer be seen as "an inextricable cultural force that is creeping across all boundaries and spheres of life" (Fournier & Grey, 1999, p. 111). Yet, drawing on Foucauldian readings of power, this is not to say that such positionality is completely free from the power effects of enterprise (Foucault, 1978; Foucault, 1980). Indeed, the discourse of caring about appears to provide a blueprint for worker subjectivity to the extent that such subjectivity was generally different from, or in response to, the neoliberal image of the entrepreneur.

However, this study also contributes to showing some of the more subtle forms of resistance against the neoliberal logics of enterprise. Such resistance cannot be easily reduced to an 'enterprise versus non-enterprise' binary opposition. Following Fournier (1998), resistance can manifest from within the power relations of enterprise, whereby the discourse of caring about does not merely reproduce the established neoliberal dogma in cultural work, but instead opens up opportunities for "subvert[sion] ... by shifting its referents" (p. 73). This does not solely imply a production of a 'reverse discourse' of enterprise (Foucault, 1978), whereby workers re-deploy the categories and vocabularies of neoliberalism that otherwise would have marginalised any form

of collegiate, supportive, non-individualised forms of subjectivity. Instead, it shows that the meaning of the enterprise discourse should never be assumed as static, as it appears to “embed, entail and presuppose” (Parker, 1992, p. 13) alternative vocabularies, such as caring about in the case of community arts. This was apparent in the way entrepreneurial subjectivity in the study lacked links to neoliberal aspects of individualisation, profit-orientation, and competition. It appears to be reframed alongside the ethics of care using either the same vocabulary of enterprise or using alternative vocabularies that selectively appropriate aspects of ‘acceptable’ enterprising behaviour. For example, community arts workers were shown to regard themselves as ‘competitive to a certain level’, ‘competitive within’, ‘arrogant’, and ‘driven to succeed’ that connote actively pushing oneself to produce best results and gain access to funding and job opportunities, finding enterprising ways of dealing with daily challenges for the benefit of local communities without resorting to actually competing against other people, or having negativity or belligerence towards potential competitors in the labour market. As the findings of this study suggest, entrepreneurial logics were not completely avoided – participants did indeed adopt positions that could be considered competitive, autonomous, flexible, calculative, and in essence, entrepreneurial (Du Gay, 1996). Yet, neither of these enterprising elements were fully embraced in the way existing theorisations of neoliberal enterprise have suggested. Instead, there appears to be a discursive reframing of enterprise, opening new possibilities for subject positions that take account of individual values of caring about local communities, peers, and partners, going beyond the dichotomy of either submitting to enterprise or outright resisting it.

Acknowledging the interconnected and complex role of discourses in the production of subjectivity necessitates recognising that such subjectivity is ambivalent. The intricate interplay between economic and non-economic discourses highlights that subject positions of cultural work cannot be pigeonholed solely by applying enterprising categories nor be solely understood as being outside the effects of power of neoliberalism. This interplay of discourses provides a range of resources at the disposal of community arts workers to assemble their own subjectivity, whether it is through entrepreneurial aspects of flexibility and self-reliance, or caring attitudes of collegiality and peer support. Understanding workers in community arts as ambivalent subjects helps to highlight “the kind of relation one has to oneself to a creative activity”

(Foucault & Rabinow, 1984, p. 351), as they expertly navigate the precarious terrain of cultural work and weave individual concerns for welfare of fellow citizens and peers into the production of the 'caring entrepreneur of the self'. Fundamentally, acknowledging this ambivalence provides an opportunity for expanding current theorisations of the discourse of enterprise beyond antagonistic accounts of subject formation (see for example, Du Gay, 1996, 1994b; Gay & Salaman, 1992) and instead conceptualising it as a flexible discourse that presupposes a variety of competing meanings. This opens new avenues of understanding for how worker subjectivity is produced through the intricate interplay of economic and non-economic discourses.

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

This research aimed to explore whether and how the discourse of enterprise pervaded the cultural work of community arts in Wales, and to examine the subject positions that workers adopted in relation to this discourse. The following Conclusion Chapter highlights how this has been accomplished by detailing how this study addressed the Research Questions in Section 1.2. This chapter outlines the implications of this study's findings to current theorisations of enterprising work, followed by practical implications in relation to policymaking and managerial practice. Lastly, it discusses the limitations of this research, offering suggestions for future studies of enterprising discourse within the area of work and employment.

8.2 Addressing the Research Questions

Research Question 1: Does a discourse of enterprise pervade the cultural work of community arts in Wales?

As discussed in depth in Chapter Six, this study of cultural work in community arts practice in Wales did indeed observe a proliferation of entrepreneurial vocabularies within the accounts of community arts workers. The findings of this study shed light on five areas in which the enterprising work of participants was made visible, as these workers reflected on the nature of their work and employment in community arts. It is important to highlight, however, that although these vocabularies of enterprise pervaded the accounts of community arts work, they were in no way paradigmatic in relation to worker subjectivity. Instead, they were enmeshed with alternative non-economic discourses in the production of worker subjectivity, which will be discussed further in response to Research Question 2. The first way in which the discourse of enterprise emerged was linked with the idea of competition, which was generally

constructed as a pervasive feature of community arts work. Reflecting the constructions of competition as a neoliberal practice within the theory of enterprise (Read, 2009; Donzelot, 2008; Foucault, 2008; Keat, 1991a, 1991b), participants also linked this discursive object to the idea of being in a contest against other workers and organisations, fuelled by precarious working conditions. This competition invoked an image of a worker who must be solely interested in furthering their own interests in a struggle against the other people around them.

The second way in which the discourse of enterprise was made visible was in relation to autonomy as a characteristic feature of community arts practice. This autonomy connoted a person's capacity of being in control over their own work patterns and methods of conducting work unconstrained by bureaucratic formalities and excessive managerial control or the oversight of traditional employment. However, it is important to note that such representations of autonomy were not linked to the idea of cultural workers or artists as unrestrained and completely free subjects (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011). As this study has shown, the construction of autonomy appeared to be generally linked to the idea of achieving organisational goals, highlighting the productive elements of freedom and control that disciplined workers as flexible, self-reliant, and responsible individuals, reproducing the neoliberal ideals of contemporary forms of work (Rose, 1999b; Foucault, 1980). Thus, to be autonomous in community arts practice connoted a responsible subject of work who must exercise their own flexibility, exclusively directed towards working in the community. It also meant recognising that freedom was bounded within institutional, organisational, and legal frameworks, rules, obligations, and expectations that set out the conditions of possibility within which such autonomy could be meaningfully and productively exercised.

If autonomy appeared to be an integral part of individual enterprise, then flexibility emerged as one of the ways in which this autonomy was made practical. Thus, the third aspect of enterprise that emerged within the accounts of community arts workers was linked to entrepreneurial flexibility. As the analysis of data has shown, flexibility formed an important part of the discursive constitution of community arts work, which transpired as an individual's ability for multi-tasking in relation to, as well as adaptability for dealing with, various unexpected situations and challenges of everyday work. This flexibility also involved having a wide range of work-related

skills, such as writing funding applications, marketing, and networking, adapting to individual needs of community members, solving challenges ‘on the go’, and performing routine admin and maintenance of workspaces. Any lack of flexibility appeared to be presented as a matter of individual responsibility that must be reconciled through continuous involvement in “cultivating, maintaining and marketing a variety of different skills” (Hoedemaekers, 2018, p. 9; Gordon, 1991). This flexible outlook on work was particularly evident across the accounts of freelance creative practitioners, offering constructions of flexibility as self-management practices in creating and maintaining of their own work opportunities. Here, the idea of flexibility was linked to the discourse of enterprise, whereby a flexible worker was portrayed as someone who self-disciplines and is responsible for their own sustenance with no references to external support.

Another aspect of enterprise discourse that emerged in the field data was linked to calculative vocabularies of community arts workers. On one hand, this research contributed to the understanding of community arts work as pervaded by languages of forward planning and rational thinking linked to an individual’s desire to gain certain beneficial results, particularly in relation to practices of networking and partnering with other individuals and organisations. On the other hand, this study did not find support for the kind of utility-maximising visions of enterprise presented in existing academic research understood through “the economic model of supply and demand and of investment-costs-profit” (Foucault, 2008, p. 242). Nor did this study find evidence that the calculative language of community arts workers can be understood through practices of risk minimisation or via the notion of ‘investments’ into their own human capital (Foucault, 2008; O’Malley, 1996). Instead, the language of calculations was that of hope and expectations of getting future results without any guarantees, underpinned by non-individualised concerns about the community. This was particularly germane to the way the discourse of enterprise was enmeshed with alternative non-economic discourses that acted both as grounds for the reproduction, as well as reinterpretation and resistance to enterprise, which will be discussed in response to the Research Question 2.

The discourse of enterprise appears to place the image of the entrepreneur as a key subject position to take – a ubiquitous model for worker subjectivity that implies a diverse range of individual characteristics rooted in business-like behaviour (Foucault,

2008; Du Gay, 1996; Keat, 1991b), such as preoccupation with self-interest, competitiveness, and general animosity towards other people within the same labour market. This study did indeed find evidence of references to these characteristics in the accounts of community arts workers. Throughout the analysis of data from this study a particular image of the entrepreneur or the businessperson has been made apparent, as a subject position preoccupied with commercial activities of buying and selling products. This position also encompassed being driven by profits, self-interest, economic growth and widening of customer base, whilst also prioritising one's personal success over other people within the labour market. However, whilst the discourse of enterprise formed the basis for the construction of this entrepreneurial image, community arts workers viewed such a subject position as incompatible with the motivations and values of community arts work, rooted in ideas of collegiality and caring about the community and peers. Thus, the discourse of enterprise acted as a point of resistance, but also as a discursive resource that enabled community arts workers to flexibly construct their own version of enterprise that fitted within their particular situations and which they deemed acceptable in relation to their work.

Research Question 2: Does an enterprising subjectivity get reproduced in community arts practice?

Thus far, this study has shed light on the proliferation of the discourse of enterprise in community arts work, drawing attention to questions of competition, autonomy, self-reliance and responsibility, entrepreneurial flexibility, a calculative outlook on work practices, and the construction of the image of the entrepreneur. Yet, the reproduction of enterprising subjectivity was never a simple one, suggesting a more complex picture beyond paradigmatic theorisations of neoliberal governmentality (Foucault, 2008; Du Gay, 1994b, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992; Rose, 1992). In particular, this research has shown that community arts workers emerged as ambivalent subjects who both reproduced the power effects of neoliberal enterprise by “interact[ing] with [it] germanely, as befitting their particular reality” (Cohen & Musson, 2000, p. 44), while drawing on alternative non-economic discourses as resources for operationalisation of, and resistance to, individualising and competitive market imperatives of neoliberal enterprise. This was evident in the way community arts workers discursively shifted

the market principles of competitive enterprise away from the idea of actually competing against other people or organisations, reinterpreting competition along alternative vocabularies, such as ‘arrogance’, ‘ambitiousness’, ‘competitiveness within’, or ‘healthy competition’. These reinterpretations appeared to open a possibility for subject positions that reconciled various entrepreneurial aspects, such as flexibility, active involvement in work, multi-tasking, along alternative non-economic discourses of ‘caring about’ and collaboration. As such, there was a production of acceptable forms of competition that also implied a desire to benefit local communities, contribute to strengthening of social cohesion, and create meaningful, valuable, and beneficial work despite limited availability of resources. Importantly, this subject position shunned the idea of animosity against other people and causing harm in order to succeed. The resistance towards the individualised imperatives of competition was particularly evident in collaborative reciprocation and partnering offered as alternatives to enterprise, which implied a reality of community arts work based on ideas of collegiality, mutual support, and commonality of experiences as better ways for work-based practices beyond competition.

This study shed light on the enterprising aspects of community arts work, as participants made explicit the importance of autonomy and self-reliance as part of their everyday work. The language of autonomy was linked to individual references to retaining control over the shape and form of work, the choice of methods employed in conducting projects, and implied individual responsibility without a recourse to external support or direct managerial control. Yet, as this study has shown, the reproduction of the autonomous self was not uniform across all participants of this study and varied between freelancers and non-freelancers. For freelancers, the language of autonomy generally emerged in relation to binary oppositions against ‘other’ jobs outside the community arts domain, highlighting the contingent nature of the reproduction of worker subjectivity (Du Gay, 1996; Laclau, 1990). This was particularly evident as creative practitioners envisaged themselves through notions of freedom, individual control, and informality as opposed to seemingly non-creative professions, such as teaching. They portrayed traditional work as ‘dull’ and ‘mundane’, lacking individual control and autonomy to shape their own personal patterns of work. This work was envisaged as being subject to constant supervision from managers and being bound by unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles of formalism,

excessive paperwork, and legalism, necessitating one to 'seek permission' to exercise one's own creativity. However, non-freelance practitioners, such as those workers who were in positions of management, produced more cautious images of autonomy. They recognised that their autonomy was 'bounded' by the institutional, organisational, and legal constraints within which their organisations operated. Their freedom was not completely effaced, but appeared to be contained within conditions of possibility set out by business plans, legal frameworks, organisational targets, policies, and funders expectations. As such, the findings of this study demonstrated the importance of social, cultural, and political contextual factors in the production of selves as autonomous subjects (Cohen & Musson, 2000).

This study has highlighted how community arts workers adopted autonomous subject positions, which were made practical through references to individual flexible outlooks in the workplace and reproduced in relation to discourses of precarious work. This flexibility was reminiscent of 'task flexibility' or 'labour process flexibility' (Hill et al., 2010; Bagguley, 1991; Atkinson, 1985) and connoted one's capacity for multi-tasking, as well as having a variety of skills deemed necessary to managing work responsibilities. Particularly in relation to this flexible outlook on work, this research highlighted the role of alternative discourses as grounds for its reproduction. Whilst flexibility appeared as a general characteristic feature of work, freelance creative practitioners appeared to draw on the discourse of enterprise more often. They envisaged themselves through the lens of entrepreneurial flexibility, seeing this as a necessary individual characteristic for creation and maintenance of their work opportunities, as well as for dealing with financial insecurity, the lack of resources to run projects, the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the pervasive competition experienced within the labour market. This subject position generally necessitated being responsible for a diverse range of tasks, such as taking care of funding applications, building links with customers, potential employers and funders, networking, self-promoting through advertisements, maintaining working spaces, and self-development.

However, although flexibility emerged as an important aspect of worker subjectivity seen necessary for ensuring economic sustenance and employability, it nevertheless was primarily directed towards doing work in the community as an end goal. Lacking the individualised, utilitarian, self-centred vocabularies generally associated with the

discourse of enterprise (Foucault, 2008; Du Gay, 1996), flexibility was co-terminus with prosocial vocabularies of caring about the local community. Analysis of data provided evidence that participants envisaged themselves as flexible subjects who adapted to catering for the needs of their community members, were resilient, resourceful, patient in the face of everyday challenges, and were able to solve problems that came their way for the purposes of benefiting the people in their projects within the community. This, of course, highlighted the technological aspects of the vocabularies of caring about as grounds for the production of autonomous, flexible, but also productive subjects of community arts work (Rose, 1999b). These findings also made explicit the more complex discursive terrain of community arts work, where alternative non-economic discourses act both as grounds for legitimation, as well as points of reinterpretation of enterprising flexibility without contradicting the prosocial aspects of community arts practice (Fournier & Grey, 1999).

As discussed earlier in relation to Research Question 1, the analysis of data did not reveal a production of the discourse of enterprise linked to the idea of rational calculations. Whilst this study drew attention to how participants engaged with calculations as forms of dealing with precarious work and as a path to bringing new opportunities with no certainty of outcomes, their subject positions were not reminiscent of the entrepreneur of the self as a *homo economicus* described by Foucault (2008). There is no evidence that calculative subject positions of community arts workers were predicated upon the economic notions of “investment-costs-profit” (p. 242), risk minimisation, or utilitarian approaches to networking and partnering (Blair, 2009; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, 2007). This research drew attention to the production of subject positions where individual calculations were detached from individualisation and self-interest and instead directed towards sustaining work and contributing to local communities.

If the discourse of enterprise implies self-identification with an image of the entrepreneur (Foucault, 2008; Dean, 1999; Du Gay, 1996; Keat, 1991b), then community arts workers appeared to be generally reluctant to be associated with such an image, presenting themselves through alternative non-economic discourses. As this study has illustrated, the entrepreneurial vocabularies were not completely effaced in the production of subject positions of community arts workers, but on the contrary participants reflected upon being competitive, self-reliant, responsible, flexible, and

adaptable individuals. Yet, as has also been discussed earlier, participants were reluctant to be associated with entrepreneurs or businesspersons if it involved commercial activity and being competitive, selfish, and even harmful towards others, or motivated by profit-making and economic growth, because they presented such individual characteristics as being incompatible with the ‘ethos’ of community arts. Instead, the vocabularies of caring about formed important discursive resources upon which workers across the board drew upon in the construction of themselves as compassionate, caring, collegiate, and supportive individuals.

The other-centeredness, or “labour of care” (Alacovska & Bissonnette, 2021, p. 146), of community arts was particularly evident in the way the discourse of caring about underpinned individual reasoning for community arts work. Participants identified their desire to promote better access to cultural activity, particularly in socially and economically marginalised communities. They talked about wanting to help people realise their creative potential and foster social and economic mobility. They also advocated for mutual support, diversity, and inclusion, with an aim to instil hope for a better future that could positively impact on people’s quality of life and work. It is not to say that workers were outside neoliberal governmentality (Foucault, 1978, 1980), as their caring subject positions appeared to have been produced in response to competitive and individualistic business logics of entrepreneurs. Yet, their subject positions also offered opportunities for non-economic vocabularies to be meaningfully voiced as important resources in the constitution of the self, challenging the paradigmatic status of enterprise in cultural work (Fournier & Grey, 1999).

8.3 Theoretical Implications

This study has responded to the call for research that accounts for more complex, contextually-situated analysis of work and employment beyond theorisations of enterprise that assign a paradigmatic status to ‘the entrepreneur of the self’ as a *fait accompli* (Foucault, 2008; Fournier & Grey, 1999; Du Gay, 1994b, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). Although the current theory of enterprise provides an important starting point in sensitising research to the pervasive effects of neoliberal

governmentality that may act as a blueprint for worker subjectivity – a dynamic particularly noted within the domain of cultural work (Hoedemaekers, 2018; McRobbie, 2016; Blair, 2009; Banks, 2007; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006, 2007; Storey et al., 2005) – there is a need to go beyond the deterministic accounts of entrepreneurial work seen through the lens of ‘enterprise versus no enterprise’ and recognise the role of alternative vocabularies in the formation of worker subjectivity (Fournier & Grey, 1999). Any further research would benefit from going beyond this limiting dichotomy, whereby workers can be seen as constructing their own versions of subjectivity through engaging with both economic and non-economic discourses within the context of their work (Masquelier, 2019; Cohen & Musson, 2000), rather than simply accepting or resisting the effects of neoliberal governmentality.

For researchers of governmentality, this recognition of discursive plurality in the constitution of worker subjectivity encourages empirical output that is contextually sensitive and locally specific, but also helps to further extend current theorisations of enterprising work. By accounting for a variety of discursive developments that may emerge in such data, such as the role of the ethics of caring, future research of enterprise could help to move beyond the established ideas upon which the theory of neoliberal enterprise appears to have been built, such as the image of the sovereign consumer, self-fulfilment, and utility maximisation (Vallas & Cummins, 2015; Foucault, 2008; Du Gay, 1994b, 1996; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992). By recognising the operation of discourse as a dynamic, constantly contested, and changing terrain (Parker, 1992; Foucault, 1978), new opportunities emerge for looking beyond paradigmatic representations of enterprise as an accepted fact not only within the domain of cultural work, but also widely within other sectors of work and employment, highlighting how neoliberal discourses may co-exist with seemingly contradictory non-economic vocabularies of work (Fournier & Grey, 1999).

8.4 Implications for Policymaking and Managerial Practice

Cultural work has come to be increasingly associated with the economised notion of ‘creative industries’ in the language of policymaking, presenting it as an idealised

blueprint for worker subjectivity to further national economic growth, help regenerate deprived urban areas, improve community cohesion, tackle local unemployment levels, and provide therapeutic value in healthcare (Campbell, 2021; Belfiore, 2020; Luckman, 2018; Thestrup & Pokarier, 2018; Conor et al., 2015; Morgan & Wood, 2014; De Peuter, 2011; Banks, 2007; Freedman, 2007). This entrepreneurial, business-oriented discursive construction of cultural work has been particularly pertinent within the language of UK policymaking, as the neoliberal model of creative industries and creative economy appeared to have been actively promoted as a powerful tool for national economic growth and exported globally through a range of State-funded programmes and international diplomatic initiatives (British Council, 2024b; Gov.uk, 2024; DCMS, 2023, 2001, 1998). Despite this development, the domain of community arts work appears to sit uncomfortably in relation to neoliberal visions of creative industries through the resistance to individualised values of work, general lack of profit-orientation, and distancing from entrepreneurial growth that starkly differentiates this type of labour from other commercial areas of cultural work seen as drivers of national economic growth. Yet, the domain of community arts faces very similar issues to many other sectors of cultural work, such as a lack of access to stable streams of funding and a need to survive amidst uncertain economic environments, whilst playing a fundamental role in offering many of the social care and community engagement functions that were shifted away from the State apparatus toward locally-based community organisations and charities, as well as individuals (Kisby, 2010). While recent UK Government's acknowledgement of creative industries as contributors towards health and wellbeing of individuals and communities is a welcome step (DCMS, 2023), more should be done in recognising the important role of community arts work. Future policymaking initiatives should consider shifting away from understandings of cultural work through the equalising gaze of neoliberalism and recognise the social value that community arts organisations and workers may bring to local communities as an important function beyond economic output. This approach to policymaking may necessitate a more nuanced and tailored approach that considers the non-economic orientations of such work.

Also, a recognition of the diverse discursive terrain of community arts work may offer new opportunities in shaping of the nature of employment relationships between community arts organisations and freelance creative practitioners, as well as

community arts organisations and public funders. By focusing on aligning the individual strivings of artists to benefit their local communities through creative activity, managers and organisational leaders could create more fulfilling and meaningful workplaces. Furthermore, taking account of the idiosyncrasies of community arts work aligned with values of care and collaboration, public bodies could seek more effective implementation of arts projects in the community. The wider implications of this study for managerial practice are in acknowledging the productive role of alternative non-economic discourses, such as caring about the community, as important in the formation of worker subjectivity and as a key resource in the reproduction, reinterpretation, as well as resistance to organisational governance. By recognising the complex, ambivalent nature of worker subjectivity in management of people beyond individualised concerns for profit, success, individual passion, or career growth, it may be possible to invoke a more effective, fulfilled, empowered, and consequently, productive workforce.

8.5 The Study Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study of community arts work in Wales provides many insights into the reproduction of the discourse of enterprise, adding new knowledge about the nature of work and employment within generally non-commercialised areas of cultural work. This research advances understanding of whether and how cultural workers may adopt entrepreneurial subject positions, drawing attention to the role of alternative non-economic discourses as resources for resistance to, and reinterpretation of, enterprise within the context of caring work of community arts. However, this research provides only a glimpse into the complex and multifaceted terrain of community arts practice, showing a particular situated, context-specific representation of enterprising work. Any future academic research paying similar in-depth attention to manifestations and engagements with the discourse of enterprise, across and beyond regional and national borders, could widen understanding of work and employment in the community arts domain and provide opportunities to explore how these geographic contexts may influence worker subjectivity. Such research could be particularly pertinent in envisaging community arts work as a more complex and diverse field of work that

may come under varying labour pressures and economic challenges, including those that cut across national policymaking terrains. This focus would be particularly relevant considering the starkly different socio-economic protections that cultural workers appear to have across the globe.

The ethnographic design of this research provided a scope for an open-ended, exploratory investigation of community arts practice, focusing on individual engagements with enterprise, while staying open to unexpected occurrences within the data. As such, less attention was paid to exploring the dynamics between community arts organisations and funding providers, such as the Arts Council of Wales. Although the importance of the relationship between funders and community arts organisations was acknowledged in this study, shedding light on discursive boundaries those relationships established, any future research could further investigate how community arts workers may adopt or resist particular versions of competitive enterprise supported by public institutions and private funders. While this research highlighted the diverse manifestations of the discourse of enterprise across two groups of participants - freelance and non-freelance participants – particularly in relation to the role of precarious work and the reproduction of entrepreneurial flexibility, a further study could focus specifically on providing more depth and scope to the relationships between these two groups of workers in relation to the uptake of enterprising work.

Although this study actively engaged with a diversity of data collection methods, the peripatetic nature of community arts led to the prioritisation of verbal and written accounts over non-verbal data. While this approach provided a wealth of data on how participants constructed their visions of work and envisaged themselves as particular types of subjects, any future investigation using observations as primary form of data collection could help shed light on extra-linguistic manifestations of the discourse of enterprise, particularly in relation to individual embodied practices. Lastly, while snowball recruitment was effective in gaining access to community arts workers across a diverse range of professional backgrounds and individual characteristics, this self-selection made it more challenging to ensure a balanced and diverse representation of various individual characteristics of participants in this study, such as those in relation to gender, age, or neurodiversity. Any future studies of community arts work may focus on recruitment methods that could help shed further light on diverse individual

characteristics as discursive resources in relation to the reproduction of, and resistance to, the discourse of enterprise.

8.6 Concluding Thoughts

The global Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath shed light on the transformative power of arts and creativity in helping communities and individuals to overcome the challenges brought about by this crisis (Fairley, 2023; BBC News, 2021, 2023; Sayej, 2021; BBC Arts, 2020). Such constructions disassociated arts practice from traditional understandings of creativity linked to visions of ‘art for art’s sake’ and recognised further its impact beyond economic value, helping people to stay resilient in the face of mounting economic challenges. Yet, the community arts sector – a sector that for many decades has been instrumental in eliciting this transformative power of arts in local communities and promoted cultural democracy amidst various social, economic, and political crises – still appears somewhat marginalised both by policymakers and academics. It is hoped that research such as this would encourage further fruitful dialogue and discussion between academics, policymakers, cultural workers, and the wider public in understanding the complex aspects of work and employment and worker subjectivity in community arts, helping to harness the transformative power of the arts even further.

APPENDICES

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Appendix 1

Study Information Sheet



School of Management
Swansea University
Bay Campus
Fabian Way
Swansea
SA1 8EN

Tel: [REDACTED]

PhD Study Invitation

Hello,

My name is Rey Shakirzhanov and I am a doctoral researcher at Swansea University and a graduate teaching assistant at the School of Management. I would like to invite you to participate in my doctoral research, which focuses on the working lives of community and participatory arts professionals in Wales.

As part of this study, I am interested in learning about the work culture within community and participatory arts and people's understandings and values in relation to cultural and creative work in contemporary times. The key goal of my research is to increase understanding of community and participatory arts work and shed new light on how identities are shaped through work. It also intends to contribute to both to the existing academic knowledge, as well as to increase awareness amongst organisations and institutions about the real-life practices, values, and work culture(s) prevalent within Wales community and participatory arts.

My data collection will involve a combination of different methods, such as interviews, participant observations/work shadowing, and examination of industry-related and other materials. These methods could be both face-to-face, as well as virtual. The project started in July 2021 and expected to last for 12-months, concluding in summer 2022. However, your involvement will depend on your availability and your consent will be sought throughout.

If you are interested in being part of this study, then I would like to have an initial meeting where we will discuss my project in more detail and determine next steps. By agreeing to this meeting, you are also agreeing to participate in this study, although you are free to withdraw your participation at any time. Regardless of the extent of your involvement, all personally identifiable information will be anonymised and handled in line with UK Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR).

Thank you very much in advance and I am really looking forward to hearing back from you.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Rey Shakirzhanov

Postgraduate researcher

Centre for People and Organisation

School of Management, Swansea University

Email [REDACTED] k

July 2021

Appendix 2

Further Data Collection Invitation



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Tel: [REDACTED]

Further PhD Research Invitation

Dear research participant,

I would like to wholeheartedly thank you for your involvement in my research into the cultures of work within community and participatory arts practice in Wales. The data that you provided is instrumental in widening my understanding of the nature of community arts work and sensitising me to key themes, issues, and challenges prevalent within it, all based on your personal experiences.

I am now planning to collect further data in order to explore key themes in more detail. Therefore, I would like to invite you to participate further, through participant diaries and observation. See below for details:

1. Participant diary:

- You will be asked to keep diary entries about your community arts work. This should include:
 - (1) Routine issues and challenges and how you deal with them.
 - (2) Nature of decision-making in your work – who makes the decisions, when and why?
 - (3) Relationships with colleagues, other workers, clients, as well as the role they play in your work.
 - (4) Reflections on the actions you take (or not) and why.
- Entries can be made in a form most convenient for you – electronic, hand-written, audio, as well as involving other types of media, such as photography.
- You will be asked to make at least 2 diary entries per week for a period of 4 weeks and share your entries with me at the end of each week.

2. Participant observation:

- It would be extremely valuable to have the opportunity to attend, observe, participate and/or support some aspects of your community arts work, especially during the planning and preparation stages of your projects. This could involve some combination of supporting activities, observing and making notes either

March 2022

Appendix 2 (continued)

Further data collection



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during or after the event and/or speaking to participants, colleagues, or partners.

I would like to reassure you that your involvement in this study is completely voluntary, and you have a right to withdraw your participation at any time. Any personally identifiable information will be anonymised and handled in line with UK Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR).

If you are not currently involved in any community arts work, but would like to contribute by reflecting on past projects, please contact me directly to discuss this.

Thank you very much in advance. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Rey Shakirzhanov

Postgraduate researcher

Centre for People and Organisation

School of Management, Swansea University

Email: [REDACTED]

March 2022

Appendix 3

Participant Management Tool Sample

Name	Sampling	Work type	Data collection	Communication with participant	Initial playback	Transcription	Phase one analysis	Phase two analysis	Methodological coding
██████████	Purposive, via ██████████	<i>Freelancer</i> , multiskilled (mosaics, textiles, printing, painting murals, making land art, collage, sculptures from wood or scrap etc)	<p><u>07-09-2021</u>: F2F interview (The ██████████), 1 hour</p> <p><u>09-09-2021</u>: inbound email</p> <p><u>14-09-2021</u>: inbound email</p> <p><u>01-12-2021</u>: inbound email Re: info on 10 Dec observation</p> <p><u>06-12-2021</u>: inbound email Re: photos on another 10 Dec observation</p>	<p><u>09-09-2021</u>: inbound email re: long email data</p> <p><u>12-09-2021</u>: inbound email, re; photo links</p> <p><u>22-09-2021</u>: interview audio sent, snowball request</p> <p><u>30-09-2021</u>: inbound email re: more supplementary data sources, photos of mosaic, and potential new snowball contacts</p> <p><u>30-09-2021</u>: outbound thank you email re: previous entry</p> <p><u>04-10-2021</u>: inbound email re: video and description of ██████████ workshop</p> <p><u>04-10-2021</u>: outbound, re: responded to previous email</p> <p><u>27-10-2021</u>: inbound email re: photos of non-work-based community arts projects.</p> <p><u>29-10-2021</u>: outbound email re: saying thank you for precious email.</p> <p><u>26-11-2021</u>: inbound email invitation to participate in observation Dec 10th.</p> <p><u>29-11-2021</u>: outbound confirming attendance and asking for details</p> <p><u>01-12-2021</u>: inbound email re: details about Dec 10 observation and about Pioneers.</p>	Yes, <u>08-10-2021</u>	Yes, <u>22-10-2021</u> (10,116 words)	<p>Interview: 26-01-2022</p> <p>Email (09-09-2021): Yes, 18-02-2022</p> <p>Email (30-09-2021): Yes, 24-02-2021</p> <p>Email (04-10-2021): Yes, 24-02-2022</p> <p>Email (27-10-2021): Yes, 24-02-2022</p>	<p>Interview: yes (13-02-23)</p> <p>Email (09-09-2021): yes (13-02-23)</p> <p>Email (04-10-2021): yes (13-02-23)</p> <p>Email (27-10-2021): yes (13-02-23)</p>	Yes, 03-10-22

Appendix 4

Researcher Journal Excerpts on Technical Difficulties

The following excerpts illustrates the various situations in which technology complicated the interviewing process, necessitating alternative strategies of data recording.

“Technology. You can never trust it during most important moments of your life. My iPhone’s Voice Recorder app just would not start recording ... This is exactly why I brought a Dictaphone with me as a backup device. But, nevertheless, it was still pretty frustrating sitting there clicking on my phone in vain. [The participant] proposed she would use her phone as well, and send me a recording (which she did later that night) – this was a blessing.”

(Researcher Journal, September 2021)

“Now, I want to turn to my recall of the interview. Before I highlight the general themes of our chat, it is worth noting the issues that I had with technology. *Technical difficulties* happened right at the beginning, when I turned Zoom on and realised that I was unable to record our conversation, because, somehow, I was a ‘guest’ in my group, rather than the ‘owner’ (which was strange, considering that I created this call). Thankfully, to *mitigate* such *technical difficulties*, I also used my Dictaphone and my phone, as well as QuickTime’s screen grab feature. The latter failed completely, because it was stuttering the call video for the first 3 minutes, and as it was almost impossible to turn the screen capture off, I had to ‘force quit’ the app, which resolved the issue. Hopefully, [the participant] did not notice these glitches that at all?”

(Researcher Journal, October 2021)

Appendix 5

Example of Open Codes Development

A need to be resilient	Being optimistic	Creativity as panacea	Enjoying working in a	Helping others	Navigating relationships	Pushing yourself	Taking chances
Acceptance	Being organized	Curbing (self) expectations	Ensuring sustainability	Hybrid enterprise	Necessity to do work well	Raising awareness of	Teaching dance
Addressing inequality	Being passionate	Curiosity	Example - community	Ideological mismatch at	Need for work	Recall issue	The 'necessary' skills of
Administrative hurdles	Being useful	Defining community	Exiting practice	Increasing importance of	Negotiating pay	Recognising a community	The power of art
Aiming to provide better work	Belonging	Delivering a bad session	Extended employment	Interest in arts	Networking, job and	Relating to experiences of	Therapeutic, reflective value
Allocating work	Blurring of work and	Describing one's role	Familial and partner	Interest in arts	Not being happy with	Resilience, perseverance	Trained in arts
An older woman	Building a community	Describing ways of doing	Feast and famine	Judging subjectively	Not being materialistic	Role model	Treating clients as
Art for arts sake	Building relationships	Describing work -	Feeling isolated	Justifying your work	Not being selfish	Scepticism	Ubuntu motivation
Autonomy at work	Burning out	Describing work	Feeling pressured,	Keeping in touch	Not compromising	Scoring practitioners	Unpredictable nature of work
Balancing work and life	Calling	Difficulty of defining	Figuring one's place in the	Lack of appropriate	Not fitting in	Seeking empowerment,	Unregulated working hours
Being a family	Career prospects	Disseminating knowledge	Filling an opportunity	Lack of creativity at	Not managing workers	Seeking self-fulfillment	Valuing equality
Being a festival-oriented	Caring	Distinction from 'other'	Financial (in)security	Lack of engagement	Not working for the money	Seeking to provide better	Wanting to know more
Being a friend	Celebrating culture	Doing different	Focusing on community,	Lack of experience	On being 'entrepreneurial	Self-generating of work	Wanting to settle in
Being a mother	Centrality of community	Doing regular art work	Focusing on people's	Lack of interest in	Overlooked community	Set tasks to complete	Wanting to work with
Being a problem-solver and	Changing perceptions of	Doing traditional	Fostering collaborative	Lack of oversight	Overworking	Setting boundaries	Welcoming the variety of
Being an experienced	Close knit community	Doing unpaid work	Fostering mutual trust	Leading sessions	Performing below	Setting up own	Why participate in
Being authentic	Co-producing, co-performing	Drawing on shared	Fostering ownership	Loving arts	Portfolio career	Shadowing	Work as leisure
Being emphatic	Collaborative, dialogical	Education	Fostering representation,	Managing collaboratively	Practicing art autonomously	Sharing	Work chaos
Being flexible and adaptable	Commissioning work	Embeddedness of artistic	Fun and serious	Managing projects as	Practicing dialogically	Shifting culture	Work satisfaction
Being hard	Communicating through art	Employment (in)stability	Gaining work experience	Misc	Practitioners as social	Side-jobbing	Worker motivations
Being honest	Community arts as small	Enabling access to art	Giving a little extra	Moving	Preference to do longer	Socializing, empowering	Working creatively
Being in forties	Connecting people	Enabling learning	Giving back	Moving away from Wales	Professional (self)developm	Space bound practice	Working locally
Being kept in the team	Contractual work	enabling opportunities	Growing up in a small village	Multi-tasking	Progressive change	Starting to work in	Working solo
Being kind to one another	Creativity	Enabling self-sufficiency	Happiness at work	Mutual benefit	Promoting creativity	Studying art	Working somewhere
Being labelled	Creativity as journey	Enjoying work	Having people skills as ideal	Nature of competition	Providing support to one	Taking a break	Working to criteria

Appendix 6

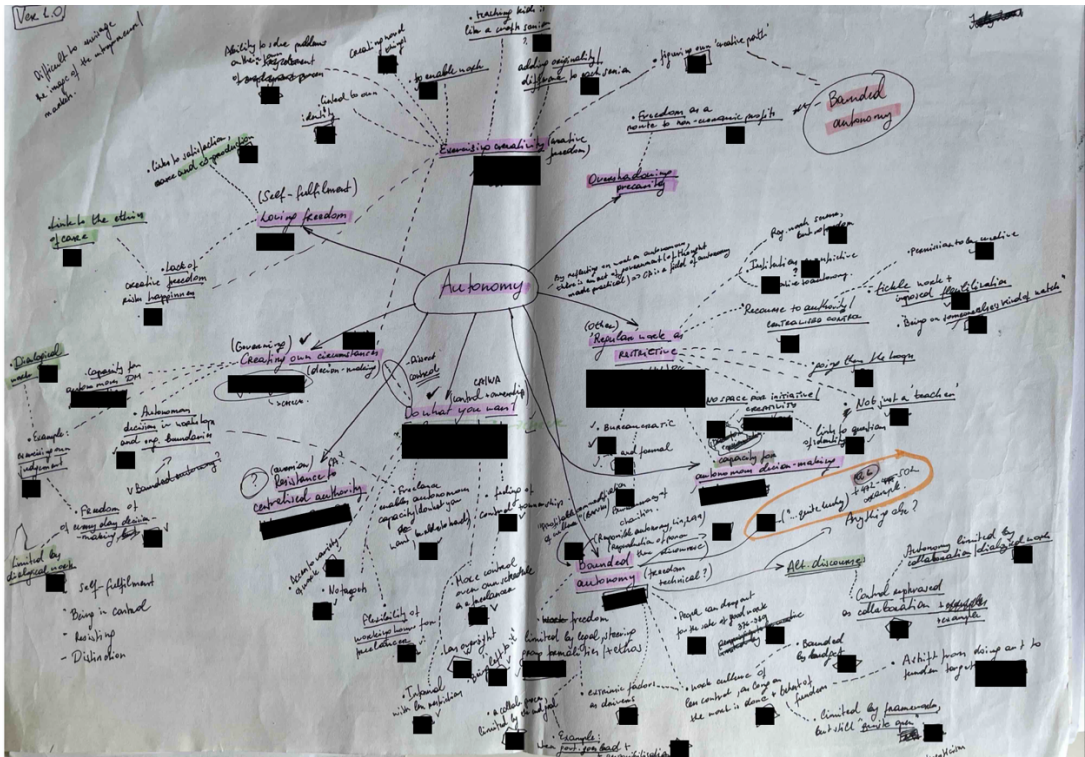
Example of Focused Codes Development

CARING	COLLAB.	EMOTIONS	ENTERPRISE	SELF-IDENT.	PRECARITY
Access to art	Co-production	Enjoyment	(Self)promotion	(Anti)competitive ness	Alleviating uncertainty
Architectural regeneration,	Collaboration with partner	Experiential interest	Autonomy	(Non)materialism	Anxiety
Community need	Decision- making	Fulfilment	Business, entrepreneur,	Anti(non)- business,	Financial
Confidence building	Dialogical	Happiness	Calculative	Artistic identity	Job security
Empowering, visibility,	Friendliness	Love	Flexibility, adaptability	As intermediary, as facilitator	Relationships
Environmentally conscious	Resource exchange and	Luck	Innovating	Collaborative	Uncertainty
Fairness	Support	Sharing	Multi-tasking	Dislocated and relational identity	Work pattern unpredictability
Focus, interest, caring			Networking, recruitment	Experience	Work-life balance
Fostering creativity			Non-dependence	Fun	
Heritage			Portfolio career	Inherent	
Participant autonomy			Proactive	Selflessness	
Relationship- building			Responsibility		
Skill development			Self-development		
Social cohesion			Unpaid work		
Wellbeing					

Appendix 7

Example of FDA: Autonomy in Community Arts

The diagram and the excerpt from the researcher journal below provide a worked example of applying FDA approach to examining how autonomy was constructed by the study's participants. The diagram shows the variety of ways in which community arts workers talked about autonomy in their work, and the researcher journal excerpt shows in more detail how one participant positioned themselves as an autonomous subject.



A worked example of analysis of data: Chloe (interview)

...

- Do what you want/binary opposition: the language of autonomy emerges early on in the interview with Chloe. Here, the object of autonomy appears as an individual ability to choose a place of work (30-38). In relation to this representation of autonomy, there appears to be a discursive turn that establishes regular jobs (in this case, teaching) as a domain that constraints one's freedom to do what you want in the workplace. Working in community arts instead allows one to creatively approach own work, as opposed to schools. This involves an ability to 'create your own circumstances', meaning that as a creative practitioner she positions herself as someone who can use own initiative and creativity to fully shape the nature of her own work (52-58). Schools are too static – they require lesson plans, with 'no real drama' happening there (40-45). As a creative practitioner, one can have the freedom that school teacher don't have. There appears to be a link to the discourse of enterprise, as such freedom necessitates being flexible and constantly adaptable to the demands of the workplace, but this position is also concomitant with a caring outlook on work, as flexibility and autonomy is directed towards the needs of the community and to benefit individuals attending her workshops ...

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