

Career as meaning making:

**A hermeneutic phenomenological study of women's lived
experience**

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Abstract

The multifaceted nature of women's careers has received growing interest in the career management literature. This research utilises hermeneutic phenomenology (Heidegger, 1927/2008) a methodology previously little used in management research, to illuminate previously unexposed aspects, of women's career experiences within the perspective of their wider lives. Women's careers are at the heart of this study, which contributes to the quest to reveal a more comprehensive picture of this complex dynamic.

"Conversational" interviews were undertaken (van Manen, 1990), with a purposive sample of fourteen women aged between 30 and 61 years, working in the education industry. Using a minimum of direct questions, participants were encouraged to describe their career experiences in detail in a discussion co-led by participant and researcher. Phenomenology supports the view that people make sense of their world from within, from the "inside," or the lifeworld (trans. Ger. *lebenswelt*). By enabling participants to re-establish contact with their original experiences, rich interview data for analysis were produced. Phenomenological anecdotes or evocative stories of the "lived experience" of women's careers were crafted from the interviews. These were hermeneutically interpreted against the philosophical writings of Heidegger (1927/2008) and Gadamer (1960/1998), as informed by the human science approach to phenomenology outlined by van Manen (1990).

Key findings include three overarching and intertwining themes, entitled, "Where have I come from" "Who will help me" and "Who am I becoming?" Using the dual concepts of Heidegger's historicity (1927/2008) and Bourdieu's (1977) habitus, this research

reveals how sociological aspects of a woman's life were crucial in shaping her career identity. An early disposition towards leadership and teaching was identified early in these women's lives. A key finding was that limited cultural capital and habitus did not necessarily restrict; rather they tended to inspire. Women made sense and meaning of their present situation, and their future, by being conscious and aware of the influences of their past, their culture, and their heritage.

A second theme concerns the impact of an ethic of care in these women's lives (Gilligan, 1982). Heidegger (1927/2008) opined care is fundamental to our existence, it makes us feel more human; an argument embodied by the women in this research. Being shown care in their everyday existence meant these women had increased meaningfulness in their careers; it caused a positive change in their psychological state, and was instrumental in the development of career agency. In its imperfect state, its negative influence meant women became disillusioned and lacking in purpose. Strong ties with significant family members, particularly her mother or her partner, were found to be key to these women's career confidence. Further her career often took precedence over that of her partner; these women did not opt out; they continued to seek challenge throughout their careers (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). The findings of this study reveal that being shown an ethic of care exposes the finely tuned balance of the intricate relationship between psychological and physical life passages (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009).

A third theme concerns women's movement desire to be "true to themselves" and to seek authenticity (Hall & Mao, 2015). Women in this study were often non-conformists; they followed self-crafted individual pathways, and responded to a calling. They pursued educational opportunities throughout their careers, they desired to become

increasingly masterful in their work, and to reach the highly desirable state of practical wisdom, Aristotle termed *phrōnesis* (Sellman, 2012). For women in this study, their career had more expressed meaning when they could be true to themselves, follow their own pathway, and become increasingly reflective and masterful.

The contribution of this study is empirical, methodological and theoretical. It adds to empirical knowledge by broadening the understanding of women's career management and revealing facets of the relationship between subjective and objective career. By providing a detailed explanation of the methods used in this hermeneutic phenomenological study, it provides a guide to assist other researchers investigating careers. The three emergent key themes exist in an organic synergy, linked by time, by psycho-social and environmental factors. A tri-partite model based on the three identified themes is introduced as a step towards an emergent theory of women's careers.

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In memory of my maternal grandmother

who told me —

I don't think there's anything you couldn't do

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	iii
List of figures.....	x
List of tables.....	xi
Attestation of Authorship	xii
Chapter One	1
Introduction	1
Puzzling over an enigma	1
Education: A context for this study	3
Women’s careers: Not as important as men’s?	3
Research Question and Theoretical position.....	4
Researcher’s experiences: A personal history of career.....	6
Early influences: No matter how gifted she is, a woman’s career is not as important as a man’s	7
Women who are forthright are bossy and difficult: Men are leaders	7
Women should do caring work and should not eclipse their husband	8
A woman can choose and can have a career of her own.....	9
Women are not always supportive of other women in their careers	9
How did this study come about?.....	11
Outline of the thesis.....	14
Reflections of the researcher	16
Chapter Two	18
Women’s careers: The story so far	18
Introduction	18
Career definitions	18
Women’s need for meaningful work.....	21
Early constructions of career theory for women	21
Agency and communion: Women’s careers as an inward journey	24
The picture on women’s careers: disparate, fragmented, and complex	26
Twenty-first century developments.....	28
The Kaleidoscope Career Model.....	29
Education: A major gateway	31
Spirituality, calling, meaning making, and eudaimonia	32

Authenticity and career.....	36
Framing women's careers	44
Summary	46
Chapter Three	48
Philosophy of Phenomenology.....	48
Introduction	48
Phenomenological research challenges	48
Hermeneutic phenomenology: A complex philosophical pathway.....	49
The father of phenomenology: Edmund Husserl (1859–1938)	50
Martin Heidegger and Being Human	51
Being and Time	53
Dasein – being there	54
Historicity.....	55
The One and Authenticity.....	58
Sorge.....	60
Moods and thrownness	62
Angst and conscience	64
To the things themselves: The work of Hans Georg Gadamer	66
Hermeneutic phenomenology as method	68
The contribution of Merleau-Ponty	69
Habitus, field and capital: The work of Pierre Bourdieu	70
Fields	70
Capital: cultural, social economic and symbolic.....	71
Habitus as applied to career fields.....	72
Aristotle and Heidegger: Phronesis and the skilled practitioner	75
Summary	76
Chapter Four	78
Research design	78
Introduction	78
A new star on the organizational research horizon	78
A dazzling array of methodological choices	81
Interpretive traditions.....	82
The interpretive research process	83
Phenomenology as research method	84
Phenomenology versus Hermeneutic phenomenology	85
Narrative inquiry	87
Key differences: Narrative inquiry and phenomenology	89
A continual questioning	90
Challenges for the phenomenological researcher	91
A pathway to a clearing (van Manen, 1990, p. 30)	94
A line in the sand	97
Summary	101
Chapter Five.....	103
Method	103

Introduction	103
The participants.....	103
Criteria and selection	104
Recruitment.....	105
Ethics approval.....	106
Demographics.....	107
Method	110
The interviews	110
Interview process	111
Researcher process	113
Data Analysis	115
Working with the transcripts: Extracting the anecdotes	115
Returning the stories.....	120
Working with the stories.....	122
Towards the identification of themes	125
How did the themes emerge?	127
Expressions of rigour	129
Balanced integration	131
Openness	132
Concreteness.....	134
Resonance	136
Actualization	138
Summary	138
Chapter Six	140
Influences of the past	140
Introduction	140
Historicity and habitus: Influences of the past.....	141
Habitus: It's embedded in me.....	144
The whole process of feeling: I don't know enough, I wouldn't be good enough	144
I was adopted: It's been a struggle to find out who I am	147
Having the support of a tight knit family.....	148
A natural disposition towards teaching and learning	150
I have a reputation as being someone who's very stubborn	151
I'm the only one	153
I've always been that sort of geeky person.....	154
And it was such a natural progression	154
I've been horrendously privileged	157
I was very lucky experiencing all those different things	157
I need to return some of the favours I've been given.....	159
Succeeding was something I did for my family.....	160
Summary	164
Chapter Seven	166
The influence of Care.....	166
Introduction	166
Sorge: Being-in-the-world with others	166
How does care influence?	167
Care at formative stages	168

Care at transition points	176
Ongoing care from a significant person	180
The caring influence of family	182
The profound influence of Mother	182
A partner's perspective	186
Sorge in its imperfect state: Power plays in a career field	189
Betrayal	191
Bullying	192
Discrimination	194
Summary	198
Chapter Eight	200
 Moving towards authenticity	 200
Introduction	200
Heidegger and authenticity: Being unto death	201
Answering the call of conscience	202
And I do use the Christian analogy of that Road to Damascus	203
So that's my soapbox	205
Having her own identity	206
Mummy works at the University	206
It's OK to be different	208
I'm really different from all my friends	208
I'm definitely in a minority	208
Education as transformative: Being a life long learner	209
I need something to get the brain going a little bit more	210
And the first semester was a real baptism of fire	211
Balance, burnout and stress: The cost of becoming authentic	212
I was starting to feel really burnt out	213
It's like having this big wobbly thing	214
I was in a terrible mess with stress	216
And you're carrying that stuff around	218
Every ounce of everything inside me	219
I just reckon it was my body crying out "Oi, slow down!"	220
I wasn't a black raven; I was a blue bird	222
I'd actually quite like to just be at home, making bread and knitting my dishcloths	224
Building on their skills: From novice to expert	225
Novice to advanced beginner	225
Becoming competent	227
Developing expertise	228
Being reflective: moving towards mastery	230
The skilled phrōnesis: A resolute individual	231
Summary	235
Chapter Nine	237
 Emergent Themes	 237
Overview	237
Influences from the past	237
The influence of care: a game changer	239

Moving towards authenticity.....	244
Towards a career theory for women: small beginnings.....	248
Chapter Ten	254
Discussion	254
Introduction.....	254
Career theories and models.....	255
Bourdieu's habitus theory: it's potential in career development	255
Work that has meaning: Career as calling.....	257
Authenticity and eudaimonia	259
An ethic of care.....	264
The balance between agency and communion.....	269
Returning to O'Neil et al (2008)	271
Summary.....	276
Chapter Eleven.....	277
Conclusion.....	277
Introduction	277
Overview	277
Research objectives	279
Empirical Contribution.....	279
Theoretical contribution	281
Viewing career through a Bourdieusian lens	281
Women's career stages and patterns	281
A theoretical model: A small step towards a career theory for women	288
Methodological contribution: Using phenomenology as research tool	289
Recommended skills considered necessary for the novice phenomenologist.....	298
Practical implications of this study	300
For career counselling and development: Developing phronesis in education ...	300
Limitations of the study	302
Suggestions for further research	303
Summary	304
References.....	306
Appendix A: Ethics approval.....	330
Appendix B: Advertisement NEXT magazine	331
Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet	332
Appendix D: Consent Form.....	335
Appendix E: Indicative Questions	336
Appendix F: Letter to accompany stories returned to participants.....	337
Appendix G: Extract from the transcript of an interview crafted into a story.....	339
Appendix H: An example of a story with description and interpretation.....	340

List of figures

Figure 7.1 The effects of Sorge in its positive and negative states.....	190
Figure 9.1 The tri-partite structure of past-present-future themes.....	251

List of tables

Table 5.1 Demographics of participants.....	96
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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

-----Signed

Margaret J Elley-Brown

-----Date

Chapter One

Introduction

For we live with those retrievals from childhood that coalesce and echo throughout our lives, the way shattered pieces of glass in a kaleidoscope reappear in new forms and are songlike in their refrains and rhymes, making up a single monologue. We live permanently in the recurrence of our own stories, whatever story we tell.

-- Michael Ondaatje, *Divisadero*

Puzzling over an enigma

During my own career of over thirty years I have experienced numerous career transitions. My career pathway has been circuitous and varied as I have worked in many roles, both paid and unpaid, taken time out to raise a family, answered the “call” to work in a religious vocation, been a secondary teacher and middle manager and more recently, returned to study, and begun a new career chapter as a career consultant, writer, and lecturer.

I have wondered why so many women of my generation—the “baby boomers”—have failed to take advantage of the many opportunities to progress in their careers, appear to lack the confidence to undertake study to update their qualifications or attempt to change direction in their career pathway. I have noticed that many women in this stage of career, remain in instrumental roles, and lack any obvious career aspirations despite having the opportunity once their family responsibilities have alleviated.

I have listened to the stories of women in their forties, who have come to me as career clients who often confess to feeling overloaded and stressed, and who struggle to find a sense of equilibrium in balancing the different facets of their lives. I have observed younger women of the next generation, my daughters' generation, who are embarking on their careers and have noticed their high aspirations and ideologies towards career progression—yet also how they preface these comments with a disclaimer—“but not at the expense of babies and a family.”

My own experiences and speculations have sparked and fuelled the ardour for this research, which looks deeply into the nature of a woman's career as to how it is experienced ontologically. Research of this nature, in this area, does not seem to have been undertaken before. As well as my own career experiences, my observations and interactions with other women suggest that this is a phenomenon, which is of great interest to many. A phenomenon it seems, which is mercurial to grasp, and enigmatic to understand.

I have found that women readily engage in this topic and are keen to describe their own everyday career experiences. A conversation with any woman about her career will often involve the retelling of incidents describing challenges and dilemmas she has faced. For many women and indeed men, it appears that women's careers are a fascinating enigma. We know so much about them; still they puzzle us.

I recently completed a study in research commercialization where I was required to condense this project into an “elevator pitch” of no more than thirty seconds. This exercise enabled me to realise that this thesis was based on the premise that, “Every woman has a story to tell.”

Education: A context for this study

Many women work in the education sector, an industry, which historically has employed more women than men. Over 70% of all New Zealand teachers are women. In secondary schools, 57% of all teaching staff are women, the ratio of women to men being much higher in primary schools (82%). In the tertiary sector, females of the professoriate approximate a quarter of all members nationwide (24.38%) (NZHRC, 2012).

The role of an educator has become increasingly complex. Numerous challenges abound for women working in education, in what is considered a “caring profession,” one, which is also increasingly loaded with logistical and administrative tasks, pastoral and social work demands, as well as the traditional task of pedagogy (Sellman, 2012).

Women’s careers: Not as important as men’s?

In the career literature, men’s career models have dominated with women’s careers seen as subordinate and deviating from the dominant pattern. Since women’s careers are often disrupted and tend to comprise shorter periods of the lifespan than men’s, the view that women’s careers are less important than men’s is hard to ignore (Betz, 2002; D. Brown, 2003; Kirchmeyer, 2002; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005).

In spite of increased numbers of women involved in the workplace, women’s careers have been depicted as disjointed and disparate. Gender stereotyping still remains a restricting factor (Farmer, 1997; Levinson & Levinson, 1996). Traditional roles and ideologies around women as homemakers and mothers have ongoing influence and

continue to limit women's achievement (Fitzgerald, Fassinger, & Betz, 1995; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006).

Many writers have claimed that a fresh look at old and new forms of careers is required (e.g. Ehrich, 2005; Iellatchitch, Mayrhofer, & Meyer, 2003; Knorr, 2011). (, Hopkins and Bilimoria (2008) contended a deeper understanding of women's career requires more research to uncover characteristics of the dynamic relationship between women's personal and professional lives. Sullivan and Baruch claimed the paucity of research into the "complex interplay between psychological and physical life passages," needs to be addressed in order to discover how individuals' perspectives change during their career (2009, p. 1561).

Research Question and Theoretical position

This hermeneutic phenomenological research, which investigates women's careers, is driven by the desire to discover what it means for a woman to have a career. Phenomenology is the science or study of phenomena; a phenomenon is anything that can be consciously experienced by a person. Phenomenology focuses on how individuals experience a phenomenon, rather than how others might perceive the phenomenon looking from the outside. It studies conscious experience from the subjective point of view. Phenomenological research concerns itself with what it means for a person to live a life and involves asking "meaning" questions (van Manen, 1990). Hermeneutic phenomenology has as its aim to "transform lived experience into a textual experience" (van Manen, 1990, p. 36). It is both a descriptive (phenomenological) methodology "it wants to let things speak for themselves" and an interpretive

(hermeneutic) methodology “it claims there are no such things as uninterpreted phenomena” (p. 180).

The study focuses on the nature of a woman’s career—as it is experienced by women working in education today—concerning itself with a view obtained from the “inside.” It seeks to uncover, retrospectively the essence of a woman’s career. What does it mean for a woman today to pursue a career? What are some of the dilemmas women face along their career pathway? What are some of the essential meanings of the phenomenon of a woman’s career?

This interpretive study examines how women’s careers unfold and how they deal with transitions and dilemmas. It is also concerned to explore how they address their needs for fulfilment, authenticity and connectedness throughout their career journey. It aims to contribute to a more composite picture of women’s careers and to add both depth and breadth to what is currently understood and known about them. Its emphasis is on stories women told during in-depth conversational interviews. By talking deeply with them, the motivations and aspirations of fourteen women working in the New Zealand education industry today were identified.

The main intention of this research, is to uncover, the nature of two complex relationships: firstly, the relationship between women’s subjective and objective career and secondly, the relationship between women’s personal and professional lives (O’Neil, Hopkins, & Bilimoria, 2008; Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). A third aim is to ascertain if using a phenomenological approach might contribute to Mainiero and Sullivan’s Kaleidoscope Career Model (Cabrera, 2007; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007b).

Researcher's experiences: A personal history of career

As I undertake this research I do so with my own career experiences. These include: influences from my family of origin in a conservative protestant minister's family; my training as a teacher followed by brief teaching experience in a secondary school; being a minister's wife during which time I became a mother to four children; returning to teaching to support a husband who was training in psychotherapy; holding leadership and management positions in a large girls' grammar school; then returning to study as a mature student. As I turn towards the phenomenon of women's careers I am deeply aware of my own experiences of career.

By becoming engaged in hermeneutic phenomenological research I needed to prepare myself to be challenged and to remain open as to how my own pre-understandings might influence and become further uncovered during the research process. As I turned towards the phenomenon of women's careers I had to surrender to a process, which Dahlberg, Drew, and Nyström (2001) contended, completely takes up and involves the researcher's way of being.

This kind of intense commitment also requires that before undertaking hermeneutic phenomenological research any biases and assumptions the researcher has are identified. Rather than put aside, these are acknowledged so that their impact and influence can be taken into account. They are embedded and essential to the interpretive process. With this in mind, I needed to think carefully about my experiences and to claim the ways they related to the phenomenon under investigation, and then to include these personal assumptions and philosophical biases in the final document. A reflective journal assisted me in the process of reflection and interpretation, and contained my ongoing writings on how my assumptions and influences might contribute to the

research (Lavery, 2003). My reflections detailed below are the result of a synthesis of journal entries and excerpts from an interview I undertook with my primary supervisor before I embarked on the participant interviews.

Early influences: No matter how gifted she is, a woman's career is not as important as a man's

My family of origin was strongly religious and patriarchal, with conservative and hegemonic ideals. Thinking outside the square was not encouraged—neither was studying other religions or philosophy—rather thinking inside the square within the rules according to protestant doctrine. Education was prized, but a woman's career was not valued for its own merits. In my family of origin it was not expected that a woman would work after she had had a family, and if she did resume her career it would be on a temporary basis. A man's career was considered more significant and important. This assumption remained with me for many years, and informed my early and mid-career decisions.

Women who are forthright are bossy and difficult: Men are leaders

Early on it was obvious I was a gifted student, and had many capabilities, which were recognised at school. In my family, being a strong and gifted young woman was not a positive descriptor. Further, there were different rules for boys than for girls. Girls must be servile; they must not question. I was a questioner and could see disparities and inequalities existed. I continued to struggle with injustices against women for many years, and never felt able to work actively towards dispelling them. I felt as if I had no voice and assumed that this might never change.

Women should do caring work and should not eclipse their husband

Certain careers were deemed to be good. Careers, which involved caring for others especially teaching, social work, and ultimately a religious vocation, were highly regarded with little or no encouragement to pursue other careers. Being a good all-rounder, and doing well at the humanities and languages, as well as the sciences, meant I had to choose between them. On the encouragement of my family, I undertook study towards a science degree majoring in pure mathematics, and then went on to train as a secondary teacher, which was seen to be a good “safe” career option.

My family conditioning was powerful. I married young and supported my husband a church minister like my father, in his career, and put my own on “the back burner.” During this time, I received many messages from church leaders and parishioners that I should stay quietly at home whilst my husband took the front line role. Further, that I should not eclipse any ability he had by being too dominant. My job was to keep the home running, raise the children, and to run women’s groups. I assumed that by responding to the “call” of this vocation, that in time I would be rewarded in some way. I also assumed that this calling and vocation would be a lifelong one.

In the early 1990s, due to a growing disillusionment with the church, my husband resigned from his position as a church minister and retrained in psychotherapy. It was imperative financially that I work part time, and I returned to teaching Mathematics in a large girls’ grammar school. For more than a decade I worked as a teacher then as a middle manager. However, I always felt somewhat misplaced in my own career pathway as a Mathematics teacher, and rather dismayed that I had not pursued initial university studies in the humanities, areas I had been more interested in, and gifted at in earlier schooling.

During this time, neither my husband nor I ever considered changing roles to allow him to work part time and me work full time. The assumption was always that my husband's career was more important. My career was the second career. My income would supplement my husband's income.

A woman can choose and can have a career of her own

In 2008, a defining event occurred. I was awarded a Royal Society Teacher Fellowship, which gave me a full year away from the classroom and time for research and reflection. During that year, it became clear to me that I wanted to return to study. Always keenly interested in holistic education and lifelong learning I began a Master of Career Development, which cemented this interest.

From the point where I began to study again, I felt I was on a personal pathway, one that I had chosen rather than one that was decided by my family or by necessity. Virginia Woolf famously said "A woman must have money and a room if she is to write" (1928/2004, p. 4). Throughout this period of study and writing I benefitted from having my own designated writing and study space. Further, there has been a shift in my understanding of what it means to have a career. A woman *can* have a career of her own, and not simply a hobby job, or one where she "piggybacks" on her husband's career.

Women are not always supportive of other women in their careers

It has been my experience that women still face considerable obstacles to pursuing and crafting an individual career. Whilst I have been studying, I have also been working part time, during which time, I have not always have the support of other women colleagues. Some other academics queried the sensibility of taking on doctoral studies "at my age"

and felt that rather than studying in mid life I needed to be “paying off the mortgage.” In one work situation, I received overt bullying from a woman manager who was working alongside me in a small office. This reinforced the fact for me that women are not always supportive of other women in their choices, and that discrimination in the workplace towards women, can come from other women rather than men.

I began working in education thirty-five years ago. As I have become involved in this research I have become increasingly aware of several assumptions I have had about women’s careers. Assumptions, which have been shaped and moulded by my own career experiences. By identifying my own biases and pre-understandings I have been able to choose to use them to enhance rather than hinder this study.

These include:

- Feeling I had no voice, a by-product of early life and career experiences. By interviewing a woman about her career I am enabling her voice to be heard. Research participants have a chance to tell their own story.
- Injustices I have experienced have potential to sensitise me to injustices that participants face, and enable me to be a more empathic listener.
- The assumption my career has not been as important as my husband’s. In conducting this research, I needed to be open to hearing the stories of women who have held different and opposing assumptions and perspectives.
- While studying, many incidents and pressures have hindered and affected my progress. These can alert me to the struggles and pressures other women face.

How did this study come about?

It was during my study towards a Master of Career Development that my interest in women's careers began to develop and grow into more than just a personal one. Gadamer (1994) noted a person turns towards a phenomenon rather than a preoccupation with research techniques. I found myself increasingly drawn to the phenomenon of women's careers. I completed a research project, which used narrative and constructivist techniques to investigate the career of a high achieving New Zealand woman (Elley-Brown, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). I began to contribute feature articles on careers for the New Zealand Herald, New Zealand's largest daily newspaper. Many of these focussed on women's career development. Much of my private practice work involved career counselling and workplace coaching with women.

Van Manen (1990) contended that to conduct phenomenological research the researcher must first identify a phenomenon of serious interest. Increasingly the phenomenon of women's careers began to reveal itself across these areas of my working life. The question at the centre of not just my personal life but also my professional life became enmeshed with the meaning of career development for women (van Manen, 1990). I had become "seriously interested" in the phenomenon of women's careers.

I was very familiar with quantitative research, having previously taught secondary school students statistics to scholarship level, designed a quantitative survey used during a teacher fellowship year and implemented a large scale quantitative survey whilst working as project manager for a university research team. Whilst undertaking the Master's project I discovered I possessed a much greater affinity with qualitative research, in particular narrative methodology.

The findings of this Master's project revealed three themes (Elley-Brown, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). Firstly, the power of narrative in giving voice to the participant's story and examining the dynamics by which life themes impose meaning on vocational behaviour (Savickas, 2005). Secondly, the participant's ongoing struggle around concurrent communal and agentic perspectives (Marshall, 1989). Thirdly, the participant's desire to be true to or to care for herself, resulting in her movement towards greater authenticity as a mature woman (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005).

Completing this small-scale study personally confirmed the complexity of women's career paths, and provided a "taster" of what can be achieved by using narrative to elicit women's career stories and life themes. There was no doubt in my mind I wanted to conduct further qualitative research into this area of women's careers.

I initially explored the idea of completing a Master of Philosophy—and had approached and gained the support of my primary supervisor, a specialist in the area of women's careers, and interpretive research in particular—but was encouraged to undertake doctoral studies so that a greater range of participants could be involved. In this doctoral research, I wanted to emphasise not high achieving women per se, but rather more "ordinary" women, "everyday" women who did perceive themselves as career women, and were currently enacting a career. Education provided an extensive pool of women across all age groups, women active in promoting the learning of others. The choice of the education industry from which to draw participants seemed obvious, as I had been involved in secondary education throughout much of my career.

In undertaking doctoral research, I sought to go deeper into women's career experiences. I wanted to find out what motivates and impels these women to craft and enact a career and to consider some of the dilemmas they faced along the way. I wanted

an insider's view, to understand what having a career means rather than to write about objective career success or write a career narrative and analyse it using extant career theories as I had done for the Master's project (Elley-Brown, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c).

I had become comfortable with using constructivist and client-centred modalities, in my private practice work as a career consultant (Bujold, 2004; Erwin, 1999). The notion of co-led research—where researcher and participant work towards uncovering previously hidden meanings—also “sat well” with me. I had used Career construction theory to good effect in client work to collect significant stories and to extract themes (Savickas, 2002, 2005).

In February 2012, I attended an AUT Qualitative Research Methods Master class, where I attended sessions on hermeneutic phenomenology and the work of Martin Heidegger and Hans Gadamer. I was drawn to interpretive hermeneutic phenomenology, a writing activity, which involves crafting and revisiting a text several times. I resonated with this interpretive and circular approach, and the fact that it involved extensive writing and re-writing did not deter me. Further, I began to see that hermeneutic phenomenology could provide the in-depth view and insider's perspective I sought. I decided that this would be the theoretical perspective and methodology I would employ for this doctoral research. I resonated with van Manen when he commented, “The method one chooses ought to maintain a certain harmony with the deep interest that makes one an educator” (1990, p. 2).

This research is grounded in the traditional hermeneutic phenomenological philosophical perspective, which originated with the work of Husserl (1952/1980) who first identified the need to return to the establishing of truths in human experience. It is informed by the human science approach to phenomenology outlined by van Manen

(1990), which has its roots in the philosophic traditions of Husserl (1970), Heidegger (1927/1962) and Merleau-Ponty (1962). This view of phenomenology is that of the European phenomenological philosophers, and the Utrecht School of Philosophy.

Outline of the thesis

This thesis contains eleven chapters, including Chapter One, the Introduction.

Chapter Two, “Women’s careers – the story so far” gives an overview of research into women’s careers over the past three decades. It provides context for the study by exploring relevant literature on women’s careers, considers the changing nature of career as well as early attempts at formulating career theories for women. It discusses current career issues for women, and provides a definition of subjective and objective career.

Chapter Three, “Philosophy of Phenomenology” returns to the founding fathers of phenomenology. It outlines the basic tenets of Heideggerian phenomenology as developed into a research method by Gadamer and van Manen in order to provide a philosophical framework for this study. It discusses additional models for understanding women’s career management: Bourdieu’s concepts on habitus, capital and field and Aristotle’s concept of *phrōnesis*. It examines the salience of phenomenology in career management and career development research.

Chapter Four, “Research Design” firstly addresses the salience of phenomenology to research in career management. It then considers the range of interpretive traditions and where phenomenology fits within this range. It outlines crucial differences between various phenomenological modes of inquiry and addresses challenges for the

phenomenological researcher. It establishes how the research is situated theoretically and methodologically.

Chapter Five, “Method” outlines the methods used in this project, from participant recruitment, the data gathering process, and explains how the data were analysed, phenomenological anecdotes written, interpreted, and themes identified. Being aware that scant research has been undertaken in career management using phenomenology, I have sought to make this chapter as full as possible. I have tried to be specific and clear as possible about my research process.

Chapter Six, “Influences of the Past,” the first data findings chapter, introduces the first of three themes. It addresses how the beginnings of a woman’s life affect her subsequent career and decision-making. It considers the part family culture and genetic disposition make towards career agency, and where early motivations and the first signs of career agency in women’s lives appear. It seeks to answer the question, “Where have I come from?”

Chapter Seven, “The influence of Care” is the second data findings chapter and concerns the notion of Care, which Heidegger calls *Sorge*. It outlines how care influences career development in various ways. It seeks to answer the question, “Who will help me?”

Chapter Eight, “Moving towards Authenticity” is the third data findings chapter and addresses drivers for women’s movement towards authenticity. This chapter addresses the question, “Who am I becoming?”

Chapter Nine, “Emergent Themes” synthesises the findings from the three previous data findings chapters and offers a fledgling theoretical model for women’s careers.

Chapter Ten, “Discussion” provides a bridge between the data findings and the conclusions. It connects the study findings to emergent and current career theory in order to consider how they support the study findings and to establish what this research adds to the extant research on women’s careers.

The final chapter, Chapter Eleven, “Conclusion” brings together the findings from the previous four chapters, with the research question and research objectives. It outlines the empirical, theoretical and methodological contributions, and the practical implications of the study. Limitations are identified and suggestions made for future research.

Reflections of the researcher

By conducting this research I have sought to attain specialised knowledge in an area, which keenly interests and fascinates me. After many years subsuming my own opinions and desires I am now able to have my own ideas, my own voice, my own identity and my own platform. I undertook this research because this question of what it means for a woman to pursue a career in this day and age began to absorb and intrigue me. I wanted to know more, to gain an in-depth understanding of women’s motivations and career drivers.

As a phenomenological researcher it is not just a matter of writing down my question, I must attempt to “pull” the reader into the question in such a way that the reader cannot help but also wonder about the nature of the phenomenon. A good phenomenological investigation is such that it teaches the reader to wonder, to examine deeply the very thing that is being “questioned by the question” (van Manen, 1990, p. 44).

This hermeneutic phenomenological research, which focuses on women's careers, might be described as a quest for the fullness of living. A search for the ways a woman pursuing a career can experience the world as a woman (van Manen, 1990). In this context, it is my intention that along with me the reader will also wonder, about the nature of women's careers and ask, "What does it mean for a woman to have a career?" The journey, the quest, to answer this question begins.

Chapter Two

Women's careers: The story so far

We cannot change what we are not aware of and once we are aware,
we cannot help but change.

-- Sheryl Sandberg, *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*

Introduction

This chapter provides context for the study by exploring relevant literature on women's careers. Firstly, it identifies definitions of career, and examines the differentiation between the subjective versus objective career. Secondly, it considers traditional linear career theories and the emergence of early career theories for women, the changing nature of career at the turn of the century, and its effect on women's careers. Relevant research literature is reviewed on women's need for education, spirituality and meaning making, calling and authenticity.

Career definitions

There have been numerous definitions in the career literature over the past several decades. Van Maanen and Schein (1977) referred to career as a process. Their definition of career development was as "a lifelong process of working out a synthesis between individual interests and the opportunities (or limitations) present in the external work-related environment, so that both individual and environmental objectives are fulfilled"

(p.36). Writing some thirty years later Tams and Arthur (2010) pointed out this definition references the environment rather than the organization. As such it is robust enough to accommodate anything that contemporary career thinking would bring in.

Inkson, Gunz, Ganesh and Roper (2012) commented the ongoing relationships between people and their work are “nicely captured by the notion of career which uniquely connects individuals with organizations and other social institutions over time” (p. 324). Further “the notion of career, then, offers a vantage point from which to understand the evolution of relationships between organizational structure and strategy, and individual agency and behaviour” (p. 324).

Even so, the expression “vantage point” can have a double meaning as Hall and Chandler (2005) observed, referencing Hughes (1958). Further, they commented one of Hughes’ greatest contributions to the field of careers was in pointing out the importance of just which “beholder’s eye is viewing a career” (p. 155). Hughes (1958) asserted that the subjective career is most relevant from the vantage point of the individual as he or she evaluates different facets of their career. By contrast, Hughes (1958) highlighted the criticality of the objective career when considering the vantage point of society and an external perspective that “validates” the tangible facets of an individual’s career, such as income, and hierarchical job level, and job mobility (Van Maanen, 1977).

Seeking to expand an understanding of the relationship between subjective and objective career, Hall & Chandler (2005) developed this dichotomy further; they suggested, when addressing career, it is not a case of either subjective career or objective career, one is inside, and one is outside a person. There is one condition under which the subjective career has particular salience, namely when the person feels a

sense of calling in his or her career: that this is the work one was meant to do (Hall & Chandler, 2005).

Savickas (1997, 2002, 2005) defined subjective career from a constructionist viewpoint as a changing perspective, which gives personal meaning. He advocated that the theme matters to individuals in their life story because it gives meaning and purpose to their work making them care about what they do. It consists of what is at stake in a person's life. Savickas (2002, 2005) called this the subjective career that guides, monitors and maintains vocational behaviour, which emerges from an active process of making meaning, not fact finding.

Savickas (2002, 2005) maintained individuals build their careers by imposing meaning on vocational behaviour, providing a way of thinking about how individuals choose and use work. Using Savickas' Career Construction theory (2002, 2005), the essential meaning of a career and the dynamics of its construction, become exposed in self-defining stories. A person's stories reveal the themes they use to make meaningful choices, "As a client narrates his or her stories, his or her personal paradigm can be identified, of how the individual turns essence into interest, tension into intention, and obsession into profession" (1997, p. 11). Savickas (1997) purported a person's occupation can allow them to resolve childhood's "unfinished business" and to so work towards making meaning, advancing in life projects and increasing personal agency.

This research seeks a subjective view of career, from the perspective of the women themselves. The definition of career, which will be used in this research is: career as a life long process of making meaning, a changing perspective as viewed by the individual as she evaluates different facets of her career.

Women's need for meaningful work

Women's need to have opportunities for meaningful work, has received considerable attention in the career development literature. Achieving both in relationships and in the world of work is a need common to both women and men. Further, Erikson (1950) stated, the well-adjusted human being is able to "love and to work" (as cited in Betz, 2002).

Involvement in multiple roles enables women to reach their potential. This involvement also impacts positively on their physical and mental health, providing meaning and satisfaction (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Betz, 1989, 2002). In contrast, women who work as homemakers without other opportunities for success and satisfaction are prone to psychological distress. Although multiple roles bring added stress, they also act as protective factors (Crosby, 1991).

Early constructions of career theory for women

Traditional linear career theories (Holland, 1966; Super, 1957), biased towards men's experiences have not fitted with the experiences of women well. This "misfit" has distorted any understanding of women and their lives (Gallos, 1989; Gutek & Larwood, 1987). Gutek and Larwood (1987) suggested a skeletal outline for a women's career theory. They identified five issues: career preparation, societal opportunities, the influence of marriage, pregnancy and children, timing, and age. Gallos (1989) contended, missing from their list was "a consideration of women's distinctive developmental needs and voices" (1989, p. 127). She mooted the need for a separate career theory for women.

Early career theorizing tended to focus on the dichotomy between social and psychological identity and traits such as self-efficacy: the belief one is capable of performing in a certain manner to reach certain goals (Bandura, 1977). Gottfredson (1981) maintained self-concept consists first of a social self, and second, a psychological self. She theorized that establishing a social identity based on a person's choices is crucial to career choice. Her theory described how people's career objectives develop with unique maps of occupations based on: whether it is male or female dominated, its prestige, and fields of work. These components develop through four stages, where people reject occupations that do not fit with their gender, social class, ability level, and interests and values. Vocational choice is treated as a process of elimination of choices to give a "range of occupations the person considers as acceptable" (1981, p. 548). She suggested that women remain in lower-status, lower-level positions because these occupations have congruence with their self-concepts and beliefs about ease of access. At times of compromise, sex-role socialization is the last variable to be given up, meaning that women tend to opt for female dominated roles (Gottfredson, 1981).

Around the same time, Hackett and Betz (1981) suggested their "self-efficacy approach to the career development of women appears promising due to its explanatory power, implications for counselling practice, and research potential" (1981, p. 337). In their attempts to develop a women's career theory—rather than merely continuing to list barriers to women's choices and achievements—Hackett and Betz researched the means by which societal beliefs and expectations about women's achievement and acceptable vocational behaviours become entrenched. They found "significant and consistent sex differences in self-efficacy with regard to traditional and non-traditional occupations" (1981, p. 407). Women demonstrated stronger career self-efficacy in "female" jobs such

as social worker or secretary, and men had stronger self-efficacy in “male” jobs. In historically male dominated jobs, women's low self-efficacy was shown to have created a divide between gender differences in occupational choice and vocational behaviour (Fitzgerald et al., 1995).

The role of mothering as a determinant for a daughter's career development was addressed by Betz & Fitzgerald (1987). Findings indicated maternal attitude to career is a more important influencer than mother's actual career. Four sets of variables are crucial to identify women's career choices (p. 143):

- Individual variables: self-concept, ability, liberated sex role values;
- Background variables: parental support, educational level, occupational status and work experience;
- Educational variables: higher education, continuing in mathematics; and
- Adult lifestyle factors: timing of marriage and number of children.

Building on other previous work, Astin (1984) set out to develop a women's career theory that described career choice and changing career aspirations. She attempted to include career choice and work behaviour together with the interactions of personal/psychological and social forces. Her need-based model was based on: motivation, expectations, sex-role socialization, and structure of opportunity. Although influential in the drive to construct a theory of women's career development, her theory had few supporters and limited ongoing impact. Astin's most valued contribution is her focus on the structure of opportunity (D. Brown, 2003; Fitzgerald et al., 1995).

This feminist theorizing at the end of the twentieth century aided in understanding women's career choices, the variables which contribute to career self-efficacy and

women's career patterns. It did not provide a deeper understanding of women's careers, nor was it able to take account of increasing career complexity in a changing work world.

Agency and communion: Women's careers as an inward journey

Writing from a feminist perspective Marshall (1989), drew heavily on Bakan (1966) who linked agency with maleness and femaleness with communion. Communion, the sense of being "at one" with other organisms, has its basis in integration. It seeks union and cooperation as its way of coming to terms with uncertainty and is characterised by contact, openness and fusion. Agency is an expression of independence through self-protection, self-assertion and control of the environment. The agentic strategy reduces tension by changing the world about it and reveals itself in focus, closedness and separation (Marshall, 1989, p. 279). Bakan distinguished between these two vital principles of human performance defined as basic coping strategies for "dealing with the uncertainties and anxieties of being alive" (1989, p. 280). Marshall (1989) drew parallels between Bakan's work on agency, and employment and career concepts, underlining clear associations exist between them. In contrast to agency, communion references "being," manifestations of trust and openness to the environment. Marshall (1989) extended them further drawing parallels with Jung's concepts of anima and animus, individuation and self-actualization. She argued, Bakan's work implies "women's journey of development is typically more inwardly oriented than that of men" (p. 280).

While Bakan (1966) asserted, women need to have "agency mitigated by communion," Marshall suggested women need the reverse, "communion enhanced by agency" (1989, p. 289). This emphasis, re-values traditional female characteristics, shifts them from de-

valued stereotypes and gives them equal value with male characteristics. She advocated for the need to “re-vision” career theory—rooted in male values and masked male psychology—to embed women’s psychology into career. Marshall challenged, “One of the tests of the adequacy of emergent theorizing will be whether it attributes equal value to female and male principles, to communal acceptance and agentic control” (1989, p. 289).

Hansen attempted to answer the question, “What does the mature woman in society look like?” (1997, p. 111). She also cited Bakan (1966), and used the terms self-sufficiency and connectedness as a metaphor for agency and communion. Her version of the agency and communion model, the “Excelsior Model” theorized agentic men exhibit a high degree of self-sufficiency and communal women a high degree of connectedness. Both men and women experienced ongoing compromise in two parent families in their attempts to attain ideal roles. Hansen listed salient factors which affect women’s opportunities and the ability to live holistic lives. The most significant and important factor was poverty. This was followed by socialization and stereotyping, and self esteem and self efficacy. Hansen claimed that inequities persist, and further, change does not come easily (1997).

Farmer (1997) used social learning theory as a theoretical framework and—over two decades of research—developed ideas on women’s career theory. Her research had particular focus on women’s persistence in science careers. In this context, instrumentality was identified as crucial to women’s career success. The women in Farmer’s study possessed instrumental traits, a collection of qualities previously called masculine. These traits were later seen to include a combination of characteristics such as independence, self-sufficiency and the feeling the person was in control of his or her

life. It did not mean that women in Farmer's (1997) study did not possess traits considered feminine such as nurturance and sensitivity, traits also referred to as expressiveness or communion. The critical factor of instrumentality, which can be described as agency, also links with self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Betz, 2005; Farmer, 1997).

The concepts of instrumentality and expressiveness correspond to agency and communion, combinations of which give rise to the androgynous personality style considered desirable for both men and women (Betz, 2002, 2005). Farmer (1997) claimed women employ sophisticated multi-layered role combinations and do not have the simpler pattern of the traditional breadwinner male adopted by males. For ease of understanding, the original descriptors for the two variables of human performance: agency and communion will be used from this point forward (Bakan, 1966; Marshall, 1989). Undoubtedly the struggle for balance between the two perspectives of agency and communion has maintained a central theme in women's careers (Arthur, Inkson, & Pringle, 1999; Marshall, 1989; Pringle & McCulloch Dixon, 2003).

The picture on women's careers: disparate, fragmented, and complex

As a result of the 1970s feminist movement, greater numbers of women became involved in the workplace. Increased numbers of people became involved in part-time and contract work. This caused reciprocal effects between employment status and organizational structures. These effects, along with globalization and technological advances, created changes in the way individuals enacted their careers (Fitzgerald & Harmon, 2001; Sullivan, Forret, Carraher, & Mainiero, 2009).

These influences combined to produce a watershed for career management theory as non-linear career concepts emerged and were embraced. The two most dominant models, which jostled for attention, were Protean careers (Hall, 1996) and Boundaryless careers (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). Protean careers drew from the Greek god Proteus who could change his shape at will. As a result, Protean careerists can adapt their career package of knowledge, skills and abilities to retain marketability within the changing work environment, placing value on flexibility, independence and life long learning (Hall, 1996). Boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996), had a specific meaning but has become a more generic term used for any new paradigm career writing such as portfolio, career free agents. The boundaryless career emphasises the agentic nature of the individual in career process and is positioned as oppositional to the traditional, bounded organizational career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996).

More recently, writers have proposed the complementary or overlapping nature of the two theories: Protean and Boundaryless (Briscoe & Hall, 2006; Inkson, 2006). Other writers contended the term boundaryless career is misleading. Rather than seeming boundaryless, careers have more complex and multifaceted boundaries, which are positive and functional (Arthur et al., 1999; Inkson et al., 2012; Pringle & Mallon, 2003). In a large-scale qualitative empirical project, Arthur, Inkson and Pringle (1999) found for many women no "last boundary" between home and work existed, their central focus was how to balance paid work and other responsibilities. Accommodation and fluidity were characteristic of these women's careers. Compared to a traditional framework, women's lives appeared fragmentary, transitional, accidental and contradictory (Arthur et al., 1999; Pringle & Mallon, 2003).

As the twentieth century drew to an end, the picture on women's careers remained disparate, fragmented and complex, in spite of considerable development and theoretical empirical work. Social roles were changing rapidly which lead Hackett and Lent (1992) to note that the shelf life of past research findings may diminish. Women were expected to work more, but gender stereotyping was still a restricting factor. Their attempts to integrate work and family roles met with varying levels of success and continued to be a challenge (Farmer, 1997; Levinson & Levinson, 1996).

Twenty-first century developments

As the new millennium dawned considerable uncertainty still existed about the nature and development of women's careers (Betz, 2005; Bimrose, 2004; Patton & McMahon, 2006). Various writers identified the need for an integrative strategy. Within this growing awareness, Patton and McMahon (1999, 2006) introduced their Systems Theory Framework (STF) as an attempt to synthesise the extant literature and create a meta-theoretical structure.

The Systems Theory Framework (STF) identified two components of career theory: content and process. Sub-categories of the content component are the individual and context, and of the process component: recursiveness, change over time, and chance. In the STF, the person is a key feature which means attention can focus on gender and other intrapersonal variables "possessed by all individuals but different for each individual" (Patton & McMahon, 2006, p. 156). Using an inclusive and interactive approach the STF has potential to broaden other narrow career definitions. Patton and McMahon suggested this is a positive shift for women's careers. It indicates a move away from the view of "non-traditional careers for girls" and towards, "reclaiming the diversity of women's lives and fostering the development of broad choices" (p. 169).

Although useful in accommodating and utilising a large variety of career concepts the STF was not designed as a theory for career development. As such, it did not fill the vacuum of a distinctly women's career theory (Patton & McMahon, 2006).

The Kaleidoscope Career Model

In response to this lack of a theory for women's experiences, Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) introduced their new career model: the Kaleidoscope Career Model (KCM). Their model focussed on more accurately capturing the career experiences of women. In particular it sought to explain how women work to prioritise relationships in their lives. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) proposed individuals make decisions pivotal on three career parameters, challenge, balance and authenticity. They defined their KCM parameters as follows (pp. 113-114):

- *Authenticity*: Can I be myself in the midst of all of this and still be authentic?
- *Balance*: If I make this career decision, can I balance the parts of my life well so there can be a coherent whole?
- *Challenge*: Will I be sufficiently challenged if I accept this career option?

Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) used the metaphor of a kaleidoscope for careers. Rotating a kaleidoscope tube produces changing patterns as its glass chips fall into different, unique and complex patterns. The KCM seeks to explain how at different times of their lives, an individual will change their career pattern choosing to work towards balance at one time, and towards challenge or authenticity at another. People work to achieve the best fit among demands and constraints of work, relationships and values. As a kaleidoscope generates a distinctive pattern, by ongoing adjustments, so does an individual, creating a complex and individually crafted career pattern.

Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) proposed their model has particular relevance to women's careers. More significantly, the KCM provides a way to examine the questions: "How do women's careers unfold" and "What meaning does career have?" (p. 115).

The KCM concept has spawned a variety of research. Empirical research aimed at validating the KCM (Cabrera, 2007; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007b) revealed gender differences in career enactment. Men tended to follow what researchers have labelled, an Alpha Kaleidoscope career pattern of challenge followed by authenticity then balance. In comparison, women are described as having a Beta Kaleidoscope career pattern of challenge, followed by balance then authenticity.

Career patterns of women in these KCM studies differed noticeably from the traditional linear career model. Their careers were characterised by the need to seek challenges and learning opportunities yet constrained by the lack of advancement opportunities, and blatant sex discrimination. Women confronted opportunities and blocks and responded in unique ways. They rejected linear career progression and created non-traditional self-crafted careers (Cabrera, 2007; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007b).

The KCM studies (Cabrera, 2007; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007b) found that in sharp contrast to men, the career histories of women were relational. Additionally these women's career decision-making was more contextual. Their decisions fitted into a larger web of interrelated issues and relationships that came together in a finely integrated package. The KCM women made career decisions strongly weighting relationship needs. They took into account how their decisions impact on others, factoring the needs of partners, children, parents and colleagues. Their careers were characterised by career interruptions that required attention to non-work needs, but also a quest for spiritual fulfilment, to remain true to and care for oneself (Cabrera, 2007;

Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007b). Educational opportunities throughout a woman's career have been shown to bring fulfilment and career satisfaction; this is the focus of the next section.

Education: A major gateway

In fact it has been proposed that it would be difficult to overestimate the importance of education in bringing career satisfaction and meaning to women (Betz, 2002, 2005). Betz stated, "In short, appropriate educational preparation is a major gateway to occupational entrance. Education creates options, while lack of education closes them. Without options, the concept of choice itself has no real meaning" (2002, p. 262).

Research has revealed adult women learners show more dedication and achieve more. Older women students did better than younger women and women who dropped out of tertiary study did better on re-entering study. They experienced learning as more transformative than younger students. Study brought fulfilment and meaning to their lives (Hayes & Flannery, 2000; Leppel, 1984; Lewis, 1988).

Some research paints a less positive picture and indicated family obligations distracted the mature student. High levels of stress predominated amongst women students with young families (Zosky, White, Unger, & Mills, 2004). However, a recent study of mature women college students found family brought stress but also inspiration. Deep commitments to education and personal growth were present in older women students (Vaccaro & Lovell, 2010). Vaccaro (2005) introduced a term "self-investment" as the valuing of self enough to believe personal growth and learning are needed and deserved. This concept of self investment has echoes with self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Hackett & Betz, 1981).

In a comprehensive research overview O'Neil, Hopkins and Bilimoria (2008) revealed a significant career pattern for women, namely the importance of human capital. They identified education and training as critical contributors to women's career development. Tisdell (1998) contended, "adult education has always emphasised the importance of experience in adult learning, but only feminist pedagogies point to the gendered nature of the experience and its relationship to adult learning" (p. 153). Whereas virtually no literature exists on men's involvement with family whilst studying, Vaccaro and Lovell (2010) argued that to judge women's educational achievement by their domestic responsibilities reflects an androcentric approach. They suggested a need for more feminist research to understand how women come to invest not just in their education but in themselves. Only through further feminist analysis can the concept of "self-investment" be better understood. Decision-making which involves investing in herself has been shown to be linked to a women's desire for meaningfulness and spirituality, concepts which are addressed in the next section.

Spirituality, calling, meaning making, and eudaimonia

There is emerging research on the influence of spirituality and work in the management and organizational literature, and in the career development literature. In contrast to religiosity, spirituality denotes a person's relationship with higher power/s, a type of guiding force or energy, or to a belief system or common good (Hill & Pargament, 2003; W. R. Miller & Thoresen, 2003). The study of spirituality has catapulted into work psychology with potential to extend understanding on the experiences and meanings of work.

The desire to have work, which has meaning and purpose, has been shown to be important in career decision-making. Research reveals that spirituality plays an

important role in an individual's career decision-making and development (Lips-Wiersma, 2002; Royce-Davis & Stewart, 2000). Various writers have proposed their own models or theories connecting work and spirituality such as Witmer and Sweeney's (1992) Holistic Model of Wellness and Bloch's (2004, 2005) theory on the connection between spirituality and career development. Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) boldly commented that for women, career can indeed be a quest for spiritual fulfilment. Duffy (2007) encouraged further research in the under researched area of spirituality and career development in order to develop a deeper understanding of the relationship between them. Career issues can have a role in a person's wellbeing with many writers claiming the positive effects of spirituality (Bloch & Richmond, 1998; Duffy, 2006; Lips-Wiersma, 2002). Heslin (2005) went further and stated that meaningful work is critical to individuals' subjective career success.

Although there has been little empirical research focused on meaningfulness in the work domain, over 40 years of research indicates that overall presence of meaning in life leads to psychological health and well-being (Steger, Frazier, Oishi, & Kaler, 2006). Steger et al (2006), defined the subjective meaning of work as the degree to which it contributes to a person's sense of meaningfulness or purpose. They defined the concept meaningfulness as "the sense made of, and significance felt regarding, the nature of one's being and existence" (p.81). Gaining an understanding of the concept of calling has been proposed to be important to further understand the complexities of meaningful work (Bunderson & Thomson, 2009).

The dominant view of calling has been that it is a stable construct, a view which has a self-fulfilling element in that people gain a calling because they "search" for one and then "find" one (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007). Dobrow (2013) suggested that the rhetoric

around calling needs to change and that instead of people “finding” a calling, people can be described as seeking to “develop” a calling through their involvement in a particular occupation. An individual's calling over time can decline, which suggests the role calling plays in career decision-making, is unstable. She suggested that people's quest for meaning may be a primary drive (Frankl, 1959) and proposed a dynamic model of calling where calling can change over time. Further, a calling can be shaped by factors such as an individual's ability, behavioural involvement, and social comfort in the area to which they experience a calling.

More recent work proposed people cease from trying to “find” a calling, but instead occupy themselves in developing the degree of calling they experience towards a domain (Dobrow, 2013). Dobrow viewed calling as a psychological construct, which reflects the sentiments individuals have toward a domain. As sentiments can change over time this definition allows for the possibility that calling might change and allows for a dynamic model of calling. One negative aspect of a calling she exposed is that a strong calling may be difficult to maintain. Her research revealed that individuals who were more “behaviourally oriented and socially comfortable” in a calling domain underwent a decrease in calling over time, a finding which challenges the notion that people “find” and therefore maintain a calling (2013, p. 446).

Feeling called to teach has been found to correlate with career commitment and job involvement among educators (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007). Educators, who perceived their work as a calling, had an expressed desire to teach longer. They viewed their work more positively with regards to its positive social benefits than those who did not identify as possessing a calling (Serow, 1994; Serow, Eaker, & Ciechalski, 1992).

A calling has been found to be both “binding and ennobling” (p. 32), in Bunderson and Thompson’s (2009) study with male and female zookeepers. Participants constructed narratives of their occupational position that validated a strong sense of self (always been attracted to this kind of work) as well as a domain competent and efficacious self (I am especially good at this sort of thing). Frequent in the zookeepers’ narratives was a sense of inevitability about finding this vocation. Rather than the “hand of God” as being the attributed force behind their choice, it was fate, destiny or just inevitability that led these zookeepers to consider they had found their calling. Occupational identification, transcendent meaning, and occupational importance were found to be positive effects of a calling. However there were also costs associated with a calling such as: “unbending duty, personal sacrifice, and heightened vigilance” (p. 39); costs which gave rise to the title of Bunderson and Thompson’s (2009) article “the double edged sword of meaningful work.”

Both calling and vocation—two overlapping, yet distinct concepts—align with the meaningfulness of work, but only people with callings consider the impetus behind this comes from an external source (Dik & Duffy, 2009). Both are defined, by Dik and Duffy (2009), as “an approach to a particular life role that is oriented toward demonstrating or deriving a sense of purpose or meaningfulness and that holds other-oriented values and goal as primary sources of motivation” (p. 428). However, a calling also includes, “A transcendent summons, experienced as originating beyond the self” to that life role (p.427).

Authenticity and career

Having a calling is generally linked in some way to improving the world. However, career authenticity differs from having a calling (Hall & Chandler, 2005). It has a broader application as every person has values and needs which they seek to actualise in their career and authenticity is not confined to careers devoted to a higher cause or purpose (Hall & Mao, 2015). Authenticity has also been part of western culture since classical Greek philosophy introduced the notion of “know thyself” (Aristotle, trans. 1999) generally defined as being true to oneself (Harter, 2002).

Research on authenticity in organizational literature (Murphy & Volpe, 2015) tends to focus on precursors to authenticity, that is encouraging individuals to be more authentic (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006); research specific to careers is mostly confined to early stage conceptual work (Ibarra, 1999; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005, 2006; Peterson, Sampson, Reardon, & Lenz, 1996; Svejenova, 2005). Scholars' interest in authenticity is allied with the contemporary view on careers as increasingly disjointed and irregular paths that extend outside the boundaries of a single organization (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996). In spite of the interest in authenticity, little attention has been paid as to how individuals can be true to themselves at work. Concomitantly a specific meaning of authenticity for careers has not been explored in depth with little written on how authenticity interfaces with career (Hall & Mao, 2015; Leroy, Verbruggen, Forrier, & Sels, 2015; Murphy & Volpe, 2015).

The basic assumption of career theory and practice is that a good fit for an individual between his or her true self and their work, results in positive consequences for both the individual and colleagues affected by her work. For a person to experience full engagement at work suggests that their authentic self is present at and in the work.

Further, to be authentic at work, there needs to be congruence between the enacted self and the perceived self (Hall & Mao, 2015). Being “true to oneself” is not a new concept in the career literature, either explicitly or implicitly mentioned in concepts such as “knowing who” (Ibarra, 1999; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). Being true to oneself requires self-knowledge of one's values, needs, wants, thoughts, emotions and preferences; to be authentic an individual must know him or herself (Harter, 2002; Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Further, knowing oneself has always been at core of career theory since Parson's (1909) introduction of trait and factor theories.

Knowing thyself (Aristotle, trans. 1999) therefore involves self-awareness; a person must become aware of their needs, values and desires. They must seek feedback, self-awareness is increased by considering meaning and value of past and future actions (Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2008). By becoming more psychologically present individuals can become more authentic and more engaged with their work (Kahn, 1992).

How authenticity is defined is dependent on how a person views her self and her investment of self in her work. Social psychologists view the self as constantly evolving and connected to the world which means there is no fixed self, rather an ongoing process of sense making, and shaping of self (e.g. Mead, 1934). Along with being true to oneself, existing definitions of authenticity also include making autonomous decisions; and achieving consistency. Making autonomous decisions does not equate to making independent choices and according to self determination theory people can make autonomous choices even when the environment influences their choices (Leroy et al., 2015). Achieving consistency means a person's behaviour and actions over time have relative unity.

Hall and Mao defined career authenticity as “a measure of the extent to which the person’s actual work and career path constitute a path with a heart for that person” a process in which the “self is not acted, but is also enacted” (2015, p. 6). Further people who pursue an authentic career path bring a high degree of self to their work congruent with how they perceive themselves at that time. Career authenticity therefore requires a continual process, which includes reflection, sense making and decisions around work and career; a person needs to reflect on who they are and achieve congruence between themselves and their job (Hall & Mao, 2015; Leroy et al., 2015). This kind of self-directed decision-making and contingent action is consistent with a protean work orientation or boundaryless mindset (Briscoe, Hall, & De Muth, 2006); multiple career decisions demand an increased need for this (Briscoe & Hall, 2006). The rise of the protean or multi-faceted-self has therefore enhanced the search for authenticity (Lifton, 1993).

When work satisfaction is gained by helping or taking care of others it involves content-based authenticity. The content of the work reflects a person’s values and enables her express herself in a way that is congruent with them; she can be “who she is.” Career behaviour matters rather than outcomes. Although unable to be measured objectively indicators that reveal levels of career authenticity are, firstly, that an individual invests more of herself in her work and draws meanings from work to construct his or her-self; secondly, he or she tends to identify less between themselves and an organization but between themselves and a personal career path, traits, which reflect a protean-career orientation. People with a high level of work identification have high cognitive engagement in doing the work, plus a strong commitment to it. They consider the work they are doing is meaningful and they believe it has some higher purpose or that it

makes a significant contribution to society. This results in self-constructions, which provide them with both self-esteem and satisfaction in their work (Hall & Mao, 2015).

Hall (2002) proposed that psychological career success is subjective success; that perceived by the individual. People can gain attain objective career outcomes such as wealth and power but their “heart is not in it.” The gratification from these outcomes is therefore not internal as the work does not hold significant personal meaning (Hall & Mao, 2015). Further, psychological success is related to career authenticity and the realization of the person's highest goals (Hall, 2002).

Moving towards greater authenticity in career requires a process of personal learning in career mini-cycles, in contrast to Super's (1957) five career stages and requires shorter bursts of change (Hall, 2002). In order to promote career authenticity reflection is required and frequent evaluation of the internal self; this takes time so that an individual can make sense of the past and utilise this sense-making to inform the future. People who are high in congruence between self and career are more tenacious and persevering in their work, they are more optimistic and original, and are better at working with others. Growth in self-awareness is required if a person is to develop authenticity and maximise the congruence between self and career; which is advantageous as it leads to increased subjective career success (Hall & Mao, 2015). The advantages of career authenticity is that it may help people in self-directing their career; they can be continually updating and learning important self-management behaviours (Leroy et al., 2015).

Leroy et al (2015) reviewed the development of construct of authenticity within positive psychology (Harter, 2002) self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and conceptual development (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Leroy et al's (2015) aim was to

provide conceptual and operational definitions of authenticity in careers to formalize and fine tune our understanding of careers.

A social networks perspective was used by Murphy and Volpe to “account for the influence that interactions with others have on shaping the self, and indirectly affecting the enactment of authentic career behaviour” (2015, p. 95). They proposed a conceptual framework for understanding authentic career behaviours. Strong ties defined as links between individuals which are directed, connected and have mutual influence, are called “direct ties”. Strong direct ties provide psychosocial assistance (Higgins & Kram, 2001), are influential in shaping identity (Ibarra, 1999), and characterized by intense emotional relationships with high reciprocity. These relationships tend to enhance an individual's sense of identity, competence, and work success. Examples of strong ties are spouses, family members, and intimate friends; organizational strong ties occur with some colleagues who are directly connected. Relationships such as these serve as significant influence on an individual's self-concept. They offer formative material on who a person is; a deep sense of self is formed by connection with others in an ongoing feedback loop (Harter, 2002; Murphy & Volpe, 2015). Strong, direct ties provide individuals with ideas and attitudes; they learn to behave in significant ways, and integrate these data when evaluating their self-concept and perceptions of self “who they are” in their career behaviours. These strong relationships aid individuals in developing a keen perception of authenticity in their career (Murphy & Volpe, 2015).

The dual and dynamic effect of identity salience and social networks in facilitating authentic career behaviours was also explored by Murphy and Volpe (2015). In this process individuals choose and maintain people who are key to their identity in social networks by self-verification. When a person acts in harmony with his or her true self,

he or she experiences a sense of authenticity (Harter, 2002). Murphy and Volpe (2015) proposed a direct link between identity salience and authentic career behaviour, with a feedback loop between the enactment of authentic behaviour and the shaping of an individual's social network. Identity formation is a continual process through the life span and career, which means that for any individual the meaning of authenticity and authentic career may change and shift over time. Hall (2002) proposed that the question "What do you do?" might well be re-framed as "Who are you?"

Leadership scholars and researchers have suggested that individuals who experience authenticity at work are more productive, cheerful, have higher self-esteem, life satisfaction, subjective career success, and wellbeing (Harter, 2002; Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Murphy & Volpe, 2015). However, there are risks to becoming more authentic at work; a person can become vulnerable. Being true to oneself is not always easy. For a person to accept her weaknesses, she needs to be open and willing to experience pain (Harter, 2002).

Authentic career behaviour has also been proposed to be linked to eudaimonic well-being as it is directed by the extent to which a person makes meaning of their career identity amidst other potential identities, which results in the person enacting a career congruent with her "true self" (Murphy & Volpe, 2015). The eudaimonic approach (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryan et al., 2008) is the degree to which a person is fully operative and existing as one's true self (Aristotle, trans. 1999). Researchers investigating well-being have suggested that eudaimonic well-being—comprised of personal growth, psychological strength, and meaningfulness—equates to a basis for human flourishing (Dik & Duffy, 2009). A person possessing eudaimonia is therefore characterized as living well, involved in attaining excellence, reflective in his or her

decision-making, and seeking to work toward ends that represent the actualization of our highest human natures (Ryan et al., 2008). Meaningfulness safeguards against depression and anxiety and corresponds to several healthy psychological functioning indicators (Steger et al., 2006). The individual who undertakes meaningful tasks, realizes his or her potential, and is “fully functioning”—frequently recognized as trademarks of eudaimonia—will usually experience significant happiness and pleasure (Ryan and Deci, 2001).

Further, a sense of meaningfulness and purpose in their career may be particularly salient for women, in particular women of colour. These groups, still face obstacles in accessing hedonic benefits of work (e.g. pay, power, prestige) in many careers, due to sexism and racism, and glass-ceiling effects (Constantine, Erickson, & Banks, 1998; Cook, Heppner, & O'Brien, 2002; Worthington, Flores, & Navaro, 2006). In fact, findings from a large-scale survey found minority status consistently predicted positive eudaimonic well-being (Ryff, Keyes, & Hughes, 2003) further suggesting that in spite of negative factors such as discrimination and racism, some facets of well-being can exist along with negative effects (Dik & Duffy, 2009).

Goals associated with eudaimonia tend to be autonomous; autonomy is associated with greater wellness, as well as more persistence and higher quality performance in what one does (Ryan et al., 2008). Autonomy is defined by a person's thoughtful and reflective affirmation of his or her actions. Ryan and Deci (2001) argued that eudaimonia is essentially embedded in human autonomy, as Aristotle proposed. A person cannot be “true to himself” and not be autonomous. Reflective competence supports the growth of autonomy, and vice versa (Ryan, 2005).

Mindfulness is defined as “awareness of what is occurring in the present moment” (Ryan et al., 2008, p. 159). It is characterized by an openness and receptivity to both internal and external actions. Mindfulness is similar to what Aristotle described as eudaimonic individual who can perceive the right way to respond in every situation. Empirical research to investigate the role of reflectivity and self-awareness in action through the concept of mindfulness found when mindful people are aware of the whole situation, they are better prepared to make meaningful decisions and to act in an integrated way (Ryan et al., 2008). Ryan, Huta, and Deci (2008) contended mindfulness is a basic requirement for a person to engage in eudaimonic living. They further argued that it might encourage the eudaimonic state as it enables awareness of what “is worth doing, and doing it well” (p. 159).

A sense of meaning is also sometimes viewed as an outcome of eudaimonia. Eudaimonic living with a focus on intrinsic goals and a practice of reflection and mindfulness produces a sense of meaning and a greater sense of purpose in life (Ryan et al., 2008) Eudaimonic living could provide a protective mechanism against isolation and lack of life purpose, considered opposites of finding meaning. Huta and Ryan (2006) found that eudaimonic goals and activities were positively related to several measures of meaning in life.

Further, to credit a person with having eudaimonia is to pay tribute to them. Ryan et al (2008) summarized, “Eudaimonia is viewed as living well, defined in terms both of pursuing goals that are intrinsically valued and of processes that are characterized by autonomy and awareness” (P. 163). The eudaimonic individual possesses attributes that exemplify an admirable life, regardless of whether they “feel good.” Eudaimonia is a

“way of living” rather than a state of mind, is thus not conceived of as a mental state, a positive emotion, or a reasoned consideration of self- satisfaction (Ryan et al., 2008).

Aristotle (trans. 1999) was explicit in his definition of an excellent life. He argued the eudaimonic person, the person with *phrōnesis*, must be engaged in reflectivity and deliberation continually with regards his or her behaviours and goals. When a person lives a reflective life they evidence both reason and deliberation; this enables the development of human excellence and uniquely human characteristics. Aristotle considered the contemplative life as supremely eudaimonic for it expresses the quality of unique humanness of the highest intrinsic worth. Aristotle's view is self-affirming, and echoes the view of psychologists who value self-awareness and knowledge. Aristotle depicted a eudaimonic life as one in which the individual is reflective and applies a sense of reason to his or her activities (Ryan et al, 2008). The intersection of women's lives and careers is addressed in the next section, which considers recent reviews of women's career research and offers suggestions for future research directions.

Framing women's careers

While progress has been made towards understanding women's careers in past decades, it seems the historic roles and beliefs around women as homemakers and mothers continue to impact on every aspect of women's career choice, placing limits on what women achieve (Fitzgerald et al., 1995; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006). Still prevalent is the idea that women's careers are less important than men's, due to women experiencing more paid work interruptions. Interruptions for women are more likely to be from family demands while men's career interruptions more often result from job

loss (Betz, 2002; Kirchmeyer, 2002; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). Undoubtedly women's careers deserve more attention with writers such as Brown (2003) having expressed concern about "the 'white bread' nature of most extant theories of career choice and development" (2003, p. 511). Other writers such as Marshall (1989) have been disquieted by the tendency to place women, as "the other" with "minority" groups, and deviations from a dominant pattern.

In their sweeping review of contemporary careers research over the past twenty years, Sullivan and Baruch (2009) noted the advances achieved in understanding the complexity of emerging non-linear career concepts such as the KCM, and commented such "newer conceptualizations suggest many intriguing avenues for future study" (p. 1558). The advantage of the Kaleidoscope Career Model is how it highlights the importance of gender differences to enact a career path.

In their comprehensive examination of the extant literature on women's careers O'Neil et al (2008) sought to understand "What is known and what is still left to be known about this important topic" (2008, p. 727). Four patterns emerged. The first resonates with Bateson's "Composing a life" (1979): Women's careers are embedded in women's large life contexts, namely women's careers are contextual. The second resonates with Gallos' question "How do I deal with the importance of relationships?" (1989, p. 119): Families and careers are central to women's lives. The third: Women's career paths offer a wide range and variety of patterns. Lastly: Human and social capital remain critical for women's career progress (O'Neil et al., 2008).

This review (O'Neil et al., 2008) suggested future research directions employing holistic approaches to women's career research to better address the intersection of women's careers and lives. The relationship between women's personal and professional lives

needs “to be further explored in ways that deepen our understanding,” as a result of consistent findings about the significance of context and relationships to women's career choices (p. 737). Holistic approaches could identify links between authentic career behaviour and eudaimonic well-being, and the extent to which a person makes meaning of their career identity (Murphy & Volpe, 2015). Sullivan and Baruch (2009) urged more research is needed with emergent theories such as the KCM, with a focus on how individuals change their psychological perspectives over time and on the complex relationship between physical and psychological passages, the latter being more complex and harder to study. Furthermore with regards to complexity, Iellatchitch, Mayrhofer and Meyer (2003) claim:

At the empirical level, career research places specific demands on researchers. Given the multi-disciplinary and multi-level characteristic of careers, it becomes obvious that applying theoretical analytical concepts to empirical career research is often neither simple nor one-dimensional, especially if an attempt at a more comprehensive look at career is made. (2003, p. 729)

Iellatchitch et al (2003) advocate the appropriateness of a fresh look at “old and new forms of career,” they argue, “there is no doubt that such a look is influenced by the personal and collective histories of those looking” (2003, p. 730).

Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of research and developments in women's career theorizing over the past fifty years. It has touched on issues such as women's career complexity, the value of education, spirituality and meaning making, and identified the place of vantage point for viewing career. Recently writers on career, and reviewers of

women's career research have insisted a "fresh" look at women's careers is needed in ways in order to deepen our understanding.

This research takes up this challenge. By employing a phenomenological research methodology, it seeks to explore the complexity of the relationship between women's physical and psychological journeys, in order to gain a deeper understanding of this intersection. By discovering details of the personal lives and histories of the participants, this research will seek to shine light on previously unknown aspects of career. It brings women's career passages centre stage, studying them from the vantage point of subjective career: from an insider's perspective, that of the individual pursuing her career. The next chapter provides the philosophical framework for this study, by considering phenomenology as theoretical perspective.

Chapter Three

Philosophy of Phenomenology

Everything we see hides another thing, we always want to see what is hidden by what we see, but it is impossible. Humans hide their secrets too well.

-- Rene Magritte

Introduction

This chapter provides the philosophical framework for this study. It documents my journey into understanding the philosophies of Heidegger and Husserl, a journey, which has been essential in order to provide a reference point for the theoretical perspective of this research. In this chapter, the work of Gadamer, and Merleau-Ponty is introduced. A discussion of Bourdieu's concepts on habitus, capitals, and field and Aristotle's concept of phrönesis is included as additional theoretical frameworks towards understanding women's career management.

Phenomenological research challenges

According to Caelli (2001) there are two weighty challenges for the phenomenological researcher. The first is the lack of articulated methods for undertaking phenomenological research. Surprisingly few sources address the utilitarian aspects of how to carry out such a study. The second challenge is to understand the philosophical underpinnings of such research. The researcher must personally develop an

understanding of complex philosophy. This challenge overshadows the first and is incontrovertible (Caelli, 2001).

With these two challenges in mind—early on in the research process—I began to read from the work of van Manen (1990). My aim was to understand the “how to” aspects of pursuing a hermeneutic phenomenological study. I then began to “dig” more deeply into the phenomenological literature. I read the work of Heidegger as expressed in the writings of Heideggerian scholars such as Harman (2011) and Dreyfus (1991, 2005). I listened to lectures by and interviews with Dreyfus. When I had sufficiently girded my loins for the task I began to read from the work of Heidegger (1927/2008) himself. The following is my interpretation of Heideggerian philosophy, with particular reference as it pertains to this research project, which seeks a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of women’s careers.

Hermeneutic phenomenology: A complex philosophical pathway

Hermeneutic phenomenological research—concerned with the study of phenomena or the appearance of things—has its roots in German philosophy. It has a complex philosophical pathway, which focussed in particular on the work of Edmund Husserl (1859 – 1938) and Martin Heidegger (1889 – 1976) who worked together and influenced one another. These two philosophers sought to uncover human experience as lived. Later, Heidegger moved onto the ontological question of the nature of reality and “being” in the world (Lavery, 2003). Phenomenology as a theoretical position developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by leading figures such as Scutz,

Gadamer and Mead, which stimulated the growth of other interpretive traditions, such as hermeneutics: the study and understanding of texts (Prasad, 2005).

The father of phenomenology: Edmund Husserl (1859–1938)

Often called the father of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl began his career working as a mathematician (Polkinghorne, 1983). Later, becoming interested in “pure phenomenology,” he sought to find a universal foundation of philosophy and science. Husserl (1952/1980) was critical of the scientific method. He believed psychology had done mankind a disservice and had treated human subjects as inhuman beings with automatic responses instead of responding according to their own perceptions. He argued that researchers who looked merely at physical stimuli, ignored their natural context, and created situations which were highly artificial (Lavery, 2003).

Phenomenology—defined as the study of lived experience or “lifeworld” (Ger. *lebenswelt*)—focuses on the world as lived by a person, rather than the world or reality, as separate from a person (van Manen, 1990). Husserl (1970) thought the phenomenological method which penetrates deeply into human reality provided a sure way of reaching true meaning. Husserl claimed, the reality uncovered by phenomenology is local and specific rather than being separate or “out there” like the reality represented in Cartesian dualism (Polkinghorne, 1983).

Husserl proposed two concepts are key to understanding phenomena: intentionality, a process where the mind is directed toward objects of study, and essences, structures which make the object identifiable as unique from others. He also suggested, that to be able to see clearly, defer judgment and achieve contact with essences, the outer world needs to be bracketed out (Husserl, 1970). Husserl described phenomenology as the

rigorous science of all conceivable transcendental phenomena. He frequently used the words “transcendental” and “phenomenology” interchangeably to describe the distinct method of the reduction used as the means to explain the phenomena (van Manen, 1990).

Martin Heidegger and Being Human

Heidegger began his career in theology, before becoming interested in philosophy. He was not a student of Husserl’s but the two taught together at Freiberg and Husserl trained Heidegger in phenomenological intentionality at which he became highly skilled (Lavery, 2003). Heidegger went on to succeed Husserl as chair and then disassociated himself from him. Heidegger broke with Husserl by substituting ontological questions concerning what sort of beings we are and how our being is bound up with the intelligibility of the world, in the place of epistemological questions concerning the relation of the knower and known. In this way, Heidegger, following from Kierkegaard, reversed Descartes famous maxim to, “I am therefore I think” (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991).

Since Descartes, philosophers have been concerned with the epistemological problem of seeking to explain just how the ideas within our minds can be true of the external world. What Heidegger did was to show that this subject/object epistemology assumed a knowledge of everyday practices we are socialised into, but don’t have in our minds (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991). Heidegger claimed he was doing ontology, asking about the “nature of this understanding of being that we do not know that is not a representation in the mind corresponding to the world—but that we simply are” (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991, p. 3).

Heidegger maintained interpretation is crucial. He claimed: to be human is to interpret (1927/2008). Following on from the work of Wilhelm Dilthey (1833 – 1911) in using

hermeneutics to study ancient texts, Heidegger generalised hermeneutics as a way of studying all human activities. He introduced the hermeneutic method into modern philosophy by his explanation of the need for interpretation in the study of human being. Further, he reasoned, such interpretation has a circular composition. In this way, Heidegger developed “hermeneutic” phenomenology in opposition to Husserl’s “transcendental” phenomenology (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991).

As with transcendental phenomenology, hermeneutic phenomenology is concerned with human experience as it is lived: the lifeworld. Its focus is on revealing details, often seemingly unimportant with the goal being to create meaning and achieve understanding. It was here that Husserl and Heidegger disagreed as to how to proceed with this exploration. While Husserl emphasised understanding phenomena, Heidegger (1927/2008) focussed on *Dasein* (Ger.) which translates as “the ‘mode of being human’ or ‘the situated meaning of a human in the world’” in an ontological philosophical sense (Lavery, 2003, p.7).

Husserl was interested in developing the means by which essential knowledge could be obtained. He proposed reductions and bracketing. Bracketing—also called epoche or the phenomenological reduction—can be described as the act of deferring judgment about the natural world and instead, concentrating on an investigation of mental experience. Husserl introduced the notion of the lifeworld. Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology built on this notion but he rejected Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology, and insisted that self and self-consciousness are not separate. Heidegger maintained the importance of being or *Sein* (Ger.) since he saw “being-in-the-world,” was more important than consciousness. People are not separate from the world – but are “being-in-the-world” (Ehrich, 1997).

Both Husserl and Heidegger appealed for a fresh look at the world and human beings. They desired to reclaim what had been lost through centuries of empiricism in human science (Lavery, 2003). Both men did not believe in a world based on Cartesian dualism. They believed knowledge is not split. It is not “out there.” Rather it is local and specific. They both sought an understanding of lived experience. Although their approaches were different, the focus and outcomes can be similar (Lavery, 2003).

Being and Time

Heidegger (1927/2008) believed every great thinker has a single great thought. He proposed his great thought was that being is not present or presence, because, being is time. Time is never just present but is continually pulled apart in an ambiguous threefold entity. Being is time and time is finite. It comes to an end with our death. What it means for a human being “to be” is to exist temporally in the stretch between birth and death. If we want to understand what it means to be an authentic human being, it is essential that we constantly project our lives onto the horizon of our death. Heidegger called this “being-towards-death” (1927/2008).

Heidegger’s book *Being and Time* (1927/2008)—first published in 1927—was immediately recognised as a classic. Considered the greatest work of philosophy in the twentieth century, its greatness lies in its depth and simplicity. Simply put, for thinkers such as St Paul, St Augustine, Luther and Kierkegaard, it is through a person’s relation to God that he finds “himself.” For Heidegger, whether God exists or not has no philosophical relevance. It is only through confronting death that the self can become what it truly is, by making meaning out of its finitude. If being is finite, then what it means to be human involves coming to terms with this finitude (1927/2008).

Heidegger claimed, the world is ambiguous and two faced. Things hide from view and things come into view. The world as such is a constant passage back and forth, between shadow and light called time. This simple thought is revolutionary. Heidegger was dismayed that the entire history of philosophy and science since ancient Greece had reduced objects to a kind of presence, missing their richness. The question of being has been forgotten since the time of ancient Greece (Harman, 2011). Modern technology too, has further stripped things of their mystery (Hartung, 2002).

Dasein – being there

As previously mentioned, the name for human existence in Heidegger's philosophy is Dasein, which means literally "being there." Heidegger used the word Dasein—used in German for any existence—for *human* existence. Heidegger wanted to revive the forgotten question of being through an analysis of human existence. He chose Dasein as his topic saying it is vitally important to understand what its structure is. The human being is more difficult to interpret than any other entity (Harman, 2011).

Heidegger's idea is that Dasein are defined by the world they live in, the fact they are aware of their being and the fact that being is an issue for them. Dasein are not isolated subjects, cut off from other objects and as beings they must be questioned to learn about their being (Harman, 2011). Heidegger said Dasein have become confused, they do know about the nature of their being but only in a vague kind of partly defined way. Their knowledge is hazy and they are on the lookout for new and more lucid forms. Heidegger believed being had been misconstrued in three ways: firstly, being is the most universal concept and is arrived at by abstraction; secondly, that by virtue of its abstraction it is indefinable; and, thirdly, that being is assumed to be something present for human view or physically present (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991).

Dasein can always be viewed from the outside by looking at appearance, personality, physical attributes; these are external traits. Yet, viewing beings from the outside won't reveal anything about being or how to live. Dasein is ontically¹ closer to people—since they are beings—but ontologically furthest from them. Dasein is not defined by a “what,” like an inanimate object that can merely be viewed from the outside, but by a “who,” who can act, perform and do, and is shaped by existence in time. The life of any human being, “can only be understood as the event, act or performance of its own being” (Harman, 2011, p. 56). Past interpretations of human being are therefore ruled out, the two most dominant being the Greeks who saw humans as rational animals and the Christians who saw humans as created in the image of god. Both of these concepts diminish beings to entities that have certain attributes viewed from the outside, and neither concept does justice to their innermost being (Harman, 2011).

Such was the depth of Heidegger's change to philosophic thought that he found it necessary to introduce a numerous neologisms, newly coined terms, words, and phrases. Several of these Heideggerian concepts and neologisms are now introduced and outlined.

Historicity

Heidegger (1927/2008) maintained time must be used as the horizon for the understanding of being. It is only within the concept of time can any understanding of being be reached. Heidegger was not referring to chronological time but to “kairological” time, which is an ambiguous threefold structure found in any moment. “Dasein is deployed in a threefold form of ecstatic time that stands outside of itself by

¹ of, relating to, or having real being

simultaneously swinging toward the past and future” (Harman, 2011, p. 59). For Heidegger (1927/2008) the point is not only that time is the horizon of being, being itself is time. This means Dasein itself is never really present and the world can’t be seen directly because it has a historical structure.

Heidegger used the term “historicality” for the authentic conception of history. Also used by some writers is “historicity,” which will be used here. Historicity is a defining characteristic of Dasein, and concerns an individual’s history or background. It includes what a person’s culture gives them from birth and what is handed down. It presents individuals with ways of understanding the world (Lavery, 2003). Heidegger regarded consciousness as woven together and shaped by historically lived experience. He insisted that a person’s background and understanding influences their responses at all times, which means that nothing could be encountered without reference to it (Merleau-Ponty, 1962).

Further, every interaction Dasein has, involves interpretation. All understanding is gained from interpreting links back to pre-history and structure. It simply cannot be eliminated, and can’t be bracketed out. It is through the lens of their own history, culture and language that people view and understand the nature of their experience (Lavery, 2003).

Heidegger (1927/2008) maintained that Dasein’s existence is always defined by time. Dasein are beings with a past; who progress through the present. As they do this, possibilities become available to them which Heidegger termed “ways to be.” Being human, means to exist with a specific past, an individual and cultural history, and by a continuous succession of possibilities that can be either taken advantage of, or not.

Dasein are constantly preoccupied with themselves, with their own way of being, and with how things are going for them personally. Heidegger termed this concept “mine-ness.” Being is always an issue for Dasein, which makes mine-ness a key feature of Dasein. Only human beings, only Dasein can undergo the practice of self-analysis and self-doubt. Only Dasein can question, reflect and interpret. Only Dasein have existence which involves these facets—this is how Heidegger defines existence—only Dasein have mine-ness (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991).

Heidegger contended that Dasein exist as historical beings. “Dasein always historicizes, torn between the two sides of its being” (Harman, 2011, p. 75). It is only on the basis of a sense of their own past, as Dasein that anything like a “world history” is possible (Heidegger, 1927/2008, p. 41). The world is primarily historical; the past is never entirely gone. Its possibility remains in the form of a heritage. Heidegger says the proper way for Dasein to deal with this is by repetition, which means to take over some possibility as one’s own. Multiple Dasein who historicise together, have a destiny (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991).

In spite of his belief that all consciousness is shaped by historically lived experience, Heidegger’s approach was not concerned with what it means to be a human being in a particular culture or historical period. Instead, he attempted to describe everyday life in such a way that it laid out generic arrangements, which transcend culture and history. These arrangements are based on Dasein’s inherent intelligibility and revolve around its self-interpreting way of being (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991).

At this point, it is important to begin to contextualise these practices and concepts within the context of this study. As a woman pursues a career, her background, her culture and past experiences shape and inform her understanding. She has her own

particular past and personal history. Various possibilities and chance events have been a part of this—she has responded to them in her own way—as she has created her career pathway. Her career is shaped over time by “existing” in the world. A woman is also “caught up” and pre-occupied by her own career. Heidegger’s concept of mine-ness has relevance to findings in the literature on women’s careers, in particular with respect to women’s careers being non-traditional, individual and self crafted (Cabrera, 2007; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007b).

The One and Authenticity

The world is full of people and living in the world is an experience Dasein share along with others. Heidegger called this “being-with,” described by King (1964) as the essential nature of existence, our reason for existing. Even when not physically with others, our mode is still being-with (1927/2008).

Heidegger claimed the world reveals itself most typically as a useful or handy world. The world of average everyday experience, which Dasein are always, existing or being-in. Heidegger calls it “being-in-the-world.” This being is in an existential sense rather than a categorical one as we typically think of “in.” For example, “water in a glass,” or “she is in the house.” In this case “in” means, immersed, enmeshed, taken up with (Harman, 2011). Dreyfus (1991) called it in-volvement in a personal or self-defining way.

The ordinary way of living, Heidegger (1927/2008) termed, “everydayness.” He contended philosophical insight about Dasein can be gained by observing them in their everydayness. Another Heideggerian concept is that of “Das Man,” which does not translate exactly into English. Often translated as “The-They” or “People” or “Anyone”

it is more accurately translated as “One,” as in “one should always arrive on time,” which will be used here. The One is everyone, and no one, is always right and never risks being wrong (Heidegger, 1927/2008).

Dasein are constantly worried about how they differ from other Dasein, from the One. This worry is always there, if often unconscious. On an everyday basis, they constantly compare themselves with others, competing, trying to out-do them. This behaviour Heidegger labelled “distantiality.” He perceived inherent dangers in being-with others, because in the everyday public world the influence of others diminishes the possibilities of being (1927/2008, p. 164). “In one’s concern with what one has taken hold of, whether with, for or against, the others, there is constant care as to the way one differs from them” (p.163). In this way, the people who Dasein are with have influence, and can determine how they behave, interpret, and operate in the world. Individuals can risk losing their sense of identity as Dasein.

Dasein can exist in one of two dominant modes, either authentically or inauthentically. A choice must be made between these two modes. To either truly come to grips with their own deepest possibility of being, or, to draw their ambitions and self-understanding from what the public, the One says. Further, defining themselves through possibility is an essential part of being, of what it means to be human (Heidegger, 1927/2008). People shouldn’t be defined by what they might be now, rather, by what they may become, “Dasein is in every case what it can be, and in the way in which it is its possibility” (p.183). By facing up to possibility Dasein can potentially break free from everyday circumstances and go on to live a more authentic life. To achieve authenticity is to live a life of possibility, an authentic life is striking a balance between

what is actual and what is possible. This is the crux of Heidegger's idea of authenticity (1927/2008).

Heidegger called the normal way of behaving gained along with a typical familiarity with things and people, “averageness” (1927/2008). To live averagely, means living according to the “One-self” and being accepting of mainstream views, unreflective and unable to think. Heidegger claimed this leads to “leveling down” which reduces Dasein’s potential for being (p.166). In order to be authentic, Dasein need to separate themselves from others in some way; otherwise they can be absorbed into the everyday averageness of the One. One-self contrasts with “Authentic-Self,” the self, which has been taken hold of in its own way (Heidegger, 1927/2008).

There is a great deal in the career literature about the importance of career as being a vehicle for reaching one’s potential, growing in self efficacy (Hackett & Betz, 1981) with women’s career development described as being typically more inwardly oriented (Marshall, 1989). These concepts have synchronicity with Heidegger’s concepts of the One, authenticity and possibility. In conversational interviews the interviewer takes interest in hearing everyday accounts, in the “run of the mill” occurrences, which a woman might tell about her career.

Sorge

The German word “Sorge,” translates as “care for” “concern for.” For Heidegger, Sorge is not just about existing in the world and existing alongside other people (1927/2008). It’s about being there, existing “for” others. Sorge goes, “beyond being Dasein-with and Dasein-in, which are unavoidable modes of everyday – it must become Dasein-for” (Steiner, 1987, p.100).

To take hold of the ordinary way of being—everydayness—Heidegger suggested an appropriate tool is needed (1927/2008). He identified Sorge as such a tool. In his view, Sorge is the central character of being, “being-in-the-world is essentially care” (p.237). Sorge is the means by which Dasein becomes Dasein-for. To care is inseparably linked to the whole idea of being “in” the world and “with others” (p.235). Because of this Dasein cannot help but feel compelled to take care of and to be concerned for others. Simply put, being-in-the-world and being-with-others, means that beings “care-for” (Heidegger, 1927/2008).

Care seen in this way is not a practical sort of care, such as the tasks a caregiver would complete for a sick person. It lies much deeper and is seen “as a primordial structural totality” (Heidegger, 1927/2008, p. 238) Care is there before contact is made either with others or with things in the world. “Care-for-others,” solicitude is the essential part of being-with others. Solicitude is concern, anxiety even worry for other people. Through solicitude, a human being begins to understand itself (Heidegger, 1927/2008).

Everyday “being-with-one-another” reveals itself, between two extremes. The first is inauthentic solicitude, which is dominating and relieves the other of care. In its concern it puts itself in the other’s place. It “leaps in” and dominates. Heidegger’s notion of leaping in implies a sense of taking over from the other. “In such solicitude the other can become one who is dominated and dependent, even if this dominating is a tacit one and remains hidden” (Heidegger, 1927/2008, p. 158). Authentic solicitude by contrast, what Heidegger calls “leaping ahead” is an extremely positive state (p.158) which “leaps forth and liberates” (p.159). Heidegger concluded that care is the primordial state of being as human beings struggle towards authenticity (Steiner 1978).

More frequently, however, care reveals itself in its imperfect or uninterested states,

called “deficient” modes of solicitude (Heidegger, 1927/2008, p. 158). Even when we as Dasein are careless, care itself is evident, or when “we pass one another by” (p.158) or are apathetic to each other. While Heidegger (1927/2008) noted that care is guided by consideration and acceptance it is also found in intolerance and thoughtlessness.

Moods and thrownness

One of the compelling features of Heidegger's work is his attempt to provide a phenomenology of moods, of the affects that make up our everyday life in the world. Mood is linked to tuning and pitch: beings are attuned to the world firstly and mostly through moods. Mood can refer to sensibility, culture or temper (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991). Dasein are always in some mood or another and there is no escaping it, a mood reveals how things are going. Heidegger (1927/2008) believes that in a contrary mood Dasein become blind to themselves, and their environment becomes masked, the wariness of anxiety sends them off course.

“Thrown-ness” is the simple awareness that Dasein always find themselves somewhere. Dasein are continually “thrown” into a situation to which they must respond. As Dasein, people are transported into a world, which fascinates them; a world lived in and shared with others. This is what Heidegger calls the thrown-ness of human existence. Moods reveal the human being as thrown into the “there” of being-in-the-world (Heidegger, 1927/2008).

Dasein are continually caught up in everyday life in the world, in the throw of different moods, worry, boredom, pleasure or, as will be outlined in the next section, anxiety or “angst.” Being aware of uncertainty for Dasein, is characterised as a state of thrown-

ness in the present with all its incumbent irritations, agonies, and stresses that are inevitable, such as social customs and obligations and relationship ties (Harman, 2011).

Dasein confront every concrete situation in which they find themselves (into which they have been thrown) as a range of possibilities for acting (onto which they may project themselves). Dasein are not just beings defined by being thrown into the world, they can also choose to throw off that thrown condition in a movement where they seize hold of possibilities, in a concrete situation. This movement Heidegger called “projection” and it is experienced as freedom. Freedom is the experience of the human being revealing its potential by acting in the world. To act in such a way is to be authentic. Thrown-ness and projection provide two of the three aspects of Sorge, care (Heidegger, 1927/2008).

The third is “fallen-ness.” “Dasein has, in the first instance, fallen away from itself as an authentic potentiality for Being its Self, and has fallen into the world” (Heidegger, 1927/2008, p. 220). This process of fallen-ness is the everyday mode of being human of being-with. In its everydayness being-with shows itself as ordinariness, “Being-lost in the publicness of the ‘they’ ” (1927/2008, p. 220). Tranquillised by the voice and influences of the One, fallen-ness makes Dasein think they are living life to the full. Really they are just living it as the One lives it not from their own potentiality for being.

This question of “How do you find yourself?” “How are you doing?” might be the first question asked in a conversational interview. It is in the opening minutes of an interview, that a participant may provide an outline of what work they are currently doing and to describe how things are going for them—the mood of their situation—and to reflect on their state of mind.

Angst and conscience

The concept of “angst” or anxiety has been touched on above as a fundamental mood for Heidegger, “Angst serves as a breakdown that reveals the nature of Dasein and its world” (Heidegger, 1927/2008, p. 233). When angst is experienced as inauthentic Dasein, the world appears like an instrument that has failed to do its job. Rather than being absorbed and taken up with the things in the world, everyday familiarity with it collapses (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991). Angst is described as feeling uncanny or “un-Heimlich”, which means, not at home. When Dasein experience angst everything seems strange. It is as if they don’t even know themselves and their everyday lives seem odd and somewhat peculiar.

Yet, angst can act as the vehicle towards becoming their “own selves,” and can provoke a move towards becoming more authentic. It provides a way of escaping dread, of turning away from the One. When angst is experienced there is the chance for Dasein to make a new start, to consciously resolve to choose life, something not available in their everyday life (Harman, 2011). Because of this, angst isn’t construed as something negative; rather it can be seen as a necessary evil, whose effect is to rouse people from their everyday lives. They can become so locked in their routines; they don’t question the status quo, and simply follow the herd. Angst can free people from the herd instinct and enable them to make their own personal decisions (Harman, 2011).

Another force that causes a denial of the One is “conscience.” Luther or Augustine might have described the Christian experience of conscience as “God talking.” For Heidegger (1927/2008), by contrast, conscience is a person’s own voice talking to them. The call of conscience—with its sudden somewhat painful and eerie appearance—can feel like an alien voice. It is, Heidegger declared, Dasein calling to itself.

The call of conscience doesn't mean that Dasein become weighed down with a record of guilty deeds. Instead, they can merely accept the guilt that is already there simply because they are Dasein. "Everyday" Dasein like to tally up all their good and bad actions and trade them off against one another, the end result being a good or a bad conscience. The call of conscience calls them as Dasein to be guilty, brings them face to face with their own being and at the same time frees them into taking responsibility for their own being in the world (Heidegger, 1927/2008).

Like conscience, "resoluteness," has no specific content. It is simply, the authentic way of being oneself. Resoluteness is often stifled by the norms and common sense of the One, and by absorption in the things of the world (Heidegger, 1927/2008). However, the resolute individual does not withdraw from his or her circumstances but endeavours to discover what is actually possible, and then to take hold of that possibility in whatever way they can (1927/2008). Irresolute people, by contrast, are driven in random directions by chance events, and fail to truly come to terms with possibilities (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991).

There is an emerging literature on authenticity in women's careers, for example Mainiero & Sullivan (2002, 2005). The notion of authenticity observed from the internal perspective of a movement away from "dread" or feeling "uncanny" has potential to add to this. As I write this, one of my daughters is seeking a new job having returned from overseas. There is no doubt her job search has given her angst. Yet it has also provided her with a chance to make a fresh start. To consciously choose the kind of job she wants as this stage in her career and to pursue that choice. Rather than to keep on choosing the same sort of job, she now has the opportunity to diversify. To not "follow the herd" but to potentially change her way of being-in the-world-of-work. She

has the chance to become more authentic. To resolutely choose to let this concrete situation enable her to move towards possibility.

The previous pages have provided an overview of Heidegger's philosophy with particular reference to how it might apply to this study on women's careers. Gadamer's contribution to phenomenology is now considered.

To the things themselves: The work of Hans Georg Gadamer

Gadamer (1900 – 2002) studied philosophy at Freiberg during which time he was influenced by both Husserl and Heidegger. Gadamer (2004) extended Heidegger's work in practice and agreed with him that language and understanding were inseparable. Gadamer (2004) was critical of much modern philosophy with its emphasis on objective truth and natural sciences, and claimed there is no one view where one can look at the world and see it objectively for what it is. This is because all understanding as Dasein is conditioned by our culture, language and history.

Gadamer (2004) stated people all have prejudices, and possess "pre-judgements" which influence them and their way of seeing and understanding the world. These prejudices are not necessarily undesirable, and come from their background, culture and religion. Further, individuals have an intricate connection of these pre-judgments rooted in their history, which affects their understanding of the world. Gadamer called this an "historically effected consciousness" (p.350) and professed, "understanding is, essentially, a historically effected event" (p. 310). Individuals are moulded by their history and culture. They are embedded in it. The historically effective consciousness is the chief concept to Gadamer's hermeneutics (Gadamer, 2004).

Gadamer defined a horizon as “the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point” (2004, p. 313). He maintained, when individuals interact and converse with others, they have their own “horizon of understanding” (p.302). Involvement in a conversation is biased by individuals’ pre-judgments and understandings, yet they can attempt to understand a horizon, or way of thinking different from their own. In order to do this, their prejudices and pre-understandings need to be tested. Gadamer reasoned that by interacting in the world, and with others, a person’s views and ideas can grow and be transformed in a process he called “a fusion of horizons” (p.305). In this way, different views meld together and enlarge and transform an individual’s worldview.

The horizon of the present is continually in the process of being formed because we continually have to test all our prejudices. An important part of this testing occurs in encountering the past and in understanding the tradition from which we come. Hence the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past. (Gadamer, 2004, p. 317)

Gadamer advocated questioning as an essential part of the interpretive process. Interpretation is seen the fusion of horizons of the interaction between the expectation of the researcher and the meaning of the text. Understanding and interpretation are so bound together that interpretation is continually evolving and never complete (Lavery, 2003).

Understanding is always more than merely re-creating someone else’s meaning. Questioning opens up possibilities of meaning, and thus what is meaningful passes into one’s own thinking on the subject...to reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one’s own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were. (Gadamer, 2004, p. 383)

Gadamer believed that bracketing was impossible and attempts to do so absurd. All understandings are based on historicity of being and all understanding has some prejudice. Historicity of understanding is unquestionable and positive in the search for meaning (Lavery, 2003).

Hermeneutic phenomenology as method

It was Gadamer (1976, 2004) who developed hermeneutic phenomenology as method. For Gadamer (2004), when a researcher engages with a research question, he or she must live the question, engage with the question, and involve themselves in whatever thoughts, experiences or moods occur.

Hermeneutics must start from the position that a person seeking to understand something has a bond to the subject matter that comes into language through the traditionary text and has, or acquires, a connection with the tradition from which it speaks. (Gadamer, 2004, p. 306)

Hermeneutics is the study of human cultural activity as texts. Its intent is interpretation—to find expressed meanings—with texts taking written or verbal form, including literature, the visual arts and music (Lavery, 2003). Hermeneutics invites participants into an ongoing conversation, but does not provide a set methodology.

Gadamer (2004) saw hermeneutics as a process of co-creation between the researcher and participant, in which the very production of meaning occurs through a circle of readings, reflective writing and interpretation. These interpretive influences need to be accounted for by process of the “hermeneutic circle.” Integral to hermeneutics, this process establishes a link between a text and its wider context. The “part” (elements of the text) can only be interpreted from the “whole” (the context) and vice versa (Prasad, 2005). In this way, by following a hermeneutic circle of inquiry, the interpretive process

is achieved, moving repeatedly to and fro, from the parts of experience to the whole (Polkinghorne, 1983).

What is decisive is not to get out of the circle but to come into it the right way... In the circle is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowing. To be sure, we genuinely take hold of this possibility only when, in our interpretation, we have understood that our first, last and constant task is never to allow our fore-having, fore-sight and fore-conception to be presented to us by fancies and popular conceptions, but rather to make the scientific theme secure by working out these fore-structures in terms of the things themselves. (Heidegger, 1927/2008, p. 195)

The contribution of Merleau-Ponty

Four key concepts called “celebrated themes” are common to different types of phenomenology. A significant contribution Merleau-Ponty (1908 – 1961) made to phenomenology was to identify these themes, namely: description, reduction, essences and intentionality. The aim of all phenomenology is a description of phenomena, anything that presents itself, which could be feelings, thoughts or objects. Reduction is a process that involves suspending the phenomena in order to return to the “things themselves.” Essence makes an experience “what it is.” It is the core meaning of an individual’s experience. Intentionality refers to consciousness, as individuals are always conscious of something. It is the total meaning of the object and more than just what is given when viewed from one perspective (Merleau-Ponty, 1962).

It is important to note here that the phenomenology of Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau Ponty was written as theory and not with the intention of it being used for applied research. Over the past four decades, however there has been an emergence of research methodologies, which have drawn inspiration from the philosophical phenomenological thoughts of these founding fathers (Ehrich, 2005).

In undertaking this research project I became drawn to phenomenology and to Heideggerian phenomenology. Interpreting the findings against the work of Heidegger and Gadamer was an essential part of working in this methodology. As the research process evolved I became aware that other philosophies and theories might also be salient in interpreting the data. The work of Pierre Bourdieu with its emphasis on habitus and on capital has synchronicity with that of Heidegger.

Habitus, field and capital: The work of Pierre Bourdieu

Pierre Bourdieu (1930 – 2002) said Heidegger was his “first love.” Heideggerian scholar, Dreyfus (1991) used the French anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu to provide examples of the process of socialization that forms public intelligibility and even private experience. Bourdieu’s (1977) concepts of field, capital and habitus are key to understanding his theory of practice.

Fields

A social field is characterised by a patterned set of practices. Social fields are a playground or battlefield in which agents or players, equipped with specific field-relevant capital, try to advance their position. Each field is based on a historically produced system of shared meaning and are historically embedded social contexts; they change over time. However, even more characteristic of fields is their inertia. Social fields correspond to a playground where players realise individual strategies, playing according to, and thereby openly reproducing, the rules of the game as defined by the specific set of capitals most valuable for holding power within the field (Bourdieu, 1986).

Capital: cultural, social economic and symbolic

Bourdieu (1986) constructed three kinds of capital in fields. Economic capital is the most easily identified form and refers to money, property, and other assets. It can be more easily converted into cultural, social and symbolic capital than vice versa. Income is an important form of economic capital.

Social capital involves networks and relationships of mutual recognition, influence and acquaintance, as well as resources based upon social connections and groups, such as family or class membership. Social capital is legitimised and institutionalised by family, group or class membership. It works as a multiplier, which enhances the effects of economic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986).

Cultural or information capital refers to forms of knowledge, educational credentials, and skills. It emphasises education and academic qualifications and degrees. Cultural capital is the accumulated result of educational and cultural effort, undertaken by the person or by ancestors and passed down (Bourdieu, 1986).

Bourdieu's (1986) fourth form of capital, symbolic capital, refers to socially recognised legitimization such as prestige or honor. Bourdieu links these various forms of capital by illustrating how social, cultural, and symbolic capital convert back into economic capital. The three forms of capital: economic, social and cultural are accumulated and are assigned value as symbolic capital. The rules valid within certain social fields determine which combination of the constituent capitals are socially recognised, approved as symbolic capital, and valued in the relevant social context. A person's symbolic capital provides an indication of their social power and legitimacy within a specific field (Bourdieu, 1986).

Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus is embodied history, the active presence of the whole past, of which it is the product. Habitus is a combination of ways of perception, thinking, feeling, assessing, communicating and acting. It acts as a foundation for all the expressive, verbal and everyday communications and actions of an individual (Krais, 1985). Habitus is a dynamic and generative structure that adapts and accommodates itself to another dynamic meso-level structure composed primarily of other players, situated practices and durable institutions (Lizardo, 2004).

A field defines structures of social setting in which habitus operates. The orientation of the habitus may be primarily towards the accumulation of symbolic or economic capital, but is basically made up of cultural capitals or knowledge (Iellatchitch et al., 2003; Lash, 1993). "The adjustment of the habitus to the conditions of action is a continuous process, which cannot be reduced to the first socialization of the first years of life.... It will be constantly reinforced or modified by further experience" (Iellatchitch et al., 2003, p. 738).

Habitus as applied to career fields

To be able to understand and interpret the action of players in the field, information about their dispositions and competence is required: their habitus. Knowledge is also needed of how to play the game as well as the position individual players hold in the field. Players' judgments are shaped by their habitus and also by the conditions and rationale of the game as it develops (Crossley, 2001). It is due to their habitus and the way in which it moulds their understanding, motivation and movement, that the players are first disposed to recognise and play the field. This means field and habitus are constantly linked in a circular relationship. The habitus is moulded by involvement in a

field, and then in turn, the habitus shapes the actions that reproduce the field (Crossley, 2001).

Recently Iellatchitch et al (2003, 2004) have applied and extended Bourdieu's concept of habitus and field into careers. They define career fields as:

...The social context within which individual members of the workforce, who are equipped with a specific portfolio of field-relevant capitals, try to maintain or improve their place in the given and unfolding network of work-related positions through a patterned set of practices which are enabled and constrained by the rules of the field and, in turn, contribute to the shaping of these rules. (Iellatchitch et al., 2003, p. 732)

Viewing careers in this way enables a "cross-sectional" view of career, which concentrates on the relationship between the players and their practices cutting across contexts such as organisations and professions. Careers themselves are not a field but develop within a field. Work is seen as the transformation of cultural and social capital into economic capital (Iellatchitch et al., 2003).

Career habitus has a durable and dynamic quality. It continues to evolve. A specific disposition may mean an individual's career habitus "fits" a specific career field and may be characterised by dispositions which "tend to be actualized 'automatically' within a career field" (Iellatchitch et al., 2003, p. 738). Such a particular habitus guarantees that a player behaves, observes and thinks according to the rules of the field and their movements appear "natural" within the field. They act "intentionally without intention" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 12). Career fields also have a dynamic quality, which recognises the relationship between work and time (Arthur et al, 1989a).

According to the framework of Iellatchitch et al (2003), career capital is the particular sort of capital valued within career fields. Career capital consists of the different modes

of support the individual obtains and has at his/her disposal and may invest for his/her further career success. Career capital is a mix of the three generic sorts of capital: economic, social and cultural (Bourdieu, 1986). Each player within a certain career field has a distinctive portfolio of capitals. The first is genetic disposition, and as a person's life unfolds a complex interplay begins between their disposition and their social context. As time goes on, educational opportunities, professional development and personal growth contribute to this interplay, which makes for a continuously altering portfolio of capitals. Career capital, from the subjective point of view is symbolic capital, recognised by other players and the rules of the field as "legitimate, valid and useful" (Iellatchitch et al., 2003, p. 735). Individuals with less career capital may be confronted with the situation of being in a field which does not fit their habitus, and in which their career capital is undervalued (Iellatchitch et al., 2003).

Viewing careers through the lens of Bourdieu's concept of field accentuates the notion of struggle (Iellatchitch et al., 2003). Intrinsically, capitals as defined by Bourdieu embody the various aspects of power: economic, cultural, social or symbolic. There is incongruence between individuals' chances to manipulate and win a struggle due to the dissemination of capitals and power. There is also an imbalance due to the layout of the field, the rules of the game, and further to individuals' abilities to comprehend, adopt and ultimately use them (Iellatchitch et al., 2003). Thus Iellatchitch et al (2003) argued, using the concept of field for career theory provides a constant link between the individual and the institutional levels.

Aristotle and Heidegger: Phrōnesis and the skilled practitioner

The work of Aristotle (384BC – 322BC) had seminal influence on Heideggerian philosophy (Brogan, 2005). Heidegger included the work of Aristotle in *Being and Time*, and made his own analysis of Aristotelian virtues, sophia—the Greek word for wisdom—and phrōnesis. Aristotle described phrōnesis as “a state of grasping the truth, involving reason concerned with action about things that are good or bad for a human being” (trans. 1999, p. 89). Often acknowledged as his “special virtue,” phrōnesis is a virtue, which “enables us to judge what it is we should do in any given situation.” It connects the categories of character and intellect to which Aristotle assigned all other virtues (Sellman, 2012, p. 116).

Closely related to wisdom, and in fact often described as “practical wisdom,” phrōnesis is Aristotle’s practical virtue, which he described as an essential habit of the mind. It is the virtue vital to be what Aristotle termed a “phrōnimos,” a virtuous or wise person (Sellman, 2012). Writers such as Aquinas (1952/1992) have defined phrōnesis as “right reasoning about what is to be done” (p.73). MacIntyre described it as “knowing how to apply general principles in particular situations... the ability to act so that principles will take a concrete form” (1984, p. 74).

Aristotle (trans. 1999) made a contrast between phrōnesis and other mental states. Epistēmê literally means scientific knowledge, or things that are unavoidably true. Techne concerns craft or craft knowledge, “a state involving true reason concerned with production” (trans. 1999, p. 88). Birmingham (2004) argued phrōnesis represents many perspectives and facets of reflection developed in the literature and as a virtue is moral. She claimed reflection is more than the sum of its parts and is essentially the virtue

phrönesis. The knowing and thinking that phrönesis calls for is concerned foremost with the particular or the situation. This is echoed in Schön's (1983) work on reflection.

Cries for more attention to be paid to phrönesis have been legion, with many writers calling for a revitalisation of the concept (see for example Flyvbjerg, 2001; Kinsella & Pitman, 2012; MacIntyre, 1984; Schön, 1983). Schön (1983) contended the phrönimos is a practitioner who has risen above the technical application of conventions, acknowledged its limitations, and begun to function in ways that are indefinable using a simply technical rational approach. Birmingham (2004) purported one of the values of phrönesis is it recognises the importance of community in teacher education and school settings, quoting Aristotle's (1999) epitome of a virtuous life is necessary for a happy life. Living a happy and virtuous life depends a great deal on the community in which one lives (Birmingham, 2004).

Cole implored educational researchers to collaborate with teachers and become advocates for institutional changes that "will promote rather than inhibit reflection" (cited in Birmingham, 2004, p.322). Cole (1997) identified how anxiety, fear, helplessness, loneliness, meaninglessness and hostility are constructed in the culture of schools. Teachers who have come to possess those dispositions are prevented from being fully reflective.

Summary

This chapter has provided the theoretical philosophical framework undergirding this study. It has discussed the philosophy of Heidegger and Husserl, and given explanations of key notions from Heidegger's *Being and Time*, including: Dasein, Historicity, The

One, Authenticity, Sorge, Angst and Conscience. It has introduced the work of Gadamer and shown how he developed phenomenology as method. In addition it has considered the work of Bourdieu and Aristotle as additional points of reference from which to interpret the data obtained in this study.

The next chapter as well as outlining the research design, discusses the relevance and efficacy, of utilising phenomenology developed as research method.

Chapter Four

Research design

Whoever is searching for the human being
first must find the lantern
-- Nietzsche

Introduction

Chapter Three introduced the philosophy behind the theoretical perspective for this study. This chapter is concerned with the design of this research project. It firstly addresses the salience of phenomenology to research in career management. It secondly considers the emergence of multiple interpretive traditions, identifies how phenomenology fits into this array, and the relevance of phenomenology used as research method. It thirdly outlines crucial differences between phenomenological modes of inquiry as well as distinctions between narrative and phenomenological approaches. Challenges for the phenomenological researcher are examined. It finally discusses how this research is situated theoretically and methodologically.

A new star on the organizational research horizon

Over thirty years ago, Sanders (1982) observing the infrequent use of phenomenological studies in organizational research contended phenomenology was “a new star on the (organizational) research horizon” and urged researchers to consider using it to “study

traditional research problems” (p. 353). Twenty years later, Gibson and Hanes (2003), noting the same thing were prompted to undertake a comprehensive database search to determine the extent phenomenology was utilised as research approach in human resource development studies. They located only a handful of studies. The contribution phenomenology might make to the broad field of management research was questioned by Ehrich (2005). She proposed since “management is a highly complex interpersonal and relational activity very much concerned with the development of the human side (of the enterprise)” (p. 8) is reason enough to suggest that phenomenological methodology—with its emphasis on uncovering meanings of human experience—might be well used to explore a range of human experiences within the broad spectrum of activities in the management arena. Further, researching human experiences beyond the constraints of extant theories can add value to current research and lead to fresh insights into the complex processes involved (Ehrich, 2005).

However phenomenology as a particular research approach appears to have found little support from researchers in management with disagreement about the use of phenomenology perhaps because of the wide usage of the term, conceptualised as philosophy, research method, and overarching perspective from which all qualitative research is sourced (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). To date, phenomenology has not been greatly used by researchers in management related studies (Gibson & Hanes, 2003; Sanders, 1982) or in areas such as education (Ehrich, 1997). A small number of recent phenomenological research include studies on women’s mentoring, people’s experience of work lives through IT change, experience of team emotion and professional development for school principals (Crosetto, 2004; Ehrich, 1997; Gibson & Hanes, 2003; Moreno, 2001).

Career development theorists have also referred to the need for phenomenological approaches (Young & Valach, 1996) and hermeneutics (Savickas, 1995) for some time. These approaches relate to the “development of meaning in social interaction, involvement of inter-subjectivity, the place of context, and the construction of career” (Young & Valach, 1996, p. 364). Although scarce, studies which have used phenomenology to investigate career development are Brooks and Daniluk (1998) to explore women artists’ careers, Teixeira and Gomes (2002) to study career transition, Sullivan (2002) to explore non-traditional career choices for women, and Knorr (2011) to explore women in management.

Further, phenomenology provides the possibility to observe career development from a different perspective than that of the individual—considered as an active and reflective participant—who can discuss her career development from the past to the anticipated future (Grant & Giddings, 2002). Knorr (2011) contended with Young and Valach (1996) that career is “an overarching construct that serves to frame and organise the complex pattern of intentional actions over longer segments of life” (p. 364). She suggested this would provide fresh understanding of context of careers as a source of social meanings which individuals draw from, to construct a career (Knorr, 2011).

It is more than two decades since Collin and Young (1992) advocated for an investigation of another side of careers, and suggested research is needed with links to the internal matters related to individuals which reveals individuals’ viewpoints on their lives and its meaning. Recently, Knorr (2011) claimed much career research investigates the person and the environment and not vice versa. She proposed a gap remains to be filled and an opportunity exists to demonstrate the multidimensional

quality of careers, so capturing “the richness and complexity of individuals’ lives” (p. 104).

A dazzling array of methodological choices

In spite of quantitative research methodologies still taking centre stage in many disciplines, an increasing dissatisfaction with logical empirical methods has seen qualitative methods shift from a marginalised position towards one of greater acceptance amongst researchers. Prasad called it a “qualitative turn” which has yielded “a dazzling array of methodological choices” (2005, p. 3). The interpretive traditions lie within this array, and include the research methodologies of phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology.

Qualitative research, concerned with explaining the meaning of human interactions and with exploring individuals’ interpretations and beliefs, allows the researcher to go deeper into an understanding of complex phenomena within an organizational context. It provides insights into what individuals’ experiences are, why they do what they do, and what they need to do in order to change (Rowan & Huston, 1997). Over the past thirty years there has been an increasing desire for research methods that involve such deep exploration and emphasise discovery, description and meaning, rather than control and measurement. Polkinghorne (1983) described this shift as a rethinking of the mainstream positivistic psychology approach and a growing recognition of the limitations of empirical methods.

Interpretive traditions

Interpretive traditions have their roots in the thinking of Immanuel Kant and the German idealists. Taking human interpretation as their starting point for developing knowledge about the social world, interpretive traditions uniformly subscribe to the ontological belief that worlds are socially created and constructed because people have the ability to attach meaning to interactions and events. Knowledge is therefore personally construed and subjective (Prasad, 2005).

The goal of interpretive traditions is to understand these processes of subjective reality construction in all facets of social life, a principle Weber (1949) called *verstehen* from the German word, which means, “understand.” Dreyfus (1991) commented—whether consciously or not—such approaches draw on the hermeneutic method of Heidegger’s *Being and Time* and observed that, as researchers are, “coming to question the role of theory in their disciplines, they are becoming interested in interpretive methods that take into account meaning and context” (1991, p. 2).

A focus of interpretive research concerns the unpeeling of reifications or truths people hold fixed in their consciousness. These beliefs become taken for granted, central to a person’s life and treated as immutable facts. Examples of these include: intelligence, and ability according to gender; social constructs, which can tie people up, in effect, making them prisoners (Prasad, 2005). Prasad argued, “a constant unpeeling of reifications is one of the goals of interpretive scholars and researchers” (2005, p. 16).

Cocks (1989) considered the move towards interpretivism is the “first and smallest step of abstraction” where theory and lived experience shift apart (p. 104). It is the hermeneutical step where the researcher deems that something of the truth of a situation

can be found in the “self-understandings of his/her participants”, that truth “must be discovered by thought rather than by sensory observation” (p. 104). In this hermeneutical step, the researcher does not simply mirror back to the participants what they have told him or her, but instead interprets the significance of their self-understandings in ways the participants may not have been able to grasp before (Grant & Giddings, 2002).

The interpretive research process

Traditional positivist approaches in research have been conceived of as a process in which an expert scientist controls the investigation. Using interpretive methods, both participant and investigator are involved in the research process. An interpretive researcher seeks to relate and interact with research participants in an endeavour to understand what they have experienced and what these experiences mean to them. To do this, the researcher needs to focus intently on a participant’s descriptions of experiences and their explanations of them. The researcher listens carefully, attempting to interpret the data communicated by the participant in an inter-subjective relationship (Grant & Giddings, 2002).

To be authentic in interpreting a participant’s story the researcher must also understand and make clear his or her own position with regards the phenomenon under investigation. This requires an element of reflexivity. Although both researcher and participant are involved in data gathering, it is the researcher’s interpretation that is to the fore in the data analysis process (Grant & Giddings, 2002). The role of the researcher is therefore emic or internal.

Within the interpretive traditions there are differing methodologies, which have similar assumptions about what truth is and how human experience can be understood. Where they differ is in their theoretical perspective or the lens through which they view the world. Emphasis is given to different aspects of experience and therefore different methods are employed to collect data and analyse it (Grant & Giddings, 2002).

Phenomenology as research method

Phenomenology is defined as the study of lived experience or lifeworld (Ger. *lebenswelt*), the world as lived by a person, not the world or reality, as separate from a person (van Manen, 1990). Phenomenology is concerned with the question, “What is this experience like?” attempting to unfold meanings as they are lived in everyday experience. The lifeworld is understood without categorization, “a priori,” and can often include the taken-for-granted (Polkinghorne, 1983). As van Manen stated, “A universal or essence can only be intuited through a study of the instances as they are encountered in lived experience” (1990, p. 10).

As discussed in Chapter Three, phenomenology has a strong philosophical component and draws heavily on the writings of Husserl and Heidegger, Sartre, Merleau Ponty (Cresswell, 2013). A phenomenological study describes the meaning of a phenomenon for several individuals, their lived experiences of a concept or phenomenon. Its focus is on describing what all participants have in common, and in describing the phenomenon as it is universally experienced (Cresswell, 2013). The purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence “a grasp of the very nature of the thing” (van Manen, 1990, p. 175).

The phenomenological researcher collects data from people who have experienced the phenomenon and seeks to develop a composite description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals. The researcher aims to stay close to what happened to the person by encapsulating his/her stories (Grant & Giddings, 2002). Also, to keep close to the person's story, since it provides a means of getting to the "thing" itself. The description contains "what" they have experienced and "how" they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenology used as research methodology can provide a deep understanding of a phenomenon as experienced by several individuals. Knowing about common experiences can be valuable for groups such as therapists, teachers, health personnel (Cresswell, 2013).

Phenomenology versus Hermeneutic phenomenology

Although writers today argue somewhat differently for the philosophical use of phenomenology, all writers seem to share common ground. Namely the study of lived experience of individuals, the notion that these experiences are conscious (van Manen, 1990), and the formulation of descriptions of the essences of experiences, and not explanations or analyses (Moustakas, 1994). There are two approaches: hermeneutic phenomenology (van Manen, 1990) and empirical transcendental or psychological phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994).

The work of Max van Manen (1982, 1984, 1990, 2006) draws its influence from the German tradition and from the Utrecht School in the Netherlands, founded by Martinus Langeveld. In the hermeneutic phenomenology of van Manen, human experience is interpreted as though a text with the aim being to produce texts that are rich and deep accounts of the phenomena (Hein & Austin, 2001). Alternatively the work of Amadeo Giorgi has its origins in the phenomenological work of the Duquesne School

(Moustakas, 1994). Giorgi's method is transcendental in nature and focuses less on the interpretation of the researcher and more on a description of the experiences of the participants and has been categorised as "empirical phenomenological research in psychology" (Hein & Austin, 2001, p. 5).

The two methods have much in common in that rather than using explanations they employ descriptions. For both, a process of self-reflection is required as part of the preliminary phase of the research in order to identify the researcher's biases and assumptions and how they might impact on the study (Lavery, 2003). In the case of the empirical transcendental phenomenologist these reflections might be written down and used for reference during the data analysis process (Polkinghorne, 1989). By becoming aware of his or her biases and pre-assumptions the researcher is then able to set them aside, to become involved in the research experience without any preconceptions about what might be uncovered. Gaining this awareness is seen as a protective factor, ensuring the researcher's biases or assumptions do not intrude on the study.

In hermeneutical phenomenology, the researcher becomes involved in self-reflection not to set aside their biases and assumptions but instead to consider how their own experience might relate to the phenomenon under study. The researcher must clearly acknowledge how they might relate to the research. This overt naming of influences and biases as crucial contributors to the research in hermeneutic phenomenology is a salient point of difference from the identifying and "bracketing" out of biases in empirical phenomenology (Lavery, 2003).

Both van Manen and Giorgi agree that imaginative variation helps illuminate themes or essences. This kind of research is a reflective process; it enables the researcher to see what is essential and what is incidental. Both methods are concerned with extricating

the essence of a human experience. The focus is on the phenomenon itself and not the subjective experience of participants. The subjective pole is only of interest as a means to understand the phenomenon (Ehrich, 1999).

In hermeneutic phenomenology the researcher shifts the focus from the stories a participant tells to the participant's interpretation of that experience, encouraging a more in depth exploration of what lies behind what is being said (Grant & Giddings, 2002). In this way, hermeneutic phenomenology differs from empirical phenomenology in that it produces insights rather than accurate descriptions. Hermeneutic phenomenology is therefore less prescriptive than empirical phenomenology and it is not inductively empirically derived. It has a literary and poetic approach as opposed to a psychological approach, and a strong moral dimension. A holistic and poetic approach is key; holistic because it reveals depth and insight into the human condition and poetic because it is sensitive and contemplative (Ehrich, 1999). In the hermeneutic approach, poetic language can be used because it is seen as "the only adequate way to present human meaning" allowing more understanding of a phenomenon (Hein & Austin, 2001, p. 7). Hein and Austin (2001) comment the method of research employed is dependent on the researcher's skills, as well as the nature of the research question and data.

Narrative inquiry

Another research method, which has similarities with phenomenology, is narrative research, which also focuses on stories of individuals tell about their lives. Polkinghorne advocated the human science study of human being, needs to focus on the realm of meaning, in particular on narrative meaning. He described narrative as "the primary scheme by means of which human existence is rendered meaningful," (1988, p. 11). Bujold (2004) proposed the transforming power of narrative as a research paradigm,

since a relationship can exist where a person feels acknowledged and accepted. Cochran (1997) propounded narrative as a paradigm for career research, arguing that in order for narrative to be deemed a worthwhile approach depends “on whether meaning is regarded as the central subject of a career” (1997, p. 78). However, Loyttyniemi (2001) cautions personal stories are constructions which do not necessarily tally with objective truth. The meaning of a story might not be given by the narrator, but by the researcher which points to the important responsibility of the researcher as attentive listener (Loyttyniemi, 2001; Peavy, 1997b).

Narrative has both process and product functions. As process it involves the meaning making of a person’s experiences and is a kind of self-construction or flexible self-awareness. As a product, narrative becomes a story, (Bujold, 2004), which has a hermeneutical connotation when applied to people and their social environments, in the sense that human lives may be conceived as texts that researchers must interpret (McAdams, 1988). Although using narrative in research goes against the scientific law that a generalisation cannot be made from the observation of one single case, to some extent similarities exist between all people and everyone’s story can find an echo in another person (Lapointe, 2000). Atkinson (1998) argued story is essential, “to learn what is unique to some and universal to others and how both are parts of a dynamic interacting whole” (p. 74).

Cochran (1997) proposed, narrative may help attend to and explore answers to a number of vital questions such as the nature of a good life, or of a good career, the meaning of life, and the differences in the way people make decisions. To date numerous career studies have been undertaken which use narrative inquiry (Bujold, 2004; Maree & Molepo, 2006; McAdams, 1988; McIlveen & Patton, 2007; McLeod, 1996).

Key differences: Narrative inquiry and phenomenology

Narrative and phenomenological approaches do have similarities but there are crucial differences, which call for recognition. For phenomenologists, knowing consists of the interpretation of multiple stories with collective and recurring themes (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). It is not single case descriptions, which are of interest to phenomenologists, but describing the essence of a lived phenomenon (Gibson & Hanes, 2003). Narrative research on the other hand, concerns itself with investigating the life of an individual. Narrative researchers are interested in how a person constructs knowledge by reconstructing experiences, and have a need to tell stories of individual experience.

Although both types of inquiry involve dialogues with others about their life experiences; the purpose of the research, how participants are recruited, the nature of data, the analysis of the transcripts and the involvement of the researcher all shape the method (Lindsay, 2006). As Clandinin and Connelly (2000) observe, the distinction between considering things in time (narrative inquiry) and considering things as they are becoming (phenomenology) is a crucial one. There are differences in the methods employed to conduct narrative inquiry and interpretive phenomenology, which arise from the divergent conceptions of phenomenon and agent(s).

There is a difference in the sense of temporality in subject matter between the two methods of inquiry. The stories in phenomenological research are crafted, ready for interpretive analysis, complete, intact and outside of time (Baker & Diekelmann, 1994). Narrativists see past, present and future in a continuous thread and phenomenologists see temporality as past-present-future combined in a present moment (Lindsay, 2006).

Additionally, narrative inquiry is concerned with epistemology and phenomenology with ontology.

The difference between the two methods of inquiry with relation to the participant is also clearly marked. In narrative inquiry, researchers are autobiographically and momentarily involved in the matter under investigation, involved with co-participants. That is, both the participant and the researcher are “agents.” In Heideggerian interpretive phenomenology researchers are mindful of their own pre-understandings and biases. However, they are not autobiographically caught up in the inquiry. They do not write themselves into it (Lindsay, 2006).

This research is concerned with obtaining an ‘emic’ or insider’s perspective of a woman’s career. Rather than describing and detailing narrative accounts of women’s career it seeks to obtain the essence of the phenomenon of women’s careers by interpreting a number of stories, which have collective themes. It aims to find out what it is like for a woman to ‘be-in’ a career rather than what they ‘know-about’ their career. For these reasons hermeneutic phenomenology is employed as it seeks to produce rich stories, which will expose the “thing” or phenomenon of interest itself.

A continual questioning

Van Manen (1990) proposed that to do research from a phenomenological perspective is to continually question the way we experience the world, to want to know the world in which we live as Dasein. Theorizing is the deliberate act of fixing ourselves to the world, to grow to be more completely a part of it, to turn *in-to* the world. This “joined at the hip” connection to the world is called the principle of intentionality. By doing

research we begin to question the world's very mysteries and intimacies, which construct the world as it exists, for us and in us. Intrinsically research is a caring undertaking because we want to know that which is most crucial to our being (van Manen, 1990).

To care is to serve and to share our being with the one we love. We desire to truly know our loved one's very nature. And if our love is strong enough, we not only will learn much about life, we also will come face to face with its mystery. (van Manen, 1990, pp. 5-6)

Phenomenology is an attentive practice of "thoughtfulness" which Heidegger (1927/2008) described as "caring attunement." Van Manen pronounced it as, "a heedful mindful wondering about the project of life, of living, of what it means to live a life" (1990, p. 12).

Challenges for the phenomenological researcher

This is indeed idealistic rhetoric. Gadamer (2004), commenting on the task of translating these ideals into reality, stated, the method in phenomenological research is that there is no method. Caelli (2001), in discussing the difficult process of conducting phenomenological research quoted Knafl (1994) who avowed, "this is tough stuff, very abstract, and very conceptual" (1994, p. 134). In spite of the profusion of significant, phenomenological research the recognised difficulties for the researcher have grown rather than diminished. Caelli (2001) lamented the difficult process that researchers new to phenomenological pursuits experience in spite of writings by van Manen (van Manen, 1984, 1990, 2006), Bergum (1986) and others, and discussion of processes by phenomenological methodologists such as Crotty (1996).

Caelli (2001) wondered if phenomenological researchers are trying too hard to be true to its philosophical underpinnings and are subsequently too reticent about the “how to” of research. This means the already extensive process of phenomenological research is further lengthened. To carry out a phenomenological study, in spite of “extraordinarily voluminous writings about phenomenology” there are few sources, which give concrete directions (2001, p. 275).

Phenomenology is first philosophy and the approach must therefore emerge from the philosophical implications inherent in the research question. Caelli (2001) further observed this lack of defined methods is compounded by the greater challenge of comprehending the philosophical foundation of phenomenological research. The researcher must wade through the copious and contradictory literature in phenomenology and enunciate a suitable process or method for achieving the aims of their specific project. Further, beginning researchers must search for hints in studies, which employ the same philosophical approach chosen. This is a tall order because it requires full comprehension of the intricacies of phenomenology and more challenging still, if little work has been done in a researcher’s area.

Since Caelli’s (2001) article, there has been a great deal more phenomenological research conducted in the area of nursing. Writers such as Smythe (2011; 2008) have written helpful “how to” articles on the subject. However, as previously mentioned phenomenological research in the area of career management is virtually unknown.

Van Manen (1990) acknowledged, however, there is tradition, insights and a growing body of knowledge. Further, there is a balance between total rejection of tradition and slavish following of it. He provided six research activities—as suggestions for the phenomenological researcher—which are neither exhaustible nor definable. Further he

insisted, “a real understanding of phenomenology can only be accomplished by ‘actively doing it’” (p. 8). Smythe (2011) echoed this sentiment when she commented that the skills come from the practice of the craft.

Van Manen did also say the phenomenological approach demands a degree of “scholarship” with the researcher becoming a “sensitive observer of the subtleties of everyday life and an avid reader of relevant texts in the humanities, history, philosophy, anthropology, and the social sciences as they pertain to her domain of interest” (1990, p. 29). Working with experiences, which contain multi-layered meanings, provides further challenge to the scholarship of the researcher. In romantic vein, Van Manen (1990) declared, “Phenomenological research is a being-given-over to some quest, a true task, a deep questioning of something that restores an original sense of what it means to be a thinker, a researcher, a theorist” (van Manen, 1990, p. 31).

At this point, I resonate somewhat with Caelli who proclaimed, “There is so much at stake when one is a neophyte researcher; what if I were wrong?” (Caelli, 2001, p. 277). Nevertheless, having become aware of the aforementioned difficulties, challenges and uncertainties, I am quite comfortable proceeding with the undergirding of van Manen’s (1990) six suggested activities, which are in some cases more attitudes or behaviours of the researcher. As outlined below, these have been used to lead and guide the research process.

A pathway to a clearing (van Manen, 1990, p. 30)***1. Turning to a phenomenon, which seriously interests us and commits us to the world.***

This activity includes formulating the research question and addressing assumptions, and pre-understandings, which I have done in Chapter One. Biases and assumptions are fixed, and vital to the interpretive process: unavoidably researcher bias occurs. The researcher must pause and reflect on the bias and ask how it might impact on the research process, which in turn will contribute positively to its trustworthiness. While important in all qualitative research, this reflection is imperative in hermeneutic phenomenological research. The researcher's personal assumptions and philosophical biases are contained in the final research document (Laverty, 2003).

In the Introduction I outlined how I was drawn to this question of the meaning of a women's career. Van Manen contended, "To orient oneself as a phenomenologist always implies a particular interest, station or vantage point in life" (1990, p. 40). His orientation to the lifeworld is that of the educator; he orients to life as parent and as teacher. "It is because I am interested in children and in the question of how children grow up and learn that I orient myself pedagogically to children in a phenomenological hermeneutic mode" (p.40). A phenomenological question must not only be made clear, and understood, but also "lived" by the researcher. The question that is at the centre of my professional and personal life as a woman career consultant and lecturer is the meaning of women's careers. I orient towards it as I talk with women of all ages with whom I work.

2. Investigating experience as we live it

This activity includes choosing the method of data collection, collecting it, consulting the literature and journal writing. Data can include the researcher's reflections, information collected from participants, also other information which portrays the experience from outside the research project, which may include poetry, visual arts and painting (Polkinghorne, 1989). To assist the process of reflection and interpretation means the researcher needs to keep a reflective journal, to engage in self-reflection. Writing can compel an individual to do this (van Manen, 1990). Using a journal is one way a hermeneutic circle can be used, so that the researcher can move to and fro between the parts and whole of the text (Heidegger, 1927/2008). Practical wisdom is sought. "Being experienced is the wisdom of the practice of living which results from having lived life deeply" (p. 34). As with the next four activities, numbers three to six, this activity will be further developed in Chapter five.

3. Reflecting on essential themes

"True reflection on lived experience is a thoughtful, reflective grasping of what it is that renders this or that particular experience its special significance" (van Manen, p. 32). Conducting a thematic analysis, isolating and uncovering thematic aspects and statements, research seminars and bringing in other artistic sources are included here. As discussed previously, the distinction between phenomenological research and other research is the focus on essence rather than appearance. Phenomenological research brings into nearness that which tends to be obscure. About any experience we can reflectively ask: "What is it that constitutes the nature of this lived experience?" (van Manen, p. 32).

4. The art of writing and rewriting

It is crucial to understand the benefits of writing and re-writing. “To do research in a phenomenological sense is already and immediately and always a bringing to speech of something.... which is most commonly writing” (van Manen, p. 32). Also, important is to recognise the power of language through the use of phenomenological anecdote as a literary device. Experientially, language and thinking are hard to separate. The researcher must stay close to the participants’ stories, and write and rewrite them, until the interpretation is deemed to encapsulate the essence of the phenomenon (Grant & Giddings, 2002). This becomes what is known as the “hermeneutic circle of understanding” (Lavery, 2003). The hermeneutic process of co-creation between researcher and participant in the construction of meaning consists of a circle of reading, reflective writing and interpretation (Gadamer, 2004).

5. Maintaining a strong and oriented relation

Van Manen (1990) warned phenomenology is very demanding of its practitioners. A researcher must remain strong for it's easy to be side-tracked and to fall back onto taxonomic concepts. The researcher cannot have “scientific disinterestedness” but must be fully and not superficially engaged in the research. The text must be continually oriented to the question, maintaining its strength by interpreting each situation in turn. The researcher endeavours to provide a rich and thick description by exploring a phenomenon in all its first-hand consequences, and further to provide a deep text which, “reaches for something beyond” which involves that one must, “meet with it, go through it, encounter it, suffer, it, consume it and, as well, be consumed by it” (p. 152).

6. Balancing the research context by considering the parts and the whole

The researcher must stand back and look at the whole. “It’s easy to get buried in writing that one no longer knows where to go, what to do next, and how to get out of the hole one has dug” (van Manen, 1990, p. 33). Heidegger (1927/2008) likened phenomenological reflection to following certain paths, “wood paths” towards a “clearing” where something could be shown, revealed or clarified in its essential nature. These paths are not simply identified by fixed signposts. They need to be discovered. Phenomenological human science is discovery oriented, yet the risk is the researcher can get so involved, “that one gets stuck in the underbrush and fails to arrive at the clearings that give the text its revealing power” (van Manen, 1990, p. 33).

A dynamic interplay

Van Manen’s six research activities are used as a guide for this study. However, they will be woven through the project and so will not be used as a step-by-step guide as this is not what he intends. Rather that the research be seen as a “dynamic interplay” between the six activities (van Manen, 1990, p. 30).

A line in the sand

In commencing this research—as with many researchers—I did not start with an epistemology. I began with a real life issue I wanted to understand more deeply, with questions that needed to be answered (Crotty, 1998). These questions directed me towards strategies and procedures, to the methodology and methods I would use.

This chapter has attempted to justify these methods by providing a detailed explication of the theoretical perspective and epistemology behind the study. As Crotty stated – the order is in reverse (1996, 1998). What is required now, at the conclusion of this chapter, is to clarify the position this research holds; to make a theoretical and methodological “line in the sand.” To do this, Crotty (1998) proposed, that before undertaking this research project, four questions must be answered:

- What theory of knowledge is being held to? The epistemology that informs the theoretical perspective.
- What theoretical perspective, philosophical stance is held which provides context, lies behind and grounds the methodology?
- What methodology, strategy or plan of action, will govern the choice of method, linking that choice to the outcome?
- What methods, techniques and procedures will be used?

The epistemology in this theoretical perspective is constructionism, the view no objective truth or meaning exists without a mind. Meaning is not discovered but constructed. Different people will construct meaning differently, even with respect to the same phenomenon, in this case women’s careers (Laverty, 2003). Research is a human activity in which the researcher as knower is central, yet the investigator and the investigated become interactively linked in the creation of findings, with the investigator as passionate participant (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Grant & Giddings, 2002).

The theoretical perspective is interpretive hermeneutic phenomenology. Hermeneutic phenomenology focuses on *lebenswelt* the lifeworld or human experience as lived (Heidegger, 1927/2008) illuminating details and seemingly humdrum aspects within

experience that may be taken for granted in our lives, with the goal of creating meaning and achieving a sense of understanding (Lavery, 2003). The goal of this research into women's life/careers is interpretive, as it concentrates on historical meanings, their development and cumulative effects on individuals. The interpretivist framework of inquiry follows the ontological perspective of not one reality, but rather multiple realities constructed and changed by the knower (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The philosophic framework and underlying assumptions of this research primarily draw on Heidegger's philosophy of phenomenology. The expression hermeneutic phenomenology captures two central understandings of this research. Firstly, it is phenomenological, in the sense that the inquiry explores a particular phenomenon, the nature of a woman's career. Secondly, it is hermeneutic, in that the inquiry seeks to lay open past and changeable understandings of things, revealing the crux of phenomena in the process (Annells, 1999; Malpas, 1992).

The methodology is hermeneutic phenomenology, the study of lives and their existential meanings as developed by van Manen (1990). In referring to this research the term: *hermeneutic phenomenology as informed by the work of van Manen* will be used (van Manen, 1990). Phenomenology concentrates on people's experiences with regard to a phenomenon and how they interpret it. It requires participants to re-examine "taken for granted" experiences and has the potential to uncover new or forgotten things (Lavery, 2003). In hermeneutic phenomenological research, when posing a question, the researcher must not just understand the question, he or she must also "live" it; helping study participants describe experiences as they are lived, to capture their "lived experience" (van Manen, 1990).

Understanding human behaviour or experience requires the participant become involved in the interpretive process, they must interpret the action or experience for the researcher, with the researcher interpreting the explanation provided by the participant. An ongoing interaction exists between researcher and participant with the aim of reconstructing the experience and knowledge of the participant. However, the researcher is making the interpretation and as such, there is a power relation between researcher and researched; the researcher dominates (Grant & Giddings, 2002). In this research context, hermeneutic phenomenology asks, “What is the essence, the nature of women’s careers?” The only reliable source of information to answer this question is women themselves (van Manen, 1990).

The method employed, is conversational interviewing. As used in hermeneutic phenomenological research this kind of interview serves two purposes: Firstly, to explore and gather experiential narrative material that may serve as a resource for developing a richer and deeper understanding of the human phenomenon of women’s careers. Secondly, as a vehicle, for the participant to develop a conversational relationship with the interviewer about the meaning of an experience (van Manen, 1990). This second purpose is where the conversational interview differs from other qualitative interviews in that the interviewer may work with the participant clarifying the question and helping the participant in a conversational way to interpret the question. Van Manen (1990) exhorts it’s not necessary to ask many questions, rather to utilise patience, silence, repetition, reflecting “So you say that....” and steering “Can you give me an example?”

Conversational interviewing doesn’t involve a structured list of questions, asked one after the other. Rather, each interview is unique and dependent on mood, participant and

context. Safety and trust are part of the process, established at the outset and maintained throughout (Polkinghorne, 1983). As with other forms of social interaction, interviews sometimes have the power to enable people to fill in the meanings that they are not able to express themselves. By virtue of being interviewed people can develop new insights and understanding of their experiences. They may not have previously thought about or reflected on events about which they are being interviewed and during an interview they are encouraged to voice things they have not previously voiced (S. J. Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The researcher engages in interviews, until he or she reaches a point of saturation, in a single interview or over a series of interviews. Clearer understanding is not found by further discussion with the participant (Laverty, 2003).

In conclusion, this study uses a hermeneutic phenomenological theoretical perspective as informed by the work of van Manen (1990) in an attempt to illuminate the essence of women's careers, aiming to uncover things that are hidden, making visible those things, which have been invisible. The purpose of this research is to interpret women's experiences of career, to identify themes and to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of women's careers.

Summary

This chapter has addressed the salience of phenomenology to research in career management. It has undertaken an evaluation of interpretive traditions, and phenomenology developed as method. It has addressed differences between various modes of inquiry, such as narrative inquiry and phenomenology, and identified

challenges for the phenomenological researcher. Finally, it has clearly outlined the theoretical and methodological framework of this study.

The next chapter, Chapter Five, describes the method. As this kind of research is novel in the career management arena, as much detail as possible is provided, in an attempt to provide a clear understanding of the research processes employed in this study.

Chapter Five

Method

Not everything that counts can be counted,
and not everything that can be counted counts.
-- Albert Einstein

Introduction

This chapter outlines the method of this research project. It provides an explanation of how the participants were recruited, the criteria used, and how the data were gathered. It explains the process of data analysis, the writing of phenomenological anecdotes, the interpretation of the anecdotes and the identification of themes.

As previously mentioned I am providing a great deal of detail in this chapter in order to clearly outline the processes employed. I am aware that it is easy to write and re-write towards the identification of themes and then to seemingly “pluck them out of the air.” I want to tell my story of how this research was conducted and to clearly show how the themes emerged.

The participants

As I begin to write this chapter, I am keenly aware of the privilege I was given to hear the career and life stories of the women who participated in this research. I look back on the interview times with them with appreciation and respect. Without exception, the

fourteen women were warm and generous in their communications with me, and were eloquent and reflective in sharing their stories.

When I say that a being is granted to me as a presence...this means that I am unable to treat her as if she were merely placed in front of me; between her and me there arises a relationship which surpasses my awareness of her; she is not only before me, she is also with me. (Marcel, 1971, pp. 24-26)

These women have been “with me” for the past months. I have carried their stories in my head tossing them around, looking at them from this way and that. It has been sometimes a burden and at all times a responsibility. First and foremost, working with their stories has been a privilege.

Criteria and selection

The theoretical construct for this study is women’s careers. The age range from 30 years to 59 years was chosen to include women established in their careers. The methodological approach of the research requires that the participant exercise a reflective approach to her career, and be able to express her thoughts in an articulate manner. The education industry was chosen to provide a suitable context for the research, with women involved in education being likely to have good communication skills and the ability to relate well (careersnz, 2012). Further, education has provided one of the most significant sectors for female employment in previous decades (NZHRC, 2012), which ensured there would be women across all age cohorts of interest and potentially able to participate.

In selecting participants the intention was to have women who have experienced a career and were willing to talk about these experiences. As such it was a purposeful sample, to enable women to be chosen who met the primary criteria (Thomas & Pollio,

2004). The aim was also to have diversity of age, experience and sector amongst the participants to increase the possibilities of “rich and unique stories of the particular experience” (Laverty, 2003, p. 18).

Recruitment

An advertisement placed in NEXT magazine (see Appendix B) contained the two criteria of a woman having experienced a career and being willing to talk about her experiences, plus additional criteria of age and industry. Specifically the advertisement stated:

Participants must be:

- Currently involved in teaching within the wider education industry either at primary, secondary or tertiary level
- Aged between 30 and 59 years
- Currently involved in some form of paid employment: part-time, full-time or contract
- Interested in telling their story of how pursuing a career provides meaning in their life

In response to the NEXT advertisement, seven women were recruited by responding by email to the advertisement. An email including the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix C) was then sent for them to consider. All respondents wished to receive further information about the research. The Participant Information Sheet and Consent form, (see Appendix D), was then sent by post. These women were from diverse parts of the country from both islands, from across primary, secondary and tertiary sectors and a variety of ages. One participant was older than 59 years, 61 years and after

discussion with my supervisors she was included in the study as she met the other criteria and had expressed a keen interest to be involved. All the other respondents to the NEXT advertisement met the criteria.

Once the respondents from NEXT magazine were recruited, further participants were selected to maximise diversity within the selection constraints e.g. sector, responsibility for dependents or not, position, age, geographical location. These participants were recruited by snowballing, from referrals through contacts of the researcher and supervisors. The researcher approached these contacts by email and by phone. Information was sent out according to the same procedure as for the participants recruited through NEXT magazine. In all fourteen participants were recruited. Each participant was given a pseudonym.

Ethics approval

The design of this research project, entitled “Career as meaning making: a hermeneutic phenomenological study of women’s lived experience,” was approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC), AUT University, New Zealand. Approval for the study was granted on 17 May 2012 (Ethics Application Number 12/96, see Appendix A). The research question for this study was, “What is the meaning of a woman’s career?”

The research and interview process was communicated to each participant by email and in the participant information sheet (Appendix C) where issues of partnership, participation and protection were outlined. To ensure a participant was relaxed and at ease during an interview, a venue was chosen familiar to the participant. Both in the

participant information sheet and at the beginning of an interview, a participant was advised that if she did not wish to respond to a question, or wanted to withdraw from the study, she could do so at any time up until the end of data collection.

Removing all names and identifying information from the findings, including any details from the interview, which could identify a participant, protected participant identity. Participants were advised they could request any other information they considered confidential to be deleted on receiving the abridged transcripts for review. All data was digitally recorded and participant privacy was ensured by password protecting computer files of interview data, transcripts, phenomenological anecdotes, pseudonyms and correspondence with participants.

Demographics

The goal was to have participants selected from each of the three decades: 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 years. One participant was in the 50-59 year range, with seven aged between 40-49 years and five between 30-39 years, one participant was aged between 60-69 years. Four women worked in the primary sector, four in the secondary sector and six in the tertiary sector in either a polytechnic or University. Nine women were employed full time, two were permanent part time and two were on fixed-term contracts; one woman had recently been made redundant from a full-time position and was working full time completing doctoral studies. One woman had no children; six women had one child, five women had two children and two women had three children. All women were married or had a partner. Two women were Maori, and eleven were New Zealand European, one woman was Middle Eastern.

For this kind of research the number recommended is between twelve and twenty participants (Smythe, 2011). Smythe and Giddings (2007) noted there could be a sense of being overwhelmed by the data when there are too many participants. They commented that eight to fourteen could be managed “in your head.” With this in mind, during the recruitment process I was aware that ideally a range of participants could be involved across the age groups; however, to have fewer could be better. Smythe and Giddings (2007) commented that the researcher would know when she has done her last interview. They also noted the taxing and exhausting nature of this kind of interview.

Table 5.1 shows the participant demographics of age, sector, position, employment status, and number of children.

Table 5.1 Demographics of participants

Pseudonym	Age	Sector	Position (Current)	Status	Number of children
Libby	34	Primary	Classroom teacher Syndicate leader	Full time	1
Sophie	34	Primary	On maternity leave Contract special needs	Contract	2
Miriama	34	Secondary	Classroom teacher Management unit	Full time	0
Jackie	36	Secondary	Classroom teacher Management unit	Full time	3
Tina	37	Tertiary	Associate Professor University	Full time	2
Sarah	43	Secondary	Head of learning area	Full time	2
Rachel	43	Tertiary	Tutor Independent provider	Part time	1
Amanda	43	Tertiary	Tutor Polytechnic	Part time	3
Kiri	46	Primary	Principal	Full time	2
Katie	46	Tertiary	Tutor Polytechnic	Contract	2
Carol	47	Primary	Classroom teacher	Full time	1
Debbie	48	Tertiary	Previously Senior lecturer Completing PhD	Full-time student	1
Helen	56	Tertiary	Manager Recruitment	Full time	1
Sally	61	Secondary	Previously Senior manager Currently middle manager	Full time	1

Method

The interviews

Once a consent form was returned, I arranged an interview with the participant at a venue and time of her choosing. Each participant was then involved in one conversational interview (van Manen, 1990) with me where she was asked open-ended questions about her career and encouraged to tell her story in a relaxed manner. The interview questions are contained in Appendix E. Although I had a list of questions I did not ask them in any particular order. Typically the interview would begin with me introducing the research:

We're here today to talk about your life and your career in the midst of your life, and what it means to you as a woman today to have a career. So I'm going to ask you some questions, but these will just be prompts to allow you to tell your story and to expand on things as we go. (Extract from Interview with Kiri)

Then I would ask them to start by:

So perhaps to start off with, if you could tell me what you're currently doing, what your situation is at the moment with your work and then just around that your family and the rest of your life. (Extract from Interview with Katie)

As the interview progressed I would introduce prompts and probes. In order to encourage a participant to go deeper into an issue I kept in mind what Polkinghorne (1989) suggested, that a relationship of trust and an environment of safety and openness is critical, to ensure that the exchange is entirely open. I used only a few direct questions in order that the interview process stay as close to the lived experience of the participant as possible. As an interview progressed I experienced a relationship of trust building between the participant and myself.

I wrote in my journal:

In the first few minutes of the interview – I try not to “get stuck” in the middle of a story. A story is by nature an emotional thing. Yiannis Gabriel talks about this – stories uncover the emotion and the meaning. So I find it best to keep the participant telling without too much emotion at the beginning. I am aware that there is a whole interview to do, and that I need to keep her secure and safe. So if she starts to go into a place – where she is describing something “tricky” I ask another question to keep the conversation moving. (Journal entry)

I was aware that as van Manen (1990) noted, anything that presents itself to consciousness is potentially of interest to phenomenology, which is keenly interested in the significant world of the human being. Phenomenological reflection is not introspective but retrospective. Reflection on lived experience is always re-collective; it is reflection on experience that is already passed or lived through.

I was also very aware of the inherent danger in a conversational interview, of gathering too much material which could lead to despair or confusion and a feeling of “where to now?” and the need to avoid getting into this predicament. With my Master’s research I had interviewed the participant for a total of over four hours, which led to copious pages of transcript. Van Manen (1990) suggested getting oriented to the research question strongly so as not to be carried away by interviews that go everywhere and nowhere.

Interview process

The interviews took place in either the participants’ homes or at their workplace. Four interviews took place in October and November 2012 and the following ten in February and March 2013. The interview questions were indicative in nature and I kept them alongside me during the course of the interview. By doing this, I was able to be flexible about the order in which the questions were asked, and aware of whether I had covered each question. I endeavoured to remain relaxed and informal and to listen with intent. I

would reflect back to the women their comments, and I often used prompts and steering. As the interview progressed, the women shared increasingly deeply about their experiences and began to reflect on their motivations and intentions. Each interview would come to a natural end and ranged in length from one hour three minutes to one hour twenty-three minutes. The interviews were audio-recorded and the tapes were then transcribed by a secretarial service. Each interview took about two weeks to be transcribed.

I felt I laboured a lot over the first interview but once the transcript came back and I began to read it and take notes I could see that there was material there to work with. The second and subsequent interviews felt easier. Once four interviews had been completed I undertook an interview about my own career with my primary supervisor in order to identify my own pre-assumptions and biases; this was also transcribed. Smythe (2011) commented that it is by telling our own stories and reviewing them as if we were a participant that we are able to see how our own experiences, culture and values impact and shape the way we see the world and experience the phenomenon of interest. My biases and pre-assumptions have been identified in Chapter One.

My writing process was interrupted by the summer break, which provided a welcome time to reflect on the research and to think about the first four interviews, to review the transcripts, and to begin writing. By the time I re-commenced the interviews in 2013, the first four transcripts had been made from the interviews and three sets of stories crafted from the data. I wrote in my journal “My head feels clear. The way ahead is clear.”

Over the next five weeks I drove and flew to various parts of the country to conduct interviews. As I travelled to these destinations around New Zealand, I had time to think

about the research and reflect about these different parts of the country. On my return journey I would think about each interview, journal my thoughts, and write down key words or impressions.

Researcher process

On several occasions I needed to travel by air to meet with the participant, and I wrote:

It's interesting to be flying again. It's good to be suspended above the earth – I guess in a way that's what I ask participants to do – to get perspective on their lives as an overview – as if hovering above themselves, and then looking back and taking a deeper look at past events. I think the participants have found it helpful to be involved. (Journal entry)

For several it (career) has come at a cost, they wonder if they can continue to sustain the momentum the pace of what they are currently doing. "I wonder if I can keep going much longer" – "until I am 50 but then I know it won't be enough." Another had to cut back on what she was doing to attempt to achieve balance and now she is engaged so she feels it has been worthwhile. Yet another just wanted to get out and said "I think about it all the time." (Journal entry)

Twelve interviews had been completed in six different parts of the country. I returned home and wrote in my journal:

I feel tired – it's busy and quite exhausting doing the interviews and a bit of a worry that I might not get it all on tape. One recorder played up again. (Journal entry)

The next week, in early March 2013, I travelled to another city for two more interviews. In one of these, the participant spoke slowly and deliberately. It was important for me as co-researcher to allow her to take time to think and talk at her own pace. There were pauses and I endeavoured not to allow the pauses to feel awkward. There are various categories of silence, which generally operate in human science research and in hermeneutic phenomenology in particular. As researcher I needed to be aware of silence

out of which and against which all text is constructed. Van Manen (1990) warned of the tendency to fill an awkward space in an interview. When a literal silence occurs it may be tempting for the researcher to fill the space even if it is awkward, however the quality and quantity of the silences of spaces speak just as loudly as words. Ontological silence is the silence of being or life itself. It is the fulfilling silence of being in the presence of truth (van Manen, 1990).

An epistemological silence is “the kind of silence we are confronted with when we face the unspeakable” (van Manen, 1990, p. 113). There was also a point in this interview when I became aware of this notion of epistemological silence. It was as if a moment was reached where there was a deep sense of loss, of pain. The participant spoke of being gradually pushed into a corner where she had nowhere else to go describing it as being “on the edge of a precipice – no knowing what...” She did not cry, yet as we talked there was great sadness and emptiness. There were long pauses, where she struggled to put into words what she was feeling. It was as if she was teetering, in fact on the edge of that precipice she described. It felt as if she was looking into a deep ravine, a dark abyss.

On reviewing the tape later, after returning home from the interview I wrote:

I feel overwhelmed today for the first time. I listened to Debbie's tape yesterday. Her voice sounded so sad. I was glad it was one of the last ones to do as I knew that I would find it difficult to look at this one...There is a hopelessness about her story/ies. I find that it's affecting me. It's making me realise that there are quite a few stories where there is some despair/illness/chronic/tiredness/pain/abuse. Hard things. It's not all rosy and happy. I'm carrying that at the moment. (Journal entry)

It was not just the stories I was carrying in my head. There was an emotional load I was carrying as well. Rich data had been gathered from a diverse range of participants

(Polkinghorne, 1989), and there was an overlap with some of the participants stories (van Manen, 1990). On returning home I met with my supervisors and we mutually decided sufficient data had been gathered and saturation had been reached; further interviews would not reveal a clearer understanding of the experience (Lavery, 2003). The interview process was complete.

Data Analysis

Working with the transcripts: Extracting the anecdotes

As each transcript was returned I worked on each one individually to attempt to keep my focus on one participant at a time. I would listen to the tape, and read the transcript and take notes in the margin, in order to clarify my thinking about what mattered in a participant's story. At this stage at least one or two stories became obvious. At a supervision meeting I discussed with my supervisors the process of writing, of crafting stories from the data and commented how the stories "fall out of the data." On reflection later, I realised this wasn't the case. There was craft to the writing and the stories emerged gradually; there was a process and I was sure I could document it.

The next time I began to work with a transcript I attempted to track the interview, and to note where the probes and prompts came. I looked for these probes in the transcript and asked whether it is the probes that encourage the participant to go deeper and to make meaning. I noted how the interview began with the participant describing her situation and her pathway at first, then how the rhetoric began to change as I reflected and mirrored her responses. When I summarised a point she had made, it encouraged her to share more deeply. By using reflective listening skills and attending, responding, and

summarizing she became more involved in the interview. As I continued to respond and to empathise, to reflect back her comments, she became able to explore more deeply.

There appeared to be a point in the interview when the mood changed. The participant became more absorbed and reflective. There was less a sense of narrative or telling. She became less descriptive, and more interpretive. Sometimes the same “thing” began to come out over and over again. Sometimes the participant would reflect and say “I never thought about it that way” or “now that you say that, I realise....”

In another interview, as we talked about a significant person in a participant’s life she commented:

But it’s interesting, as we’ve talked, all through this conversation, she’s popped up, her name has come up. When you asked me that question “Do you see her as a mentor?” I would immediately have said “no” but it’s quite interesting when you probe, to ask is she? Probably. (Extract from interview with Libby)

This verifies what Taylor and Bogdan (1998) note, that a participant may by being interviewed develop new insights and understanding. During an interview he or she is encouraged to express things they have not previously expressed. In our interview, Libby was open, warm, and reflective. She engaged strongly in the interview process and expressed delight at the insights she gained about herself, her behaviours, and her relationships.

I wrote in my journal:

Even when there is detail, detail, on the first page of the transcript – there will be a clue – to something else. Sometimes it leads straight into a story so I go there, occasionally without much prompting at all. Often it is something that is returned to by the participant. It comes up again and again. Then there are prompts, probes, and the conversation goes deeper.” (Journal entry)

Van Manen (1990) commented every conversation we share in has this structure: not just a personal relation between two or more people who are involved. It may start off as a mere chat, which is usually the way. Then when gradually a certain topic of mutual interest emerges, the speakers become in a sense animated by the notion to which they are now both oriented, a true conversation comes into being. Such a conversation is structured as a triad. There is a conversational relation between the speakers; further the speakers are involved in a conversational relation with the phenomenon that keeps the personal relation of the conversation intact (van Manen, 1990).

And in another interview:

I would've said there were hundreds of things she said to me, but now you've asked me, I do remember one thing. I was about 16, and she said "You are wise beyond your years. You were born old, Kiri." I said "Oh, what do you mean by that, Mum?" I remember casting it off as something a bit silly.
(Extract from interview with Kiri)

Gadamer (1975) described this as having the dialogic structure of questioning-answering. The conversation has a hermeneutic thrust and is oriented to sense making and interpreting of the notion that drives the conversation. This collaborative quality lends itself well to the task of reflecting on themes of phenomenon under study (van Manen, 1990).

The art of the researcher in a hermeneutic interview is to keep the question open, to keep him or herself oriented and the interviewee oriented to the substance of the thing being questioned (van Manen, 1990). "The art of questioning is that of being able to go on asking questions i.e. the art of thinking" (Gadamer, 1975, p. 30). The interviewee becomes the co-investigator of the study.

In my last interview I was aware of this notion occurring, as I kept closely oriented, intuitively thinking about what a participant might mean.

I then hypothesised:

So as you're telling me that story, there's a bit of a contrast here that I'm hearing between the quite inquisitive, curious, quite strong-minded young girl.... then this other girl in your teens who actually was quite, I'm feeling, gentle, sensitive. A little bit vulnerable. (Interviewer, in interview with Kiri)

She responded: "That's exactly what it's been like" verifying my hypothesis and from then going on to describe more fully and deeply her process, and the reasons why she had confirmed my supposition.

Once I had identified ideas for stories, I would work with the ideas one at a time. Sometimes a story would be told "all at once" and sometimes it would be threaded through the transcript, and I would need to take pieces from here and there. I would cut and paste pieces of the transcript into another document. Then I would shape the sentences and delete fillers and superfluous words to make it read to get the "gist" of it. In this editing process I did delete words, phrases, whole sentences, and sometimes changed the order so that it made more sense, and was more readable. I did not rewrite or paraphrase a participant's words; I used her own words as much as possible.

I continued to work with a story, further "crafting" it until I felt it read well and contained a "notion" rather than a lot of descriptive narrative or factual information. Sometimes I would return to a story several times reducing it further each time to craft it into what van Manen (1990) named a phenomenological anecdote. The phenomenological anecdotes were an organizing tool obtained by analysing the transcripts for relevant incidents and stories. I gave each of these a title. I kept a record

of the stories in a spreadsheet. An example of the crafting process of a story is shown in Appendix G.

If we can't grasp essence of a phenomenon by looking from outside we may be satisfied by an anecdotal story (van Manen, 1990). The functions of an anecdote are manifold. An anecdote can function like an implement used to lay bare covered over meanings—where phenomenology is seeking to penetrate layers of meaning—as in the tilling of soil. Anecdotes can have a levelling function, they also have the ability to humanise, to present a relationship between living and thinking (van Manen, 1977). Heidegger discussed this notion that what we think be represented in how we live (1927/2008). An anecdote can provide a concrete counterweight to abstract theoretical thought. Anecdotes also have a pedagogical function and can provide an account of a doctrine, or demonstrate some wisdom or truth or provide examples or signs of exemplary character (van Manen, 1990).

The aim in crafting the anecdotes was to create evocative pieces of writing that would draw the reader in and enable them to grasp a particular aspect of a woman's career. As I crafted the stories from the transcripts I was aware that from some participants there was richness to the data, some stories had a more powerful tone to them. Some descriptions are richer than others: we tend to learn more about life from some people than from others. Nevertheless there will always be something there for us to gather (van Manen, 1990).

I had sometimes returned from an interview aware that there was a depth to the storytelling; there was a quality about the nature of the interview that was captivating for me as researcher. Sometimes this would mean there would be a greater number of stories, although sometimes it would mean the stories themselves had a more

compelling quality to them. There were several stories from participants that had this kind of quality. Sometimes the participant herself was a skilled storyteller, or she used poetic language or metaphor in telling her story, or she had a particular turn of phrase, or used a quote from literature.

In contrast to historical narratives, phenomenological anecdotes have a poetic quality as they are describing a universal truth. Anecdotes share epistemological or methodological features with phenomenological human science which operates in the tension between particularity and universality, a “hybrid textural form is created, combining the power of philosophic or systematic discourse with the power of literary or poetic language” (van Manen, 1990, p. 121). In explaining how a small child experiences the world of things, Langeveld (1984) told the story of a little girl giving her baby brother a feather, saying, “This is for baby brother, because he is so small” (p. 115). The significance of the “thing,” in this case the feather, said Langeveld is that it is not a mere present but it is a real gift. He goes on to describe the distinction between present and gift. A present is given as an obligation, in that “small presents maintain friendship” but love and friendship make gifts, even the smallest ones possible. Langeveld purported that in this way stories are not mere illustrations but methodological devices, which make comprehensible some notions, which might otherwise be elusive (1984).

Returning the stories

For each participant I crafted a total of four to eight stories or phenomenological anecdotes² from the transcript; each story was about one page in length. It was these

² For ease, I will use the terms ‘story’ and ‘stories’ from this point on to represent the phenomenological anecdotes crafted from the transcripts.

stories, which were returned to the participants for review. Once I had crafted sets of stories from the data from seven participants, I returned these to the participants. The letter, which accompanied the stories, is provided in Appendix F. Participants were asked to review the stories and to indicate whether they wanted any changes made by writing on them and then initialing. If there were no changes needed, they simply initialed each page. Over the next two months I worked on the remaining seven sets of stories and returned them to the participants also. Most of the participants returned the stories unchanged. Four participants requested small changes. Two asked that certain quotes from a particular story not be used in the writing up of study findings.

Some participants sent notes back with the stories, surprised at the tone: “That’s really good. True to the conversations we had – I hope it’s not all too negative.” One participant, as if understanding the constructionist viewpoint commented: “Very interesting. Although I would say, it’s my perception of the truth/history and others involved may have quite different versions.” Another echoed my own sentiments about the interview transcript’s failure to capture the warmth and depth of the mood of the interview: “I dislike reading transcripts of my oral accounts. I think this is because they don’t capture the non-verbal tones, body language, eye contact. I don’t feel that it captures the talk we had.”

The last stories had been returned. I was ready to begin to work further with them, in interpreting and extracting themes. I began with two sets of stories, and it was soon apparent that I was not ready to analyze them against the philosophy of Heidegger and Gadamer. I needed to further understand the philosophy before I could proceed, and so it was to those readings I returned. At this point, my process involved returning to reading before attempting to write any more.

Working with the stories

After considerable reading, note taking and reflecting, over several months, I felt ready to “trust the process” and I returned to the stories to begin to work with them again. As I did so, I dipped in and out of my readings and notes on Heidegger. I returned to consider the first two sets of stories and added to them, reading, note taking, and thinking about the different aspects of Heideggerian philosophy. I then began to work with a third set of stories. This set I had struggled with as it was the first interview; I felt it didn’t go particularly well, and I mentioned previously that I had labored over it. I was puzzled by it, I couldn’t read the mood of the interview well, or sense intuitively whether or not the participant was being truly open with me.

The phenomenological method is the ability or art of being sensitive to undertones, and subtleties “to the way language speaks when it allows the things themselves to speak” (van Manen, 1990, p. 111). It requires the need to be sensitive and to tune in. The researcher needs to be a true listener to the way things are spoken about in the lifeworld and to what things mean in this world (van Manen, 1990).

As I read the stories again and began to describe then interpret them and look for a notion in each, I found my readings from Heidegger were particularly salient. As I approached each story to begin the description and interpretation, I had my notes from Heidegger beside me. I would read them over again once I had begun an initial analysis for each participant. This time, I could “tune in” and I was able to discern more effectively what things meant. As I was involved in this process new insights would come. I continued to work with the other stories, working with a whole set of a

participant's stories at a time, describing, interpreting, and identifying a notion. An example of one of a participant's stories crafted in this way is contained in Appendix H.

In the initial process of writing the stories, I had used what van Manen (1990) described as a wholistic or sententious approach in identifying a heading for each story. I had attended to the text as a whole, and tried to express that by formulating a phrase. In returning to work with the stories, I worked with more of a selective approach (1990). This involved reading a text several times asking what statements seem essential or revealing about the phenomenon. These were then circled or highlighted. I looked for repetitive words in the story. Always beside me were my notes from Heidegger and I would think about how a story might relate to a certain concept.

For each story, I first formulated a description, then worked towards an understanding or interpretation of the meaning of the story, and finally I sought to determine if there was any one notion in particular emerging from the story. I recorded these notions alongside each story's title in the spreadsheet, to which I continued to refer.

Once I had written a set of descriptions, meanings or interpretations and notions for each participant's sets of stories, I would sometimes seek to complete this stage of the analysis by writing a section entitled "the parts and the whole" in an attempt to provide an overview for a participant. Interpreting the stories was undertaken with attention to each story as a part of a participant's career and then to look at all of the stories as the a whole, in order to identify the meaning of the parts and the whole. Understanding the whole needed to be informed by the parts and vice versa.

As I began work each day, I would read over the interpretations and analyses I had already completed making small changes. Sometimes I would ask the question, "Is this

story like another story?” and note if this was the case. Also, at the beginning of each working week I would read over the stories I had worked with the previous week. Sometimes I would read over the whole set of stories to see connections between them. Often I would find that there was more I could add to some of the earlier stories, material I had since read, other insights I had gained from the subsequent stories. In this way, there was a going around and around I experienced. The writing was thus fused into the research activity where writing and re-writing continued in a “hermeneutic circle toward understanding” (van Manen, 1990, p. 32).

My notes from Heidegger helped frame my analysis and focus my thinking. They helped me to answer the question – “What is the meaning, the point of this anecdote?” (van Manen, 1990). The notion I wrote at the end of each story was my initial attempt to simplify the story. Whereas on an earlier reading of all the anecdotes I had been tempted to quickly give them all an “emerging theme,” I resisted doing this, understanding that as van Manen (1990) said, themes are not objects that we encounter when reading a text, rather they are intransitive. They are not the “thing,” that is, themes are not the phenomenon itself. They provide a way of capturing the phenomenon. Themes encapsulate an aspect of lived experience.

I sought to be alert and remain in an attitude of openness throughout the process of analysis entitled “Working with the stories.” I would remind myself that this was a process and I needed to stay within it. Gradually I would become aware of patterns emerging. I could see that the phenomenon of a woman’s career was beginning to be uncovered.

By writing the anecdotes the transcripts had been considerably reduced from between twenty to twenty five pages to between four to eight pages. The “working with the

stories” part of the analysis involved describing each story, then interpreting it, and finding a notion. This part of the analysis brought shape to the stories, and provided me with a means of getting at the phenomenon. This is the goal of phenomenological writing, to have those involved in the research see what they haven’t seen before, revealing the phenomenon in a new way (van Manen, 1990).

Towards the identification of themes

With seventy-four phenomenological anecdotes crafted and analysed against the work of Heidegger, Gadamer, Bourdieu and Aristotle, my next task was to begin to recover the themes. “Reflecting on lived experience becomes reflectively analysing the structural or thematic parts of that experience” (van Manen, 1990, p. 78). Theme describes an aspect of the structure of lived experience and is the experience of focus, of meaning, of point, that is at best a simplification (van Manen, 1990).

Rather than a mechanical application of a frequency count or coding of terms, or a break down of the content, “theme analysis” is recovering the themes that are embodied and dramatised in the evolving of meaning and imagery of the work; it is different for phenomenological description (van Manen, 1990). Making something of a text of lived experience is more accurately a “process of insightful invention, discovery or disclosure – grasping and formulating a thematic understanding is not a rule-bound process but a free act of “seeing” meaning” (p. 33).

The challenge for me as researcher was that I needed to be able to give myself over, to let the writing come, to make interpretive leaps in what was a complex and iterative process. The skill of interpretation was needed which led to the uncovering of understanding directed towards building a coherent argument (van Manen, 1990). I

needed to remind myself that as researcher the only way for me to learn how to analyze phenomenological data was by doing it myself, and that it might require considerable writing and re-writing. The process required patience, trust, courage and the belief that insight will come (Smythe & Giddings, 2007). I needed to remain close to the data, and to allow myself to trust the process (Smythe, 2011).

Van Manen (1990) asked, “How does the theme relate to the “phenomenon” that is being studied?” answering that theme is the means to get at the phenomenon (p.88). A theme gives shape to the shapeless. At the same time it describes the content of the phenomenon and reduces the phenomenon. A theme gives control and order to our writing.

As mentioned, I kept a spreadsheet with a list of all the stories, their titles, and the notions that had emerged from each story. Towards the end of the interpretative analysis of the stories, I noticed one participant’s stories had a reference to Pierre Bourdieu, habitus and cultural capital. Dreyfus (1991) also referred several times to the work of Bourdieu. As I had worked towards completion of the “working with the stories” stage of the data analysis I wrote in my journal:

I have now written up 11 sets of stories with a description/meaning/notion – I am well though this stage of the research now. It feels good. Emerging is the influence of historicity. This appears similar to Bourdieu – habitus – which JP has written on. It may be another reading thread. Also interesting is the influence of key people which is emerging in the stories. Being cared for or not.

(Journal entry)

Phenomenological themes are structures of experience; they are not objects or generalizations. Metaphorically speaking they are more like knots in the webs of our experiences, around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus lived through as

meaningful wholes. They have phenomenological power when they allow us to proceed with phenomenological descriptions (van Manen, 1990).

In Chapter Three I discussed how a reading thread on Bourdieu was undertaken as I began to see a synchronicity between the work of Bourdieu on habitus and Heidegger on historicity. I could discern that a knot in the web around which experiences are spun was beginning to be identified.

How did the themes emerge?

In a previous life role I was a high school mathematics teacher, involved in teaching statistics and mathematical modelling at scholarship level. Several topics required the students to write a report based on an experiment they had conducted and to fit a mathematical model to their findings. I would encourage them to consider the past, the present and the future in writing their report. The past concerned the physical context of the data, the variables and what relationship they might potentially have with one another. The present, was the data gained from the experiment the students had conducted, which led to the selection of the mathematical model. The future was their prediction on how the model would stack up, and a consideration of the reliability and validity of their model.

Perhaps those notions were still in my mind as I considered the interpretive data analysis of the phenomenological anecdotes I had written from the transcripts and then interpreted. On interviewing the participants I asked them to reflect on their career pathway and lives. They told me stories from their lived experience, sometimes from their early childhood, often from their school years, and from their current career situation. They told me about their future dreams and aspirations.

Themes come about by our desire to make sense; they are the sense we are able to make of something, through our openness to something (van Manen, 1990). I could discern an emerging focus was the significance of women's past in shaping her present and in determining how she would move towards her future (Harman, 2011). The tri-partite arrangement of past-present-future emerged as a sense-making mechanism. As I remained open to discovering the phenomenon of a woman's career this interpretive triad became increasingly obvious. In this way three themes appeared all at once, yet one at a time.

The emerging cluster of themes around historicity, habitus, culture and capital emerged as a theme of "looking back to the past," the awareness a person's culture and roots shape their experience. This theme I called "Where have I come from?" Existing as historical beings and becoming aware of their finitude, Dasein can swing between their past and their future. In order to move ahead in their careers with agency, women described a myriad of ways how the influence of key people—exercising what Heidegger (1927/2008) called *Sorge* or care-for—made a profound difference. These "being-in-the-world-with-others" or being-with stories came together as a theme of the present, I called "Who will help me?"

Heidegger's notion of authenticity is a key component of his writings; he asserted we have to choose whether we will become authentic or inauthentic. In analysing the anecdotes against the philosophy of Heidegger (1927/2008), many stories involved descriptions of how women were motivated in various ways towards becoming more authentic. They were pulled towards future possibilities. This emerged as a third theme, that of the future and a movement towards authenticity. It was represented in ideas such

as calling, self-discovery, fulfilling the call of conscience, career as vehicle for a woman becoming the best she can be. This third theme I called “Who am I becoming?”

“Hermeneutic phenomenological research is fundamentally a writing activity (where the) research and writing are aspects of one process” (van Manen, 1990, p. 7). Each day I would continue to write and rewrite using the phenomenological anecdotes and the analyses I had made. The spreadsheet was used as an ordering tool. Once the structure of the three themes was realised, the stories naturally grouped together into the emerging chapters.

The writing process sometimes requires borrowing words of another, in poetry or prose. As I prepared to use phenomenology as methodology I had read from a number of doctoral theses, which had used such “borrowed words.” Some writers had penned their own poems or used pictures from participants. In collaboration with my supervisors, the decision was made to use quotes from my journal and then excerpts and titles from the stories, and not to include other literary devices such as borrowed poetry or prose.

Expressions of rigour

Phenomenological research and writing is a project in which the normal scientific requirement or standard of objectivity and subjectivity need to be re-conceived. In the human sciences, objectivity and subjectivity are not mutually exclusive categories. Both find their meaning and significance in the oriented (personal) relation that the researcher establishes with the “object” of her inquiry (van Manen, 1990).

Thus, interpretive qualitative research does not accord with the strict tenets of the standard scientific method. Compared with quantitative approaches,

interpretive qualitative research is far more interpretive, flexible, participatory, and reflexive. Indeed, the extent to which qualitative research is judged to be trustworthy is relative to its foregrounding of the researcher as an engaged subject within and throughout the research process. (Kinsella & Pitman, 2012, p. 87)

Interpretive research such as phenomenology might not “accord with the strict tenets” (2012, p.87) of positivistic research. Nevertheless, as van Manen (1990) noted, there needs to be a re-conception of what objectivity, subjectivity and scientific rigour mean in this context. Kinsella and Pitman (2012) pointed out, the trustworthiness of the research depends on the “foregrounding” and capabilities of the researcher. Objectivity means the researcher remains true to the object, in a sense a guardian and a defender of the true nature of the object. The researcher wants to show it, describe it interpret it while remaining faithful to it, aware that one is easily misled or side tracked.

Subjectivity means the researcher needs to be as perceptive, insightful and discerning as he or she can be in order to show or disclose the object in its full richness and in its greatest depth. The researcher must be strong in their orientation to the object of study in a unique and personal way. Yet, he or she must avoid the danger of becoming arbitrary, self-indulgent, or of getting captivated and carried away by unreflected preconceptions (van Manen, 1990).

Various writers have provided criteria for assessing the rigour of either phenomenological or hermeneutic methodological approaches. As previously stated, there has been scant phenomenological research undertaken in management studies, which necessitated I draw from writings of phenomenological researchers in the area of nursing to inform my practice. After an extensive review of published theoretical interpretive phenomenological nursing research from 1994—2004, de Witt and Ploeg (2006) identified expressions of rigour used in these studies. De Witt and Ploeg (2006)

have synthesised and integrated them resulting in a new framework. They proposed their framework for evaluating rigour attends to both hermeneutic and phenomenological research concerns.

The framework contains five components which de Witt and Ploeg (2006) termed expressions rather than criteria. These are: balanced integration, openness, concreteness, resonance, and actualization. The words used were intended to be accessible and make the framework easy to remember and apply. Although primarily designed to use as criteria for phenomenological research in nursing, de Witt and Ploeg's framework (2006) will be used to provide criteria for assessing the rigour of this study investigating women's careers.

Balanced integration

Balanced integration is the first proposed expression for rigour for interpretive phenomenology. Balanced integration relates to the interweaving of philosophical concepts in the methods and findings of the study and working to achieve balance between participants' voices and philosophical explanation. Throughout the analysis of data I have attempted to stay close to the philosophical underpinnings of the study, the writings of Heidegger and Gadamer, and also Bourdieu and Aristotle. In analyzing the data, I kept my notes from my readings "always beside me" as I worked to discern if a certain Heideggerian—or other philosophical—concept might have application. These notes helped focus my thinking.

Balanced integration: An example

A key concept for Heidegger (1967/2008), and of our existence in the world as Dasein is Sorge or Care-for. We exist alongside other people; Heidegger called this being-with and said that we cannot avoid care.

One participant Kiri, talked about her mother:

She became an integral part of what I did and would often visit me in my classroom. ...She was my biggest fan, my mother....in my day to day life as a principal it's my mother who comes back to me when I have to deal with children and parents....there are lessons I've learnt I take into my life today.
(Kiri)

Kiri identifies the strong care-filled relationship she had with her mother. Heidegger says care makes our existence more significant and gives our lives meaning, that care is “the primordial state of being of Dasein as it strives towards authenticity” (as cited in Steiner, 1989, p.110). For Kiri her mother’s words give meaning and direction to her actions as a principal.

.... But what I loved about her most is she just thanked us for being her children. Her last words to me were “Thank you for being my daughter.” Mum was 63 when she passed away. Too soon. Sorry, (talking about) Mum always makes me cry. She was powerful in her being. And she drove us to be good women. She must've.
(Kiri)

This example reveals the two features of balanced integration: philosophical explanation and participant voice. Heidegger’s (1967/2008) concept of *Sorge* identified as a “the primordial state of being” interwoven through these extracts is evident, and the philosophical explanation is alternated and balanced with the voice of the study participant as she identifies that her movement towards being a “good” woman was motivated by her mother’s care. This story is provided in full in Chapter Seven.

Openness

The second expression is openness. Openness refers to a systematic, unambiguous process of describing the many decisions made throughout the study process. It is an

expression, which concerns the orientation of the researcher, as he or she remains attuned to the phenomenon throughout the enquiry.

During the research process two activities enabled me to keep grounded, to not to be “carried away” and to remain in an attitude of insightful reflection, to remain open and attuned to the phenomenon. The first was keeping a journal, which I found to be of great benefit. Writing in my journal was part of my poeticizing project as I moved between the interviews, stories, the interpretations and my notes. My journal was where I tracked my progress and ordered my thoughts. I have examined different types of silences above, ontological and epistemological silence. In becoming aware of these different types of silences I needed to be able to not just read the transcripts, but to listen again to the tapes, to hear the voice of the participant, the modulations and inflections, to attempt to recapture the mood of the interview. It was also important to remember my own lived experience of the interview. To aid with this, I found particular value from reflections I had made after each interview in my research journal.

Openness: An example

After each session I think about the participant—there are reflections—but I don’t have any/many ideas really until the transcripts arrive back and I read and listen simultaneously, taking notes as I go. At this stage at least one or two stories become obvious. But always there is a great deal of script that becomes just detail—the narrative but not necessarily the phenomenon, “the thing” - DASEIN. To look for probes—are they what opens up the participant to go deeper and then the meaning? I need to check this.... The hardest part I think will be when I do the phenomenological analysis against the writings of Heidegger. What does it mean? (Journal entry)

I also benefited greatly from the regular input of my supervisors who were committed to habitually reading and evaluating my work throughout the analysis process. Receiving feedback from my supervisors and meeting regularly to discuss the research process

also enabled me to keep strongly oriented towards the research throughout its progression. It was during these meetings that decisions would be made to return to certain readings, or to undertake another reading thread in order that I might be more astute and informed in the data analysis.

Today I met with Judith for supervision. We talked about the work I had been doing on Kiri's stories using Bourdieu. As I reflect and think and tease out the idea/notions from the stories there are themes emerging as knots in the web or fabric.... Are they all drivers? Said Judith. I guess my initial question in what motivate these women to progress their careers what it is that impels or drives some more than others. Thesis of my thesis: What impels these women? What drives them? Why do women do what they do? (Journal entry)

I also benefitted from being able to "stand back and look at the whole," and to be able to use study breaks, exercise and holidays as a means of remaining both open and fresh.

These first two expressions of openness and balanced integration reflect the research process. The three remaining expressions of rigour deal with the research outcome.

Concreteness

Concreteness, the third expression for establishing rigour, concerns the usefulness for practice of the findings of the study. For the reader this means that the findings are presented in a way, which enables them to be positioned "concretely" in the context of the phenomenon. Van Manen (1990) called this notion "lived thoroughness."

It was after I had completed the stage, which I entitled "Working with the stories" that I was invited to present a conference paper at a career research conference. As part of my presentation I shared three stories reading them aloud. As I began to read the stories, the room was very quiet; there was complete silence amongst the audience. I continued to read and there were murmurs and small movements in the room and even though I was

focused on reading I noticed that many people were nodding. In a lecture, Buytendijk referred to the “phenomenological nod” as a way of indicating that a good phenomenological description is something that we can nod to, recognizing it as an experience that we have had or could have had (as cited in van Manen, 1990, p. 27).

A phenomenon is adequately described if description reawakens or shows us the lived quality and significance of the experience in fuller or deeper manner.

Concreteness: An example – “It’s the way I cope”

Many people attending the workshop engaged strongly, in a concrete way with the story of Sarah, whose story is provided in full in Chapter Eight. For these workshop attendees Sarah’s “lived experience” of anxiety, described in this story, enabled them to be positioned and aligned with her. Below is an excerpt from Sarah’s story.

Last night when I came home I was quite anxious. These first few days are quite anxious. I want to make sure I’ve given the students all the information. They know what I expect from them. They know where they’re going. I’m carrying that stuff around in my head. When I got home last night Mike said, are you all right? I said—I’ve just got quite a bit on my mind. He said—Okay, that’s fine. So he knows that it’s nothing else. Sometimes I dream about stuff. This morning, I woke up at half past five. So I just stay awake, I get up. It’s the way I cope. (Sarah)

Workshop participants commented her story was “just like me.” They too were experiencing the effects of stress and feeling anxious about their work. Rosen (1986) writing on the narrative aspect of phenomenological research commented the significance of narrative is that it compels us, leads us to reflect and look for ourselves in the story. It involves us personally in that we look for meaning via our own meaning. Participants “concretised” the findings in that they positioned themselves in the story as it was read.

Resonance

Resonance provides the fourth expression of rigour in de Witt and Ploeg's model (2006). It incorporates the experiential effect when study findings are read. The effect is described as an arresting, touching experience that is deeply felt (van Manen, 1997). The following excerpt from an interview was found to be particularly resonant with people who read this story.

Resonance: An example – “I wasn’t a black raven; I was a blue bird”

They swept us in to each take a turn at giving a speech, and there were these three enormous black ravens, three men in their black suits and their white shirts, and then this little thing in a pale blue trouser suit in the middle. And I thought afterwards how incongruous that must have looked. These three black ravens sweeping in and then this little blue bird arriving. If I look from the outside, that's probably one of the things I see I was fighting against. I didn't fit the mould. I wasn't a black raven; I was a blue bird. I don't think the glass ceiling has been broken in education. (Excerpt from Sally's stories)

People reading Sally's story identified with the notion of “not fitting the mould” and the feeling of having experienced some form of discrimination. Identifying with her experientially rather than concretely, the “blue bird” and “black raven” metaphor resonated with them. Although the two expressions of concreteness and resonance appear to be very similar in nature, resonance concerns a more emotional response to a story.

Van Manen (1990) commented the narrative power of story can be more compelling than lives, than life itself—reading phenomenology can be like reading poetry—it speaks partly through silence. When a researcher reads a draft of her paper, participants become aware how a story resonates or not with their own experience.

After the workshop participants commented that the reading of the stories transformed and moved them. These responses confirmed the way I was proceeding with the data analysis, crafting stories to describe women's lived career experiences, resonated with workshop participants' lived experience of career. Later many people spoke to me about their responses to the stories and one told me, that all around her, people were "tearing up" as I read. Once I had read the three stories, I asked participants to write a response to one of them. Several people responded to my talk and I later received emails and other feedback from people who had attended the presentation who commented on the refreshing nature of the content, how engaged they found themselves during the presentation and how they found themselves wanting more.

"A good phenomenological description is collected by lived experience and recollects lived experience—is validated by lived experience and it validates lived experience" (van Manen, 1990, p. 27). The difference between phenomenology and other social and human sciences is that the focus is not on statistical relation amongst variables, predominant social opinion, occurrence or frequency of behaviour but on meanings. A good phenomenological description is an adequate elucidation of some aspect of the life-world; it resonates with our sense of lived life (van Manen, 1990).

Heidegger (1962) compared phenomenological reflection with following wood paths in search of a "clearing" where a phenomenon could be shown in its essence. Receiving feedback confirmed for me that indeed, I was on the right track. I was heading towards a "clearing in the woods."

Actualization

The fifth and final expression of rigour is actualization, which involves the future fulfilment of the resonance of study findings. Rather than ending when a study is finished, a phenomenological interpretation continues to be interpreted by future readers. It is in the future that a phenomenological study has potential to be more fully verified. De Witt and Ploeg (2006) commented on the lack of a formal mechanism for recording actualization in the research community. With this in mind, the actualization of the findings of this present study is yet to be realised. However, the study's potential contributions will be analyzed comprehensively in Chapter Eleven.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the methods used in this study. It has provided details of participant recruitment and criteria, data gathering and analysis, as well as explanations of how phenomenological anecdotes were written and interpreted. An in-depth explanation of the processes employed to identify the three themes has been provided. Finally a five-stage model has been used to evaluate the rigour of this project.

The next three chapters introduce three phenomenologically powerful themes, which emerged from the anecdotes crafted from the participants' transcripts. These themes were crafted and re-crafted by the interpretive process of a circle of writing and reading, re-writing and re-reading. Excerpts from the anecdotes are provided throughout the chapters. These themes uncover an in-depth appreciation of the ontological nature of a woman's career.

The first theme and the focus of Chapter Six, concerns how woman's early beginnings influence her way of being in her career and involves the dual notions of habitus and historicity. The second theme and the focus of Chapter Seven describes how the influence of Sorge impacts on a woman's career decisions and way-of-being throughout her career. The third theme and focus of Chapter Eight, discusses how women move towards the desired Heideggerian way-of-being, that of authenticity; and how they potentially develop practical wisdom or *phrönesis*.

This thesis has considered women's career literature and the phenomenon of this inquiry, the subjective nature of a woman's career, and how it is experienced ontologically. As hermeneutic phenomenological research, the research journey is undergirded by the philosophical writings of Heidegger and Gadamer. The next three chapters are data chapters that consider different essential understandings of this phenomenon of interest.

Chapter Six

Influences of the past

Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.
-- Soren Kierkegaard

Introduction

This chapter, which introduces the first of three themes, addresses how the beginnings of a woman's life affect her subsequent career and decision-making. It seeks an insider's view by considering the part that family culture and genetic disposition make towards her career agency. It considers where the early motivations for career appear, and at what point the first signs of agency in a woman's life is identified. Quite simply, it seeks to answer the question, "Where have I come from?"

The goal of this project is to understand more fully what it means for women to pursue a career. It aims to look deeply into women's career experiences and to find out what motivates them to enact their careers and to consider some of the challenges they face along the way.

In my interviews with the women in this study, I asked them to reflect on their lives and careers. I sought to gain an understanding of how and why they had made certain decisions, and had responded in certain ways. I asked them to tell me about anything that came into their consciousness. As phenomenological reflection is not an

introspective process, rather it is rather a retrospective one, there is a sense in which reflection like this, on lived experience is always recollected or recalled to mind. It is reflection on experience, which has already been passed through (van Manen, 1990).

As these women looked back into their past—and in particular their early lives—stories and formative incidents emerged which detailed aspects of their family of origin or culture. Now mature women, the study participants were still acutely aware of their past, where they had come from, how their family of origin had shaped them, early messages they had heard, and how those messages had impacted on them. The “world” that they found themselves in at the point of our interview, had a historical structure, and their knowledge of it was taken for granted. As Heidegger said, it is assumed, based on something previously known or a priori (Heidegger, 1927/2008).

Historicity and habitus: Influences of the past

The influence of the past—of habitus and historicity—permeated the stories of the women in this study. Dasein exist, as historical beings, defined by time. These women continually “historicised,” they “looked” back, then forward. In this way, they are positioned oscillating between the two sides of their being (Harman, 2011; Heidegger, 1927/2008).

The influences of the past emerged as a principal reference point for women. They stood out as a sense-making mechanism, a means by which they understood themselves. Themes come about by our need to make sense. They are the sense we are able to make of something, through being open and alert (van Manen, 1990). A woman’s past was

seen to be vitally significant in shaping her present and in determining how she would move towards her future.

Women in this study often described their backgrounds as modest, whether financially or culturally. There were stories, which told of a lack of support, of undermining and disempowering influences, but also stories of the backing of strong supportive parents and families. Participants were sometimes thrust out of their comfort zone at an early age and were forced to fend for themselves or to move frequently, which disrupted their learning and socialization. These women did not come predominantly from wealthy or highly educated backgrounds. If anything their background, their historicity was that of simplicity rather than sophistication.

Historicity is a defining characteristic of Dasein and involves what has been passed down, what Dasein are given at birth through their culture. Heidegger's answer to the question: "Of what does the being of being human consist?" is: "existence." He proposed people exist in the world as historical beings. Their past is never entirely gone; it remains with them as a kind of legacy (Heidegger, 1927/2008). Gadamer (2004) contended people have a "historically effected consciousness" (p.350) and that they are embedded in the particular history and culture that formed them. Women's perceptions and beliefs are undeniably shaped and prejudiced by their culture and history (Lavery, 2003).

Arguably a fuzzier concept (Lizardo, 2004), Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) concept of habitus represents embodied history, the active presence of the whole past, of which it is the product. Whereas historicity is concerned with existence, and ways and states of being, habitus has a more generative and active makeup. It adjusts itself in the "field," another dynamic intermediate structure made up primarily of other players or actors,

situated practices and enduring institutions (Lizardo, 2004). Habitus is a combination of representations of perception, thinking, feeling, insight, assessing, communicating and acting, a precursor for all the expressive, verbal and everyday displays and statements of an actor (Krais, 1985).

Both historicity and habitus, are concerned with a person's past, what they have inherited, what has been passed down. A fusion of horizons can thus be seen between Bourdieu's notion of habitus and Heidegger's of historicity. Dreyfus (1991) said Bourdieu sees the sense in which, resonating with Heidegger, "thanks to the habitus, *the* world is prior to *my* world" (as cited in p. 160). There is clear synchronicity between Heidegger's ideas of historicity and Bourdieu's of habitus.

Lizardo (2004) noted two main uses of habitus, firstly as a perceptual and classifying structure and secondly as a generative structure of practical action. It is this second use, which has more application here. Just how does the habitus as generative structure influence and guide women, urging them towards career agency and action?

By using habitus and historicity as dual concepts to consider women's early influences a richer and deeper look into women's lives can be garnered. Their motivations can be identified, and also how those motivations change and are molded by their experiences and actions.

Habitus: It's embedded in me

The whole process of feeling: I don't know enough, I wouldn't be good enough

Debbie has been a university academic for many years.

She tells how her working class background has ongoing influence:

I come from a working class Irish background and I went to a small town Catholic girls' school. None of my family had been to university. My father came from a big family; they had been very successful. My Dad was very bright. But he was a carpenter, a carpenter at the freezing works. My mother thought she was really dumb, really stupid. She clearly wasn't. But she used to struggle with exams. She said she didn't have any brains. Mum's friends were all nurses. She was a nurse. She was quite senior. That's the background I came from. I was quite able at school, but nothing much was ever suggested to me. I was desperate not to go to university because I didn't think I'd be brainy enough. Nursing was a big career option and I did go nurse aiding at first. I decided I didn't like the hours and I would go with the other option, to be a teacher. I was a bit hesitant. I knew you had to go to university to do teaching, and I wasn't sure I'd be able to. Going to university was not a comfortable, easy thing. It's embedded in me, very much part of my own - as Bourdieu would say - habitus, my cultural capital. The whole process of feeling I don't know enough, I wouldn't be good enough. I came to the university and didn't feel very comfortable in the way it operates and works. I think that women from my sort of background sometimes have those sorts of experiences. Once I got to university, a whole world opened up. It helped me understand a whole lot of things about growing up in a small town. (Debbie)

As a university academic, Debbie interprets her situation when she mentioned her habitus and how "it's embedded" in her. She says the feeling she has of not being good enough and not knowing enough, come from her habitus, her cultural capital. Debbie's family historicity is a lifelong legacy. Like her mother before her who thought she was "dumb, really stupid," Debbie feels she does not measure up saying, "I won't be good enough." Her family's legacy to her is such that it limits rather than empowers her. Although Debbie describes herself as "quite able," she says I "didn't think I'd be brainy

enough” for university and she was “hesitant” and “not comfortable” or “easy” about going there.

Iellatchitch et al (2003) contended that habitus adjusts to the conditions of action, and that this action is a continuous process and cannot be reduced to the first socialization of the first years of life. Further experience will have the effect of continuously reinforcing or modifying it (Iellatchitch et al., 2003). Debbie’s socialization in her early years was in a working class family, with a father, who although bright, worked at the freezing works. She attended a small school. She comments, “None of my family had been to university.” Going to university for Debbie can be seen as part of the continuous process of adjustment of her habitus. University became a place where her habitus was modified, “a whole world opened up” she says.

Bourdieu (1986) defined cultural capital as forms of knowledge, education credentials and skills, with emphasis on education. It is the accumulated result of educational and cultural effort, undertaken by the person or by ancestors. Debbie’s ancestors did not pursue tertiary study at university; they did not accumulate much in the way of educational qualifications. This impacts on Debbie throughout her adult life, even after years as an academic. She still looks back, she wavers between the two sides of her being, swinging between her working class roots and her professional and academic career.

This story can also be interpreted through the lens of Savickas Career Construction theory (Savickas, 2002, 2005), which proposes the meaning of a career, and the dynamics of its construction become exposed in self-defining stories. A person’s stories reveal the themes they use to make meaningful choices.

Savickas (1997) defined subjective career as a changing perspective, which gives personal meaning. “As a client narrates his or her stories, his or her personal paradigm can be identified, of how the individual turns essence into interest, tension into intention, and obsession into profession” (Savickas, 1997, p. 11). He contended a person’s occupation could allow them to resolve childhood’s unfinished business, work towards making meaning, advancing life projects and increasing personal agency (Savickas, 1997).

By learning feminist, educational and social theory, Debbie has been assisted to make sense of her background. Working with marginalised and unconfident people from diverse backgrounds has felt natural to her as she has herself felt marginalised and unconfident: on the edge. This tension of not belonging and not feeling good enough has translated into an intention of helping others to feel a sense of belonging, to be empowered. Debbie’s obsession with not feeling good enough has seen her enter a profession where she has worked alongside others who also feel on the edge. It can be argued; her occupation has helped her to resolve some of her unfinished business from childhood (Savickas, 1997).

The strongly transformational nature of Savickas’ theory doesn’t attend to the notions of habitus or historicity, which Bourdieu (1990) and Heidegger (1927/2008) argued are always with us. In spite of her achieving meaning through her career, Debbie has found herself in the situation of being in a field which does not fit her habitus, and in which her career capital is undervalued (as will be discussed in the next chapter).

I was adopted: It's been a struggle to find out who I am

Carol received negative messages from her adoptive family:

I was told I'd never amount to much, I was dumb, and I was weird, different. I was adopted so it struck home. It was very hurtful. There was quite a bit to overcome in terms of believing in myself and standing on my own two feet...It's definitely been a struggle to find out who I am in my own right. Even meeting my birth parents didn't help a lot, as I thought it might've at the time. To find your own identity is really important. I think when I found my purpose; that went a long way to actually helping me solve that. It's who I am as much as what I'm meant to be doing. I think it gives you that sense of intrinsic worth. That was very healing. Whatever else came after that was an attempt to cancel out what somebody in my family said. And still, there was that nagging doubt at different times, that inner struggling. (Carol)

Individuals' history or historicity consists of what their culture bequeaths them from birth and what is passed down; further, it provides them with ways of understanding the world (Lavery, 2003). Adopted at birth and initially with no contact with her birth parents Carol did not know what her culture was. She was therefore limited in the ways she could make sense of and understand the world. She was disadvantaged in that she did not know her cultural identity and had no knowledge of her own ancestry. Further, rather than advocating for her, Carol's adoptive parents criticised and demeaned her. She tells how she struggled to find her identity. It was an ongoing challenge, and there was "quite a bit to overcome."

Now in her forties, Carol knows how important finding her identity has been, and she describes finding her "purpose" (teaching) as giving her "intrinsic worth." She feels valued, but it has been a process to undo the "nagging doubt(s)" from the comments made in her early years. Carol's habitus adjusts as she takes agency and moves forward in her early career interactions. Not limited by early social interactions and experiences, she describes how her habitus has been shaped and reinforced by her experiences in an

ongoing way (Iellatchitch et al., 2003). Carol identifies her first habitus as being restricted and restricting. Her search for her own identity, involved many adjustments in an iterative process where she worked consciously towards undoing the early foundations of criticism and negativity laid down by her adoptive parents.

Iellatchitch et al (2003) commented, “Through their habitus individuals are constrained by the rules and norms they internalised” (p. 738). Being “dumb” and “not amounting to much” were the “norm” for Carol, and the criticisms her family voiced can still have power over her to re-enact those early life rules. This means that however intact Carol might now feel, the effects of early experiences and of the lifelong struggle to find her identity, still impact on her. However, as will be seen later, they do not constrain her.

Having the support of a tight knit family

Amanda came from a close, tight knit family:

Mum is very strongly Catholic. My father wasn't, I remember him getting his Holy Confirmation made with me. I've got one older sister. Dad worked at the telephone exchange. He had a very steady job. Mum was basically at home with us for most of our childhood. When I was about 10, Mum became the welfare officer at St Vincent de Paul and managed that through all of my growing up and teenage years. She was always working with others. They had a house, for caring for people with alcohol related disorders. There were a lot of people who she became friends with through St Vinnie's. My mother was the landlady of a convent and when refugees would come in, they would be based there. So we had this quite exciting adventure place as well, in our childhood. We'd sometimes have the odd child stay over who needed care. My parents also sponsored some Polish refugees. So I had four Polish foster “brothers.” I saw many different things throughout my childhood. I had a happy safe childhood. But I saw the helping side of life. So I took that into speech therapy and then into this job. It taught me to accept people from all walks of life; it taught me to appreciate whatever I had. It was learning to share. (Amanda)

Amanda comments that her decisions are made in synch with her faith:

I think it's a mix of my faith as well. I can't just isolate myself from my community. That if I'm going to make an impact it may as well be something that is worthwhile from my perspective. (Amanda)

And with her family foremost in her mind:

I don't see work as my main priority. I was part of a family then had my own family. My work is interwoven into it. I don't see it as something I'm born to do. I'm lucky I'm passionate enough to do something that I've landed in or sought out. I find the good in it. I think the family life has to come first. That's what my Mum and Dad have shown me. Family life has to come first, because what's the stress going to get you 10 or more years from now? (Amanda)

Amanda's family, in particular her mother, was a powerful influence. Gadamer's notion of making sense of our world from within our existence is similar to Heidegger's view that we act within a background of bodily, personal, and cultural practices that are always present (Lavery, 2003). Amanda's family of origin, and its cultural influences were very potent, prejudicing her to create a life where "work is interwoven into it." As a consequence, she has not deviated from her family values and ideals. She returned home to live near her parents and sister. Although she has the opportunity to move to another city she says:

My husband would happily move, because he's lived here since he was four years old. He's happy to go somewhere else. I think because my Mum and Dad and sister are here, the tie is stronger for me. They've all moved here and I like it. Amanda

Amanda makes sense of her life by referring to her own background, which provides her with a personal horizon of understanding (Gadamer, 2004). This horizon gives significance to the things she does and informs her practices. Amanda says "That's what my Mum and Dad have shown me." She comes from a secure family, a religious family, where Mother was powerful and influential and involved in caring for others, which,

she says, “taught me to appreciate whatever I had.” Amanda’s family culture strongly influences her and the culture she seeks to build for her own family.

In contrast to Debbie and Carol, Amanda is confident and assertive; she has always had a strong sense of her own identity. As she tells of her own upbringing and her current choices and situations, she speaks with determination and clarity about her decision making process. She has internalised her family’s norms of family first, Catholic faith and “the helping side of life” and does not see a need to be very different from her parents, to change way of being or to expand her horizon. She comments, “I was part of a family then I had my own family.” The norms and ideals of her family both contain and constrain her (Iellatchitch et al., 2003).

Whether it is restraining or compelling, whether dispiriting or encouraging, a woman’s family background, her family culture and norms are vitally formative in shaping her early identity. Although she might swing between her past and her future (Heidegger, 1927/2008), or she might have nagging doubts, once a woman has a sense of identity and purpose, whenever that might occur, she pushes ahead in her career with agency.

A natural disposition towards teaching and learning

How does women’s genetic disposition affect their early career decision-making and agency? Women in this study often described an early disposition towards taking charge, leading, teaching and learning. They referred to themselves as “mouthy,” “stubborn,” “opinionated,” “forthright,” and “naughty.”

Bourdieu (1986) defined a social field as playground or battlefield in which agents, equipped with specific field-relevant capital, try to advance their position; fields are characterised by a patterned set of practices. Iellatchitch et al (2003) defined career capital as “the particular sort of capital valued within career fields” (p.734). They proposed every agent within a specific career field has a unique portfolio of capitals. Genetic disposition is the starting point.

I have a reputation as being someone who’s very stubborn

Sally tells how she was always a “take charge” kind of person who learnt to be a “fighter”:

I think it’s something inherent that I was born with. I’ve got an 85-year-old mother who still tries to boss me around. I just think that was how I was born. And it’s also come out of a certain amount of hardship as well, because my mother was a solo parent before the DHB and she worked more than one job, teacher, and then worked at night at Watties, that sort of thing, so that’s what I was shown as I was growing up, that you had to keep striving. To come out of the poverty that I had as a child requires a bit of fighting as well. (Sally)

Helen comments on her opinionated nature, and how coming from a large family she had to fend for herself somewhat:

I am seen as mouthy and difficult, like I’m stirring up things. I suppose I’m more strident and more independent. I came from a family of six kids under eight. You’re just first up, best dressed, off you go. There was no “Are you in the gifted class?” None of that nonsense. You just piled off to school, got whoever you got, and got on with it. I went to an all girls’ school, where you did embroidery. That didn’t really suit my personality. And I was pretty naughty. I left there at the end of Year 11 or Fifth Form, and went to a co-ed school, and I loved it. No-one was telling you what you had to wear and what colour socks you had on. Why you had to wear gloves, I could never work out. (Helen)

Kiri’s upbringing was in a large and economically impoverished Maori family.

She describes her early foundations:

I'm the eighth of 11 children; I have five brothers and five sisters. We weren't poor in other ways, but we were poor financially. My father was a labourer. Things were a struggle. In my family I have a reputation as being someone who's very stubborn, someone who is articulate and can be forthright. Even to this day, my brothers will say, "Kiri, you do it." They'll let me do the talking. It's a role we're all comfortable with. (Kiri)

And how she had a natural disposition for learning:

I could read from an early age. My older sister taught me. I was an avid little reader but I hated silent reading because there wasn't enough time for it. I remember once, I found an old reader about Madame Curie. I was partway through her life story and we were told to put our books away. I kept reading it. I got into a lot of trouble from the teacher. She said, "Would you put that book away! Reading will not get you anywhere!" I often think about that as a teacher myself, and I crack up at it. I had lots of that kind of thing going on. I was inquisitive, a good reader; I had a good standard of writing. But I was really no different to my sisters. My older sisters were as bright as me, if not brighter. So why did they struggle to even go to school some days? It just didn't make sense. (Kiri)

How she spoke up on behalf of her older siblings:

I was number eight and poised to go to high school and I said "No." I remember saying to Mum "I don't think the Catholic school has done anything really for any of us. And you know what I think it is, Mum? I think they do that because we are Maori." And she said, "How can you say that?" I really upset her. It was my father listening in to this conversation, who said to Mum "She can go wherever she wants to go." So, I was the first of my family not to go to a Catholic school. (Kiri)

Habitus' foundations are formed early in life and continue to grow (1977). Sally, Helen and Kiri were disposed towards leadership and taking charge, to learning and achieving from an early age. These dispositions, identified early on in their lives, developed and were enhanced by their experiences.

Kiri was also a questioner; she wondered why her older siblings didn't achieve and asked her parents about it. Even then, as pre-teen she took charge of her life, orchestrating a shift in family opinion so that she could study at a different school. Kiri was perceptive and self-aware, and as a young Maori woman with a strong sense of family and collective culture, she began to take responsibility for her siblings as well. This resulted in the shaping and moulding of her habitus, as she became the first in her family to attend a different school. Kiri didn't want to conform to how others did things. She wanted to do what her father described as, "Go wherever she wants to go." Helen wanted to make her own choices to be in a place, "where no one was telling you what to do" and Sally describes being a take charge person as, "something I was born with."

These women all came from simple roots, describing their family background as, "a certain amount of hardship", and not, "poor in other ways but poor financially" but it was their self-determining disposition, which impelled them. An independent and forthright spirit, a need to ask questions, to stand up for themselves is apparent in girlhood for these women.

I'm the only one

Miriama didn't mind being different. She consciously chose against the status quo, doing something different from what others in her town were doing. She tells of her upbringing in a small country town:

I'm the middle of three girls. My older sister became a teenage Mum when she was 16 and I was about 12 or 13. So that was another negative experience that made me think - I don't want that to be me. I think she really struggled, as a teenage mother. Then I have a younger sister who started doing a nursing degree but now she's doing other work. I'm the only one who left that town and went to university.
(Miriama)

An early experience shaped Miriama's habitus when her sister became a teenage mother. Observing her sister's experience, watching her struggle, Miriama calls a "negative experience," which Miriama didn't want to replicate in her own life.

I've always been that sort of geeky person

In order to understand and explain the action of players in the field one needs information about their dispositions and competence (Iellatchitch et al., 2003). Another early disposition, which was frequently attested to was a love and aptitude for learning.

Tina describes how she's always been a good student:

I've always been that sort of geeky person as well who likes that sort of thing.
So I think – yeah I was always gonna be that sort of person. (Tina)

And Sophie says:

I went to school in a little town and then went on to the local high school, and when I got to about fifth form and you had to start choosing whether you wanted Arts or Science, that I really liked them both so in my final year they changed the timetable so that I could take both. I liked it all, I found it really hard to choose. I liked school, I was a very achievement minded type of person. (Sophie)

These early dispositions predisposed women towards moving ahead, and taking charge, towards being independent and making their own choices. Such dispositions strongly contributed to later career decision-making, agency and progression.

And it was such a natural progression

Carol was disposed towards working with people but because of her habitus—as described earlier—it took some time to find her "vocation" in teaching. There was a

long process where she amassed skills and knowledge, built her cultural capital, and finally went to University to study teaching in her late thirties.

She tells how this happened:

I started off working in a chemist shop, I was 14, and I lied about my age. I left school at 15 and went to work for the bank, into what was going to be a career in banking. That's what my parents wanted, but it just wasn't me. I excelled at customer service and enjoyed meeting people. I didn't like the banking industry, so I left and went to work in retail, which suited me down to the ground. I loved retail and I loved working with people. Then I started doing bar work. I was 18 and under age. I lied about my age again. It was great to have people come in and stand and talk with you and unwind. I learnt most of my counseling skills as a barmaid. You know everybody's secrets. The management felt I had some good skills so they put me forward for hotel management training. After about six months I fell pregnant with my son. So that was my career on hold. I had my son and single-parented, didn't do any work. When he was five I started teacher aiding at his school. I loved working with young people. I was involved with the church and they persuaded me to start training to be a youth pastor. I was working with young people and teacher aiding at my son's school. Then I felt really challenged and thought: I want to do more, to do something with the rest of my life, to give something back. By this stage my son was 12 and I thought, "Where are all the young people? They're in school. That's it! I'll go and be a teacher." And it was such a natural progression. As a child I'd played being a teacher with my dolls and toys. They often say that the things that you play with in childhood are the things that you're actually naturally really good at doing. I have to say that's true of me. (Carol)

Gadamer (2004) described how our prejudices could be conceived as a horizon, which influences our range of vision from a particular viewpoint. The horizon is flexible and changeable; it adjusts and shifts over time and moves with our experiences in the world. Carol's horizon changed as she moved through her career. Although she began her career doing something she didn't want to do and didn't enjoy, she quickly moved into a job, which fitted with her disposition towards working with people. As she changed jobs, her skills and abilities were recognised, first by the hotel management and later by the church leadership. At that time, she could not see teaching as a potential career; it

was not within her range of vision. It took several decades for her to move to the vantage point where she could envisage herself working in education.

Career habitus is a habitus that fits a particular career field and may be defined by the disposition, which tend to be actualised “automatically” within a career field. A particular career habitus ensures that an agent acts, perceives and thinks according to the rules of the field and her movements within the field of career appears as the “natural” way. She acts intentionally without intention (Bourdieu, 1987, 1990).

Once Carol found her vocation of teaching she comments, “it was such a natural progression.” Her career habitus fitted within the field of education. Her disposition towards working with and supporting people was spontaneously realised once she entered teaching. She adds:

Everything I’d done prior to teaching, the customer service, the working with people, all of those skills I use in teaching. Because you’re dealing with people, you’re dealing with parents who might be irate, like you would an irate restaurant customer. It’s the culmination that all the stepping-stones on the way were leading up to. The minute I walked into the university and took my first class, I knew this was where I was meant to be...It’s my passion and I love it. Teaching is the work I was born to do, with my heart and my soul I know that.
(Carol)

She acknowledges the difference being a mature person has made:

If I’d gone into teaching as a young person, I wouldn’t have the skills, the understanding, or nous to stand up where I feel I need to stand up for children. I think those life skills bring a richness to the job. I had experienced life to a degree and raised my son. I had some understanding of children and child psychology.
(Carol)

As Carol’s horizon changed and adjusted so has her habitus as she has moved through her career. Her disposition towards working with people was enhanced and reinforced

as she worked in retail, customer service, youth work and finally in teaching. She has “the skills, the understanding, or nous” and her “life skills bring a richness.” Although her career habitus was shaped by being in fields different from education, the influence of her habitus on her career choices and subsequent fields are linked in a reciprocal relationship. Carol describes how she questioned herself “Where are the young people?” and then answered, “They’re in school” and thought, “That’s it, I’ll go and be a teacher.” The pathway she has been through is more than this one off internal conversation. Many choices and decisions have shaped her habitus, built her cultural capital and prepared her for this decision, as she moved to a place where her vision was increased.

Other participants also spoke of being disposed towards teaching yet not choosing it as a career until later. Like Carol, it took a process of adjustment of their habitus, a shift in their horizon to bring them to a point where they were aware not just that they wanted to move into education and teaching but that they were ready to do so.

I’ve been horrendously privileged

I was very lucky experiencing all those different things

Tina is a young academic whose family came to live in New Zealand from the Middle East at the end of her schooling:

When I talk to other people my name is often a talking point, people ask, “Where’s that name from?” And I’ll say, “Oh it’s a such and such name and I’ll have the story about where I’ve come from.” I know, I’m a different person, I’m aware of different cultures. When I came to New Zealand, the first thing I noticed was everyone was complaining about small things. I’d watch the news and there’d be this big hoopla about something that seemed very minor. I felt

people weren't very aware here of what was going on in the world. That's a huge generalisation, but I still think it's a bit true; they don't know what's happening around the world in terms of current events or history. I think it's because a lot of people in New Zealand grew up here and don't go to many other places. Whereas I grew up in the Middle East, I lived a year in India and a year in the UK so I experienced very different things there. Plus every year, from when I was aged five, my parents would take time off every summer and we'd go to North America or Europe or somewhere so we got to experience lots of different cultures. I was very lucky experiencing all those different things.
(Tina)

She goes on to describe more about her upbringing in a middle-eastern country:

I was born in the Middle East and lived there for most of my first 19 years, although my Mum and Dad did send me to boarding school in the UK when I was 10 for a year and I didn't like it, because I think back then in the sort of mid eighties, very racist climate I used to find in the UK. I think I was the only brown person in the boarding school that I went to, so that lasted about a year before they brought me back to the Middle East.
(Tina)

Tina came from a wealthy family, and a privileged background; she describes her father as “self-made and well off, and able to retire early.” Yet, Tina also experienced being a refugee when she and her family had to flee from their country—which was in the throes of war—and were unable to return for several years. A wealthy background could have contributed to her becoming complacent and indulged. However, her experiences of being the “only brown person in the boarding school,” being in a racist climate, becoming a refugee, and “experiencing all those different things” have shifted her perspective and expanded her horizon (Gadamer, 2004)

Tina knows she is “a different person” because of these experiences, experiences that have combined to make her more culturally sensitive and not to “complain about small things.” Being different and feeling on the edge has caused her to become more aware of diversity and as a result she has a more inclusive and accepting worldview. Her habitus has undergone shaping by reciprocal and complementary experiences, which in

turn have shaped her way of being in her career. This will be explored more in subsequent chapters.

I need to return some of the favours I've been given

Jackie was also from a privileged background:

My father was very wealthy. I'm one of five children. My parents had very high standards for us and nothing was ever good enough. It's interesting because I was not a good student at school. I was a terrible student. I got expelled; I know it's ironic. I spent most of my time spraying myself with Rexona because I was having a fag down the back of the shed. (Jackie)

Then she describes how in her twenties she realised:

I need to return some of the favours that I've been given. Like I said, my family was quite well off, and it was just a given that we went to university and things were paid for. I have been horrendously privileged but I couldn't keep doing this for the rest of my life. (Jackie)

Jackie did not appreciate the benefits of financial security and the high aspirations of her parents. She felt pressured to conform and initially rebelled against her privileged and wealthy upbringing, saying she was “a terrible student” and got expelled. It was not until considerably later that she became aware that such a vantage point was to her advantage. She realised the benefits she had and changed her behaviour; her motivations shifted, and she became impelled from within. How this occurred will be expanded in Chapter Eight.

Succeeding was something I did for my family

Sometimes a woman's family of origin is a powerful driver in pushing her to succeed and to be a representative for them. Kiri describes how she feels responsible for her own family:

If you asked "Are you career-driven?" I would say no. I've felt I've had no choice but to move forward, to move into things. I've had to because I've had to represent Maori. I've had to for my own brothers' and sisters' sake, to ensure that their wellbeing and livelihoods are kept intact. In one sense, I feel hugely pressured from lots of quarters to be who I am. I have an obligation to my family and to society, whom I feel quite strongly about, and am influenced by. I think that's my very Catholic side coming through. It was all about calling and there was a reason you did things: you did them for others. But the main people you did it for were your family. Being someone who did well was something I did for my family. Succeeding was something I did for my family. (Kiri)

Kiri questions where her motivations and aspirations come from for career success and goes on to describe the powerful influence of Maori collective culture coupled with her family's Catholic faith. She tells how her career success is not for herself, but for all of her family, and for all Maori. She feels pressure from outside to achieve on their behalf but she also tells how she is pressured from within.

Bourdieu (1977) elaborates on the notion of habitus by explaining its dependency on history and human memory. For instance, a certain behaviour or belief becomes part of a society's structure when the original purpose of that behaviour or belief can no longer be recalled and becomes socialised into individuals of that culture. Pringle, Jones and Reid (2013) argued, since Bourdieu theorizes habitus not as an individualised ego but an "individual trace of an entire collective history" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 9), it has the potential to be applied to collective as well as individualised cultures. Although established in early experiences the foundations for habitus continue to grow throughout life and are shaped through reciprocal influences in the field. Kiri is deeply aware she is part of a collective

culture, however, she has become socialised into her culture. Her culture is a part of her collective cultural capital. The cultural artefacts, beliefs and dispositions her family have given her impact on her behaviours and attitudes, both consciously and unconsciously. It is second nature to Kiri to “represent Maori,” it is embedded in her.

Bourdieu (1986) defines cultural capital as forms of knowledge, education credentials and skills, with particular emphasis on education; the result of educational and cultural effort, either by the agent or by ancestors. Kiri’s ancestors, her whanau³ did not pursue tertiary study or gain any educational qualifications. This impacts on Kiri throughout her life. She sees herself as instrumental; she knows she is a leader, for her family, for her school, and for all Maori:

I was very aware of who I was as a young Maori woman. And I really built on that while I was at Teachers’ College. I learnt te Reo⁴. I pursued Maori studies as my main curriculum area. That gave me a sense of what I needed to do in terms of working in Aotearoa, New Zealand, to address some of the balances. I’d always been someone who could see injustices from the day I was born. I was particularly interested in classrooms and the way they perceived Maori. That’s been a passion that’s driven me. (Kiri)

Always very mindful of her own identity, Kiri says “I was very aware of who I was” and of her own destiny, “what I needed to do.” Her early disposition towards leadership continues to be enhanced as she moves through her career.

Gadamer (2004) said that the horizon of the present is in a continual process of formation. This is because our prejudices are being tested all the time, an important part of which occurs in encountering the past and in understanding “the tradition from which we come” (p. 317). For this reason, he argued, the horizon of the present can only be formed by the past.

³ Whanau, a Maori word for extended family

⁴ Maori language

Kiri has developed fluency in te Reo and has tertiary education and post graduate qualifications; she has high cultural capital based on her educational credentials. Her disposition towards social justice, she could “see injustices from the day I was born,” and her deep interest in how her family are progressing, combine to stimulate Kiri to become more involved in social justice issues, working to improve conditions for Maori. Kiri moves within her career and assumes different roles, but what guides and motivates her is the “tradition from which” she came.

The degree to which Bourdieu’s three capitals: economic, social and cultural are recognised and valued in the relevant social context, is known as symbolic capital. This is the worth ascribed to the amalgamation of the three, and this gives an indication of the level of social power and prestige within a certain field a person might hold. Kiri’s cultural capital as an informed and highly educated Maori woman, well versed in Tikanga⁵ and te Reo, combined with her social position as a highly successful principal, and the incumbent economic rewards this brings, mean she is a person of high symbolic capital.

Within this context Kiri continually seeks to make a difference for Maori. She is prejudiced in favour of Maori, and to Maori capital formation. Her decisions are always tested against that prejudice. They are also informed by her past, she harks back to her still vivid memory of herself as a small girl, questioning and arguing and wondering just why her family hadn’t achieved at high school.

⁵ The Maori way of doing things, includes culture, customs, protocols

She says:

I have a wonderful close family. We make a huge effort to care for one another, to be there for one another. In my eyes they're all really successful people. They've been wonderful parents. They've got wonderful children who are all well and cared for. Academically I was the first one to go through to University Entrance level. Since then my sister who was Head Girl later on, she has also gained a degree. We're the only two out of our family so far. That's not the total measure of success. The total measure of success is how you are and whether you can look after your family. I think my family have done really well with that; they're a real credit to each other and to their children. But one thing that drives me still, is the thought that this non-achievement of Maori has been generations now. And within my own family too. They're still in quite low-paying jobs. Even though they're working, and that's great, they didn't stay at school. We're still failing in many ways. I lie awake at night thinking, "Am I still going to be part of this failing?" At the end of my life and I look back, will I say, "Oh God, it's still there. What did I do?" That haunts me a little bit. (Kiri)

In spite of her own learning, status and success, Kiri tells of her anxiety about her extended family. Although very close and caring for each other deeply, although successful in some ways, in the main, they have not achieved academically. Kiri begins the interview by describing her own family situation and it is to this that she returns as the interview concludes.

Heidegger (1927/2008) argued conscience is not God talking to a person, but the person talking to him or herself; the voice of conscience is a force that makes them reject the everyday, what Heidegger called the One. In this story, there is a sense that Kiri experiences a troubled conscience and tallies up good and bad actions, not for herself, rather, on behalf of her family. It bothers her that members of her family have not achieved academically and she has something of a bad conscience at their expense. She takes on responsibility for their actions. This is a part of being Maori and part of Kiri's collective culture. Because of the under achievement academically of the next generation, Kiri, as a leader and mature family member, asks herself, "Am I still going to be part of this failing?" and "What did I do?"

“*Dasein* is deployed in a threefold form of ecstatic time that stands outside of itself by simultaneously swinging toward the past and future” (Harman, 2011, p. 59). Kiri historicises; she wavers between the two sides of her being, her past and her future. She is aware that her people have a potentially powerful destiny and she longs to play a part in making that destiny possible; it haunts her.

Summary

Throughout their lives and careers, their roots, their culture and early influences impact on women in an ongoing way. Many women in this study had simple beginnings, being raised in families where their parents were working class and uneducated, often financially constrained but culturally and socially rich. Several spoke of faith being a strong influencer in choosing a career, which involved helping people. More often, it was a desire to give something back; in particular, for women who came from privileged backgrounds. A key idea was that in spite of the limitations of their habitus and cultural capital, which meant women might be lacking in confidence, hesitant, with low self-esteem or a lack of identity, their habitus was adjusted, shaped and moulded so that they increased in their self-confidence and self-esteem and found a sense of their own identity. Rather than being a limiting factor and holding them back, a simple background and habitus and little cultural capital appeared to challenge and inspire.

Their career progression was also due to their dispositions towards leadership, teaching and learning, working with people or being achievement oriented. Such dispositions were identified early in their lives, by themselves and by others. In cases where they did not take up teaching early in their careers, a move towards it was seen as “a natural

progression.” They were not afraid to “make a stand” often identifying themselves as “the only one” or “the boss” in their family. They did not mind being different, and were not concerned with what others thought, influenced by the status quo, what Heidegger called the *One*. Simply put, they are individuals.

The advancement of cultural capital meant women’s horizons shifted so that they gained a different worldview or horizon. There was a shift in their prejudices or preconceptions. Women took responsibility for others, sometimes of their own culture or ethnic group, or for other women. This tendency was particularly true for the Maori women in the sample. The notion of habitus and capital formation is strongly woven into the fabric of the stories and lives of the Maori women and the Middle Eastern immigrant woman. The effect of family culture in a collectivist culture impacts greatly on how the two Maori women are living out their career lives. They saw themselves as leaders and gate openers for their students but “in particular for Maori.” Due to her increased cultural awareness and sensitivity, to feeling on the edge, the Middle Eastern woman seeks to work in areas of cultural and gender disparity. Feeling on the edge was a driving force for women directing them to work with others who were also disenfranchised or marginalised. Other women wanted to use their point of advantage and high cultural capital to “return the favours” they had been given.

For these women, working in education and helping others to advance their cultural capital, thus “making a difference” are all attributes of subjective career. For them, these motivations are more significant than any trappings of objective career success.

In the next chapter a second theme is introduced, the part that being cared-for plays in a woman’s career progression.

Chapter Seven

The influence of Care

Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,
and where care lodges sleep will never lie.
-- William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet

Introduction

This chapter introduces a second theme, the influence of caring others in women's career progression. It seeks to answer the question "Who will help me?" It describes how being cared for is essentially a game changer for women in pursuing a career with agency. It reveals the profound difference that being cared for at key points in a woman's life, in sometimes quite ordinary ways can make an extraordinary difference to her career pathway.

Sorge: Being-in-the-world with others

The world we live in is filled with people; we live alongside them, together sharing our existence in the world. This is what Heidegger called being-with. King (1964) described it as the essential nature of our existence as beings. Even when we are not physically with others, our mode is still being-with. The people who we are with who Heidegger called the One, influence us and affect how we behave, interpret and operate in the world (1927/2008).

A fundamental basis of being-in-the-world is *Sorge* or care. Heidegger says there is no way we can avoid it (Polt, 1999) that to be-in-the-world in an authentic existential state is to be “care-full.” Care makes our existence, not only significant but also meaningful. One form of care Heidegger called solicitude, means concern for others (1927/2008).

How does care influence?

Being cared for, cared about, shown care, and caring for others are recurring notions in the stories of the women in this study. *Sorge*⁶ enables them to understand and make sense of themselves in their everyday existence as teachers. In the complex web of interrelationships women describe, the theme of care emerges as a knot in the web. Time and again it orients itself as a significant influencer and driver throughout their careers. *Sorge*⁷ influences positively, through key people: mentors, supporters and gate openers, who encourage and empower these women. It is seen at formative and transition points, with ongoing effect and instrumental in the development of career agency. Care in its imperfect state, influences negatively, through detractors and gate closers and women become disillusioned and discouraged.

Women talked of the influence of caring others as a positive driving force and influencer in their everyday lives and careers. They spoke of how teachers and colleagues, heads of departments and lecturers, mothers and significant family members, who encouraged them and believed in them at specific points, impacted on them throughout the rest of their lives. They told of occasions when they were struggling to find a way forward, to know the best direction to take, when a few

⁶ From this point on *Sorge* will be used for Solicitude in this chapter

⁷ For simplicity, the word care will be mostly used for *Sorge*, from this point on

perceptive and prescient words helped them find direction. They described the impact a powerful person had in opening a pathway for them, by identifying an area of gifting or interest.

They were often emotional as they described the way that particular words of affirmation had remained “in my head” and “even to this day.” They outlined the enabling effect that ongoing support and mentoring brought and continued to bring them in keeping on with their career aspirations. And they explained how when finding themselves in a vulnerable situation, the support of significant teachers and family members had life changing effect.

Care at formative stages

You can be something else

As discussed in Chapter Six, the background of some women in this study was not conducive in enabling them to pursue tertiary study and a professional pathway. In those situations, the formative influence of schoolteachers was particularly salient. Miriama came from such a background. She lived in a small country town where many young people ended their schooling early and found work in a factory, the supermarket or on a farm. In this town, it was common for young women to fall pregnant at an early age; this had happened for Miriama’s older sister.

While she was still at school Miriama’s parents moved overseas:

My parents moved to Australia when I was in Sixth Form and I stayed on in that little town and rented a house with my cousins. And it was two teachers, at a time when my parents weren’t there, who really made me think that I definitely could go to university that I could move out of that small town and that I could do other things. They would never accept it if I didn’t get an A. “Of course you should be getting this kind of mark. Of course you should be looking at plans for

university. Your path isn't to work in the supermarket, because you're really talented." Constantly expecting me to succeed. And I don't think they realised what an impact they had on a young girl living in a small town. Not many people from that area left. Most people went and worked on farms or in the local factories. I was probably more likely to become a teenage Mum, than to leave that town. There was always the expectation I wouldn't leave school and get pregnant or work in the supermarket or become a farmer's wife. I would go to university and whatever I did there was okay. They were really instrumental. Because of them, I wanted to teach. The impact they had on my life was huge; those two key teachers were life changing. When I think about it now, at the time they seemed like amazing teachers, but they weren't doing anything super-special. They were just caring that you came to their class, planning good lessons, expecting you to do well; just good basic teaching practice. I could tell they enjoyed doing what they were doing; they made me want to be in their classroom. And they really believed in me; they said, "You can be something else." I always cry about them. (Miriamia)

When Miriamia told this story she was drawn back into her lived experience of being a young teenaged woman, alone and vulnerable. As she described the impact the teachers had on her, it impacted on her again. She reconnects with that experience. Feeling strong emotion and gratitude towards the teachers, she cries "about them." She recognises they were "life-changing" in their influence, by being there and showing care for her, at that crucial time.

The two teachers constantly expected Miriamia to achieve at whatever she did and to follow a different pathway from other young people in the town. She doesn't perceive them as being exceptional as teachers. She says "they weren't doing anything super-special," but their belief in her ability and their "constant expecting" her to succeed, increased her self-belief.

The intensity of emotion Miriamia reconnects with is as a result of the empowering influence that these teachers had on her. What is key in Miriamia's narrative is the showing of care at a significant time in her life, when she was vulnerable and at risk, "They were just caring." The two teachers believed in Miriamia's potential as a human

being. Their caring influence strongly enabled her; she left the town to study at university and to follow a different path from most other young people in that town.

Miriama describes the influence—several years later—of a kuia⁸ in her first school:

My first position was in a big school with over a hundred staff and there were three older female Maori teachers who had been teaching a long while, who made me think, “That’s the sort of teacher I want to be, strong and well respected and making a difference.” In my first year there was a whole group of first year teachers and several of us were Maori but we weren’t doing things like Kapa Haka⁹. One of those three women was like the kuia of the school. And one day, she said to me, “Whether you like it or not, the kids view you as Maori. So, you have to represent us in a really positive way.” I was really shocked. “Oh my gosh, who is this lady telling me this? I know I’m Maori.” She went on, “The students look at you and they see a Maori face and a Maori name. So you need to make sure that at all times, you represent us in a way so that they will look up to you.” And I realised it was true. I’d been a bit shy, a bit reticent about being Maori. About standing up and saying what I thought. But I did want the kids to look at me and say, “I could be like her, she’s not afraid.” It made me think I shouldn’t always be the person at the back, such a wallflower. It was really defining. And she said, “You need to do this, it’s expected. You will be this strong Maori presence who teaches at this school.” At the time I thought she was a grumpy old lady, a little terrifying, but that’s because she cared. She’d give you a hug but also tell you off. At the time, I thought, “I’m not even that Maori. I don’t even go on a marae.¹⁰” But now I’m really grateful. (Miriama)

As a new teacher, Miriama had been watching the three senior Maori women staff and observing their behaviour. She wanted to be like them, she was interpreting them. The three women were also watching Miriama; they interpreted her timidity and one of them made the interpretive leap of talking to her about it. This extreme state of caring Heidegger (1927/2008) called “leaping ahead,” and has the effect of helping the other person to become more authentically who they are. Essentially by leaping ahead the kuia helps Miriama to take responsibility for her own actions. She encourages Miriama to represent Maori and become a role model for her students.

⁸ A Kuia is an Maori woman elder; a leader

⁹ Kapa Haka is the Maori Performing Arts or the cultural dance of the Maori people

¹⁰ A marae is a Maori meeting house

A woman whom Miriama respected had a defining conversation with her. It causes Miriama to shift in her subjective view of herself; she sees herself as who she authentically is, a Maori woman. She embraces her Maoritanga as part of her being, her humanity; she *is* Maori.

Of key people in her life she says:

Whether it was those teachers at high school, or the teachers when I first started teaching, who were amazing, strong women; having good role models, has been such a key thing. It's about having key people. You have to surround yourself with people who are positive. Because, if you don't have them; it's too easy to make other choices. People who believe in you, that you can achieve more, that you can do anything. (Miriama)

Later she says:

I moved schools because of an inspirational teacher, who wrote textbooks and was involved in Ministry development. I'd met him at conferences, and knew I wanted to be connected with him, could learn a lot from him that he'd be great to work with. (Miriama)

She could see he could be a gate opener for her:

He indicated to me he was going to be at P School for one more year saying "Come on board, then you can be promoted to these other positions when I leave." (Miriama)

As a young woman, gaining in her maturity and experience, Miriama chose to follow through on this invitation. Realising she "wanted to be connected with him" Miriama exercised agency.

She says:

It was a good way of stepping into middle management, but also being with someone who is a really great teacher. As well, there was a really innovative department there, with passionate teachers who just loved the subject, talked about it every day; what's happening in the news, what they were doing in their classes. That was the best part. It was great to be with people who really loved the subject. I really appreciated that because I developed as a subject specialist.
(Miriamia)

The teacher—a head of department—acted as a gate opener. He stepped in and showed care, and like the *kuia*, leapt ahead seeing what could potentially be in the future for Miriamia. Bosley, Arnold and Cohen (2009) identified the function of a gatekeeper in their typology of “career shapers” or people who helped shape an individual’s career. According to the typology of Bosley et al (2009), the gatekeeper is distinguished from other categories of career shaper by their “power to provide.... access to jobs” (p. 1506). Miriamia’s interaction with her Head of Department resonates with this description, as he exercised such a gatekeeper function.

What did care mean for Miriamia? How did being cared for impact on her? It meant she moved towards becoming someone who was different from other young women in her town. It meant she reclaimed her identity as Maori; rather than being timid, being empowered to be a “strong Maori presence who teaches at this school.” It meant making choices further on in her career to be in a school where she could build on her strengths as a subject teacher and being prepared to “come on board, then you can be promoted.” And from that point on, it meant she had learnt the importance of surrounding herself with people who believed in her potential and who cared about her future, people who believed she could “do anything.”

The compounding effect of “key people” is part of Miriama’s lived experience, “*Dasein* woven together with the world – all parts of her world are fused into a colossal web of meaning in which everything refers to everything else” (Harman, 2011, p. 63). These key people in Miriama’s life, the teachers, the kuia, the head of department, are no longer physically present with Miriama, yet the possibilities they have opened up remain for her like a kind of heritage (Harman, 2011). They are all part of, in this case, the “heritage” of care she received as a young woman. To deal with a heritage properly demands repetition (Heidegger, 1927/2008). Miriama understands that the influence of these key people is ongoing and repetitive.

What also counts is those people who believe in you

Kiri, a primary school principal in her mid forties, tells of significant teachers at high school:

I’ve been asked this a lot throughout my life, “What makes a difference for Maori students? How can we help them succeed?” And I’ve thought about it, reflected on it and spoken about it a lot. I understand the importance of knowing te Reo. I understand the importance of knowing about culture, that culture counts. But for me, one of the things that also made a difference was two Pakeha teachers at Girls High. It wasn’t that they knew te Reo Maori or anything about Maori culture. It was rather that on a human level they were people who could see potential. They simply encouraged me. One was my history teacher; one was my science teacher. I have a love of science. I was good at science at secondary school. I remember, I was sitting in class and there were some girls around me. We’d just had a test and I’d got full marks. They started to say – just jokingly – because they were my friends, supposedly “Look at Kiri’s mark. Did you cheat? You must’ve cheated to get that.” It was said in jest. I knew that. I said “No.” That science teacher was listening. And she said “Actually if anybody’s cheated it’s you guys off her.” What was happening is as they were teasing me; I could feel the tears starting. I didn’t know how to handle it. I could feel it and she probably could see it. From then I thought, “I can do this.” I didn’t know how important this teacher was until years later. I maintained contact with both those teachers once I started teaching. Both of them said to me “Go to Teachers College.” They both knew that story, and they both said, “No, come on.” And when I’ve spoken to Maori about that kind of thing happening, some people have shaken their heads and said “I think you’re putting too much on it, romanticising it. It was other things as well, Kiri. It was other

things.” It wasn’t much to those teachers. But what they did for me, in my head as time has gone on, was very significant. I can put my finger on those times and the things that they said. Even though language and culture counts, what also counts is people who believe in you. And if you can do nothing else as a teacher for Maori, it is to believe in them and to encourage them. Look it must’ve been significant, I’m still telling that story to this day. (Kiri)

Heidegger (1927/2008) said, as Dasein, care makes our existence both significant and meaningful. It’s what being-in-the-world and being-with-others means. This kind of care, directed towards us, makes us feel more human and affects our way of being-in-the-world positively.

Kiri says, although learning about te Reo and culture matter; people also matter, in particular people who “encourage and believe in you.” About these two teachers she comments, “It was rather that on a human level they were people who could see potential. They simply encouraged me.” They made her feel more human. Kiri’s science teacher observed the taunting and teasing towards Kiri by her classmates. She then leapt ahead and dealt with the situation in a way that was empowering to Kiri, restoring her sense of being, her dignity.

By being considerate and accepting, the care-full way that these teachers treated Kiri helped her gain significance. This subjective influence has been ongoing. Kiri says “What they did for me, in my head as time has gone on, has been very significant.” She can still hear their voices “the things that they said.” Those words affect her even now, thirty years later.

Other people tell Kiri to diminish the powerful effect of the teachers, saying she is romanticizing their influence. Still, Kiri remains adamant that people believing in you, as well as culture and language do matter. As a school principal and educational leader, she holds fast to the belief that to encourage young Maori people onto a pathway, which

will increase their cultural capital educationally, people are very important, but not just any people “people who believe in you.”

Go and do it, you go and do it girl

Carol was initially constrained by her background as an adopted child. She felt disenfranchised and struggled to find her own identity. Today she is a confident woman in her mid-forties. She trained as a teacher ten years ago, and acknowledges the importance of significant people, at significant times to instill confidence:

I think people are always part of it. Throughout my life I can see people who have come into my life at the perfect time, and have said things that have given me a boost or the confidence to do something. In my first year there was one teacher on practicum. She had been in education a long time. At the end of my practicum she looked at me and said, “You should be teaching now. I don’t know why you didn’t go years ago. I would entrust my kids to you now.” That really struck me and stuck with me, and still does to this day. Because she was very good at her job, she was a professional. I wanted to teach like she did. She was a real role model. I was blown away. Later, when I would be thinking about what to do, it was her comments that came back to me. From within her words would come, “Go and do it, she had the confidence in you, you go and do it girl.” I think having role models is imperative as we make our way through our careers. People we aspire to be like, that give us confidence. There were a couple of lecturers too, who really had faith in me. One of them in particular was there for me at a personal time. He was understanding, quite brilliant really, encouraging and supportive. The other lecturer was known for being the hardest marker. I had done this huge project and he had awarded me an A+. A couple of other students queried it too. When I talked to him afterwards he said, “You’re one of a very few students I’ve ever given an A+ to.” It just boosted my confidence. (Carol)

The words of the teacher on practicum, Carol says, “stuck with me, and still do to this day.” At transition points since, she says “It was her comments that came back to me.”

In turn, Carol passes on what she has learnt from key people to others:

That sort of feedback, gives you the confidence to know when you’re teaching something, you know what you’re talking about, what you’re doing. I think I pass that onto the children I’m teaching “Somebody did it for me, I’m going to do it for you.” (Carol)

As with Miriama and Kiri, Carol says, people are “always part of it” and “have given me a boost.”

Care at transition points

A lot of older women were very nurturing and took me under their wing

Like Carol, Rachel did not come to teaching after leaving school. For many years she worked in the IT industry. Rachel describes the experience of receiving caring and encouraging support whilst in a career transition:

In Seventh Form I did work experience, teacher aiding at the local primary school. I enjoyed it, knew I wanted to be doing something with children, but working in primary didn't quite gel. So I actually just fell into IT by accident. I did that for a long time. Then I was getting closer to 30 and wanted to start a family, and was very much at a crossroads. The job was stressful; I would get called in at three in the morning. It was having an impact. Everyone in the family knew I was interested in teaching and my auntie said, “My cousin's got her own early childhood centre, why don't you go and have a chat?” So I rang her. She said “Come and do some volunteer work, you don't want to sign up for a degree if it's not for you.” So I volunteered for a couple of months. I absolutely loved it. I just felt this is what I want to do. I'd always worked in the corporate sector. It was a huge thing to leave my job. When I finally decided to, it was a shock. It's a requirement to work so many hours in a centre and be doing your degree alongside. And it was minimum wage back then. That took a bit of adjustment. But then my daughter came along, that was the best thing and she could be with me all day. It was such a friendly, welcoming, warm environment. A lot of older women were very nurturing and took me under their wing. I don't know if it was that environment that did it. I don't know. They offered me a full-time job. It just fell into place. I knew the staff, I knew the children. I felt really at ease.

(Rachel)

Rachel's move into teaching was synchronous with her disposition towards working with and helping people. Shown care by her auntie and other women at the centre, Rachel describes feeling at ease and at home. She describes experiencing a sense of belonging, of community and of shared destiny as she connects with people similar to her and says, “I don't know if it was that environment that did it.” Care enabled her to

transition successfully into another stage in her career, a “huge” transition, which was made easy, and relatively anxiety free.

He opened up a completely different way of seeing the world

Sometimes care from a person, can change more than just a woman’s confidence. Debbie tells how her way of thinking was influenced by a colleague, who encouraged her to study social and feminist theory:

One of my lecturers was extremely influential, Daniel, an Associate Professor. I adored his lectures and his teaching. He opened up a completely different way of seeing the world and understanding the politics and role of education. I think he knew I might struggle at university. I got introduced to social theory, educational theory, and feminist theory. (Debbie)

The Professor inspired Debbie to pursue learning in certain areas, which changed her way of “seeing the world.” Because of his encouragement, Debbie went on to find her niche in education. She became drawn to working with people from diverse backgrounds, people she describes as being “marginal.”

You know, you’re quite ready to apply for Associate Professor

Tina, a young academic, hadn’t experienced many people taking a real interest in her; she indicates that people were somewhat uninterested and didn’t take time to exercise any responsibility of care towards her. She tells how this changed:

Three years ago, we had an Associate Professor join us from the UK, and he just instilled this extra confidence in me. He’d say to me, “Oh yes, you could quite easily do this” or “Why don’t you apply, this would be quite good for you Tina.” And, he would also say, “You know, you’re quite ready to apply for Associate Professor.” And a year later I did apply for Associate Professor. By then he had left, and gone back to the UK. If it wasn’t for him I don’t think I would have applied. When he came, I felt “Oh here is somebody who actually understands me, who takes time to know what I research or what my strengths are.” (Tina)

The visiting Professor showed the highly positive state of caring Heidegger called leaping ahead, the result of which had a lasting effect on Tina; she took his counsel and applied for promotion. At a time when Tina felt in need of care, the Professor's interest and concern enabled her to take more charge of her career. In contrast with anyone Tina had met before in her career, the Associate Professor took time to understand her.

He influenced Tina's behaviour in two ways: first, she became more confident and was impelled to apply for the position of Associate Professor; second, she determined to be the same kind of person for others. It affected both her subjective career and her objective career, that is, how she felt about her career and what she decided to do next. She describes how she now exercises the same duty of care towards others, seeking to "take an interest" to "make sure I do that" with younger members of staff:

I haven't found that other people take the time to actually know what your strengths are, to take an interest in you. I try and do that with younger people in our department, to be someone who actually thinks "Okay, this might be quite good for this person," who says, "Look, this is really useful for you because you're new to researching, I think I should encourage you to go." I missed out on such a mentoring process when I was a young lecturer. Because I've been here 10 years I think, it's important to pass on some of the knowledge I've gained. Because I lacked that, I recognise it now. That's why I make sure I do that with younger members. And I found that no-one ever did that for me until the Associate Professor came and actually took an interest in me, in what I did.
(Tina)

As Gadamer (2004) described, a person's prejudices can be likened to a horizon influencing everything they can see from a particular standpoint. The horizon is "not a rigid boundary but something that moves ... and invites one to advance further" (p. 247). In this way, an individual's horizons are dynamic and temporal, moving with their experiences in the world.

To have a horizon:

...means not being limited to what is nearby but being able to see beyond it. A person who has a horizon knows the relative significance of everything within this horizon, whether it is near or far, great or small. (Gadamer, 2004, p. 313)

The effects of care can be ongoing, they can expand a person's horizon and their impact can then be multiplied. Tina's horizon has been extended. Moving from a position of diffidence, she has gone through experiences, which have encouraged her "to advance further." She now sees herself as an advocate and gate opener for others. She reflects on her role, how she now wants to "look at issues specifically for women" saying "it's very difficult."

The follow on effect is that Tina does not limit herself to doing her own work "to what is nearby." She uses her position to make a difference for others, in particular for other women. With a different viewpoint—a new horizon—she does not just see what others need. She determines to be for others what she didn't have herself. It is through the Associate Professor's care that Tina is able to further extend herself to care-for others.

I'm a little kinder than I was

Towards the end of a long-standing career in education and after twenty years in senior management in a secondary school, Sally is aware that she herself has changed. She has not always been cared for; rather she has experienced times when she has felt a lack of care. She describes a recent situation with a young woman on the staff:

I've been knocked down but I've picked myself up and made myself better than I was before. I think when you really get knocked around; you are a little kinder about other people because you know what it feels like to be knocked yourself. I noticed one of the young women last year was, I thought, pretty close to having a breakdown. One of my teacher aides is a trained life coach, a pretty valuable resource. I went to the boss and said, "I think this teacher is going to fall over

unless you do something. I could use my life coach and you could get this girl back on her feet again. Without spending a huge amount of money you can make a huge difference to her.” The boss wore it and Lara got what she needed. I didn’t have any conversation with Lara but I picked up that she was at breaking point and that was my solution. I think maybe, that I am a little nicer than I was, a little softer. (Sally)

Sally steps in or leaps ahead (Heidegger, 1927/2008) and arranges support for a young colleague whom she senses is “pretty close to having a breakdown.” Exercising empathy and using her position as a senior manager to exercise a duty of care to others around her, Sally has grown in her ability to be able to influence and care for other colleagues. Her horizon too, has changed.

Ongoing care from a significant person

In the significant moments in my career path, she has been there

Care can be evidenced in one-off situations, in significant transition points, at formative stages in early career and in an ongoing way. Libby describes the relationship she has with her Deputy Principal, Anna:

She is a person who is very positive, she nurtures people; she is a person that you want to do your best for. She’s a good friend. She was my Deputy Principal at S and she is here too as DP in my current role. We still work very closely. Her circumstances are similar but she’s five years older than me. Ten years ago I never saw myself teaching this age group. It wasn’t until Anna saw something in me; that I ended up in this age group. I guess I’m lucky that I have that personal and professional relationship with Anna. Would I call Anna a mentor? She’s a person who helps me work through my problems so she probably would be – and she listens, she’s an active listener. She’s a person that I go to. I do see her as my coach. Maybe I see a mentor as someone that you aspire, you know, you hold up high, whereas with Anna, we’re more equal, she happens to have the title Deputy Principal. But it’s interesting, as we’ve talked, all through this conversation, she’s popped up, her name has come up. When you asked me that question “Do you see her as a mentor?” I would immediately have said “no” but it’s quite interesting when you probe, to ask “is she?” I guess, she would be my mentor, yeah. I’ve never thought of it that way. In the significant moments in my career path over the last eight years, she has been there. (Libby)

As Libby described her relationship with Anna she came to a different understanding of its nature. She had appreciated and valued Anna as a colleague, friend and coach, but she hadn't realised the full extent of the relationship.

Libby understands that Anna is concerned for her and thinks about how she should progress in her career, saying "she saw something in me." Libby feels Anna does not laud it over her; they are more like equals. Anna encourages her to be more authentically human, by being there "in the significant moments." Libby had a perception of a mentor as someone "you hold up high." On reflection, she sees Anna mentors her by active listening and helping her to work through her problems; by simply "being there."

This story encapsulates "care-for," solicitude in an ongoing relationship as Anna exercises care for Libby in her everyday life as a teacher. Heidegger says "To exist, then means, among other things, relating to oneself by being with beings" (Heidegger, 1927/2008, p. 157). Our relationships with others give our existence meaning. Libby comes to see within her world, the world of teaching at her school, that Anna cares for her, and that caring makes a difference; it gives her work meaning.

Care influences by giving women significance and meaning, at formative points, transition points and in an ongoing way. It enables, motivates and impels women to exercise agency and to do so with confidence and self-belief.

The caring influence of family

The profound influence of Mother

She is my role model still, at 85

A recurring theme amongst participants was the influence of their mother. Betz and Fitzgerald (1987) addressed the role of mothering as a determinant for a daughter's career development. Findings indicated maternal attitude to career is a more important influencer than mother's actual career. For many women in this study, Mother did not have a career of her own or had been restricted in her career development. Mother's support and influence was interpreted as being particularly potent because advancing in her own career was something she wasn't able, or allowed to do.

Sally says:

My mother was a solo parent before the DPB. She was a teacher, she worked at night at Watties; we had boarders, that sort of thing. She is my role model still, at 85. She always wanted to be a Principal and Dad wouldn't let her. He said he didn't want a wife who was a Principal, because she'd never be home. He put the brakes on her. (Sally)

Rachel says:

I don't know if the drive comes from being an only child. I didn't have to compete with anyone else, so where does that drive come from? Mum has always pushed me a little. Actually quite a lot. I remember when I left high school I didn't go to university. I had had enough of school and want to go and work, as you did. Mum was very disappointed and angry with me. But at 17 I didn't really know what I wanted to do. Because I am the only one, she's very much focused on what I should and shouldn't do. It took her a long time to get over that I didn't go to university. It was something she used to bring up. She'd always wanted to go to university. She's one of six. She always wanted to and none of them back then could afford to. None of them did. I wonder if there was a sense of her trying to live her life through me. I've done everything for myself even though my Mum's had a big influence. She likes to suggest things

all the time, to try and guide me and I'll say, "No, I'm doing this." She goes "Oh, I can't convince you otherwise, can I?" And I say, "No. You need to leave that now, Mum." And she knows. She knows I am my own person and won't be convinced otherwise. But she's as proud as punch. (Rachel)

Rachel answers her own question about where the drive to succeed comes from saying "Mum has always pushed me." She also asks whether there is "a sense of her trying to live her life through me?" and acknowledges that as an only child and the daughter of a mother who wanted very much to be educated, she may have something of the answer. Aware she has opportunities her mother didn't have, she is impelled to push ahead with her own career. Aware too of her mother's influence, she laughs when she describes how she pushes her mother back. She doesn't necessarily do what her mother says, but she does like it that her mother cares and is proud of her.

You are wise beyond your years

Kiri's mother was also unable to have a career of her own:

I had the most gorgeous mother in the world. She was an amazingly intelligent person, who without any formal education, was very well read. She had that ability to absorb everything she heard and read and keep it in there for when she needed it. She used to write when we were all in bed. Imagine it, 11 kids. She'd stay up at night, writing. To keep, what I see now, her creative woman's side of her, alive. She was journaling, writing poetry and stories. Amazing. She was a creative person; that was what got her through the real tough times for her soul, her creativity. I often think about that. She became an integral part of what I did and would often visit me in my classroom. When Mum was in the school, because she was that kind of person, the whanau would hear and they'd all come and see Auntie Ruth. She'd teach the children, tell stories – she was wonderful with harakeke¹¹, she'd write with them; it was like having a writer in residence. I loved how she thought, how she spoke, and her take on everything in life. She was my biggest fan, my mother – and I was also her biggest fan. She was an outstanding woman. In my day-to-day life as a principal, it's my mother who comes back to me when I have to deal with children and parents. The way she kept everybody's dignity intact. There are lessons I've learnt I take into my life today....One thing she used to say was, "Just be careful with your words, because they have power. Especially yours, Kiri." I remember her saying that.

¹¹ Maori flax weaving

But what I loved about her most is she just thanked us for being her children. Her last words to me were “Thank you for being my daughter.” Mum was 63 when she passed away. Too soon. Sorry, (talking about) Mum always makes me cry. She was powerful in her being. And she drove us to be good women. She must’ve.
(Kiri)

Ruth’s care-filled words to Kiri reinforced her disposition towards leadership. Ruth told her she was “wise beyond her years” telling her to “be careful with your words.... especially yours Kiri” which confirmed for Kiri she was different and exhorted her to treat that difference with respect. Ruth’s influence on Kiri still “comes back” to her as she carries out her everyday duties as a principal. Her mother’s caring made Kiri’s existence more significant and meaningful. If, as Heidegger says, care is “the primordial state of being of Dasein as it strives toward authenticity” (as cited in Steiner, 1989, p. 101) the early evidence of a move towards authenticity by Kiri, is prompted at least in part, by her mother’s care.

You choose, it’s your chance

Amanda’s mother encouraged her to take charge of her own life and she went on to become a “frontier” for a new adventure. She tells how she became the first in her family to travel, and the first to study at University:

I always did well at school. At primary school I would’ve been dux. When I went to college, I remember I was a straight A student. It was compulsory to study a language. I did German. I didn’t want to do it the following year. I remember the German teacher coming to get me out of class three times saying “Please take it on next year. You’ve got good grades.” I said, “I don’t want to. It’s not what I want.” Mum said, “You choose.” Mum always supported what I did. She gave me the confidence to do what I wanted. She says she wished she’d had the chance to go to university. Having daughters of her own, she wanted us to do what we wanted and to not let anyone tell us otherwise. She didn’t tell me what to study. She said, “You choose. It’s your chance.” My adventure into university was the first for our family. When I went to England, none of our family had ever travelled. I was the frontier for that. Having Mum’s support and the freedom to choose, I thought that whatever choices I made would work out.
(Amanda)

Amanda's mother also wanted to study but never had the opportunity; because of this she wanted her daughters to do what they wanted to do. She says to Amanda and her sister, don't "let anyone tell them otherwise." Being supported and encouraged to make her own choices gave Amanda "the confidence to do what I wanted."

Libby tells of the relationship she enjoyed with her Gran who was her caregiver:

I look back on my own childhood and it was very happy and quite unique. Gran who looked after me was blind. She had been a teacher; her disability came about when she was only 40 and her working career ended abruptly. Because Gran was blind, we would spend all our time talking, we had a very close relationship. I'm an only child so it was just Gran and me for a good part of my childhood. When I was at high school I had an idea in my mind that I didn't want to go teaching. I had aspirations of grandeur, I thought I'm going to go to university, I'll do a geography degree then town planning, it was quite clear. I got to university and found it a really lonely place; I didn't have a peer network, and didn't have a good first year. I remember going to Gran's and it must have been July or August, and she said to me "You know Libby, you've always talked about working with children, have you thought again about doing that?" And it was as if a penny dropped. I remember, quite vividly, I was having a cup of tea with Gran, at her place when I made the call (to teachers college) and she said "Just go for it, if you don't like it you can go back and carry on with geography and town planning." So I went and found my niche; I've loved it ever since. I look back on the women who influenced me and it's interesting, there are lots of parallels, I had role models of women around me who were workers. And did Gran have an influence because she had been a teacher? I'd say so. (Libby)

Libby had several significant people in her life, her mother who was a career nurse, Gran who had been a teacher, and then Anna described in the previous section. When Libby recalls the incident, she comments that she remembers it "quite vividly" so strongly is the memory and the emotion around it. A significant conversation with her Gran, a powerful role model and caregiver for her, changed Libby's subsequent career pathway.

A partner's perspective

He is very supportive, I think he finds it a bit weird

Many women in the study talked about their partner's influence as supportive and caring and also as a reality check:

The other thing that keeps me going is I've got a wonderful man who says to me, "Don't take it all too seriously." And that helps too. (Kiri)

Debbie says:

My partner is really well read and politically engaged. He finds it a little bit hard to understand the whole allure of the university and some of the pitfalls of being an academic. Some of the issues around managing it, and all of that. I think he finds it a bit weird. He is very supportive. By the same token he's not the sort of person that has everything absolutely invested in my career and me as a career person. I mean he also sees me as a person. Not just a worker. And he's reminded me of that several times in the last while. (Debbie)

Several women in the study described their husband's careers as being different, from, in particular not as stressful, as theirs. Amanda describes it like this:

My husband's had ups and downs with his job. He's not a career man. He worked at the freezing works for 13 years, then did labouring jobs. He says, "I wish I'd gone to university and had a career." And I say "That's probably not who you are. You don't look at five or ten years from now, career-wise." I use the saying - I wear the pants. I'm not trying to insult him. If I need to do something with my job, the two of us ask, how can we make this work? I think quite often the reverse is the stereotype. At school, a lot of the Mums are not working, or working two or three hours a day, and their partners have high career stress. I've got a partner who doesn't have that stress. It gives me the freedom to put in the time I need to. I thought of that when I was dating. He was the third man who proposed marriage to me and he was just right. I had turned down two others. I thought if I had somebody who was putting on a business suit every day and maxing out at night-worried about getting ready for tomorrow, there's no life for me in that picture. Having his down-to-earth, common sense approach, gives me the freedom to say "Right, my next step for study, or..." I like having someone who can get his hands dirty, dig a garden. I don't feel the pressure of competing with someone else. (Amanda)

Amanda describes her husband as “not a career man” that she “wears the pants.” She doesn’t have to compete with him. Amanda was purposeful in choosing a husband who would give her the freedom to make her own choices and to pursue her own career.

Amanda compares herself with others saying that other mothers are not working or not much and “their partners have high career stress.” She explains this is why she can work more, because her partner doesn’t have this stress. She chose a husband who could be subordinate to her career wise, possessing a “down to earth common sense approach” so that she can have freedom. She made a definite choice to do this. Amanda moves forward in her career with agency whilst her husband “cares” for her and takes a major share of the childcare responsibilities and household tasks. He supports her in her career rather than the other way round.

I don’t know if the roles were reversed I’d be like that

Rachel describes her husband’s support as one hundred per cent:

My husband’s supportive. One hundred per cent supportive. He was all for me changing careers. We went through three years of not great money while I studied. It was lucky he had a good job, because I was earning pretty good money in IT, so that was a huge thing to give up. When I started postgrad, we made that decision together, knowing that I wasn’t going to have much time, with me working full-time. I can’t be running a house and working five days a week and trying to study. He’s really good at taking my daughter off my hands, going out somewhere, or keeping her occupied on the weekends while I’m studying. I feel bad there’s always something to be done on the house or something to be bought and I’m saying, “I need a couple of thousand to pay for this paper.” He just says “Okay...” I think that’s awesome, because I don’t know if the roles were reversed I’d be like that. I’d probably be saying, “You spend all these thousands of dollars and we’re not getting anything else done.” I sit back and think, “Wow, he’s compromised a lot.” (Rachel)

Rachel can spend money on studying, can keep the house running, and can spend time studying in the weekends because her husband is so supportive. Her husband is a vital aspect of her pursuing her career. As with Amanda, Rachel's career and the decisions around it take centre stage in the family.

You apply wherever you want, I can find a job anywhere

Being with a supportive partner has been key for Tina. She became more confident as a person when she met her husband soon after breaking up from a difficult relationship. As with Amanda and Rachel, Tina's career takes priority. She and her partner's joint decisions are made contingent on her career.

After that I was much more confident as a person, even at work. Before, people would describe me as a bit shy, a bit timid. After I separated, I thought I've got to really enjoy my life as a single woman and then.... and you can't help these things, when it happens it just happens, I met my new partner and we knew straight away, that we would be together for life. My husband is a much more supportive person. He has the attitude: "You apply wherever you want, I can find a job anywhere." Being in academia there's limited places you can go so you have to have someone who can fit around you a little bit. All the decisions I made when I came back to work were my decisions. I talked with my husband about them, but they were all driven by me, he is a much more supportive person. (Tina)

What does it mean for a woman to receive care in her career pathway? Heidegger (1927/2008) said that in being cared for we become more human. For the women in this study, receiving care means they have more confidence in themselves and their abilities. Crucial words from key people resound in their memories to provide inspiration. As a consequence they self-assuredly make decisions and exercise increased agency in their careers. Women who receive care can experience a change in horizon, their world-view increases and along with it their perspective on life. Sometimes this change in horizon results in exercising leadership and mentoring others, in particular other women.

For women who are strongly agentic, the support of partner is vital and their career may take a front seat to their partners. These women are often the first in their family to study and to gain professional qualifications. This is due to the encouragement and care of their mother, significant teachers and partners.

Heidegger (1927/2008) said, as Dasein, people have become confused, they know what “being” is but only in a vague partly defined kind of way, not the more rigorous concept for which they are looking. Their knowledge of being is blurred and they are on the lookout for new ways to be.

Care enabled the women in this study to move beyond this confusion, to feel more certain, of who they are. They were able to see through the fog, to discern the way ahead with more clarity. These women became less accepting of what Heidegger (1927/2008) called living averagely or the mainstream view. Being shown care enabled them to pursue an individual pathway. The influence of care or Sorge is a significant career driver that increases career agency and self-efficacy. In its positive state, care is a compelling factor, boosting and directing the building of human capital.

Sorge in its imperfect state: Power plays in a career field

Sometimes however, Sorge is not evidenced in a positive state. More frequently, care reveals itself in its imperfect or uninterested states (Heidegger, 1927/2008). Even when people are careless, care itself is evident, or when they ignore, or are apathetic to each other. Care is shown by thoughtfulness and recognition; however, it is also evidenced in narrow-mindedness and negligence.

Figure 7.1 below, illustrates the dichotomous aspects of care in its positive states and its imperfect states. The different positive aspects of care are shown at the top of the figure to indicate the empowering and “lifting” effect they provide for women. Aspects such as: Mother’s care, a partner’s support, and care at a transitional stage. At the bottom of the diagram are represented imperfect aspects of care, which have a limiting and disempowering effect on women. Aspects such as: bullying, power plays and discrimination.

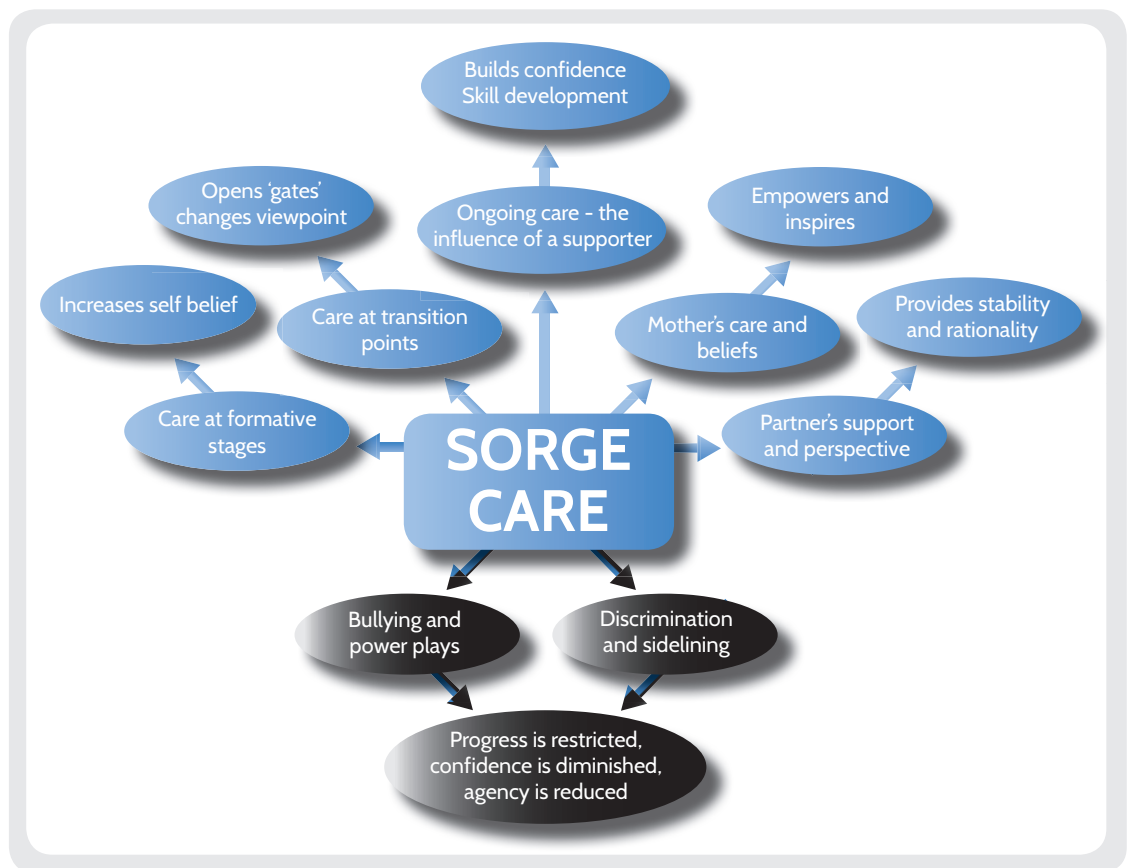


Figure 7.1 The effects of Sorge in its positive and negative states

Betrayal

She knew the dagger that would pierce me

Sally felt very let down by a colleague who betrayed her trust and “it became very sour.” A woman she expected to be helpful and supportive was exactly the opposite.

Her behaviour and comments had an overwhelming effect:

There was quite a bit of fall out. The woman who was doing my job that year I was away (offshore) was also managing parts of the project I was doing and it went very sour. I think she hoped I wouldn't come back and when it became more and more clear I would have to come back, it got more and more sour. At one stage she accused me of being unethical. I had to come back from overseas and meet with the Board. It was quite unfounded but it really knocked me for a six. That was the worst thing someone has ever said to me. She could have called me a whore. If she'd called me a whore, I would have flicked it off but tell me that I'm unethical, that really hit me at my core. She left half way through the year, but she was here for a while, doing another role, nibbling at what I was doing, hoping that I would go, that she would get the job. It turned quite nasty. I went into a bit of depression for the first year I was back here, a bit of a slough. The boss gave us the opportunity to go and have mediation, to have a person in the middle, so we could express how we felt. I said to her how devastating that comment had been. She never apologised, she never did; she wouldn't. She wouldn't accept that what she'd done was incorrect. I felt I'd been vindicated by what happened with the Principal but she and I, we never managed to get it sorted. She left and I've never seen her again. It's never been the same again between the two of us and we were really good friends. And I couldn't believe it because she was a Guidance Counsellor so she would know how much something like that would really get me. She knew the dagger that would pierce me. (Sally)

This situation affronted and arrested Sally. It seriously affected her mood. Being called an unethical person drew into question her way of being, she says, “it hit me at my core.” It contributed to her becoming depressed, going downhill into “a bit of a slough.” If care is the primordial state of being, being “un-cared” for made Sally feel her being was itself an issue. Her existence became, at least temporarily, insignificant and lacking in meaning, and she struggled to gain perspective.

Bullying

Debbie describes how she was bullied, undermined and harassed:

It was a real bullying experience. He was a stand-in manager and he insinuated I can't write, I can't analyse and I can't synthesise; I wouldn't be able to write a PhD. It really rattled me. I found the getting started process difficult. I did enrol but then I encountered this person, in a way that I've never encountered anybody before. It was unbelievable. He had no right to say what he said, and what he said wasn't true. If there's one thing I can do it's actually synthesise and analyse. That's what my work's been about. I got to the point where I had to bring the union in. I wouldn't go into his office without bringing someone in with me, and even then it made no difference. He just continued. The union, my supervisor came to a meeting with him. My supervisor was astounded by the stuff that he said to me. He still kept going in front of my supervisor. He was so unprofessional. It literally was a nightmare. It was a personal attack. It was very distressing. I realise now I should've taken a personal grievance against him. I didn't. It was straight out bullying and harassment. There was no other word for it. And this man has a reputation for this. He's well known for it. (Debbie)

In Debbie's story, she describes how she has fallen victim of the dominating and more powerful influence of her manager. This harmful kind of solicitude relieves the other of its responsibility by dominating and taking away its choice. Leaping in is care expressed in inauthentic form. The two extreme states of care expressed as care for others, solicitude are leaping in and leaping ahead (Heidegger, 1927/2008).

As mentioned previously, Bourdieu's (1986) definition of a field is a playground or battlefield where agents, possessing particular field-relevant capital, try to improve their position. Each field is based on a historically generated system of shared meaning. Iellatchitch et al (2003) contended that without doubt, Bourdieu's concept of field could be applied to professions such as academia.

Individuals with less career capital may be confronted with the situation of being in a field which does not fit their habitus, and in which their career capital is undervalued. Iellatchitch et al (2003) stated although power as such does not appear in Bourdieu's

(1986) definition of capitals, they clearly represent different forms of power. This means the chance to influence and win a struggle are not only unevenly distributed because of the distribution of capitals and power. They are also linked to the structure of the field, the rules of the game and the “habitus-related possibilities of understanding, accepting and finally using them” (2003, p. 738).

Bourdieu’s (1986) fourth form of capital is symbolic capital. A person’s symbolic capital provides an indication of social power and legitimacy within a specific field. Iellatchitch et al (2003) contended that for symbolic capital, the rules valid within particular social fields specify which combination of basic forms of capital will be authorised as symbolic capital. Pringle et al (2013) interpreted symbolic capital like this. The three forms of capital are accrued and assigned value as symbolic capital, the attributed worth resulting from the degree to which the constituent capitals, economic, social and cultural, are socially recognised and valued in the relevant social context.

When Debbie felt attacked by the manager she describes it as “a real bullying experience” and “very distressing.” The manager was powerful by virtue of his position. There was a power imbalance. He had symbolic capital, and a recognised position in the University that he used as his position on the field in order to play the game. Debbie’s position was not as strong as his, and she felt undermined and bullied which further weakened her position.

In academic circles, cultural capital is assigned significant value, which is primarily in the form of a doctoral qualification, research and teaching expertise. This is a strong indicator of prestige and legitimacy. There was an uneven distribution of capitals between Debbie and her manager, a senior more experienced academic with a PhD. Debbie’s symbolic capital, her social power in her field was undermined and limited.

Later she describes what has happened in the weeks immediately prior to the interview:

In 2011 I rewrote my graduate course and used that as the opportunity to up-skill my reading for my PhD. I was told by the Doctoral Office to just make sure I was ready before I enrolled. And in 2011 I did enrol. But over the past four weeks, my work life has changed dramatically. There was restructuring. There were criteria to meet. Having research publications, a PhD and teaching in the appropriate areas. I had research publications and teaching. I've got six areas of expertise I've taught across, I've supervised large numbers of master's students. I hadn't completed a PhD. (Debbie)

Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) proposed a field can be understood as a battleground or playground, where there is a certain *illusio*, or collective belief in the social game ruling the field and the sacred value of its stake. As an agent or player on the field, Debbie has endeavoured to advance her position over the past twenty years. The rules of the field, in which Debbie works, are that a PhD is a necessary criterion for tenure and promotion. A criterion she did not satisfy.

Discrimination

I was so pissed off by then. I really wanted to stick it to him.

Sophie experienced a lack of care through discrimination and the playing out of a power imbalance; it's left its mark:

It's a long story. I was a casual reliever, but I wasn't actually casual, I did every week for that term. We moved just before I had my baby, so I finished at school and because of being a reliever I didn't get maternity leave. You don't get anything. The Principal wouldn't put me on the books properly because it was more expensive. It's a bit of a bugbear. I'm supposed to let it go. I haven't let it go, I'll never let it go, that's all right, it's just one of those things. With my first baby, I got maternity leave – I got a payout, which was great, and a lump sum. It's not anywhere near teaching salary, but it's better than nothing, which is what I got this time. The Principal and I don't see eye to eye, he's never really valued me. With any relieving work I've done, he has said, if I don't like it he can find someone else. If you're a reliever and you do more than six weeks in a row doing exactly the same job, according to the (employment) contract, you're supposed to be put on a permanent contract. I should've been paid my pay rate,

which is more expensive. So I called him on it. I went to him and said, “What’s the story?” and he said, “I’m an ethical man.” And I thought “Like heck you are.” And he said, “How’s this, I’ll pay you for the day even though you only work until 1.00pm, but I won’t put you on the contract rate. And if you want extra relieving work here in the future” this was his tone “It’s up to you.” So what do I do? Do I walk away? I was so pissed off by then. I really wanted to stick it to him, and I didn’t and I should have just gone, “Stuff you.” (Sophie)

Sophie found herself in a position where she had to work with a principal who was intransigent about certain employment issues and unappreciative of her as a teacher. Sophie had various possibilities that she could have acted upon. She could have taken the situation to the union, which she didn’t do and now regrets.

Although physically removed from the situation, Sophie struggles to get free emotionally and psychologically from the anger, hurt and disappointment that it has brought her. A person who held a position of power intimidated her. She is angry and upset about this. She wants to forget about it saying, “I’m supposed to let it go” then “I haven’t let it go” and “I’ll never let it go.”

In her interview, when asked to reflect on her state of mind, Sophie declared how, she is essentially, in a contrary or simply a bad mood about this. Heidegger (1927/2008) is particular interested in moods and especially so in fear. The principal was a person who Sophie was not comfortable with. She was somewhat fearful of him, she did not trust him, neither did she think he was ethical even though he said he was.

Care is the means through which our being is made meaningful and significant (Heidegger, 1927/2008), however, because Sophie did not feel cared for, she felt undermined and undervalued. For Sophie, having a career has temporarily lost some of its meaning.

Later she describes how things continued to play out:

The next year, my friend Matt was acting principal and he rang and said, “We’d really like you to do two days.” And I said ‘Will you put me on the contract?’ And he said “I can do it for a term because we’ve got extra staffing.” I said “Fine, put me on the contract, I’ll do it properly.” He was my friend, I had a bit more power, I knew I could talk to him like that and he wasn’t going to belittle me, because unlike the actual Principal, Matt is an ethical man. Then half way through that year Matt said “You’re doing two days, do you want three, do you want to do this job share?” So I did that for six months. By then, I was pregnant; I knew I would get my maternity pay and it would take into account the six months I’d already worked. Then Phil came back from his year off and said to the teacher I was job sharing with “Instead of doing your two days a week, would you like to be back in your old job doing your new entrant classroom with a unit in numeracy and a unit as a Syndicate Leader?” which is about \$10,000 extra. Those jobs get taken up quickly, so she had to decide. He’s a very clever man; this man and she got it. So I was left with nothing. And as a pregnant woman I had a stand-up, crying argument with him, which I’ve never done with anyone else in my life. It really makes me angry that he made me cry. Because I called him on it, I said, “You are paying other teachers properly. You know that it will affect my maternity leave, you know that it will.” He said, “We don’t have any loyalty to you.” And I said, “I’ve done six months and in my days off I have come in and taken choirs and brought my daughter.” I tried to fight it; I rang the Union. The Union said you need it in writing. He wouldn’t put anything in writing. He knew all the tricks. It was a bit of a life lesson and made me quite bitter and twisted. I’d like to say it made me a stronger person. What I should have done at the start was to tell the Principal, I would ring the Board and say, “I am not working because Phil will not pay me properly, do you realise this?” and walk away. But people said to me if you ever want to work in this city again, he’s not a good person to get on the wrong side of. And then, in the end, because I was pregnant, you kind of lose the ability to negotiate. And we left for another city and I thought “Oh, good riddance to you all.” (Sophie)

Sophie was a valuable asset to the principal. She is popular and competent, and highly educated with an honours degree and post-graduate qualifications in music and drama. She is a young woman who knows her mind. She doesn’t want to just do what others might say she should do, to be forced to work more than she wants to while she has a very young family. Because of this she has been “shafted” out of her job, and denied her maternity pay out. For Sophie, this has been “a life lesson and made me quite bitter and twisted.”

As in the case of Debbie the care apparent in Sophie's story, is that of leaping in, a harmful and destructive variant of care (Heidegger, 1927/2008). By being shown solicitude in its imperfect form, Sophie has also become a victim of the dominating, intractable and more commanding influence of the principal. Heidegger says, "In such solicitude the other can become one who is dominated and dependent, even if this dominating is a tacit one and remains hidden" (1927/2008, p. 158). Sophie feels she has lost her voice; she is undermined and disempowered. Her worth, her humanity has been questioned and found wanting.

Although Sophie had cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), which could have been of valuable to the principal, the principal did not recognise her as such. This is evidenced when he says to her "We don't have any loyalty to you." The deputy principal did see Sophie's worth. In terms of her career capital, Sophie did not have sufficient social capital with the principal and a relationship of mutual recognition. Temporarily, her social connection with the deputy principal gave her a position, but it was only temporary. Within her career field of education, Sophie was a player who was easily sidelined (Bourdieu, 1986).

When an occupation has developed into a regulated profession, this is a strong indicator of the creation of a career field with a disparate distribution of power. In situations such as when an individual looks for a job, tries to keep his/her job or strives for an improvement, conflicts over the accumulation of specific capitals valued are easily detected. Career capital is the particular sort of capital valued within career fields. Each career field values particular sorts of capital (Iellatchitch et al., 2003).

A career actor's logic is moulded by their habitus and the requirements and logic of the game as it unfolds (Iellatchitch et al., 2003). Sophie is involved in a game, struggling to understand its logic, a game in which she is an undervalued player. Individuals with less career capital may be confronted with the situation of being in a field which does not fit their habitus, and in which their career capital is undervalued (Iellatchitch et al., 2003). Sophie's symbolic capital in her career field of education is diminished and not recognised by another key actor in the field. She is not recognised in her field as legitimate, valid and useful.

Sophie knows that the rules of the game within her career field of education are such that she does not have power to fight against her principal who would not put her situation in writing. She was warned by other colleagues not to take it further as "if you ever want to work in the city again, he's not a very good person to get on the wrong side of." As with Debbie, Sophie's chances to influence and win a struggle are unevenly distributed, because she has less career and symbolic capital than her principal, and because he has power over her. Understanding more about the field and the game now than she previously did may result in her changing her way of "playing the game" in the future.

Summary

Being cared for is a significant career driver for women. Being cared for in a positive way, showing what Heidegger (1967/1992) called concern or solicitude means that women feel their careers have purpose and meaning. They feel significant and that their contributions have value.

A key feature of the people who showed care at formative stages in a woman's life was that they often would not realise the impact that a few salient words, a conversation, their support or advocating for a young woman, would have at the time and longer term. Further, vital people and bringers of care into a woman's life were often only present with her for a short period. However, this might result in a change of horizon where a woman could transition into the next stage in her career with confidence, or take on a leadership role. Further, the effect of care multiplied and was ongoing, as women went on to become providers of care for others, seeking to be for others what they have had, and exercising a duty of care towards them.

The impact of a Mother's care cannot be underestimated in a woman's life, and Mother's caring words are remembered, and her unconditional support is acknowledged as being a key driver for women, motivating them to be a pioneer for others in their families. Women's careers often take centre stage, where their partner has a career, which may be less demanding or stressful. The support of a partner is often attributed to be a crucial factor in the long-term success of a woman's career.

A lack of care translates into feeling unheard, undervalued and discriminated against. Women feel fearful, anxious, and caught, sometimes angry and bitter. The ongoing effects of this lack of care can mean career derailment either temporarily or permanently, disillusionment, extreme weariness and fatigue. Women can feel that everything about their work is a burden and the pleasure and fulfilment they may have previously gained from their work dissipates slowly like sand through an hourglass.

It is care which Heidegger called the primordial state of being-in-the-world. In its ideal form, care calls us as Dasein to take hold of possibilities and move towards authenticity. Women's movement towards authenticity is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter Eight

Moving towards authenticity

The privilege of a lifetime is to become who you truly are.
-- *Carl Jung*

Introduction

Two themes have been discussed in Chapters Six and Seven, the effect of a woman's past in influencing her career agency, and the effect of other people in encouraging and supporting her progress. This chapter discusses a third theme. Woven through the women's narratives, is an expressed desire to be authentic. Essentially, Chapter Six, which looks at a woman's past, at habitus and historicity, was concerned with the question "Where have I come from?" The following chapter examined the effect that being-with-others and being shown Sorge or care has on a woman's career agency and answered the question "Who will help me?" In this chapter, the question "Who am I becoming?" is addressed, as the quest continues to discover what motivates and impels these women to enact their careers.

The women in this study often described themselves as being unlike other women and spoke about being "different from all my friends." Rather than being conformists these women were prepared to take risks, to do things in their own way, to step outside established boundaries. Comments such as, to do "something fulfilling with my life," to "give something back" to "return some of the favours I've been given," to "have my own reputation as an individual" permeated their narratives. Their stories are infused by

a strong yearning to be true to themselves, to find their own identity, and to achieve something, which sets them apart from others.

Heidegger and authenticity: Being unto death

Heidegger (1927/2008) maintained his one “great” thought as a philosopher, was that people exist temporally, in the finite space between birth and death. Further, to understand what it means to be authentically human, individuals need to project their lives onto the horizon of their death. They need to realise that their life is of limited duration and to make meaning out of this finitude.

There is a great deal in the career and management literature about authenticity. Recently Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) introduced their Kaleidoscope Career Model (KCM), where they introduced three key parameters, which they proposed shift over a typical woman professional’s life span. One of these parameters, authenticity, they defined as answering the question: “Can I be myself in the midst of all of this and still be authentic?” (2005, p. 41). In other words, authenticity concerns a person being true to himself or herself whilst they enact a career.

For Heidegger (1927/2008) however, becoming authentic means two things. First, a person needs to be prepared to separate themselves from conventional views, and not to conform to established rules. Second, he or she must learn to think deeply. Heidegger said there are two dominant modes in which people can exist; they can be authentic or inauthentic. And, in order to truly come to grips with their deepest possibility of being, it is vital they choose between these two modes.

The normal way of behaving, learned by becoming familiar with things and people, Heidegger (1927/2008) called “averageness.” He argued being average and living an everyday life isn’t desirable. Living averagely according to what he terms the One-self, Heidegger called conforming. People accept the mainstream view, are unreflective and unable to think on their own. Heidegger suggests this leads to “leveling down” which reduces individuals’ potential for being (1927/2008).

Rather than being absorbed into everyday averageness—to be authentic and become their Authentic-Self—individuals must separate themselves from the mainstream and move towards possibility. One-self stands in sharp contrast to Authentic-Self, and behaving in this way is a crucial part of what it means to be human. Further, people shouldn’t be defined by what they currently are, rather, on who they might become (Heidegger, 1927/2008). For Heidegger, the movement towards authenticity is all about becoming.

Answering the call of conscience

The women in this study came to a career in education in various ways, and often described their work as a calling. As discussed in Chapter Six, some knew they were always disposed to being a teacher, for others it was a natural progression, for still others the decision came much later.

And I do use the Christian analogy of that Road to Damascus

Jackie tells of a dramatic life-changing event in her early twenties:

I was in London and it was spring. I was single and working as a Recruitment Consultant for investment finance banks in London, a fantastic job with lots of money, so much I didn't know what to do with it; I had lovely suits, nice shoes, facials once a week. I wanted to go to Bali. I was on the phone, and the travel agent gave me the wrong number, I booked it all paid for it by credit card. And I ended up booking a holiday to Mali in West Africa, the third poorest country in the world. It's also where Timbuktu is, so I can actually say I've been to Timbuktu. I've always been like, "Oh well, It's meant to be." So I went to Mali and I arrived there and thought, "What's the point, it's a shithole?" But there was a point. It was after I had been there three weeks and just before we were about to go home. We were taken through the not-so-nice part of Mali. That was when I realised that I couldn't keep living the way I was for the rest of my life. There was a real sense of "I need to return some of the favours I've been given." I'd come from a very well off family, and it was a given that we went to university and everything was paid for. And it really was a Road to Damascus epiphany where I thought "This is a bit of a shallow existence you're living at the moment J, and you've had quite a life of privilege up to this point, and I think it's time that you did something a bit more fulfilling with your life." The blinkers were off. Fundamentally that's what it all boiled down to. It's not something that I broadcast too often, because it almost sounds like "Oh, God, she's going to start going on about Jesus." It's nothing to do with that. And I do use the Christian analogy of that Road to Damascus thing, because that's exactly what it was like. (Jackie)

When Jackie travelled to Mali—an impoverished third world country—she reflected on her privileged life back home. Due to what she describes as an epiphany or Road to Damascus event, she realised "I couldn't keep living the way I was."

Happenstance theory details the value of a serendipitous event, which can lead to a change in career (Krumboltz, 1998). These moments in a career which lead to a dramatic change either internally or externally Brott (2001) called defining moments. "Being-in" Mali gave Jackie the opportunity to look at her career in a different light, a view from "the inside" and to evaluate what she wanted to do next. Quite suddenly, it

dawned on her, that her objective career success did not give her subjective success; what Hall and Chandler (2005) termed psychological success.

Hall and Chandler (2005) maintained contextual factors influence a person's ability to answer a call and queried, "Is a calling a luxury that only those born to privilege can experience?" (p.167). They stated a major contextual factor for a person's career choice is their socio-economic status and argued that resources may indeed preclude a person of privilege from hearing their calling, insulating them from "having to take work seriously" (2005, p. 167).

Unlike the Christian experience of conscience which is God talking, Heidegger (1927/2008) said the call of conscience doesn't mean becoming weighed down with a record of guilty deeds, because as Dasein, people are guilty all the time. The call of conscience breaks into peoples' everydayness and transcends the voice of the One. It brings them face to face with their own being.

Perhaps Jackie did not take work seriously. Certainly her success was measured by how others viewed success, on external accoutrements, "...lovely suits, nice shoes, facials once a week." She hears the call of conscience, not an outside call but the call of her own voice, to which she attests. When asked, "Who is that speaking?" she replied, "It's me, my own voice." This causes her to feel guilty, yet at the same time frees her into taking responsibility. Quite dramatically, Jackie becomes aware of her own being, what Heidegger called "being-unto-death" (1927/2008).

Previously, she has been absorbed in the things of the world (Heidegger, 1927/2008) and has been unable to discern what being authentic is. Suddenly "the blinkers were off." This experience arrests her, causing her to completely reconsider her life.

So that's my soapbox

Jackie describes what happened next:

At that time, I was thinking I'd be in a grass hut in Africa doing missionary – not religious missionary work – but doing something like Medecins sans Frontieres. I knew that I wanted to get to the end of my life, and this was at the grand old age of 23, and say that I'd actually done something important. So I got back to London and I went through a list of careers and I thought I was a bit too old to train to be a doctor and it never really appealed to me. I've got two siblings who are nurses who have put me off that for life. Then I thought of social worker and I thought I was too blunt to be a social worker. Then I considered being a teacher. Once I had decided on teaching, I knew what I wanted to do is do ground breaking work for low socio-economic kids who are so bright yet no one has picked apart what makes them learn. That's the impetus for me. I want to write really good materials for these kids so that they can succeed, so I can die saying, "I know I've done something good." That's my soapbox. What is driving me so much, apart from wanting to accomplish things is to not make my life a waste of time. I think that would be the worst thing. Every now and then it flashes through my head, when you're sitting in the old age retirement home and you're boring the nurse, you've got to have some good stories to tell. (Jackie)

Realizing the finitude of her life Jackie says, "I knew that I wanted to get to the end of my life... and say that I'd actually done something important." She then chose to become a teacher, and the type of teaching she would do—synchronous with her new sense of vocation—would be "ground breaking" work for underprivileged young people. Once the calling has been felt or heard, the difference it makes is substantive. Jackie is not religious, but does see her work as missionary work. Her calling comes from a strong sense of inner direction, to do work which makes a difference to the world (Hall & Chandler, 2005; Lips-Wiersma, 2002). In contrast to a religious calling where a person finds meaning from acting on a plan from a higher being, Hall and Chandler (2005) maintained, in following a secular calling a person gains meaning for her life from her own personal fulfilment and meaningfulness.

On becoming aware of her mortality, what drives Jackie is, to not “make my life a waste of time.... that would be the worst thing.” Aged 34 years, she thinks about the end of her life, when she is in a retirement home, saying, “You’ve got to have some good stories to tell.” Ten years after her “epiphany,” Jackie’s conscience call still impels and guides her.

Having her own identity

Mummy works at the University

For Tina, having her own identity is a key motivator towards pursuing her career:

Financially I don’t need to work, we could manage with my husband’s salary, but I like working. I like having my own individual personality, because otherwise I think you get pigeon holed as the mother of so and so, or the wife of so and so. I like having my own reputation as an individual, “Oh, you’re the person who always talks about such and such on the radio,” or “You’re the person who does research on this.” I like that. Without my work I definitely wouldn’t have that. A friend of mine, who’s got four children, once had a job working in TV and when she told her children how she used to work they just rolled about laughing. But my children would never be like that; my daughter says “Mummy works at the university.” I like that my daughter’s going to grow up knowing Mummy works and this is what she does. I never had that. I used to be a little daunted when I would see really world-class women in the field. But they’re often women who never had children or they have one child, or don’t have any other social life. (Tina)

Tina says—concerning her children—“It’s nice for them to know... about what I do.”

She compares herself with two others, two examples of the voice and influence of what Heidegger called, the One. First, she compares herself to a friend who hasn’t worked since she had children, whose children laugh about her previous career. Second, she compares herself to “world-class women” in her field, women she recognises as either

not having children or not having a social life. She describes she “used to feel daunted” by them, but she has come to terms with her own situation.

Heidegger described how, in people’s everyday dealings, they constantly compare themselves with others; they compete and try to out-do them. “In one’s concern with what one has taken hold of, whether with, for or against, the others, there is constant care as to the way one differs from them” (1927/2008, p. 163). This behaviour, Heidegger called “distantiality” (1927/2008, p. 164). For this reason, although being with other people can have a profoundly positive effect on an individual’s move towards authenticity, as seen in Chapter Seven, Heidegger (2008) sees inherent dangers in being-with others. This is because just by being in the everyday public world, the influence of others can have the effect of diminishing individuals’ possibilities for being.

By comparing herself with others, Tina could potentially be at risk of such an effect. Yet, she chooses not to be defined by other people. In order to be authentic, Heidegger (2008) says, it is important people do this, to separate themselves from others in some way. Otherwise they can simply be absorbed into the everyday averageness of the One. This behaviour of comparing themselves with others, competing with them and separating ourselves out from them, is found in the stories of many women in this project. However, having their own identity and making decisions commensurate with this, was also a key feature of their narratives.

It's OK to be different

Being different from others can come at a cost as Rachel explains:

I'm really different from all my friends

I'm really different from all my friends. None of them are academically inclined, have been to university, or are interested in study. They're not bothered with any of that. Most of them work full-time. A couple work part-time. They're happy with what they do. I look at them and think; if they have a career, my perception of what a career is, is different to theirs. It sounds awful, eh? For me, having a career means going to university and being qualified in something, and really working on what I would call an academic profession. That's what my perception of a career is. That's not to say that what anyone else does isn't a career. For example, one of my girlfriends works in the Parts Department at Toyota. That's her full-time job. She's always done it. She loves it. For her, that's a career. But for me, that is just a job. And you know what, to be honest, nobody else really is that bothered or interested in what I'm doing. There's been no real support or encouragement there. They're doing their thing working, and they probably couldn't care less what I'm doing. None of them understands it. It means nothing to them. We're quite different in other ways too. We do a lot of travelling. That's a big focus. We take our daughter away every year. I don't think half of them have been out the country. And I guess, in some respects, I miss likeminded people. (Rachel)

Rachel's career separates her from others to whom she has been close. It distances her, and she knows her friends aren't really interested in her career. Being true to herself, rather than allow others' perceptions of career to shape her, comes at a cost; it makes her feel isolated. She says, "I miss likeminded people."

I'm definitely in a minority

However, Miriama can see real benefits in being different:

In this school, females are a minority. Being a boys' school, there is a certain important role for female teachers. We have to make sure that others see that. One of the key things is, only a female teacher can do a karanga at a powhiri, we have a defined role. And the profile of an economics teacher is quite different from me. Within economics it is unusual to be young, female and Maori. I hope

that students say, “Actually, an economics teacher can be young and fun.” Also for Maori kids that “Oh, it’s not the subject that we don’t do. It is a subject that is accessible and you can be successful in it.” I’m definitely in a minority because of my age and because of my ethnicity at conferences. I bring in a different perspective in that sense. Whether it’s because I look different because I’m Maori or because I’m female or because I teach economics and I look different from the other economics teachers, the students are forming opinions about themselves by the way that I act and behave. Whether I realise it or not the students are watching. And who I want them to see is someone who’s proud of who she is, who’s had to work hard, who hasn’t always had it easy but hasn’t made excuses. It’s good I’m in a minority, because it makes me more important, more special. (Miriamia)

Miriamia sees she is offering something special by being young, female and Maori, and teaching in a male dominated subject. She puts a positive spin on her points of difference. Miriamia is finding her niche in education and is comfortable with whom she now is and certain of whom she wants to become. It has been hard work to get there but she is proud of her progress and aware that she is a significant role model for her students, in particular for Maori. Heidegger (1927/2008) said, when a person moves towards authenticity they become concerned with their own potential, rather than remaining absorbed with the things in the world.

Education as transformative: Being a life long learner

A strong motivator towards women becoming authentic and being true to themselves was to pursue higher education and learning throughout their careers. Women spoke about having a love of learning; they wanted to keep on studying, and self-improving.

I need something to get the brain going a little bit more

Rachel's curiosity in terms of her learning translates into her approach to life in general.

She says:

I love studying; I love research. I am very driven and ambitious. It's given me a real sense of achievement to do all this study. I do push myself. Not to the point where I'm absolutely strung out. But I do very much pride myself on having a family and working full-time and studying, and being very organised, keeping the household running. I like learning. Not just academic learning. Cultural stuff as well, and life experiences, and travel. I do a lot of that with my daughter. To be honest, when I did my degree that was going to be it. I thought, I'll go into teaching, do my degree, cool. But it didn't stop. A few years later I got all fired up to do my postgrad. It's stressful, it takes a lot of money and time and it does have an impact on my family. But you get a taste for it, you do. The goalposts, yes, they are shifting. While the study is done for personal reasons, it's also for professional reasons. In my next job, research and on going study are encouraged. They've made that very clear, "You're getting your postgrad finished this year, wonderful. So when are you going to start doing your Masters?" That's what makes it worthwhile. To be somewhere where study is valued and recognised, and you're encouraged and supported. They've got a lot of staff there that are finishing postgrad and starting Masters. It's a supportive environment. And am I going to be content just to do something like this next job, where I'm working with smaller groups? Or is the long-term goal, once I'm qualified, that I will look at going into a lecturing role at a university? Yes, I think that eventually it is. I think it is. (Rachel)

Over time, Rachel's aspirations have changed. She has a new role synchronous with this change, and says this is what "makes it worthwhile." She acknowledges she would eventually like to become a university lecturer, "the goal posts...are shifting." Rachel is at a transition point in her career.

She describes how she became stagnant and bored in her current job:

I needed a change in my career. I thought, "Maybe it's time to move on. I'm in my comfort zone. I'm not being stimulated. "Boredom was setting in. I was putting all this time into my study, learning new things, doing all this really cool research and not really able to apply it. I'm just finishing my last paper in my postgrad and looking to pick up my Masters next year. In this (current) job, there isn't a need to be doing any more study. I need to be somewhere where I

have to keep studying and doing research. The job I'm going into very much requires you to be doing that. So, in another week I start a different role. It's not so much lecturing, more mentoring, supporting the field-based students, and teaching at degree level. To move into teaching degree students has been my goal for a long time. This new role is definitely more academic. It sounds a bit arrogant, but I want to go somewhere the students have more passion for learning and I'm utilising my experience and knowledge more. If I wasn't motivated to do further study I would just stay doing what I'm doing, just plod along. But it's not challenging me. It's boring me. I feel like I'm stagnant.

(Rachel)

Rachel's unsettledness gives her a chance to make a new start, to consciously resolve to move on. This is what Heidegger (1927/2008) called being resolute. Rather than being content with where she currently is, Rachel seeks to move ahead and towards possibility; a trait Heidegger says is an essential part of being.

Being a life long learner was the norm for women in this study, all of whom had undertaken study at various different times in their careers. As well as pursuing further learning, these women sought to build on their skills and become more expert in their craft. Being more skilled, wanting to be masterful, is a prevalent notion in their narratives.

And the first semester was a real baptism of fire

For Katie it meant a move into teaching in her mature years, a significant career change:

It's been a long process. About seven years ago, I approached the Polytechnic and had an interview and did a trial run day. Nothing came of it. I forgot about it. And then in 2011 I had my own café and we were trying to sell, it wasn't really happening and I knew I just wanted to get out. As much as I love hospitality, I got to a point where I just thought I didn't want to work weekends and nights. I'd done the whole café thing and thought, where do I go from here? So I rang one of the tutors at the Polytechnic and said, "Look, have you got any jobs coming up?" And he said, "Let's keep in touch." And at the end of the day, it was just me hounding him. That was how it all came about. They created a position, I suppose. They had the numbers. We know that not everybody can teach. I'd probably say I've got skills. I don't know if I'd say I've got a gift. That sounds a bit pompous. But I genuinely like people. I think I can relate to

lots of different age groups. I have always enjoyed teaching. I used to teach night classes at Community Education. I have always thought I would like to do more. So last year, 2012, was my first year teaching full-time. And the first semester was a baptism of fire. It's not always as easy as it sounds, that's for sure. (Katie)

Most of the time people are normally so absorbed and involved with the things in the world and what they are doing. It's only when things go wrong that they notice them. "Angst serves as a breakdown that reveals the nature of Dasein and its world" (Heidegger, 1927/2008, p. 233). Angst exposes their "nothing-ness," the things they stand for fade away. When individuals experience angst as inauthentic Dasein, it's as if they experience the world as an instrument that has failed to do its job. They are no longer absorbed in the world; their everyday familiarity with it collapses (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991). In this way, angst can serve as a vehicle towards becoming more genuine and authentic (Harman, 2011).

Katie's career in hospitality had become fraught and difficult, she had "done the whole café thing" and "wanted to get out." Katie feels a sense of angst and doesn't feel at home in the hospitality industry anymore, which forces her to look seriously at what she wants to do next. Recognising a talent for teaching in herself, Katie determinedly contacts a tutor at the polytechnic, "It was just me hounding him." She was prepared to try something new, something different, even if it was difficult and risky.

Balance, burnout and stress: The cost of becoming authentic

As women strive for authenticity, they also struggle to achieve a balance between the possible and the authentic. Many women talked about their attempts to achieve equilibrium between the different facets of their lives. Women in their thirties described

attempting to achieve balance—between their working live and other life roles—as particularly challenging.

I was starting to feel really burnt out

Miriama describes it like this:

I took a step back this year. I was starting to feel really burnt out. The last school I was at had such high expectations and huge workload. I was a bit like a machine in a factory. My last school had a culture, which didn't really fit with me. I was getting burnt out, it made me think, "You need to look after yourself." What do you want in the next few years?" I've worked really hard in teaching in the last 12 years, but for the next few years I want my life to have a different focus. It's definitely spilt over into the rest of my life. Even in term 1, my partner would say, "It's so good that you come home at 4.30 and you're happy and not exhausted saying, "I can't do anything, I have to do more work."" In terms of my personal life, it's good. Being able to develop my friendships more too. I always felt compromised between trying to do a really good job and trying to be a good friend. So my work/life balance is much better and I'm happier. I know that I can do a bit less and it will be okay. It's nice to go home and not feel exhausted and be able to give to my relationship. I always felt, I'm never happy; I'm always too tired or have other things to do instead of doing what I want: spending time with my partner. We got engaged at the end of last term. If you'd asked me last year if I thought we'd get engaged, I probably would've said no. Because I just wasn't giving as much to the relationship as I could've, should've. It's nice to have balance. I've been rewarded for it! That's exciting.
(Miriama)

Miriama began to see herself as "a machine in a factory," not as a person anymore. She counts up all her good and bad deeds and trades them off against one another with the end result she has a bad conscience: she might be a good teacher, but not a good friend or partner (Heidegger, 1927/2008). Her bad conscience makes her feel guilty, but it also frees her into taking responsibility. Experiencing angst gives her the chance to consciously choose differently, to not just keep on living in the same way (Harman, 2011). Angst isn't therefore seen as negative, rather as a necessary evil, which provokes Miriama and unlocks her from her everyday routine. She realises she doesn't need to be like a "machine in a factory," she doesn't need to follow the herd. Angst acts as the

channel towards her becoming her own self; to be more genuine and authentic, and to achieve more balance in her life (Harman, 2011).

It's like having this big wobbly thing

For Jackie who experienced the transformative epiphany in Mali, and has three small children and a new partner, there is still tension:

There have been consequences. My relationship with my children's father fell down because it was too much for him to handle because I had to work in order to keep up with the mortgage; I also had three children under five. He was not at all supportive, I kept asking for help and he said, "I can't give you any more." That was why he left. He said, "It's too much for me to cope with." So that was the impetus for quitting the job here and studying. Because, I couldn't juggle everything. There's a balance. The thing I'm terrified of is if one thing goes, everything falls over. I've got to keep my (new) partner happy; otherwise everything will fall over again. Then I have to keep work happy because that's the one thing I won't give up and I've got to keep my children happy of course. When the children are with their father I spend the time working, so that when I get my children back the time is for them. It's like having this big wobbly thing that you push up with one (hand), and the other thing falls down. When you push up on one side, one side goes down. So I sacrifice; yesterday my day was beautiful and D and I could've gone out and had a lovely lunch and we had no kids this weekend, but I had to work. I had so much work to do, so that's what I did. Say I go out and have a lovely time with say D, and I suffer the next day because I'm worried about the fact that I haven't prepared my lessons. I'm aware that I do too much. But I can't figure out what to drop. There's nothing I can do about it. I lose my house, or I lose D. I'd never lose my children; they're the constant – the nucleus that we all revolve around. And I don't want to lose my job.

(Jackie)

Jackie attempts to keep "everyone happy." She uses the metaphor of "a big wobbly thing" to describe the different components of her life. She is aware of the consequences of the high demands of her working life. She previously experienced a relationship breakdown and she recently stopped working to study towards a Masters degree to take the pressure off herself and her family. Impelled by her strong sense of calling discussed earlier, she comments, "I don't want to lose my job."

Personal failure as a result of career success has been well documented in the work/life literature (Hall & Chandler, 2005). Jackie struggles with the pull of the communal; aware she is stretched, determinedly placing her children at the centre or the nucleus of her “wobbly thing” metaphor. Remaining highly sensitive and expressive towards her family’s needs (Farmer, 1997), she finds a way of compromise in her situation, by gaining study leave and returning to university.

Hall and Chandler commented, “Individuals with a calling must accommodate and manoeuvre within the contextual circumstances in which they find themselves. The enactment of a calling is the product of situational factors and an individual’s agency with a context” (Hall & Chandler, 2005, p. 167). By describing the complexities of her work/life by with a “wobbly thing” metaphor—continually changing and unpredictable—Jackie is signalling her struggle to accommodate and manoeuvre within her own context. She is torn between the needs of her young family and her desire to follow through on her calling. Her career is a struggle for balance between agency and communion (Arthur et al., 1999; Marshall, 1989; Pringle & McCulloch Dixon, 2003). Jackie’s endeavours indicate that sometimes achieving balance seems all nigh impossible.

Earlier Tina talked about her attempts to come to terms with what “other” women do internationally. She has resolved this tension, and says:

I know I want balance. I’m happy being internationally recognised for some things but not being that sort of world-class person that travels every month to speak at some conference. My family would not cope, if I did all that travelling. As it is my daughter is quite clingy and doesn’t like it when I go for my one conference a year, let alone travelling all the time. So I never want to be that person. I recognise I never do. (Tina)

Tina has realised her limitations. She wants to be a role model, to have influence, but not at the detriment of her family:

I used to sort of think I'm never going get there and be a bit depressed about it, but now I think I'm happy never getting to that point. (Tina)

Although many participants described enjoying their work, they also indicated it was demanding, unrelenting and took its toll on their wellbeing, health and emotional state. In particular women in their forties described the toll of such ongoing stress.

I was in a terrible mess with stress

Sarah says:

I get to stages in the year where I think; I can't do this job anymore. It's overwhelming. At the end of last year I was in a terrible mess with stress. From October I spent the next three months not sleeping properly. I've done things to help manage the stress, changed my diet, relaxation and stretching exercises, meditation. I should be kind to myself and think - I've done a day's work, but I always come home with a bag full of stuff instead of leaving it on my desk. I'm going to have to leave it behind. Sometimes I feel I've done it for long enough, I need to do something else. It flits through my mind and then it's gone again, because I've got a decent job, a regular income, stability. But the toll – it's unbelievable. I've got to have a hip replacement in April. It's a genetic thing I was born with but being on my feet all day it's aggravated it to the point where I've got to go and have it done. So I'm living in pain. Every year I try and work smarter. I don't know whether the job just becomes more but I feel like we keep getting asked to do more. It's a stressful job and everybody feels you've got to keep raising your game all the time. It's the nature of the job. We've only been back a week and it's started already. The Principal sets the standard; we have to meet it. The meeting tonight was about how we're not getting enough excellences, so what are you doing about that? How are you going to fix that? It's the pressure. (Sarah)

Sarah has been stressed for some time. She has attempted to deal with it by various means, but now, she doesn't know how to cope. She no longer has the ability to process

her stress. Being in her career feels like a burden she can no longer shoulder. Her behaviour becomes unpredictable “a terrible mess with stress.”

Heidegger says that “In a state-of-mind Dasein is always bought before itself, and has always found itself, not in the sense of coming across itself by perceiving itself, but in the sense of finding itself in the mood it has” (1927/2008, p. 174). People are always in some mood or other and there is no escaping it, a mood reveals how things are going. Sarah’s mood is despondent; she is fatigued and burnt out.

She goes on:

I feel like a lot of the time I’m spread so thin. And because I’m me, I want to do everything to 100%. I want to be the best mother. I want to be the best wife. I want to be the best daughter. I want to be the best. I keep saying to Mike, I’m 43 and I want to work ‘till I’m 50, then I want to stop. That’s the ideal. It’s not going to happen, because I’m going to have to carry on working. My children won’t have finished school or education. I don’t know; do I really want to do this for the rest of my career? Last night when I came home I was quite anxious. These first few days are quite anxious. I want to make sure I’ve given the students all the information. They know what I expect from them. They know where they’re going. I’m carrying that stuff around in my head. When I got home last night Mike said, are you all right? I said - I’ve just got quite a bit on my mind. He said - Okay, that’s fine. So he knows that it’s nothing else. Sometimes I dream about stuff. This morning, I woke up at half past five. So I just stay awake, I get up. It’s the way I cope. (Sarah)

Sarah describes her perfectionist temperament and the standards and goals she sets for herself. She uses phrases such as “and because I’m me, I want to do everything to 100%” and “I’m carrying that stuff around in my head,” revealing, rather than coming from an external locus of control, another force, which impels Sarah, is from within. It is her own high standards, not just the Principal’s, which drive her. Sarah’s own inability to let things go at the end of the day exacerbates her stress. She is in a quandary, desiring to be the “100%” teacher, as well as the, “best mother.... wife....

daughter.” Riddled with angst; Sarah is unsettled and uneasy and doesn’t know how long she can continue, “I don’t know, do I really want to do this for the rest of my career?”

And you’re carrying that stuff around

Sarah continues:

But even just being an everyday teacher, you’re expected to be a social worker. You have a form class and they’re with you for five years. They’ll see you nearly every day. They come with all sorts of problems. We have kids that cut themselves. Kids that have tried to commit suicide. Kids whose parents have split up and they’re living here, there and everywhere. Kids that can’t come to school because no-one can get them there. They’ve got to stay home and look after other siblings. You’ve got all this stuff and kids will come to you in the morning in tears and it’s like - Okay, so I’ve got to put that hat on now, and I’ve got to get hold of that person or to get the counsellor. I’ve got to make sure that one kid has to have medication because she stops taking it. I’ve got to get the outside person in to come and see her today, and it needs to be done now because otherwise.....and that just takes you over here. That teaching --- What was that? Oh yeah, teaching. And you’re carrying that stuff around. What am I going to do about Cate? She says she’s sitting in her bedroom at home and all she wants to do is cut herself. You’re carrying that around. Where do you turn? What do you do? Did that person do what they said they were going to do? Did they ring home? Did they get her a counsellor? If you don’t do it, what’s the consequence? We had one girl last year commit suicide. So you’re forever thinking ...You could be a teacher that just goes into work, does the job, does the planning, sits in the office all day, goes out to her form class, gets this kid to do that and that kid to do it – you could be that sort of ...You could be. And you could just do the minimum. I know lots of teachers who do that. I don’t know how to do that. (Sarah)

The emotional work Sarah is required to do as an everyday teacher and the problems she encounters, in particular in her role as a form teacher are serious, and potentially life threatening for her students. She notices some other teachers, are not like her; they don’t get so involved. But she does; Sarah is a person who gets emotionally involved in her students’ lives. She reflects how other staff members treat their jobs more just “as a minimum.” “I don’t know how to do that,” she says.

In various ways, many participants referred to the ongoing pressure, the intensity of coping with a myriad of relationship issues, and the socio-emotional load of working in education. In particular, women with management responsibilities, which meant an extra workload outside the classroom, told of extreme stress and burnout.

Every ounce of everything inside me

Kiri, aged 46 years, tells of the unremitting pressure, in her case from working as a primary school principal in a decile one¹² school:

They've been the hardest (years) of my life and not the happiest either in some ways, because it's so relentless. It's not easy working with the issues that come up, that bubble up every day around children and their lives. I have to use every ounce of everything inside me to get through some of these days. At times I don't think there's anything more, but there always is. You just move on, get over it and live to fight another day. That's what it feels like. It's a constant battle on lots of levels. Dealing with the social injustice and the poverty that these children present with. You make a real difference if you've got the courage to work with it – work with the children and their families. There's also the life of a principal-ship. The multifaceted, what you have to put your head to in terms of management and dealing with the paperwork and the paper war and what's been created by the ministry and the pressure around that has been phenomenal. It doesn't matter what size school you're at. Those are the requirements. The paperwork's not hard. It's relentless and it goes on and on and you wonder what it's for, but it's not the hard bit. The hard bit is the people bit. Then the staffing on top of that and working with people you have to lead and be a leader to. And have a sense of moral purpose in every single day. You just get a bit tired of yourself. It's incredibly hard, yet incredibly rewarding. I don't know how much longer I can do this for. I think that most days, as I turn up for work and get in and do whatever I need to do. I've got a really good team of people around me. I've had to work hard on that because sometimes when people don't have the same moral imperatives to help them understand what your vision is, you have to continually work on that. That's one of the reasons why I've stayed, because you can't do that type of thing overnight. On the other side of things, we are very successful with these children in this school. There's been some great things happen, big achievements we can be really proud of as a community and as a school. Those sorts of things keep me going. (Kiri)

¹² Decile 1 schools are the 10% of schools with the highest proportion of students from low socio-economic communities.

Mirroring Sarah, Kiri also declares, “I don’t know how much longer I can do this for.” Being in a high functioning role takes its toll. Working in a caring profession has a wearying effect. However, Kiri can see that there are positives, and she is determined to “keep going.” She understands that following through on a vision takes time.

For women in their fifties, workplace stress has been at the expense of their health, both physically and psychologically.

I just reckon it was my body crying out “Oi, slow down!”

The breakdown in Sally’s health culminated at the time of a restructuring:

I had a huge number of responsibilities. I was constantly taxed; it was too hard. I think my health is pretty good at the moment but it certainly has gone through a bit of a slide over the past four years. It started at the same time as my husband was spending four years working offshore and there was commuting, quite long distance commuting. Running two homes, that sort of thing. He’d come home or I’d go over there, we’d see each other every six weeks. It went on for about four and a half years, quite a long period of time. I began to have more days off. I had migraines and general sickness. I went through a period of quite intense pain in my left side, which they never got to the bottom of. I just reckon it was my body crying out “Oi, slow down!” I thought I should be able to manage as much as I was, but my body told me in the end that I wasn’t managing. I was physically feeling the toll. The pain started, during the restructuring when I kept losing staff and this place kept getting upended. It would get me down and I would be coming up again but this restructuring stuff kept knocking me back. At the end of the process of me chopping everyone else’s heads off, I got my head chopped off too.
(Sally)

Over a period of several years, Sally’s health began to deteriorate. As a senior manager in a secondary school, she had a huge workload, and describes being “constantly taxed” and that it was “too hard.” Several things intensified the problem, her husband was working overseas for four and a half years and she was commuting to see him. She thought she should be on top of things, but her body told her otherwise.

Heidegger believed that in adverse mood:

Dasein becomes blind to itself, the environment with which it is concerned veils itself, the circumspection of concern gets led astray. States-of-mind are so far from being reflected upon, that precisely what they do is assail Dasein in its unreflecting devotion to the “world” with which it is concerned and on which it expends itself. (1927/2008, pp. 175-176)

Sally became unaware of her own needs, and couldn't recognise what her body was saying to her. Her lived world as a teacher/educator blinds her to what is going on. Sally's professional concern is towards others at her own expense, the lack of balance of which becomes extreme under the duress of stress and burnout. Her wellbeing is called back to her attention by an assault of mood, which takes on whatever extreme it must to finally penetrate her indifference and seize her attention. She says, “It would get me down” and “kept knocking me back.” Sally copes by having time off, by seeking medical attention. The breakdown in her health forced her to stop and consider, “What is going on here?” She says, “I just reckon it was my body crying out, ‘Oi, slow down.’”

Heidegger cautioned:

In a symptom or a warning signal, “what is coming” “indicates itself,” but not in the sense of something merely occurring, which comes as an addition to what is already present-at-hand; “what is coming” is the sort of thing we are ready for, or which “we weren't ready for” if we have been attending to something else. (1927/, pp. 110-111)

An individual may not recognise the signs that something is about to happen, because they are busy doing something else. Heidegger contended, signs, “always indicate primarily ‘wherein’ one is ‘at’ at any time” (1927/2008, p. 110). When a warning sign is not recognised, and an event subsequently happens and runs its course, in hindsight, a

person is able to discern and see the whole picture. Kierkegaard puts it this way, “Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards” (as cited in Collins, 1953, p. 37).

Sally was “not ready” for the signs that her illness was coming but the signs of stress indicated where they were “at.” Hindsight enables her to know that she was physically “feeling the toll” of the emotional and psychological work she was doing. She found herself “thrown” into a situation where she became physically as well as psychologically low; her mood was stressed. Heidegger (1927/2008) called this “fallen into the world;” meaning a person becomes out of touch with themselves. In this case, Sally was out of touch with her own body. “I thought I should be able to manage,” she said.

I wasn’t a black raven; I was a blue bird

She tells how her career has taken a different trajectory than she envisaged:

I wanted to be a Principal but never managed to push through the glass ceiling. I didn’t manage to persuade a Board that a short little Pakeha lady had the goods to do the job. It was over a period of about seven years in my forties. I was having a little poke to see if I could go further. I got short listed for about six or seven positions but I didn’t manage to ever get someone to say, “We’ll go with her.” At the end, I said to myself, “Accept it, Sally, you’ve got this far, don’t break your heart over it.” I liked the idea of Mrs Principal. I had no brakes put on me but I didn’t manage it. I remember one interview. They asked the short-listed candidates to come and speak to the staff. They swept us in to each take a turn at giving a speech, and there were these three enormous black ravens, three men in their black suits and their white shirts, and then this little thing in a pale blue trouser suit in the middle. And I thought afterwards how incongruous that must have looked. These three black ravens sweeping in and then this little blue bird arriving. If I look from the outside, that’s probably one of the things I see I was fighting against. I didn’t fit the mould. I wasn’t a black raven; I was a blue bird. I don’t think the glass ceiling has been broken in education. A man will get promotion on his potential that he might have the goods; a woman, I think, has to prove that she’s got the goods before she’s taken on. There are still a lot of stops on women. I think it’s still a man’s world. (Sally)

Never being able to assume the role of Principal was a big disappointment for Sally. Over many years, she tried to secure a Principal-ship. She feels she was limited by her gender and restricted by the status quo, which is “a woman doesn’t get promoted to be a Principal in a co-educational school.” She was incongruous and didn’t fit the stereotype, “I didn’t manage to persuade a Board that a short little Pakeha lady had the goods to do the job.”

Kuhn (1970) called “the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community,” a “disciplinary matrix.” (p.175). This would be, Kuhn says, in Heidegger’s sense, “a world.” For Sally, the “world of education” is the matrix of beliefs and values that are shared by those in it, teachers, pupils and boards of trustees. The beliefs of the boards she was interviewed by were such that they didn’t believe in her, or value her enough to appoint her as Principal.

Dreyfus (1991) says, “If I run into trouble in the way my life hangs together, my for-the-sake-of-whichs can show up unintentional-istically as unavailable goals I am trying to reach” (p. 95). Sally’s life wasn’t hanging together and her goals became unavailable. She had to shift her stance and to deliberate about that aspect of her life, and whether she should just accept where she was. Heidegger says:

Dasein finds itself primarily and usually in things because, tending them, distressed by them, it always in some way of other rests in things. Each one of us is what he pursues and cares for. In everyday terms, we understand ourselves and our existence by way of the activities we pursue and the things we take care of. (1927/2008, p. 159)

Sally is an educator and the desire to lead and care for others is embedded in her; it is what she pursues. However, her pilgrimage to Principal-ship was aborted and in the end, she had say to herself, “accept it.”

I'd actually quite like to just be at home, making bread and knitting my dishcloths

When I listened to the interview with Helen, it is the tone of her voice, which made an impression. She sounded very weary and tired, older than her years. For Helen, work has taken its toll:

I'd actually quite like to just be at home, making bread and knitting my dishcloths, reading, going to the film festivals, and growing the plants. And people say, "Oh, you'd be lonely." But I wouldn't. They have very cosy lives some of my friends. Their husbands are earning tonnes of money, so they do things like be the teacher aide at the school or have lots of holidays, work three days a week and have a cleaner. I'd love that. I'm sick of working. But not much chance of that I'm afraid. Ben would never say. That's okay, I've got another 20 years working, I'll support you. I think I choose people who are not going to say - Don't worry darling. What I would like, thank you very much, is a lovely 65-year-old who's extremely well off and says: "Darling, you can retire, we need to do a bit of travelling." That would suit me fine. I'd be out of here. I just want to be at home. I go through all the permutations I can possibly think of, of being financially viable to retire. I think about that next transition and how I would do it. I think about it all the time. (Helen)

At 56 years old, Helen is unsettled and restless, she hankers for retirement, for travel and for the next thing in her life, which she feels may never happen; she obsesses about it continually. She envies some of her friends who have wealthy husbands and don't need to work full time. Heidegger said everyday being-with manifests as levelling or ordinariness, describing it as "lost in the publicness of the *One*" (1927/2008, p. 220). Helen appears to be lost, she chatters about things, but it appears shallow and unformed. She hankers for stimulation and distraction from her situation. She continually compares herself with others and with what her friends do. Heidegger suggested:

That the wan, level lack of mood which is often dogged and not to be mistaken for a bad mood, is far from nothing at all. Rather, it is in this that Dasein becomes assuaged with itself. Being evidences itself as a burden. (1927/2008, p. 173)

Heidegger's words resonate with Helen's mood and the restless unsettled behaviour it engenders. Being in her career has become a burden she no longer enjoys or wants. She says, "I'm sick of working."

Building on their skills: From novice to expert

Many women in the study had developed significant skill level in their work. They were experienced, and mature, reflective and insightful. They appeared to understand their stressors and their needs. Heidegger (1927/2008) said that the resolute individual does not withdraw from his or her circumstances but first discovers what is actually possible, and then grasps hold of that possibility in whatever way he or she feasibly can. The final stories in this chapter enunciate and expand on Heidegger's concept of the resolute individual. They reveal what happens as women build on their skills and use angst as a driving force to discover what is possible, move towards authenticity, develop expertise and become masterful at their careers.

Novice to advanced beginner

She was like.... Jekyll and Hyde

It's those little success stories that block out all the other shit you have to put up with sometimes. I had a girl in my first semester class who was like Jekyll and Hyde. She really made my life hell for – unfortunately semester one, probably the worst time that I could've ever had someone like that in my class. She concocted a whole lot of stories that weren't true. She'd go and complain to Student Success, that sort of thing. Of course, because someone's complained they have to investigate it. Because I didn't know the process – so this is your first year of teaching and Student Success want to investigate why – it's like - Really? In the end nothing happened. She withdrew what she said and it just went away. It was an interesting little learning experience for me, in that I know if anything down the track ever happens and I have a similar situation, I need to be very careful and make sure I'm documenting what goes on, what is said. So I know I've got my bases covered and I'm doing the right thing. Once upon a time

the teacher, the tutor was the one that you respected and looked up to. What they said went. So much has shifted now. It's almost like they expect to be on an equal – some of them do – on an equal par with you. They don't actually respect you as a person in authority. (Katie)

As a new lecturer in a polytechnic, Katie has had to shift her own standards to accommodate the students. She is learning the craft of teaching, and how the good relationships “block out all the other shit you have to put up with.” Katie’s idea of what a teacher was based on a previous model. “Once upon a time the tutor was the one you respected....” She had a notion of being a teacher that is based on a norm from her own years as a student.

Dreyfus (2005) uses the Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1980) skill acquisition model to outline the progress necessary to move from novice to expert. The novice depends on a checklist method to making decisions and judgements; he or she is governed by rules. The expert appears to know as if by intuition what to do. He or she appears to practise with ease, seemingly knowing just what to do in the everyday situation and indeed in the exceptional case.

After a year tertiary teaching, Katie has shifted in her thinking. As a novice teacher, she began the year, following the rules she had learnt. As the year progressed she acquired new skills gained from coping with real situations. She saw that the rules she had learnt don't necessarily work in practice. Following the rules can be problematic. Katie needs to add situational aspects and to be flexible and willing to learn additional maxims such as, “The teacher is respected by her students, because she has earned the right to have their respect.” Katie is moving towards becoming what Aristotle called an advanced beginner (Dreyfus, 2005).

LaBoskey (1989) worked with trainee teachers that evidenced qualities consistent with reflection such as broad-mindedness, enthusiasm, and responsibility (Dewey, 1933). LaBoskey noticed these “alert novices” were self-confident and had a “passionate creed” they sought to pursue in their teaching. They were apt to ask “why” questions as well as “what” and “how” questions. Katie is a fast learner, she asks a lot of questions, and she reflects on her practice. She tells herself “I need to be more careful.” Like LaBoskey’s “alert novices” she takes responsibility for her actions, and is growing more confident in her ability to “do the right thing.”

Becoming competent

I learnt about stress and what my limits were

However, developing skills takes a long time and sometimes women don’t realise they are not yet ready to progress. Libby describes a situation, which arose early in her career:

It was one of those opportunities I felt I should take at the time. To see how it went. I’d been at S for three years. I won an interview and I had a sense of “I should be doing this, but I’m not 100% comfortable with it too.” I had issues with the way that it was handled as well. I find it really difficult to explain what happened. I remember feeling really upset. In one sense I was happy and I understood it was good that I hadn’t won that position but I just had all this emotion. I really struggled and I couldn’t put it into words what I was feeling about not winning the role, it was very strange. I remember thinking; I can’t talk it through. Hindsight has shown me that what happened since has been better. In hindsight, it was a lot better for the school, but at the time I just – I couldn’t get that. I was very emotionally tied to the school and had an affinity with the families and the children. I felt really angry and let down because I think too and it’s funny looking back, I felt that if I didn’t win that role of DP then I was ready to leave the school. I think that was what the sense was, “I’m not staying here then.” There was that sense of loss. There was a grieving process. I’d never encountered it before due to my youth and inexperience. It was huge learning, just huge. I learnt a lot about stress and what my limits were, I learnt about how much I can take on. I learnt that I had reached my limit professionally and I needed a lot more experience. It was an opportunity that came up too soon in my career.

(Libby)

In applying for the position, Libby was conflicted “not 100% comfortable.” Yet, she wasn’t able to recognise her discomfort was there for a reason, a sign she shouldn’t necessarily apply. Because of her “youth and inexperience” she didn’t read the sign. When she didn’t get the position, she was very emotionally involved, and had neither the maturity nor the resilience to be able to talk about it. Not recognizing her discomfort as a sign meant Libby couldn’t anticipate what might happen (Heidegger, 1927/2008). She says, “Hindsight has shown me that what happened since has been better.”

Libby had a decision to make as to whether she should apply for the Deputy Principal role. Making the decision gave her anxiety; still she took the risk of applying. Had she won the role she may have been elated, as it was, her choice led her to a feeling of failure and confusion.

Dreyfus said, “Learners at this stage, find themselves on an emotional roller coaster” (2005, p.143). Learning to analyse their mistakes, however, letting “them sink in” means that only then will they become an expert (p.143). A woman who is an expert gets more involved in the task, accepts the anxiety of choice, and this prepares her for further skill advancement.

Developing expertise

Libby is a proficient educator who produces work of a high standard and who now understands what is important. She is developing expertise, but she says, she is still learning about timing.

Take this time to stretch and grow

When I came back from maternity leave, the same role came up; they don't come up very often, and I grabbed it as quick as I could. So the last year has been very challenging, returning to work and being a Mum with a young child, wanting to carry my career on at exactly the same rate it was before I had children. It's very busy but I'm in a role that I'm extremely happy with and I want to carry on and nurture. I'd like to lay roots in this school. I've found my niche. At the start of last year, my Principal asked "Where do you see yourself in the school?" And I said "I would like to see myself in a Syndicate Leader role." I like seeing myself amongst the decision makers within the school. I like to contribute, to feel that I'm making a difference. And about that jump to Deputy Principal, am I ready for that? No, I don't think I am because I can now see that I've got things that I want to work on. I want to further develop my leadership skills, how to manage a team. I need to study, do postgraduate work. That's further down the track, family is happening at the moment. I was talking to my Principal about it last week and he said "Give yourself a break, it will come." In my twenties I was "I want it all and I want it now." I've learnt, there's been a sense as I've gotten older, I'm learning that my time will come. Take this time to stretch and grow. (Libby)

Libby is aspirational: "I like to see myself amongst the decision makers within the school." Although she wants to progress her career "at exactly the same rate," she does counter this with, "That's probably further down the track, family is happening at the moment." She knows it's not just the skills that she needs, the timing needs to be right as well. She needs to factor in the needs of her family and to be less anxious about things happening all at once. She needs to "take this time to stretch and grow."

Libby is realistic about not being ready to be a Deputy Principal. Over the ensuing years she has grown in her ability to be more reflective. She still has a tendency to race ahead, to try to do too much too soon. But, she knows her limitations; she is beginning to see what she does not know. She now has more experience and a willingness to take risks; she is acquiring more expertise. Her Principal has essentially told her to give herself space, "give yourself a break, it will come." She is beginning to have a bigger picture view, gaining depth of understanding and expertise.

Being reflective: moving towards mastery

Heidegger (Dreyfus, 2005) told of another stage, which goes beyond being an expert, and says that there are a few superior people who reach this. These people are never satisfied they have done the right thing because they feel there is no, one right thing to do, there is always room for improvement. Such people, continually “brood over their successes and failures, replaying them over and over in their mind” (p.144) and so go on to gain a new level of skilful coping. These “continually anxious experts” (p.144) possess a masterful awareness of the whole evolving situation. They are known and admired for their *phrönesis* or practical wisdom.

Aristotle defined *phrönesis* as not just a skill (*techne*), because it involves the ability to decide how to achieve a certain end, but also the ability to reflect upon and determine outcomes consistent with the aim of “living well.” The Greek word is “*eudemonia*” often translated as human flourishing. At the time when a person with *phrönesis*, a *phrönimos* grasps the whole temporarily unfolding concrete situation, then her subsequent action is the result of gradual refinement, of mastery acquired out of long, involved, anxious experience (Dreyfus, 2005).

Sellman (2012) outlines ways practitioners can develop competence, to become increasingly reflective. As a minimum for a competent person to begin to demonstrate professional *phrönesis* is to recognise “what it is she or he knows and does not know (and can and cannot do) but also to acknowledge that she or he is ignorant of what she or he does not know (and cannot do)” (p.127). This he contended is the first insight, which will set the practitioner “out on a voyage of discovery” (p.122).

Sellman (2012) argued, competence acts as a forerunner for professional *phrönesis*, the competent practitioner reveals a desire to understand more deeply the requirement of “the messiness of everyday practice” (p.123). Libby is aware of her own shortcomings, in both competence and knowledge, however, she does possess intellectual integrity and is developing what Sellman (2012) described as a “personal danger box” (p.124). Sellman maintained, the *phrönesis* sees it as their duty to “reduce the potential for harm” that continuing in a state of ignorance about the contents of such a box might bring.

The skilled *phrönesis*: A resolute individual

Carol says:

As an older person going into the classroom, I think, it’s an asset. So when the kids try something on I say, “Don’t even go there. Been there, done that, it’s not going to work this time either.” I think there’s a richness that I bring, a life richness that I bring as an older person into a career. (Carol)

To be a classroom teacher in her mid to late forties is a joy for Carol who enjoys the light bulb moments and oozes enthusiasm and excitement about her work. Aristotle (trans. 1999) said *phrönesis* is concerned with how to act in particular situations. A person can learn the principles of action, but in order to apply them in the real world, in situations they could not have foreseen, requires experience of the world. For example, if a person knows that she should be honest, she might act in certain situations in ways that cause pain and offence. Knowing how to apply honesty in balance with other considerations—and in specific contexts—requires experience. This is what Carol brings to teaching, and she is aware that she has skills that she would not have had earlier, “I think those life skills bring a richness to the job.” Carol has *techne* but she

also has *phronesis*. She has skill, plus the ability to be reflective and to know just how to act given the circumstances.

Like Carol, Tina is a woman with high skill level and *phronesis*, who continually questions and reflects:

When I was starting my career here, there wasn't a very inclusive culture. I think it could have been better. I know it's especially difficult for women. I do a lot of studies on gender issues and I've become much more aware of it over the last few years because I'm on a committee where we are looking at issues specifically for women. As much as you want to say "Let's even the playing field for women in academia," it's hard because women also need to devote time to other things that are important for them. It's very difficult. (Tina)

As part of the professoriate Tina is aware that she is in a position to be of influence and can respond to a situation in its largest sense. A situation may be complex, but she is prepared to look at things from different perspectives.

Kiri wanted to continue to build on her skills, and tells of how she came to be a principal:

I was a sought after advisor, I started to work in management as well and with principals, but in the back of my mind I always thought, "I've never been a principal, so am I really the person who can tell you to do this?" I need to do this myself to make sure I can. (Kiri)

After ten years in the role, and feeling ready for a change, Kiri is thinking about what that might be:

So some of the dreaming I've been doing – and this year I've got a sabbatical. I managed to lift my head up and actually put my application in. I'm looking forward to it because it's going to give me a bit of space to do some proper thinking. That's what I don't have in this job. When people say "Where next?" I haven't had time to think. So, I don't know. I enjoy study and I've done none in the last 10 years. I haven't had room to. I started my Masters but I've never carried on. Maybe that's what I should be thinking about, actually taking a big,

deep breath and thinking about doing some study or following something up. I don't know. You do make a difference. I speak extensively, at different events. Last week I was at the Ministry. I work with some of their people around what works for Maori student achievement. I'm on panels and things, which is really interesting. I like that because that's the bit that keeps me thinking and gives me exposure to the current research and that kind of thing, which has always fascinated me. I wouldn't find it arduous. I'd really enjoy it, actually. I tell myself. So that could be where it led to in the future. I don't know. (Kiri)

With twenty-five years experience in working in education, Kiri is an educational leader, aware of her identity, her heritage and her calling. She is however, human and as Heidegger insisted, all human beings have angst. A person's anxiety or disquiet is an essential tool which breaks in on their everyday life and arouses them from their complacency (1927/2008). Kiri has used her experiences of angst throughout her life to inform her decisions. She has continually questioned and reflected on her career journey as she has sought to be authentic. Now as she wonders what will be next, she seeks to further extend herself and entertains the possibility of returning to study. Reviewing where she is now and where she wants to go next, several times, she says, "I don't know."

Dreyfus (2005) questioned why it is that some people continually replay their achievements, and are continually obsessed with joy and failure. Heidegger (1927/2008) described the anxiety of guilt, which is structural, and not to do with wrongdoing. Such guilt is beholden to cultural norms, which as Dasein we can't get past. However, if a person faces the anxiety caused by their ontological guilt he or she can act with what Heidegger called resoluteness. The irresolute individual responds to the general situation; a resolute individual responds to the concrete situation of taking action.

Sellman (2012) argued *phrōnesis* as the vital attribute of any practice that aspires to better humanity. This means the *phrōnimos* is aspirational, seeking to move towards the

Aristotelian archetype of “doing the right thing to the right person at the right time in the right way and for the right reason” (p. 127). Yet, *phrōnesis* cannot be categorised, and its development depends on a mode of nurturing Sellman insisted, is “seemingly unavailable within technicist-driven educational establishments.” Yet, he noted, some practitioners do seek to become a *phrōnesis* in spite of institutional barriers. The personal cost of doing so is however, significant, “the cost of constantly accommodating technicist demands while attempting to maintain professional integrity” (2012, p. 128).

Where some people might be bounded by the “technicist demands” Sellman (2012) referred to, Kiri responds to accommodate the demands on her, and her feelings of angst by choosing to “lift my head up and actually put my application in.” Heidegger said this movement is experienced as freedom, the experience of the human being revealing its potential by acting in the world. To act in such a way is to be authentic (1927/2008).

Within her field Kiri is acknowledged as a skilled practitioner and influential leader. She is a role model for other Maori, and says, “You do make a difference.” She is an example of Heidegger’s resolute individual who “deviates both from the beginner’s rules and the public’s standards” (H. L. Dreyfus, 2005).

Aristotle (trans. 1999) held that having *phrōnesis* is both necessary and sufficient for being virtuous, a quality evidenced by the women described in this final section. For Heidegger it is only irresolute people driven in random directions by chance events, who fail to come to grips with their fate (1927/2008). The corresponding term, when dealing with many people who historicise together, is destiny. These women are big picture thinkers when it comes to their role. They care not just about their own careers, they are concerned with the destiny of many other people, whether students, Maori, or

other women. Because of this, these women are not conformists. Having found their own voice they have been prepared to separate themselves from mainstream views. They are women who agonise over their decisions, who continually reflect and think deeply. They are not only called, they are masterful and virtuous, women who fulfil Heidegger's definition of being authentic.

Summary

This chapter is concerned with the question "Who am I becoming?" It identifies career drivers towards women becoming authentic. An impelling force for the women in this study was to have their own identity, and to build a career that is individual and unique. Another driver, which directed their movement towards authenticity was having a calling. Not a religious calling as such, but a secular calling where a woman gains meaning for her life by becoming personally fulfilled (Hall & Chandler, 2005). Often this calling was experienced as a one-off event, although sometimes it came gradually over a longer period. For women in education, as exemplified by the women in this study, the call to be an educator, to make a difference in people's lives was very powerful.

In following this call, in seeking to have their own identity and pursuing an individual career, these women can feel different from their peers, alone and unnoticed. Their movement away from what other women typically does comes at personal cost. This cost however, is not as great as the cost of working in education, an industry that demands high levels of emotional work (Hochschild, 1983).

Women coped with this emotional cost in various ways. Oftentimes they were not aware of the long-term effects of carrying such a heavy burden, and experienced symptoms of stress, burnout and sometimes a complete breakdown in their health and wellbeing. These experiences, rather than diminishing their desire to enact a career, tended to increase their self-awareness and resilience, and strengthen their ability to influence and support others.

Returning to study at various times in their careers was the norm for these women, who completed postgraduate qualifications, sometimes over many years. Rather than finding study was a burden and a stressor, they commented on the pleasure they gained from it, and on its transformative nature.

Women in this study were reflective and thoughtful about their careers, and agonised at length about their decision-making. Many participants have developed significant skill levels and combined with their ability to reflect, made them masterful and prescient in their dealings with others. Some possess what Heidegger (Hall & Chandler, 2005; 1927/2008) called resoluteness, and what Aristotle (trans. 1999) termed *phrōnesis*. They possess not just skills, but practical wisdom, a masterful understanding of the whole unfolding situation.

Chapters Six, Seven and Eight have identified and outlined the three overarching themes emerging from this study. In the next chapter, these findings will be further discussed and synthesised. A theoretical model based on the three overarching themes will be proposed.

Chapter Nine

Emergent Themes

Do not go where the path may lead,
Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail
-- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Overview

This Chapter discusses and synthesises key findings from the three previous chapters. Chapters Six, Seven and Eight introduced the study's three overarching themes entitled, "Where have I come from?" "Who will help me?" and "Who am I becoming?" Drawing together the three emergent themes, a women's career model is proposed, to provide a useful heuristic from which to view women's careers.

Influences from the past

Chapter Six addressed the question, "Where have I come from?" The concepts of habitus and historicity were introduced as the first theme emerging from this research project. I proposed that utilising them in tandem could provide a deeper understanding of women's careers and lives, their motivations and actions.

The habitus (Bourdieu, 1990), historicity (Heidegger, 1927/2008), family of origin, culture and norms were critical in shaping career identity for the participants in this study. If they came from a background of "privilege" this motivated them to "return the favours." Yet, many of these women had restricted cultural capital. They had

experienced financially constrained backgrounds and often came from uneducated and working class families. Key to the accounts of these women was that in spite of limited cultural capital, which often meant a lack of confidence, self-esteem, or identity, their habitus adjusted and was shaped, and they established a strong sense of identity. Essentially limited cultural capital did not necessarily restrict; rather it tended to inspire.

A disposition towards teaching and leadership—identified early in their lives—meant the women in this study were both people and achievement oriented. In addition, many of these women attested to being different from others in their families, feeling somewhat on the edge or “the only one.”

Bourdieu’s construct of habitus, which refers to not just an individualised ego, but rather an “individual trace of an entire collective history” (1990, p.9) had particular salience for those women from collectivist cultures, in particular, the Maori women. As they became increasingly socialised into their Maori culture and language, their tikanga and te Reo Maori, these women found that, to represent and to stand up for Maori, was “culturally embedded” in them (Iellatchitch et al., 2003, p. 730). In the case of the Maori women in this study, Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital, “The accumulated result of educational and cultural effort, undertaken by the agent or by ancestors” (Iellatchitch et al., 2003, p. 734) was validated in the way they pursued their careers, seeing themselves as leaders, not just for their students, rather, “for all Maori.”

For all the participants in this study—whether from a collectivist or an individualistic culture—a growing awareness of their identity was seen as crucial to career agency and decision-making. This identity formation included a great deal of fine tuning as women

continued to work consciously towards building their own psychological identity, a work which can be likened to a personal platform from which they viewed their world. Gadamer (2004) called this view a personal “horizon of understanding” (p. 302). He claimed that our horizons are always in the process of being formed. Part of this process is in encountering the past and understanding the “tradition from which we come” (Gadamer, 2004, p. 317). For the women in this study, self-understanding and knowledge of their background, tradition and culture was key to identity formation for the women in this study.

Without a clear sense of identity these women lacked resolve. As they gained confidence and self-belief they became determined to move ahead with agency. This was poignantly portrayed in the narratives of women who came from disempowering backgrounds, growing up in situations where they were not encouraged to pursue learning or a professional career. The process of coming to know who they were and to believe in themselves, took time.

The fluid and dynamic nature of their habitus adjusted and changed throughout these women’s lives and careers and was heightened by experiences, and shaped by influences in the field. These findings provide evidence that Bourdieu’s habitus (1977) provides an apposite construct to study women’s career pathways.

The influence of care: a game changer

The psychological impact of being cared for gave the women in this study self-understanding and assisted personal sense making. Chapter Seven examined the effect other people had to foster self-confidence in the participants. It outlined the influence of

the care plus the support of family, partners, mothers, teachers, professors and colleagues to motivate these women to strive to “become the best they could be.” These influences were ongoing in that they enabled and impelled the women in this study over many years. The “voices in my head” notion resonated time and again throughout their stories as a powerful driver and positive influencer in enacting their careers. Their own voices in their heads might have been telling them, “I wouldn’t be good enough.” However, the voices of significant and caring others incited them to move ahead, with comments such as, “You could quite easily do this” and “Just go for it, see what you think.”

The caring influence of these significant others was not always for a prolonged period. Sometimes there was only a short window of time in a woman’s life when a few prescient words of encouragement from a key person made a profound difference. Care at career transition points was seen to have a strong impact.

The influence of two family members in particular, was highly important across most women in this study. First, the influence of the mother, and second, that of a supportive partner, whose career often took a back-seat role. Having a supportive mother, who believed unconditionally in her, had inestimable influence in a woman’s life. Mother’s support was often acknowledged as being a key motivator for these women to become forerunners for other family members and Mother’s “care-filled” and inspirational words were often quoted during an interview. Having a partner, who was prepared to let his career take “a back seat,” was often the norm. Most women in this study described their partner’s career as less demanding than their own. Further, they attested to their

partner's support as vital to their ongoing career progression. Care from a supportive partner helped them maintain perspective on their careers and lives.

Essentially, the way they were cared for by others changed the way these women thought about themselves with comments such as, "You can be something else," "You choose, it's your chance," "You are wise beyond your years." These comments echoed through the deep canyons of their minds returning to them time and again, resounding through the decades. These positive and empowering words also had the power to extend and multiply their effect, as the women sought to give to others what they had received, to pass it on.

This multiplying effect was evidenced not just in cases where women received care in its positive form. Situations were discussed in Chapter Seven where women experienced the effects of Heideggerian Care (1927/2008) in its imperfect state, when they faced overt prejudice and discrimination in the workplace. In these situations, a consideration of Bourdieu's concept of field (1986) as applied to career was salient.

Each career field values certain combinations of capital, with practices known to the players who are either limited or enabled by them (Iellatchitch et al., 2003). As a career field, education attributes value to various aspects of capital and practices that are field-specific. That is, the field of education has its own rules and protocols. The women in this study, who experienced discrimination, redundancy and restructuring, questioned the "rules of the game." They felt "on the edge," sometimes sidelined on the field, yet still determined to "play the game." In such situations, their confidence was temporarily diminished and their agency reduced. Yet, interestingly, as a result they tended to, in

effect, seek out different teams, to coach and enable other players; players who were also marginalised and excluded.

Although initially restricted, these women chose to move towards rather than away from others. They became more aware of others' needs and developed more empathy for other people making comments such as, "I'm a little kinder than I was." Crossley (2001) stated involvement in a field moulds the habitus, and the habitus in turn moulds the actions that reproduce the field. In this way field and habitus are linked in a mutual relationship. The women in this study experienced this mutual connection. As their habitus adjusted, they adjusted their position in the field by, for example, changing their role in a school or applying for advancement.

Another way women in this study adjusted their position in the field was in the growth of cultural capital. This took various forms, the most prevalent was through seeking further educational opportunities and qualifications. These women were life long learners, continually looking to increase their skills and qualifications. Without exception they had all sought additional educational opportunities throughout their careers. Vaccaro and Lovell's (2010) research of mature women college students found study brought stress but also inspiration. The participants in this study were committed to achieving their educational goals and felt a strong need for further education, experiencing it as transformative and a bridge to a new career phase (Hayes & Flannery, 2000; Leppel, 1984; Lewis, 1988; Vaccaro & Lovell, 2010).

Growth in cultural capital through education gave rise to a shift in these women's prejudices or preconceptions. This in turn, meant their horizons adjusted and they

gained an altered worldview and perspective (Gadamer, 2004). Further, as they accumulated cultural capital and shifted in their worldview, they often went on to take up leadership roles, thus increasing their economic and social capital. Symbolic capital is the worth ascribed to amassing capitals: cultural, economic and social within the field (Iellatchitch et al., 2003). These women used their symbolic capital not only as a means to gain or hold power in leadership positions, but also to enable and empower others. Leadership was manifest as taking responsibility for others in particular from their own culture, ethnic group and other women. In this way, psychological shift facilitated by education and/or advancement in cultural capital translated to an outward change, reflected in their objective career behaviours. Yet, in spite of this, their seemingly confident outward personas belied their inner struggles and uncertainties.

The women in this study agonised at length not just over their outward decisions, measured by objective career markers, but also on subjective indicators such as their career identity, preparedness for leadership and self-esteem. They focused strongly on their inner process and were reflective and insightful about their careers. Reflecting on Bakan (1966), Marshall argued, “Women’s journey of development is typically more inwardly oriented than that of men” (1989, p. 280). The narratives of these women were peppered with comments reflecting this inward process: “I always feel guilty about something,” “That haunts me,” or “The whole process of feeling I don’t know enough, I wouldn’t be good enough” and even, “In my darker moments, sometimes it feels like I’ve come to a cliff, that I’m on the edge of a precipice.”

Throughout this study an emergent trait that was evident was that the women’s decisions had a moral underpinning. Previously mentioned has been the effect of

discrimination, which tended initially to discourage, but often led to inspire the recipient to provide better conditions for others. They typically made comments such as, “I think because I lacked that.... that’s why I make sure I do that.” Positive influence through the care of others contributed to this phenomenon of seeking to “pay it forward.” Making comments such as, “Somebody did it for me, I’m going to do it for you,” they were motivated by a need to care and show concern for others. Heidegger (1927/2008) opined care is fundamental to human existence, an argument embodied by the women in this study.

Moving towards authenticity

Heidegger (1927/2008) defined an authentic individual as being prepared to separate themselves from what others do, and also to think reflectively. Chapter Eight identified career drivers towards women becoming authentic. Already discussed was that being increasingly aware of their own identity and pursuing educational opportunities were key drivers towards these women moving towards authenticity. Another driver, which directed their movement towards authenticity was having a calling.

Several women described being passionate about their work, with comments such as, “It’s my passion and I love it” and “You’re actually building people. I think that’s probably what makes me more passionate.” There is no doubt that the calling experienced by women in this study to work in education, in often quite specific ways directed and motivated them, giving them agency and purpose. Having a calling can impel: the desire to do something, which makes a difference to the world, is a powerful

motivator (Hall & Chandler, 2005; Lips-Wiersma, 2002). This research reveals the effects of a call can have impact over many years.

In following a call, women were prompted to pursue an individual career, feeling this is the work “I was born to do.” Yet, for many women in this study, a change in perspective due to the moulding and shaping of their habitus and the building of cultural capital through education meant they developed an increased awareness of their own sense of privilege. They became conscious of collective and social justice issues. In turn, they sought to be less individualistic in their career decisions and as a result, sought to help others less fortunate or marginalised, saying, “I tend to feel more comfortable working with people who are less confident or marginalised.” I contend this kind of imperative; the calling to work “on the edge,” is arguably a more satisfying career motivator, and a deeper and more moral imperative for these women. Rather than the work, “I was born to do,” an alternate mantra may be apt, “the work that needs to be done.”

Skill development, expertise and the notion of *phrōnesis* were also discussed in Chapter Eight (Benner, 1984). Heidegger described a stage, which few “superior” people reach, a stage beyond being an expert (H. L. Dreyfus, 2005). This “desirable” state of *phrōnesis*, is consistent with living well. Aristotle (trans. 1999) called it, *eudaimonia*, which literally means to “experience a sense of flourishing.”

A significant finding is that the women in this study described as possessing *phrōnesis*, were not necessarily in late career, but were spread across the age groups. Although the process of developing *phrōnesis* took time, time was not the only variable involved in

acquiring *phrōnesis*. It was a complex and iterative process, which is, “felt as a guiding force” (Frank, 2012, p. 57). Those described in this way were women who had been able to achieve a sense of equilibrium, who had not become overwhelmed emotionally by the demands of their work. They had built on their skills in ways, which meant they could continue to take on fresh challenges, and maintain perspective on their careers and lives.

Kinsella and Pitman (2012) commented on the elusive nature of *phrōnesis* for professional practice and stated there is no clear-cut agreement in “pinning it down” (p.163). In a comprehensive compilation of research and theory on *phrōnesis* and its implication for education and practice, they insisted *phrōnesis* “cannot be instrumentalised. We know it when we see it, yet to put it into words is a challenge” (2012, p. 163).

Sellman (2012) described how the professional *phrōnimos*, the person with *phrōnesis* is always striving, aware of the limitations in which they practice, to be the best. Dreyfus called the *phrōnimos* a “continually anxious expert,” who struggles to comprehend the limits of his or her own professional competence at the same time striving towards remedying any faults (2005, p. 144). The women in this study identified as possessing *phrōnesis* were always seeking the optimum pathway to follow, striving to be the best they can become (H. L. Dreyfus, 2005; Sellman, 2012).

Sellman identified the demanding nature of this work which requires a, “deep understanding of the turbulent and dynamic nature of practice, a recognition of the value of some form of crucial self-reflection and a resolve not to allow complacency to

jeopardise future practice” (2012, p. 116). He also alluded to the tense connection between agency and structure, arguing that the *phrōnimos* needs awareness of just how their practice is limited by, “features of the working environment over which one has little influence or control” (p.116).

The women in this study, identified as possessing *phrōnesis* were never complacent, they continually contemplated what the next stage in their career might be (Sellman, 2012). Although keenly self-aware and self-critical, they continued to move with agency through each transition that they confronted. At the same time, they remained acutely aware of the limitations of working in the demanding field of education, which at times confined and at other times enabled them. They identified recent choices they had made in order to remain energised and enthusiastic, yet pragmatic about their career. These were: choosing to move to another city for a better lifestyle, limiting the number of international conferences attended each year or obtaining refreshment through sabbatical or study leave.

These women epitomise what Birmingham (2004) asserted, that in order to enhance human flourishing “reflection as *phrōnesis*—is both essentially moral and morally essential” (p. 323). They had developed “practical wisdom” (trans. 1999) and satisfy Heidegger’s definition of the resolute individual who displays a truly authentic way of being (1927/2008).

Towards a career theory for women: small beginnings

This study sought to contribute to the extant research on women's careers by using a phenomenological research methodology, steeped in a subjective view. Although the goal of this study was not to produce a women's career theory, there is some evidence that tilling the soil in the garden of women's career journeys may have prepared the ground in which seeds of a distinctly women's career theory might germinate.

In Chapter Five I described how the tri-partite theme structure arose, with the three themes based on the past, the present and the future becoming evident. These themes surfaced through working closely with the data and in response to an awareness of Heidegger's (1927/2008) existential approach to the continuum between life and death and the realisation that our existence is limited. The past concerned itself with all those influences from a woman's family of origin, her culture and roots. Into this mix was stirred Bourdieu's organic and dynamic concept of habitus and Heidegger's concept of historicity. The influence of Sorge or care, and a woman's movement towards authenticity emerged as the second and third themes, representing present and future time. In working with the three identified themes it became apparent they were not mutually exclusive, rather they intersected and overlapped. There is evidence to suggest that a causal or recursive nature exists between them. There appears to be an organic synergy between the themes of habitus, care and authenticity. I propose the three themes are linked by time, and by psychosocial and environmental factors.

A woman's habitus has been shown to be vital in establishing her on her career journey, in the formation of identity, identification of early dispositions and values and early

influences. The women in this study have been described as being take-charge individuals, with a love and aptitude for learning. Yet, without the formative influence of caring others, it cannot be known whether these women would have advanced as they have done in their careers. There is no complementary sample of women with which to compare them. These women testified to the impact of significant people as influencers and sponsors, and recognised the ongoing influence they experienced from these people. The influence of Sorge or care can be seen to act as a catalyst, which increased women's confidence and career agency. Care impelled them in their career progression and increased their progress. Without care, would these independent, forthright and intelligent women have progressed their careers with the same agency and purpose?

Arguably the third theme of authenticity could also be linked to the first two themes. Along with their descriptions concerning learning and leadership, these women also told how in their early years, they didn't necessarily mind being different. From a young age, they were prepared to challenge the status quo. These early indications of a move towards authenticity are there from their early years, in their habitus, identified by themselves and by others, hypothetically shaped and influenced by the support and care of others in the field. These indications become more evident as the women developed their skills and expertise, moving towards mastery and *phrönesis*. Again, could the women identified as being authentic (H. L. Dreyfus, 1991; Heidegger, 1927/2008) and possessing *phrönesis* (Aristotle, trans. 1999) have "become" so without the driving influence of people such as a keenly supportive mother described as "my mother is still my role model at 85."

The themes emerged as knots in the web as shown in the diagram (Figure 9.1).

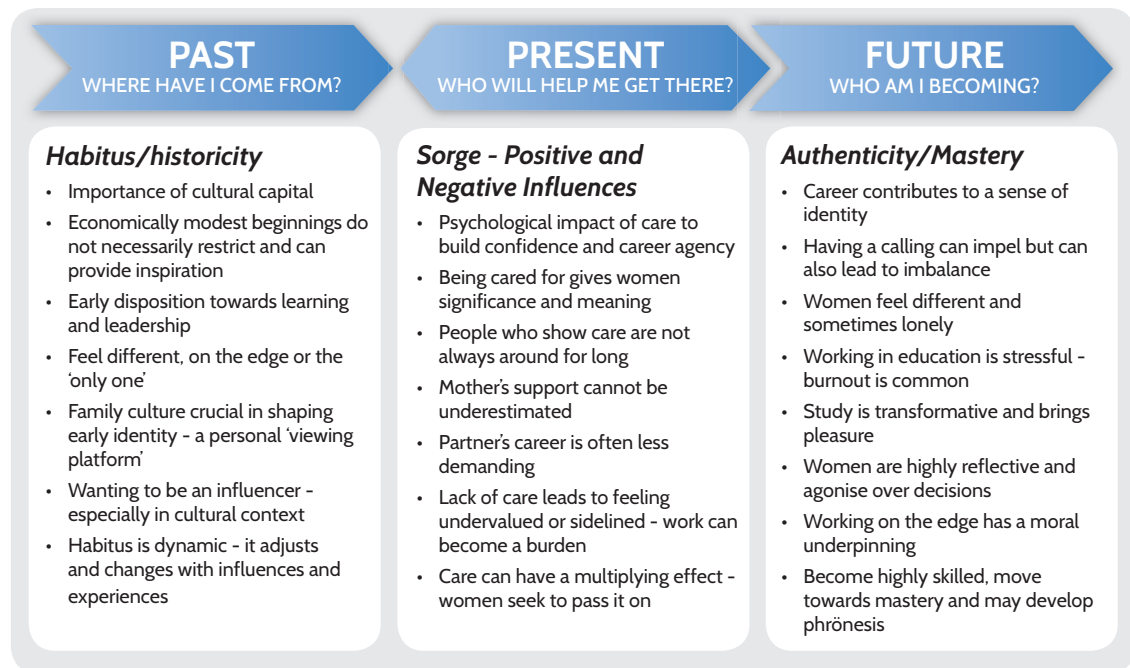


Figure 9.1 The tri-partite structure of past-present-future themes.

Meaning-making and Career

Dobrow (2013) suggested that people's quest for meaning may be their primary drive (Frankl, 1959). This research has sought to gain a deeper understanding of women's career experiences and to discover how they make meaning of their lives through their careers, in keeping with the title of this research "Career as meaning-making: A hermeneutic phenomenological study of women's lived experiences." By interviewing fourteen women about their career experiences, phenomenological anecdotes were crafted to expose key aspects of their careers, and to examine how these women ascribed meaning, or made sense of, their career experiences. From these anecdotes overarching themes were then developed.

This interpretive research focuses on how fourteen different women experience a phenomenon, that of their career. This research is concerned with what it means for these women to have a career. The key research question, which drives this research, is: “What does it mean for a woman to have a career?”

Chapter Six describes influences of a woman’s past, and was entitled, “Where have I come from?” When the research question is answered through this theme, a woman might answer, “Having a career means I can make sense of my present situation, and my future, through being conscious and aware of the influences of my past, my culture and my heritage. Who I am now, is strongly influenced by where I come from.”

Chapter Seven concerns the influence of a particular kind of caring in women’s lives. This way of caring, essentially makes people feel more human, and helps them understand themselves more fully. When a woman answers the question of “What does it mean for a woman to have a career?” through this theme she might answer, “When others genuinely care and believe in me, I move forward more strongly in my career, I have more confidence, and I can begin to return the favour for others. My career and my life have little meaning and become a burden without the concern and foresight of other people.”

Chapter Eight focuses on “Moving towards authenticity” and discussed women’s non-conformity, their preparedness to take risks and to achieve something that makes them different from others. If a woman answers the question of “What does it mean for me to have a career?” using this theme, her answer could be, “Being true to myself, following my own pathway, and becoming increasingly masterful are what it means for me to

have a career; I want to continue to grow and learn and to be the best I can be in my career.”

The metaphor of a woven tapestry provides a helpful image. If the complex patterning of a woman’s career and life is compared to a woven tapestry, then the first theme of habitus, historicity and culture can be seen to act as natural based warp threads. These warp threads, although hidden in the completed work, are an essential part of the finished product. Drivers towards authenticity such as: the search for identity, pursuit of higher education, and impact of a call; bring colour and richness to the overall pattern. They act like the weft threads that are worked over portions of the warp to create the design evident in a tapestry.

Although not essential in a tapestry, the finest tapestries sometimes included more expensive gold or silver threads. The influence of being cared-for has the effect of enriching and deepening a woman’s career experiences, just as the addition of a golden thread might do to a particularly fine tapestry. Undergirded by a strong fabric of natural warp threads, the evolving picture of a woman’s movement towards authenticity is highlighted and enhanced by the glistening gold threads of care. In this way, a woman’s career in all its dynamic complexity can be seen to emerge, like an intricately woven tapestry, of beauty, creativity and strength.

This discussion chapter has focused on the most significant contributions of the study. By undertaking a synthesis of the three themes introduced in Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight, it offers an emergent women’s career model. The next chapter considers whether the study findings are supported by current career theory and research, and returns to the

review by O'Neil et al (2008) to consider how this research contributes to the extant research on women's careers.

Chapter Ten

Discussion

Between stimulus and response, there is a space.
In that space is our power to choose our response.
In our response lies our growth and our freedom.
-- Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*

Introduction

This chapter connects the study findings to emergent and current career theory. Firstly, it discusses the potential of Bourdieu's habitus in career development theorising. Secondly, it considers the study findings in the light of current career theory and research including meaning making, calling, and authenticity. Thirdly, it provides a background to the Heideggerian concept of care, how it has been extended and has relevance to current career theory. Fourthly, it returns to and extends the discussion on Bakan's concepts of agency and communion. Finally, it seeks to determine what this study contributes to "what is known and what is unknown about women's careers" by returning to the review of women's career literature and research by O'Neil et al (2008). This chapter therefore provides a bridge between the study's themes contained in the previous chapter and the conclusions, contributions, and implications in the final chapter.

Career theories and models

The study sought to gain a composite description of the phenomenon of interest, by staying close to the women's stories. The stories provide a means of getting at the "thing," the phenomenon itself. Three broad themes were crafted as a means of making sense of the phenomenon, thus enabling a description of the universal essence of the "thing" (van Manen 1990); the "thing" being the phenomenon of a woman's career. The primary focus of a hermeneutic phenomenological study is to describe experiences and find meanings. By using hermeneutic phenomenological research, this study sought to obtain an "insider's" view, through the perspective of the women participants themselves as to what it means to them to have a career. The first theme concerned the influence of sociological aspects of a woman's life and included Bourdieu's habitus, the implications of which for career theory will now be addressed.

Bourdieu's habitus theory: it's potential in career development

Since the time of Parsons (1909) and in spite of his proclaimed belief to the contrary, the emphasis on psychological and individual influences has been the primary consideration in career counselling interventions. Social variables, by contrast, have received little attention, even though sociological research has supported the effect they have on career development (Constantine & Erickson, 1998; Gottfredson, 1981). Psychological theories such as Super's (1990) exemplify the splitting of psychological variables and social variables, the latter although incorporated are not elaborated on with respect to how an individual might process them (Vilhjálmsson, 2003). Contextual aspects of career however, have been considered in more recent theoretical developments, with an increased emphasis on sociological aspects (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2000; McMahon & Patton, 2006; Savickas, 2005).

Bourdieu's habitus theory has been proposed to mitigate theoretical problems in the career development research field, which have arisen due to a disparate emphasis on individual and social aspects. In fact, the concept of habitus was developed by Bourdieu to address the unsatisfactory dichotomy between the individual and society (Vilhjálmsson, 2003). Further, Bourdieu's habitus (1977) with its emphasis on embodied history and active adjustment to shaping and moulding in the field has been suggested to provide a deeper understanding of the nature of both subjective and objective career (Iellatchitch et al., 2003, p. 730).

Heidegger's (1927/2008) concept of historicity with emphasis on a person's culture and heritage—what they have inherited at birth—is limited in explaining the dynamism and fluidity of career. However, developed as research method, and utilised in tandem with Bourdieu's habitus has yielded a deeper understanding of the careers of women in this study. Bourdieu's theory can explain why Debbie who came from a working class Irish background commented that she didn't feel good enough; because of her lack of socialised subjectivity, she did not feel comfortable at University. Even after nearly thirty years, she feels she has remained caught within the limits of the system of structures in which she was raised. Although Debbie has worked in academia for many years and attained objective success, she still feels her habitus can immobilise her towards achieving certain outcomes (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Viewing Debbie's career through a Bourdieusian lens, avoids a choice between objective and subjective career; it pays attention to both aspects simultaneously (Iellatchitch et al., 2003). For Carol, whose early years involved many negative social interactions from her adopted family, the theory of habitus can explain how she was initially constrained; like Debbie she did not feel she amounted to much. She had internalised her family's rules and norms (Iellatchitch et al., 2003), and many years later—although her habitus has been

shaped and enhanced in the intervening years—those norms are still part of her consciousness. Bourdieu's theory thus offers a framework to “illuminate particular aspects sometimes not sufficiently stressed by recent career research” (2003, p. 730). It gives a deeper analysis of career and in this study it has enabled a more comprehensive view of the careers of these women (Iellatchitch et al., 2003, p. 730). Although formative, the developing literature on habitus and career supports the first theme identified in this study. Other literature on career calling and authenticity, which have relevance to the findings of this study, will next be discussed.

Work that has meaning: Career as calling

Another aspect this study illuminates is a calling to career. The women in this study exhibited strong commitment to their careers as educators; they persisted in spite of difficulties, conscious of the difference they could make in their students' lives (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007). Several women, in particular those in early career, described their work as a “calling” or a “vocation”; they told how this motivated them and gave meaning to their careers. Further, they expressed their desire to have work that was meaningful to them.

In fact, the construct of career calling has been considered to overlap with life meaning. The two may well be the same construct; calling could be seen as making meaning in a career (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2010), and the desire for people to have work that has meaning has been shown to be critically important to subjective career success (Lips-Wiersma, 2002). Education, as a work domain, and context for this study, involves serving others and is often described as a helping profession. People who work in such domains often attest to having a calling from some force outside of themselves (Dik & Duffy, 2009). Career calling has been found to coincide with a desire to serve others in

qualitative studies, which investigated the role of spirituality in career development (Lips-Wiersma, 2002; Royce-Davis & Stewart, 2000).

However, the rhetoric of women in this study who attested to being “called” to teaching typically focussed on possessing a natural disposition for learning, being a take charge person with leadership ability, rather than the dominant view of “finding” or “possessing” a call (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007). As a group they tended to develop a sense of calling in the teaching domain. Their calling was formed by their ability, involvement, and increased settled-ness in their work (Dobrow, 2013). For those who came to teaching later it was described as a natural progression, rather than “the work I was born to do.” Once in the teaching domain their calling “developed” (Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2011).

Women who did testify to “having a calling” found it was not altogether positive in the long-term; it became increasingly hard to maintain as their career progressed (Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2011). They described the burden of the costs of a call, for example, Sally whose “body” cried out “Oi, slow down” and Sarah who said, “I’m a mess with stress.” For these women, work became painful and tortuous; as a result any meaning and pleasure they gained from it was severely diminished (Bunderson & Thompson, 2009).

In fact, in later career, as these women became experienced and established as educators, their calling appeared to diminish (Dobrow, 2013; Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2011). It could be argued that some of these women had “lost” their calling; that it had decreased over time. There was sometimes a sense that it no longer contributed towards their work having subjective meaning or purpose (Steger et al., 2006). For example, Helen, who wanted to “knit her dishcloths;” the sense making she made at that time was

that it no longer had significance. Her work had become a burden; her perspective on her career had changed. Sally's career also diminished in meaning as her restructured position became a way to "not go out in a box" before she was sixty-five. As time progressed, these women attached less and less meaning to their careers (Steger et al., 2006). Their calling to teach did translate to a long-term commitment and involvement (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007) but it had a dynamic quality, which changed in intensity, and reflected how they viewed their career over time (Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2011).

Authenticity and eudaimonia

Although a number of women in this study did describe being called, virtually all the women told how their career gave their lives meaning and a sense of purpose. More often, their stories told of an expressed desire to be true to themselves, and to act in ways that were congruent with that desire. Their search for authenticity involved recognising their motivations, values, and abilities.

Heidegger's (2008) definition of authenticity was used to explore the study's third theme described as "moving towards authenticity." Its dual focus is firstly, on a person being prepared to become his or her "authentic self" by moving towards possibilities, "breaking free" and not being "average." Its second focus is on a person being reflective and thinking for him or her self.

Heidegger's view of authenticity has influenced the popularisation of the idea, since World War Two. The idea has been reconstructed by authors such as Taylor, Ferrara, Guignon, and Harter (Ferrara, 1993; Guignon, 2004; Harter, 2002; C. Taylor, 1991) who sought to achieve a balance to the concept after criticism that the idea was self-

indulgent; they attempted to reconstruct it in such a way so that it was neither narcissistically self-indulgent nor unattainably aesthetic.

Generally authenticity is defined as being true to oneself and achieving consistency between inward thoughts and feelings and outward behaviours (Hall & Mao, 2015; Harter, 2002). Self-awareness and self-knowledge is crucial to being authentic at work (Hall & Mao, 2015) since being true to oneself requires a person know him or herself (Harter, 2002; Kernis & Goldman, 2005). In order to “know thyself” requires a person become self-aware, seek feedback, and make sense of their past actions (Ryan et al., 2008). Libby described how she didn’t have the self-awareness in early career to understand what happened when she didn’t get a promotion. Libby said, “I had a sense of “I should be doing this, but I’m not 100% comfortable. I find it really difficult to explain what happened.” With increased maturity and self-awareness, and by seeking and receiving feedback from a colleague, she was able to get the situation in perspective, “Hindsight has shown me that what happened since has been better, but at the time I just – I couldn’t get that.”

Miriama told how she became like a “machine in a factory” and as she reflected on her life and career, she began to see that although she was “a good teacher” she wasn’t “a good friend” or partner. To maintain authenticity in her career, she needed to be involved in continual reflection and sense making (Hall & Mao, 2015). Congruence between Miriama and her job was re-established when she altered her management responsibilities and as a result, she was “rewarded for it.” She was able to remain true to herself by adjusting her career behaviour.

These women’s careers were characterized by personal learning opportunities, over often-shorter bursts of time, at various points in their careers. Consider Rachel who

said, “when I did my degree I thought that was going to be it.... but a few years ago I got all fired up to do my postgrad”; she acknowledged, her perspective has changed. By accepting her need for ongoing learning, Rachel was able to persist with her career goals (Hall & Mao, 2015). She self-directs her career, as she continually checks on her progress and learns self-management techniques (Leroy et al., 2015). Rachel’s movement towards authenticity requires a process of personal learning in career mini-cycles (Hall & Mao, 2015).

The women in this study enjoyed intense emotional connections with their family, in particular with their mothers and partners. These strong ties were influential in shaping their identity (Ibarra, 1999) and provided them with psychosocial support (Higgins, 2001). They commented on the powerful influence of their mothers “Mum was very disappointed and angry with me” and “She was my biggest fan, my mother – and I was also her biggest fan.” Their mothers provided them with germinal material on who they were, “Having Mum’s support and the freedom to choose, I thought that whatever choices I made would work out.”

The strong reciprocal relationships these women shared with their partner were also pivotal in their career behaviours and in evaluating “who” they were. For example Debbie described how her partner “sees me as a person. Not just a worker.” Hall and Mao contended (2015) the involved, authentic careerist “needs to be fully aware that work is just one part of life and to hold it lightly.” Strong ties with these family members enabled these women to “hold it lightly,” whilst staying true to themselves; thus maintaining a sense of authenticity (Murphy & Volpe, 2015).

These women also told how they deliberately “chose” people who verified their sense of identity so that they could maintain harmony with themselves (Harter, 2002). For

example, Rachel commented on her need to be with people who advocate for “research and ongoing study” and where she is “encouraged and supported.” Her identity formation has been ongoing, and what being true to herself means, has changed over the years, “the goalposts have shifted” (Murphy & Volpe, 2015). She also discussed how she now chooses not to spend significant time with friends who are not “really that bothered or interested in what I’m doing.” She chooses not to maintain deep connections with people who do not verify her sense of self (Harter, 2002).

For the most part, being authentic in their work meant that these women were energised and positive; they found meaning and were satisfied in their careers (Harter, 2002; Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Murphy & Volpe, 2015). However, they also experienced the risks of being vulnerable and hurt; at these times being true to themselves was not easy. Sally discovered these risks when a close colleague, and good friend whom she trusted, betrayed her trust and “there was quite a bit of fall out.” She commented, “it’s never been the same again...and we were very good friends” (Harter, 2002). This experience also made Sally question just how much of her “true self” she should bring to her work (Hall & Mao, 2015).

Several women in this study appeared to possess eudaimonia—they were reflective, working towards ends that represent a higher human good, had virtuous character, and productive lives. Eudaimonic well being is experienced when a person enacts a career, which is congruent with their “true self.” (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryan et al., 2008). Kiri, Carol, and Tina were identified as women living a eudaimonic life. They were fulfilled and were realizing their potential, worked on meaningful tasks and experienced a sense of happiness and pleasure in their work and lives (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Further, they were autonomous in their decision-making and thought carefully about their actions

(Ryan et al., 2008). Mindfulness or being aware of present reality, being open and receptive is also a trademark of the eudaimonic individual (Ryan et al., 2008). In contemplating their next career steps these women were prepared to consider various options, to take time to weigh them up. They processed the alternatives and were mindful of their whole situation, choosing to act in an integrated way (Ryan et al., 2008). They realized their potential, found their work meaningful and gained great pleasure from it (Ryan and Deci, 2001).

To identify a person as possessing eudaimonia is to pay them a compliment (Ryan et al., 2008). Although these women had in many ways achieved mastery in their work, they continued to seek to improve on their weaknesses and they struggled to understand their own limits. Their ongoing mindfulness and self-analysis meant they adopted a self-critical quality. These women appeared to be flourishing and evidencing an eudaimonic life, however, they did not necessarily always “feel good” (Ryan et al., 2008). They showed qualities of what Dreyfus (2005) termed the “continually anxious expert.” Rather than being self-satisfied in their work, achieving an eudaimonic “way of living” was for these women, a way of being rather than a state of mind (Ryan et al., 2008).

In spite of their increased expertise—due to simply being human—these women continued to experience angst. Validating what Heidegger (1927/2008) argued, that angst is an essential tool if we are to become who we “truly are.” In summary, the literature on calling, meaning making and authenticity identified in this section and synthesised with the study findings supports the theme of the pursuit of authenticity and an eudaimonic life.

An ethic of care

Another key Heideggerian concept which takes a lead role in this study is *Sorge*, or solicitous care which was identified in the second theme of the study. This next section provides a brief discussion on the origins of Heideggerian care, and how it has been extended and developed in the intervening years. How Heideggerian care is distinguished from other supports and organisational structures is considered, and how it applies and has relevance to current career theory and practice.

Heidegger's concept of care, lay at the centre of his philosophical system of thought. His development of the notion of care built on a long-standing tradition, that of the "Cura" tradition of care (Reich, 2014) a tradition which first emerged in ancient Roman thought, named after a mythological figure. It was developed and extended by writers such as Virgil and Seneca, and appeared again in the eighteenth and nineteenth century literature in the writings of van Goethe, and Kirkegaard. Cura, care, had two different meanings, it meant both anxieties and worries, and also, providing for the well-being of another person. Also aligned with this second meaning was the positive implication of care as attentive commitment or dedication (Burdach, 1923). Seneca saw care as a powerful force in humans that elevates them as equals with God, he said "the good is perfected by care (cura)" (Seneca, 1953, pp. 443-444). Seneca viewed care as the way to become truly human and for him it meant solititude which implies attentiveness and devotion (Burdach, 1923; Seneca, 1953).

The work of Danish philosopher and religious thinker Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) was seminal in utilising the notion of care or concern. He proposed care is fundamental to understanding human life and is the key to authenticity (Reich, 2014). Heidegger was

strongly influenced by the teaching of Kierkegaard. Heidegger acknowledged his development of the notion of care drew from and contributed to the "Cura" tradition of care. In fact he cited the Myth of Care as primordial justification of his contention that human beings (Dasein) are marked or branded by care.

Humanistic psychologist, Rollo May (1969) further extended Heidegger's views to make them accessible for the ordinary reader, and argued that at the root of ethics, lies care, as living a good life is as a result of what we care about. Erikson (1963) was also partly influenced by Heideggerian philosophy when he developed a theory of psychosocial development. Erikson, saw adult caring as "the generational task of cultivating strength in the next generation" (p. 274).

Carol Gilligan's book (1982) provided impetus to scholarly discussions of care and spearheaded extensive efforts to advance a systematic philosophical ethic of care outside the realms of healthcare. Gilligan proposed females are more predisposed to understand moral dilemmas mainly in terms of personal attachment versus detachment. Through this perspective—which Gilligan called the care perspective—fundamental concerns are to avoid hurting, isolating, and estranging individuals and to behave in such a way that attachments between individuals are reinforced and safeguarded. Gilligan (1982) argued the moral universe of women is disposed chiefly towards "a world of relationships and psychological truths where an awareness of the connection between people gives rise to a recognition of responsibility for one another, a perception of the need for response" (p. 30). She further contended, that in the past, an ethic of care had been essentially overlooked since women have been omitted from studies of moral development (e.g. Kohlberg, 1981; Piaget, 1965). Theories of moral psychology were

previously male-based and when used with women, categorised these subjects as lacking in moral development (Gilligan, 1982).

Gilligan's efforts (L. M. Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, Lyons, & Hanmer, 1989; Gilligan, Ward, & Taylor, 1988) to further define the moral reasoning of women in terms of care occurred concurrently with developments in feminist ethics. The care ethic, sometimes labelled a feminine ethic is distinguished from feminist ethics whose focus is to reject and end oppression towards women (Sherwin, 1992). The primary concern of feminine ethics by contrast, is to define the moral experiences and insights of women, given that traditional approaches have failed to include women's perspectives (Sherwin, 1992).

Critics of a feminine ethic of care have argued that it may unintentionally undermine feminism by perpetuating stereotypes of women in caring positions and thus affording them subordinate social status; emphasising caring as a worthy feminine quality might thus disadvantage women within power relationships. Further, that women should seek assertiveness, not caring, in order to challenge conventional portrayals of women as servile and pleasing (Card, 1991).

A complicating factor, in interpreting the second theme of this study, is that the ethic of care, needs to be distinguished from caregiving, which denotes a practical caring. Historically one meaning of care has been attention—heed or regard—which is still considered a component of care. Ryle (1949) said, "To care is to pay attention to something" (p.135) and Simone Weil, (1909-1943) arguably the most noteworthy thinker on the notion of attention as cognition, made it the central image for ethics. Weil argued the notion of attention is not only a concept parallel to care; it is an ingredient in care. Attention consists of suspending one's thought, leaving it detached, empty, and

ready to receive the being one is looking at, “just as he is, in all his truth” (Weil, 1977, p. 51). To care for a person means to be attentively predisposed to him or her and to give them solicitous attention. Attention is thus closely aligned with the Heideggerian concept of care.

The career literature is replete with studies on social capital practices such as mentoring and networks in women’s career development (e.g. Hamilton & Murphy, 2011; Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010; Motulsky, 2010; O’Neil, Hopkins, & Sullivan, 2011; Tschopp, Unger, & Grote, 2015). Heideggerian care is distinguished from mentoring which involves a long term relationship between the mentor and the mentee and provides them with ongoing emotional support, advice on professional and personal development, and role models (Ibarra et al., 2010), and networks which imply formal and informal organisational structures (O’Neil et al., 2011). When a person exercises Heideggerian care, this solicitous “paying attention” to someone, provides an individual not just with emotional support, it recognises the need that the giver of care has to exercise responsibility for that person, and perceives the need to respond to them (Gilligan, 1982) seeing them as they are (Weil, 1977). The result of this focussed attention and concern is that a person feels more human and that their life has more meaning (Heidegger, 1927/2008). This kind of care may not be exercised over a long period of time, and although it may be present in a person’s relationship with a mentor or within professional networks, by definition, it may occur independently of these structures.

As discussed in Chapter Seven, the outcomes of being shown this kind of care were multiple for the women in this study. Not only did they feel more confident, they did also feel their lives had more meaning, and more significance (Heidegger, 1927/2008). Further, being shown care was revealed to have a moral underpinning where the women

testified to being improved through care (Seneca, 1953); they were impelled to show care for others, as a result of being cared for themselves. They sought to “pass it on” and sought to use the same care that had been shown to them in ensuring that their students, the next generation were also strengthened through care (Erikson, 1963).

Reich (2014) expressed bewilderment as to why the notion of care has not become more well known, and exercised more influence in ethics. He argued that part of the answer is its relegation to a “minority tradition of thought and practice,” and advocated for its more extensive usage, that it has across-the-board implications in social, ethical, cultural, and political arenas (Reich, 2014).

I contend with Reich (2014) that the notion of an ethic of care needs to become more widely known and used, and that it has implications in organisational and work-related settings. In addition, Gilligan’s (1982) work on a feminine ethic of care has ramifications for career theorists and researchers. The findings of this study, in the identification of the second theme of ‘care,’ endorse Gilligan’s (1982) contention that women exist in a moral universe, which is concerned essentially towards relationships and inner truths. Being aware of connections between individuals means that women also recognise what they need to do with regard to their responsibilities and responses towards those individuals. This dual focus of women’s “being” and “doing” is the focus of the next section.

The balance between agency and communion

The women in this study prioritised their careers highly, and although they identified family and dependants were keenly important to them, they were clear about how they managed their domestic responsibilities. Further, they indicated that their partner tended to take on a greater share of childcare and domestic tasks than they did. Bakan (1966) advocated men need agency softened or mitigated by communion and Marshall (1989) contended women need the opposite, communion enhanced by agency. Arguably, the primary perspective of these women might appear to be towards “doing” – agency, rather than “being” – communion. They possessed traits of self-sufficiency, which tended to override their qualities of connectedness.

Marshall (1989) drew parallels between agency and communion and Jung’s concepts of anima and animus, individuation and self-actualization. Jung (1951) postulated that women have an opposite sex archetype. In his view, women have a “feminine conscious personality” and a masculine component—the animus—in their unconscious. Women’s thinking, assertiveness, and spirituality are attributes of her animus, a less conscious part of her psyche than her feminine ego, and inherently inferior. Jung (1951) argued if a woman thought well or was competent in the world, she only had a well-developed masculine animus that by definition was less conscious and inferior to men. In contrast women in this research were strongly in touch with what Jung describes as the “anima,” using a term he coined the “contra-sexual”¹³ part of a woman. They used powerful descriptors for themselves—take charge, stubborn, forthright, opinionated—which alludes to this well-developed part of their psyche. They perceived that these kinds of

¹³ The term refers to the movement between the intra-psychic experiences of femininity and masculinity. The stronger the awareness of both feminine and masculine aspects, the more balanced is the person’s psyche to being aware of these opposites.

behaviours—both at work and at home—were the norm. They espoused the androgynous instrumental way described as ideal for both men and for women (Betz, 1993; Farmer, 1997; Hansen, 1997). Findings on dual-career couples (Litano, Myers, & Major, 2014) discussed in the final chapter add further weight to this discussion, and provide evidence of the changing socio-cultural climate which may further perpetuate this androgenous practice.

Further, Jung's view of women's psychology has been critiqued and broadened by writers who have proposed alternative models and archetypes across a range of human characteristics. These models eliminate the need to identify any of women's characteristics or qualities as masculine (Shinoda Bolen, 1984, 2014; Shinoda Bolen & Clauson, 1995; Zabriskie, 1974). These models are validated by this research, where women in this study—by the time they had reached more than ten years into their career—were independent, assertive, and seeking control of their lives; all traits linked with agency. They were reflective and thoughtful, but it is not known whether their career journeys were “more typically inwardly oriented” than the careers of their partners (Marshall, 1989, p. 289). They were definitely proud of their achievements and competence, both in their work and home lives, and they did not see themselves as less feminine because of their achievements.

Viewed through the lens of Gilligan's ethic of feminine care, these women's actions certainly had a moral underpinning, as they were deeply concerned for the greater good of humanity. Further, this inner awareness did translate into outward responses, in that their actions were congruent with their motivations and values. However, whether these women required “communion enhanced by agency” or rather, “agency mitigated by communion,” is questionable. What can be said, is that the findings of this study

suggest that they require a finely tuned synergy of both of Bakan's vital principles in order to operate effectively in their multiple life roles. In their review on women's careers O'Neil et al (2008) encouraged exploration of women's personal and professional lives in ways that, "deepen our understanding of the complex synergies created by the flow of knowledge, skills, and experience among a women's multiple life roles as a dynamic system" (p. 737). It is to O'Neil et al's review that this next section now returns.

Returning to O'Neil et al (2008)

One of the key purposes of this research was to respond to the call by O'Neil et al (2008) to explore the dynamic relationship between women's personal and professional lives. In their review, O'Neil et al (2008) identified four patterns concerning women's careers. Firstly: Women's careers are embedded in women's larger life contexts, namely women's careers are contextual. Secondly: Families and careers are central to women's lives. Thirdly: Women's career paths offer a wide range and variety of patterns. Lastly: Human and social capital remain critical for women's career progress. Further they also identified four paradoxes to these patterns: Firstly, organizational realities demand the separation of work and family; secondly, families tend to be liabilities to women's career development in organizations; thirdly, organizations predominantly organize for and reward upwardly mobile career paths; and fourthly, women's human and social capital has not defeated the glass ceiling.

In order to determine if the patterns and paradoxes identified in their earlier article still predominated in discourses on women's careers, if there are additional patterns, and to draw overall conclusions, O'Neil et al (2013) updated and expanded on their 2008 article. They undertook a further overview of literature in the intervening five years and

found that the original patterns have seen inconsequential change. Human and social capital factors have received more focus in the intervening five years which reinforces the idea that women are responsible for their own career advancement. This next section examines the findings of this study, in the light of O'Neil et al's (2008, 2013) four patterns and paradoxes.

Pattern 1: Women's careers are embedded in women's larger life contexts. As a group the women in this study managed to integrate family life and work successfully, a feature already explored in some detail. They were all partnered and all but one had children. None of the women commented that having a family had hindered their career progression. As with women in Lirio et al's (2007) study with successful women, the women in this study reported significant subjective measures of success based on success in their career and key personal and family relationships. Success in their career was moderated and enhanced by the knowledge of success in their family life. They exhibited similar behaviours to the executive women in Pruitt, Johnson, Catlin and Knox' (2010) study who were strategic in designing life course plans which helped them manage career advancement and family concerns simultaneously. They were aspirational and goal-centred and although they had attained objective career success in that they had secured management and leadership roles, their interpretation of these roles tended to focus on subjective career success, "giving something back," "doing it for all Maori (or all women)" or "becoming the best I can be." These findings align with pattern 1, that women's careers are enmeshed in their large life contexts. Contrary to paradox 1, these women managed to blend family life with work in the education sector.

Pattern 2: Families and careers are central to women's lives. Gender role constructions between women and their partners' career were found to be of significant influence in a

study of female managers in Finland (Valimaki, Lamsa, & Hiillos, 2009) who found a continuum effect of spousal influence from “counterproductive” and “determining” reflecting traditional gender roles to “supporting” “flexible” and “instrumental” revealing greater latitude for women as active partners in the relationship. In this present study, partners’ influence fell in the latter category, and these women successfully juggled and balanced career and family concerns. The effect of partners as individuals with strong ties has been discussed earlier and further strengthens this argument. For these women, contrary to O’Neil et al’s (2008) paradox 2, families were not liabilities to their career development in organizations. The effect on a women’s career development of a highly supportive partner is developed more fully in the next Chapter.

Pattern 3: Women’s career paths offer a wide range and variety of patterns. Women’s career patterns and transitions have been described as opting in or opting out (Cabrera, 2007), following kaleidoscope or protean careers (Cabrera, 2009), enacting kaleidoscope alpha or beta carers (Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007a) or following a labyrinthine path (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Detailed discussion on the Kaleidoscope Career Model (KCM) is undertaken in the next chapter. Suffice to say, the women in this study, did not opt-out, or enact a beta-KCM career pattern. However, their career pathways might well be described as labyrinthine (Eagly & Carli, 2007) with many pursuing complex and varied career challenges throughout their career, which delineate their careers from the “normal” career trajectory defined for men. These women sometimes chose other career options; if they took time out for family reasons, it was for a limited period of time. They often used this time to gain additional qualifications, seeking study leave to keep their career “on track” rather than seeking an “off ramp.” As a consequence some of these women did experience paradox three, where due to

these more circuitous paths as opposed to an upwardly mobile one they were not rewarded by promotion in their organizations.

The final pattern, *human and social capital are critical for women's career development* involves social capital practices such as networks and mentoring, and human capital advancement in terms of educational and experience-based qualifications. Motulsky (2010) studied the influence of relationships on women's career trajectories with women in her study reporting both connections and disconnections which either enriched or blocked, or stalled their career transitions. The positive and negative effects of key individuals in women's career transitions has been detailed earlier, with women in this study reporting significant adverse as well as constructive outcomes from their dealings with these people.

The paradox identified by O'Neil et al (2008), to pattern four is that women's human and social capital has not defeated the glass ceiling. In this study, there is evidence in this research for and against this paradox. The women in this study valued themselves sufficiently to believe they deserved ongoing learning opportunities and continued to invest in themselves through education (Vaccaro & Lovell, 2010). Although some women, (for example Miriama, Kiri, Helen, and Tina) had attained significant positions with no evidence that they had "hit" any ceiling or reached an impasse, others, such as Sally and Debbie, experienced blockages to their career progression, which limited them in their career advancement. This research confirms O'Neil et al's (2013) findings that women's capital accumulation, although critical for women's career advancement is no silver bullet. It has not been sufficient to "assist them in breaking through the glass ceiling in large numbers" (p. 74).

Using organizational development as a synonym for career development may not accurately reflect the way women currently conceptualise or construct their careers. Further, O'Neil et al (2008) contended, using income as a career success measure, provides an incomplete picture, and that "future research should expand definitions of career success for women" (p.737). In this present study the women obtained satisfaction from their work from internal and subjective outcomes, which held personal meaning. They did not tend to comment on objective career outcomes such as power, prestige or money. There was little mention of income per se and not one of the women spoke about their career success as being measured or defined by income (Hall, 2002; O'Neil et al., 2008). Career success meant other things: the achieving of goals, the pursuing of a personal pathway, being a role-model for their children, or "giving something back" (Hall & Mao, 2015). There was congruence between the content of these women's work and their values (Hall & Mao, 2015).

Future research, according to O'Neil et al (2008) needs to "explore broadened conceptualizations of contemporary work and careers for women, utilizing women-specific framings of these constructs that include not just what one does for work but who one is while doing it" (p.737). In this study, the findings reveal these women were more motivated by subjective career outcomes such as a way of making meaning of their life, following a call or vocation, than with objective measures of career success. They saw themselves as leaders; they had passion and commitment for their work and they were persistent in dealing with challenges. They were problem-solvers who sought to find other options and were undeterred by setbacks. In their domestic partnerships they were egalitarian or dominant; they tended to consider their career more significant than that of their partner. Their work was a means of becoming more authentic and of being true to themselves.

Further, these women were committed to life-long learning; they told how attaining new qualifications and higher skill levels gave their work more meaning. There was a dynamic element to their careers, with synergy and flow, between the various facets of their lives. These women's expressed need to keep moving and progressing, to "stick my head up," "shift the goal posts," or "build on my skills" reveals that their aspirations were continually shifting and changing.

The personality, motivations, and behaviours of women in this study were exposed as being increasingly in control, resolute, and ascendant as they progressed in their careers. However, they experienced an ebb and flow in later career as situations arose which sapped their energy and passion. A comprehensive discussion of these women's career stages and patterns is undertaken in the next chapter.

Summary

This chapter has connected the findings drawn from the study to emergent and current career theory, and specifically research on habitus, meaning making, calling, and authenticity. It has provided an overview of the roots and development of the Heideggerian concept of care. It has extended the discussion on Bakan's concepts of agency and communion with respect to women's careers. It has finally returned to the review by O'Neil et al (2008) of women's career literature to consider how this research contributes to findings on women's careers.

The next and final chapter summarises the key findings and provides a discussion of practical and theoretical implications. It addresses the limitations of this research, and proposes future research directions.

Chapter Eleven

Conclusion

By three methods we may learn wisdom:
First, by reflection, which is noblest,
Second, by imitation, which is easiest,
And third, by experience, which is the bitterest.
-- Confucius

Introduction

This final chapter brings together the findings from the previous five chapters, with the research aims and objectives. It outlines the empirical, theoretical and methodological contributions, and the practical implications of the study. It identifies limitations of the investigation, and makes suggestions for future research.

Overview

This interpretive study seeks to deepen and broaden the understanding of women's careers, contribute data on women's motivations for pursuing a career, and offer a guide for phenomenological career management research. At the outset it was established that although progress has been made in understanding women's careers, there is a need for research, which uncovers aspects of the dynamic relationship between women's professional and personal lives (O'Neil et al., 2008). In addition, little research has concentrated on how women's perspectives change during their career. There has been a

lack of empirical research into the complex interface between women's physical and psychological life passages (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). This research addresses these gaps through a hermeneutic phenomenological study; it analyses the motivations of fourteen New Zealand women working in education who provided an in-depth conversational account of their experiences.

Bourdieu's (1977) constructs of habitus, field and capital provide a relevant framework from which to consider women's careers. The notion of *Sorge* or *Care-for*, which Heidegger (1927/2008) professed is our fundamental state of being as we struggle towards authenticity, is seen to be vital to a woman's career progression. Multiple factors enable women's movement towards authenticity, with the highly desirable state of *phrōnesis* attained by some women in this study (Aristotle, trans. 1999). In particular this study confirms the value of using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to reveal the complexity and richness of women's lives and careers and to provide a deeper understanding of the relationships and organisational behaviour in the education industry.

In chapter five, de Witt and Ploeg's (2006) five criteria model for rigour was introduced. The fifth expression of rigour, actualization, concerns the future fulfilment of a study's findings. The contributions of this study are fully discussed in this chapter. However as de Witt and Ploeg (2006) contended, the future contains the potential for the greatest fulfilment of a phenomenological interpretive study.

Research objectives

Phenomenological research seeks to answer meaning questions, to ask, what an experience means for them, and to involve participants in interpreting what the experience means for them. Specifically this study aimed to discover what it means for a woman to have a career. It sought to examine, using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, how women's careers unfold, how they deal with transitions and dilemmas and address their needs for fulfilment, authenticity and connectedness throughout their career journey. Three research aims were: firstly, to contribute to a more composite picture of women's careers, in particular to explore the relationship between women's personal and professional lives (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009); secondly, to uncover the nature of the complex relationship between subjective and objective career (O'Neil et al., 2008); thirdly, to establish whether using a phenomenological approach might contribute to research into Mainiero and Sullivan's Kaleidoscope Career Model (Cabrera, 2007; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2007b).

Empirical Contribution

This research responds to the growing disquiet about the tendency to place women as "the other" in career research (D. Brown, 2003). It addresses an identified need for research, which pays attention to women's careers as a major hub in career management research. It nudges the discourse around women's careers away from the traditional rhetoric on limitations due to family and relationships and pushes the discussion centre stage where it can receive a deserved share of the limelight rather than lurking in the shadows.

Advocating for a re-visioning of career theory, Marshall maintained emergent theorizing to women's careers must be measured by its adequacy to attribute "equal value to female and male principles, to communal acceptance and agentic control" (1989, p. 289). This research brings a sense of balance to Bakan's (1966) dichotomous principles of agency and communion. For women in this study, significant others were a potent and significant driving force, which motivated rather than restricted them in their careers; their need for communion did impel them. However, the primary perspective of these women appeared to be towards "doing" – agency rather than "being" – communion.

The caring influence of others coupled with their desire to be authentic, impelled these women to enact their careers. However, there were shortcomings to being impelled in this way. Achieving a sense of equilibrium between the different facets of their lives was at times, almost unattainable. Their intense professional lives sometimes had adverse impact on their personal health. As a result, many women in this study still struggled to achieve ongoing balance between the two perspectives of agency and communion. Although there was some evidence that the demands of caring for others was a struggle, it was the challenge of caring for herself that many women experienced as a more difficult task. The findings of this research interrogate whether these women needed "communion enhanced by agency" or indeed, "agency mitigated by communion." Whichever the case, these findings attest to the delicate synergy of Bakan's two vital principles, which these women needed in order to operate effectively in their multiple life roles. This synergy exposes not just the balance between Bakan's two principles, but also the intricacies of the relationship between women's professional and personal lives which O'Neil et al (2008) considered vital in order to understand women's careers more deeply.

Theoretical contribution

Viewing career through a Bourdieusian lens

According to Iellatchitch et al (2003), viewing careers using Bourdieu's concept of field is a "small step towards a grand career theory." This research leaps off from that small step. By using a phenomenological methodology it has uncovered aspects of career agents subjective career and exposed dynamic features of career fields and their shaping influence on agents' logic. These research findings add to that undertaken by Pringle, Jones and Reid (2013) who maintained a Bourdieusian approach allows more inclusivity of careers for people in collectivist cultures, e.g. particularly for the careers of Maori. According to Iellatchitch et al (2003) a view of career through a Bourdieusian lens can illuminate previously unrevealed aspects of career and emphasises the continual struggle career agents face in playing the game. The findings of this research further uncover aspects of career and expose career agents' "tussles" thus validating that contention. This research aids in further paving the way for continued investigation on this promising theorizing.

Women's career stages and patterns

The Kaleidoscope Career Model (KCM) Model offers a construct through which to view women's career transitions and motivations, that of a kaleidoscope (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) posited people make decisions that emphasise one of three career foci: authenticity, balance and challenge. As a kaleidoscope rotates and the different coloured chips dominate or recess combining to create unique patterns, so the three career parameters take predominance or retract at different points of a career. Research found that the KCM pattern is different for men

and women, with men following what Mainiero and Sullivan described as an Alpha Career Pattern, challenge followed by authenticity followed by balance. Alternatively women followed a Beta Career pattern, challenge followed by balance followed by authenticity (Cabrera, 2007; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006). The KCM is grounded in a wide-ranging five year, multi-method study and has been supported by Cabrera's (2007) research.

In this research study, interviews were conducted with fourteen women working in education, and aged between 34 and 61 years. Participants faced different dilemmas and challenges at various stages on their career journey. Stress and burnout, were apparent at various stages of career, dependent on how long a woman had worked in education. Other differences were obvious around women's skill development and formation of expertise. Still other distinctions concerned their relationships and the effect of key people. As with the findings in Mainiero and Sullivan's (2006) research into validating the Kaleidoscope Career Model the three motivators for career changed in intensity over the years.

In early career, having worked in the education sector for between five and fifteen years, women expressed a zest for life, and a passion for their career. Throughout my interviews with them, they were enthusiastic and energetic in their descriptions. They told of how they had achieved what they had through the support and encouragement of key people. Sometimes they told of disappointments and discrimination. Some described their work as being a calling, "what I was born to do." They appeared to be coping with a great deal of work both professionally and personally.

Mainiero and Sullivan (2006) described how in early career, "men and women equally pursue the thrill of the hunt" in their desire for achievement. They comment that in their

research, this was the time that the “flame of challenge burned most brightly” (p.119). The women, typically aged in their early thirties, were building on their skills and described incidents and told stories about having to learn more about both themselves and their limitations (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006).

In mid-career, women, “back off to make room for the more relational aspects of their lives” (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006, p.120). Women, in the KCM studies who had the support at home of another caregiver whether a stay-at-home husband, nanny or family member continued to pursue challenge, but for those in more egalitarian situations the Beta Kaleidoscope Career pattern with a movement towards balance was followed (2006).

For many of the women in this study, having a professional career in education whilst their partner pursued a less pressured and more instrumental career pathway was the norm. In describing their partner they said he, “doesn’t have that stress” and because of this they have, “the freedom to put in the time I need to.” When decisions needed to be made around career transitions these women commented that their career came first, with their partner saying, “You apply wherever you want, I can find a job anywhere.” Having an encouraging and highly supportive partner meant the women in this study tended to continue to seek challenge in their careers throughout their forties. At this life stage, the support of partner had ongoing significance also, in helping them maintain a sense of rationality and stability, “Don’t take it all too seriously.”

The question as to whether men and women are allies or adversaries in facing the challenge that balancing work and family brings has long been contested. Recently, Litano, Myers and Major (2014) brought fresh perspective to the debate. They suggested the answer centres on the degree to which women’s and men’s attempts to

handle work-family conflict and to find balance are synchronous. “Crossover” research addresses the question, “does one partner’s positive or negative spill-over affect the work-family balance of the other partner?” Recent crossover research has explored the positive cross over effects in the work-family boundary. Men and women have been shown to be allies towards each other’s determination to balance work and family (Bakker, Westman, & van Emmerik, 2009; Kinnunen, Rantanen, & Mauno, 2013). In these studies positive well-being was seen to pass from one person to another in both spheres “initiating an upward spiral of positive transfer” (Litano et al., 2014, p. 372).

Women in this present study attested to the positive influence, support and greater balance that having a partner who had less career stress could bring. Further, they benefitted from the “cross-over effect” brought by a partner who was also an “ally” for their career. Although these women identified having stress, they commented on how their partner helped them stay positive and maintain perspective in their careers (Litano et al., 2014).

Women at this mid-stage in their career had achieved a great deal but many spoke of being unsure as to where they would progress next. Some expressed considerable concern about the long-term effects of working so intensely. In my interviews with them, several asked, “What do you think I should do?” They felt at a transition point and in need of direction and counsel. These women continued to seek challenge in mid-career followed more of an Alpha Kaleidoscope Career Pattern, whilst their partner took on an equal or greater part of the domestic side of the relationship in caring for children and tending to household concerns. Mainiero and Sullivan (2006) described The Alpha Pattern as typical of most men and single, career driven women in their studies.

However, without exception the women in this study were not single, they were all partnered and all but one had children.

Other women had chosen to take time for family reasons, to be with pre-school children, or to create more life balance by spending more time with a partner. Women who made this choice did follow a Beta Kaleidoscope Pattern of challenge followed by balance. They were the minority in this research.

Recently, Cohen (2014) discussed the kaleidoscope parameters of authenticity, balance and challenge with respect to a cross section of women in her longitudinal study with seventeen women. Cohen (2014) “expressed her misgivings,” she commented that the results of her analysis were at variance with Mainiero and Sullivan’s, most significantly at mid-career where “the shift to balance did not emerge in the data as the prominent feature” (p. 115). Cohen argued that rather than “distinct and uncontested parameters” (p.119) her study findings suggest that there are no extreme divisions, rather there is a melding and fusing of the parameters at various points in women’s lives. The findings of this current study have synchronicity with those of Cohen (2014).

The women in later career had worked for over twenty-five years. A feature of this group was they had all experienced periods of extreme stress, burnout and breakdown. Sometimes both their psychological and physical health had suffered. This also affected their confidence and agency. Some women needed to take time to convalesce or simply to gain perspective on their situation. Extensive skill development meant they had assumed leadership roles. These roles were not always in agreement with those roles they had envisaged earlier in their careers. They described having to be flexible and adjust to new challenges such as when presented with a change in their family situation or a restructuring or redundancy in their work situation. These women sought to be

there for others, as encouragers and supporters, often in ways they had wanted to have but had not experienced personally. Disappointment was a key emotion in their narratives. They were weary and although they had objectively rewarding positions, they looked forward to having more time for themselves and to being able to “smell the roses.” A movement towards balance at this stage in their career was needed for self-care and re-evaluation of their own energy levels and health.

The women in this study had sought to be authentic and to pursue an individual pathway throughout their careers rather than waiting to do so until later career. Although they prioritised challenge in early career, there was little evidence of many of these women pulling, “away from their careers for a while to better manage the relational aspects of their lives” (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006, p. 131). Mainiero and Sullivan’s (2006) Beta Kaleidoscope Career Pattern identifies a trend for women once “freed from balance issues” to begin to craft their own identities, with a movement towards authenticity occurring at that late stage of career.

In contrast with the women in the KCM studies, the women in this study sought to craft their own identities from early on in their career and were strongly agentic throughout their careers. As discussed in Chapter Six, they were often disposed towards leadership and they possessed a love of learning, dispositions, which were identified early in their lives. The issues that primarily constrained them in their early career progression were psychological and internal, rather than relational and external and concerned the formation of identity and the developing of confidence. But by late career these women were highly confident of themselves, and there was no evidence that they needed to “define identities of their own” as with the women in the KCM study. However, they were weary and keen to achieve more balance in their lives, following the Alpha Career

pattern typical of men and career driven single women identified by Mainiero and Sullivan (2006).

For both the women in this present study and in Cohen's (2014) research the theme of authenticity was established in early career and developed over time. Rather than appearing at late career, authenticity "provided a coherent thread" throughout the women's lives in Cohen's cross-section of participants, a finding shared with participants in this study (p.113).

Using the Kaleidoscope Career Model with its emphasis on early, mid- and late-career stages is helpful as a tool to expose how these women's psychological perspectives changed throughout their careers and how these changes affected their physical life passages (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). During early career, whilst these women sought challenge simultaneously with authenticity, their sense of career identity was being formed, and their self-awareness developing. Although they wanted to be "true to themselves," developmentally they were often limited in their decision-making. They were ambitious and anxious to progress, yet they did not always have the checks and balances in place to be able to keep out of what Sellman (2012) described as a "personal danger box" (p. 124). However, their emerging competence acted as a protective factor and helped them understand what he called "the messiness of everyday practice" (p.123).

As they moved into mid-career and achieved management roles, these women testified to becoming more confident of their own career identity. Multiple commitments, and the incumbent emotional work and pressures of working with children and young adults, plus the toll of teaching, sometimes meant they experienced fatigue and burnout; as a result both their psychological and physical health suffered. Sometimes the ongoing

effects of maintaining a high paced professional role in education impacted on their ability to care for themselves. Their partner's support was crucial in enabling them to maintain their positive psychological well-being at both home and at work (Litano et al., 2014). Their self-awareness had increased and they were more pragmatic in their decision-making.

In later career, these women had experienced considerable pressure psychologically and professionally but they had increased in self-awareness and reflectiveness and had learnt how to monitor their behaviours. They could tell that the challenges their careers had brought them had changed them in that they were "kinder" and less anxious. They had developed more perspective and they were accepting of their situation, and how their career had not always developed as they might have expected. In short, they were wiser, more measured, and realistic. These changes to their physical life passages can be seen to reveal something of how these women's psychological perspectives had also changed over the course of their careers (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). It is important to note that the women who participated in this study were recruited by a purposive method; with this in mind, as detailed later in the limitations, these findings cannot be generalised beyond this sample of women in education.

A theoretical model: A small step towards a career theory for women

There have long been cries for a distinctly women's career theory (Gutek & Larwood, 1987). Various writers have offered suggestions with Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) as discussed extensively above, providing a recent offering in their KCM. Others have suggested a systems model, such as that espoused by Patton and McMahon (1999, 2005) as being sufficiently flexible to accommodate aspects of women's careers. This

research with its in depth focus has made the discourse around women's careers centre stage.

Rather than attempt to incorporate women's careers into an existing systems framework or to propose a model, which parallels one for men's careers, the emergent theoretical model suggested in Chapter Nine is specifically for women. This model is the result of a synthesis of the three overarching themes arising from this study. By utilising these three themes, it provides a theoretical grounded foundation for women's career experiences. There are potentially other themes, which further research may uncover. It may be that other women not working in education might have different kinds of experiences. What can be said is that the post-analysis literature review synthesised with the data findings in the previous chapter reveals that the three themes are confirmed by the extant and emergent literature on habitus, career-calling, meaning making, authenticity, and the ethic of care.

Methodological contribution: Using phenomenology as research tool

As well as contributing to knowledge from an empirical and theoretical standpoint, this study also adds to what is known from a methodological point of view by providing a guide for phenomenological research in management, and in women's career management. The study is underpinned by a hermeneutic phenomenological paradigm, as informed by the work of van Manen (1990). Such a paradigm believes reality is socially constructed; it is concerned with the question, "What is this experience like?" and concentrates on how people experience a phenomenon and interpret those experiences. Various writers have commented on the lack of methods for

phenomenological research, and that due to the abstract and conceptual nature of the methodology, difficulties in conducting it are growing rather than decreasing (Caelli, 2001). Some writers have given their advice on “how to” carry out such research (Crotty, 1998; van Manen, 1990).

With little phenomenological research having been conducted in management studies I have drawn from writings of researchers in the area of nursing (Smythe, 2011; Smythe & Giddings, 2007) to inform my practice and of writers such as Crotty (1996). Guided by the six research activities suggested by van Manen (1990) I developed a process of data analysis, attempting to bring order to the complex process as outlined in detail in Chapter Five. Chapter Four provided an extensive evaluation of the research design followed by detailed explanation of the methods used in this study; provided as using hermeneutic phenomenology is novel in management and organisation studies, with limited research having been conducted to date. However, before I began the process I needed to prepare by identifying any biases or presuppositions, which could affect the research process.

In Chapter One, I outlined the pre-assumptions identified before commencing this research. As far as I was able, and based on an interview with my primary supervisor and reflections in my research journal, I sought to determine how my life and career experiences might impact, and subsequently create presuppositions and biases which could influence the interpretive research process; a process which began with an in-depth interview with each participant.

Using a conversational interview technique enabled a fluid and engaged interchange between each participant and myself as researcher. During the interviews, women remembered incidents and recounted stories; stories they had sometimes not told to

another person. As a trained counsellor and with significant life experience in both education and management, I was able to bring those skills and experience to bear during the interview. Hein and Austin comment the method of research needs to be dependent on the researcher's skills (2001). I exercised an empathic approach and listened with intuition; I sought to probe and prompt with insight. This created an environment in which the women were able to share deeply and to explore with me their responses and emotions around their experiences.

By involving participants in this way I gained access to the participants' perspectives on their career. Used as a method, phenomenology gave me an insider's view, as each participant was able to discuss actively her career development, to reflect on it, and to anticipate what might be next. I had the opportunity to observe a woman's career development from her own individual perspective (Knorr, 2011). The interview transcripts provided me with deep and rich data. I considered they captured something of "the multidimensional quality of careers," and "the richness and complexity" of these women's lives" (2011, p. 104).

In order to further proceed with the data analysis, I needed to become familiar with Heideggerian philosophy, and the work of other philosophers and writers, such as Gadamer, Aristotle, and Bourdieu. This was time-consuming and further added to the intricacy of the interpretation and data analysis. Staying close to the tenets of Heideggerian philosophy meant returning to my readings and notes throughout the process. This added another layer of complexity to the project. However, this complexity was counterweighted by the search for meaning in the data, in the hermeneutic circle of understanding. The richness of the data and the evocative nature of the women's stories, coupled with own ontological experience of my interviews with

them continued to impel me. I continued to remain engaged as researcher and was spurred on in the analytic process. In short, although the process was intense, it was also intensely rewarding.

The hermeneutic phenomenological approach employed by van Manen (1990), which was used in this project, first emerged within the discipline of pedagogy. In narrative analysis the researcher transcribes the participant interview and these narrative accounts are sent to the participants for review. In phenomenological analysis the transcripts and the narratives (phenomenological anecdotes) are distinct; they are not the same thing (Caelli, 2001; van Manen, 1990). They are part of the phenomenological reduction; an organising tool which, in this study, is used to understand aspects of a women's career. The writing of the phenomenological anecdotes was to capture meanings of the lived experiences of the participants.

One of the objectives of this study was to realise phenomenology as “radical criticism” (Crotty, 1998, p. 87) of the phenomenon of women's career, which meant the participants' involvement in a critique of their own data was a crucial part of the analytic process. The phenomenological anecdotes were thus sent to participants for review, before any further analysis and identification of themes. In effect I asked them “Is this what the experience is really like?” (van Manen, 1990, p. 99). Hermeneutics is an interpretive procedure, which seeks to gain understanding of a phenomenon through studying socio-cultural activity as texts, and to uncover expressed meanings (Annells, 1999; Kvale, 1996). My interpretation of the participant interviews as extracted in the phenomenological anecdotes involved the construction of meaning, which was undeniably affected by my own pre-understandings, history and culture. They were my version of what is “real” (Koch, 1995). When the participants returned the transcripts,

four requested minor changes, of one or two words, and of those four, two asked that a particular quote from a story not be used in the writing up of study findings. Only once the unmitigated approval of all participants was given, could I confidently proceed further with the analysis. In addition, early findings presented at a career conference where phenomenological anecdotes were read confirmed the lived experience of participants resonated with that of conference attendees (Elley-Brown, 2013).

As I progressed with data analysis, I sought, in keeping with the spirit of hermeneutic phenomenological writing, to employ an intuitive and thoughtful approach, rather than a critical and inductive one; phenomenological thematic analysis necessitates an imaginative approach. The emphasis of van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenology, is artistic, a "poeticizing" project. Although I did not use poetry or excerpts from the literature, in the writing of this thesis, for the most part, identification and explanation of themes was done in a descriptive and lyrical way. I would reflect and read, and write, and think about what the anecdotes could mean, in the circular process known as the hermeneutic circle. This process occupied not only my working hours when I was engaged in writing and reading in my study but also my leisure time. Sometimes during the night I would be awake and thinking about the themes and the stories. Smythe commented, "You are dwelling closely with your data, and reading, and writing, and talking with your supervisor, and going back to your data, re-writing, still reading, still thinking, still letting the thoughts come" (2011, p. 46).

In using the guidelines of van Manen (1990) to identify the themes, I continually asked myself which aspects of the phenomenon were essential parts of its makeup, such that it could not exist without them. Van Manen advised, "In determining the universal or essential quality of a theme our concern is to discover aspects or qualities that make a

phenomenon what it is and without which the phenomenon could not be what it is” (1990, p. 107). It was through this process that the three essential themes of the women’s career experiences and meanings emerged. I continued until I considered that I had reached that moment in time when I had arrived at rational meanings of the experience; that the pattern that emerged within the uncovering of the three themes to be free from what Kvale (1996) called “inner contradictions.” The three themes fitted together aligned with Heideggerian philosophy, and had a sense-making function in interpreting a woman’s career. However, I was very aware that my understandings were always tentative and that change was the only constant in a hermeneutic undertaking. My interpretations of human experience would only ever be one single interpretation (van Manen, 1990).

Moreover, interviewing the women in this study had further challenged my assumptions, which had been influenced by my experiences and reading of career theorists. Firstly, I had been influenced with predictions from reading threads on theorising women’s careers, that women would be pulled relationally at different points away from their career. I had personally identified with this through my own lived experience. However, these kinds of experiences were not the case for the majority of the women in this study. These women actively pursued their careers and found ways to enable them to keep engaged in their career. The experiences of these women revealed that the pull of career calling, self-actualisation through their career, and a desire to follow an individual pathway was often stronger than the pull of responsibilities for partner, children, or extended family, which, although present in their lives was not as potent.

This finding was in contrast to my experiences of being continually pulled by these responsibilities, throughout my career and during the PhD process. In response to the differences between my journey and that of the participants I needed to acknowledge, then attempt to subsume, and sideline my own experiences and biases. Dahlberg and Drew (1997) noted that “Objectivity in phenomenological research does not mean standing outside of the research arena, but rather, critically examining one’s involvement and history with the phenomenon under investigation” (p. 306). As it became increasingly clear that these women’s career journeys and involvement were in many ways very different from my own, I needed to work in an ongoing way to attempt to remain detached in the research process.

I had attempted to minimise my own biases from affecting choices in identifying key aspects of the women’s careers and in the development of themes whilst still remaining engaged in the research process (Lavery, 2003). However, van Manen commented that a researcher’s assumptions as presuppositions may “persistently creep back into our reflections” (1990, p.47) which meant this process needed to be ongoing, throughout the hermeneutic process of writing and re-writing, reading and re-reading of the women’s stories. It was not just a putting aside, rather a continual process of acknowledging my own biases. Gadamer advised, “The important thing is to be aware of one’s own bias, so that the text can present itself in all its otherness and thus assert its own truth against one’s own fore-meanings.” (2004, p. 269). Further, Lavery (2003) pointed out that this process further demarcates hermeneutic phenomenology from transcendental empirical phenomenology where in the latter biases are “bracketed” out, overtly named, and put aside at the outset of the research process.

Secondly, I had also been influenced by previous research findings on women's careers, which indicated that women pull away from their careers to balance other facets of their lives. In particular, I had engaged strongly with the findings of the Kaleidoscope Career Model (2005, 2006). I had expected that these findings would be further validated by this research. This research revealed that many women seek challenge throughout their career, as well as authenticity and attempt to achieve balance. In this research the three KCM facets intersect rather than being strongly defined during these women's careers. My initial presupposition forged by my reading of the KCM model and research was not supported by this research.

The question this research begs is whether conducting a hermeneutic phenomenological study has been efficacious. How does the data, and the findings differ from what might have been garnered by an interpretive study, which used narrative methodology for instance? I could argue that since the ultimate aim of phenomenological research is to become more fully who we are, and since this project has had a deep and transformative learning effect, a heightened perceptiveness and increased thoughtfulness on myself as researcher that the study has been worthwhile. This conclusion would be disingenuous and insufficient.

To understand what it means to be a woman in our present age Van Manen (2001) suggested, "is also to understand the pressures of the meaning structures that have come to restrict, widen, or question the nature and ground of womanhood" (p. 12). What this study has achieved is to uncover and lay out how the women in this study are "constructing" their careers. The women themselves have confirmed that the discussions they had with me as researcher which have been supplied to them as phenomenological anecdotes are representative of those discussions. Hermeneutic

phenomenology does not ask ‘why,’ it does not seek to problem-solve or explain, it seeks to find out how it ‘is’ in the living of the ‘thing’ (Smythe, 2011; van Manen, 1990); it seeks to find meanings. The anecdotes have presented accounts of the challenges and forces, which these women have dealt with, and how they have dealt with them; what it means for them to enact a career.

The construct of women’s careers emphasises human experience and development over a woman’s whole life span. This project concentrates on women’s experience from their early beginnings up until the time of the interview. As such, it is a “whole of life” project that involved women talking about a minimum of ten years of their careers, their family of origin, early influences and future aspirations. Heidegger (1927/2008) recognised the finite nature of our existence and insisted, to acknowledge this finitude is essential in becoming authentic. A person’s whole life, the “whole space” between birth and death is of interest (Heidegger, 2008). I consider, this research was therefore an excellent fit for utilising phenomenology. Women’s experiences in career management, make up a part of the broad spectrum of activities in the management arena for which Ehrich (2005) argued, phenomenological research is a good fit. This study validates Ehrich’s argument and has uncovered women’s career experiences and ways of making meaning in their careers.

Instead of a view looking-on from the outside of these women’s careers, this research enables an insider’s perspective by seeking the view of the women themselves as to how their agency and behaviours unfold within an organisational context (2012). With consistent findings about the importance of context and relationships to women’s career choices (O’Neil et al, 2008) this research has provided a perspective, which endorses the significance of both of these factors. Rather than detracting and constraining,

relationships through an ethic of care and strong ties, have been shown to spur women towards increased career identity and positive decision-making and towards attaining more authenticity in their career. Contextual and sociological factors have been shown to strongly contribute to these women's career behaviours with Bourdieu's habitus theory providing a means to address the uneven emphasis on individual and social aspects in career development theory (Vilhjálmssdóttir, 2003).

Undoubtedly it has been my experience, that a researcher using phenomenology needs to be drawn to the topic with intensity and fervour perhaps not experienced in other kinds of research; there is indeed a turning towards it (Gadamer, 2004). I have described the additional workload required in gaining an understanding of both Heideggerian philosophy and of hermeneutic phenomenology developed as method. With this in mind, I am suggesting a list of required skills for a potential phenomenologist, not a "how to" list but instead recommendations and reflections based on my experiences in order to provide a potential checklist for a beginning researcher contemplating carrying out a hermeneutic phenomenological study.

Recommended skills considered necessary for the novice phenomenologist

Skill as an interviewer is essential

If a phenomenological research project is to be undertaken, the researcher needs to be at the least, trained in some kind of listening skills, and able to conduct a lengthy interview of over one hour with confidence. The researcher must not be daunted about becoming involved with the participant's stories, hearing of their difficulties, traumas or pain. In fact, the researcher must welcome such sharing, and must be able to "prompt and probe" in order to gain further insights into the participant's "lived experience." Collecting the data must not be problematic because the researcher becomes

overwhelmed by the participant's emotion or rhetoric. He or she must be able to keep the participant grounded and emotionally safe throughout the interview.

Being a discerning reader

As with other qualitative research, it is a given that there will be copious amounts of data. In spite of the restrictions on participant numbers to between twelve and twenty—in this study fourteen—interviews of over an hour generate several dozen pages of transcript per interview. The researcher needs to be able to discern which parts of the transcripts contain the details, important in the distinguishing of objective elements of the research and which parts contain the stories or parts of stories, which may lead to the basis of a phenomenological anecdote. The researcher must enjoy reading and must read with critical insight.

Writing is the method

I attended an AUT qualitative methods Masterclass, in February 2012, which was a kind of baptism by phenomenology, introduced as an “immersion into the spirit of phenomenology” where participants were told that if they liked reading and writing then phenomenology could be for them. An enjoyment of writing letters, blogs, essays, poems, journals, reports, may indicate a researcher could be drawn to phenomenology with its emphasis on writing and rewriting.

Phenomenological anecdotes once drafted provide material for the researcher to read and re-read then to craft and re write until they are shaped in such a way that they represent a notion or idea. Again, the researcher needs to be able to differentiate between what to leave out and what to keep in, so the anecdote has the “tilling” effect

needed in order to reveal the phenomenon (van Manen, 1990). Sometimes the adage applies; less is more. The researcher must be both insightful writer and proficient editor.

Confidence to interpret and make judgments

The researcher must be able to infer and make judgments based on his or her interpretations with confidence. He or she must be able to think both critically and creatively since phenomenology is both a “conceptual” analysis and a “poeticizing” project (van Manen, 1990). The researcher must also know when to stop, to know when the interpretive process reaches, “a moment in time where one has reached sensible meanings of the experience free from inner contradictions” (Lavery, 2003, p. 22). For the phenomenological researcher, confidence in his or her ability is key.

Who should do it?

These essential skills and abilities mean phenomenology is more suited to a person with some life experience and maturity. The researcher needs to be able to become sufficiently involved in the project as sensitive listener and interviewer. He or she must be an intuitive reader and writer, skilled editor and interpreter. Above all the researcher must not be daunted by the demands of such intense involvement.

Practical implications of this study

For career counselling and development: Developing *phrōnesis* in education

As previously identified, many women in this study struggled to maintain a sense of equilibrium. They indicated they had at different times felt fatigued. Sometimes they wondered how they could continue at such pace. It was interesting to note that not one

of them mentioned they had experienced support through career counselling or coaching. During my interviews with the women in this study, none of them indicated they had been involved in career development sessions or sought the help of a career counsellor. In several cases, after our interview had finished several of the women asked me what I would advise them to do.

The significance of people who exercised care was apparent in all their narratives as discussed extensively in sections on Sorrow or Care-for. Women who had enjoyed the support of someone they regarded as an advisor or supporter in their career found this support instrumental in maintaining a sense of perspective; a highly supportive partner also had this function. Feelings of being alone and isolated were expressed not just because they were “different from my friends” or “the only one” but also because in some cases they did not have the buffering of supportive peers or managers in their workplace. This highlights the importance of professional development and counselling opportunities for women. Such opportunities for women working in education are invaluable in helping women maintain perspective, attend to issues of self-care and become increasingly reflective and self-aware.

Further to the above recommendation of building insight and resilience through counselling and professional development, is the concern that women’s career progress might be jeopardised as a result of stress and burnout. Due to the incumbent pressures and workload the majority of women—although able to achieve a higher skill level and mastery—might struggle to maintain career momentum and to ever attain the elusive state of *phrōnesis*. As I listened to the stories of the women in this study and heard of their struggles, their experiences and rhetoric resonated with the participants in Cole’s (1997) study. Cole commented, “listening to teachers talk about their work we hear

frustration anger, stress, despair and weariness – states of mind prepared more for survival than deep thinking and learning” (1997, p. 21).

Significant research has been conducted into *phrönesis* in other studies in the professions and including the education sector (Kinsella & Pitman, 2012). Sellman (2012) proposed we have a modern paradox, he alleged that today’s technicist-driven institutions expect competent practitioners but are, “unwilling to provide the environments in which competent practice can thrive.” Such a narrow-minded approach lacks prescience and is unaware of the “detrimental long-term effect of short-term efficiency gains.” He contended as a result there would be few competent practitioners and “we will all be impoverished” (p.128).

Limitations of the study

Due to its exploratory nature, this research is limited in several ways. The sample although small with fourteen participants was designed to maximise the richness of the data obtained. Using a purposive sampling technique meant that women self-selected to participate by responding to the advertisement. Other participants were recruited using a snowball technique through contacts of the researcher and supervisors. Therefore this sample is in no way representative.

The sample was embedded in the education industry and the demographics of the sample may restrict the applicability of the findings. Although attempts were made to include a diverse range of participants, all the women were partnered at the time of the interview, and all but three were New Zealand European. Also, only two were over fifty years. Additionally the applications of this study are limited to the education industry,

in the New Zealand context. Whether the findings can be generalised to other settings needs to be explored with further research.

There are also limitations due to single interviewer bias. Although I have experience in interviews and in counselling situations, managing the interview process may have meant an emphasis was given to discussing one question over another. The conceptual framework for understanding and interpreting women's careers, introduced using the three overarching themes arising from this study needs further research to confirm whether these themes are robust and whether they are applicable and viable in other settings.

Suggestions for further research

This research has added to that conducted by Iellatchitch et al (2003) and Pringle et al., (2013) in exploring how Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and capitals can be used to understand career. Research is now needed to further confirm these findings and to explore how career fields other than education influence career actors' logic and the dynamics of the game.

Future research might also explore women's careers using hermeneutic phenomenology in other contexts and industries and using a greater diversity of participants. A comparative study using both men and women would add to existing research on the gendered differences in careers. A small-scale study such as this is useful in exploring research in untapped areas and serves as a forerunner for further hermeneutic phenomenology research.

Summary

Heidegger's philosophy developed as research methodology has proven an apposite instrument to enable an "everyday" understanding of women's careers. This study has operationalised key Heideggerian concepts such as Care, Angst and Historicity as research methodology to understand women's careers and intertwined them with two other concepts: Bourdieu's habitus and Aristotle's *phrōnesis*. This potent combination of research "tools" digs deep into women's lived experiences of career and unearths a previously unseen viewpoint.

Further, by utilising interpretive hermeneutic phenomenology—a method novel in management research—rich and deep phenomenological anecdotes of the lived experiences of the women participants were crafted. The proposed explanatory theory, embedded in the context of Heidegger's tri-partite arrangement of past-present-future, and demonstrating the three overarching themes emerged as a sense-making mechanism. This theory reveals the power of Heideggerian hermeneutic phenomenology to illuminate and interpret women's career motivations. A lucid and detailed explanation of the methods and processes employed provides a valuable guide for other researchers in the management arena to follow. The post-analysis literature review confirmed that the three themes identified are supported by the literature.

For too long, women's careers have in effect, waited in the wings, "bit" players on the career stage, with few lines of script. This study lifts the profile on women as career "actors" and elevates them to a much-deserved leading role. It shows that previous perceptions of women's careers—hindered and bound by relationships—portray women as "needy" others unable to "fly on their own." Rather than limiting, this study reveals

the positive impact and impelling nature of significant relationships and key people as potential influences, to direct and empower, rather than hinder women in their career progression. This research offers a heuristic and workable model from which to view women's careers. It provides women's career theorizing with some much needed depth, impetus and direction.

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Appendix A: Ethics approval



MEMORANDUM

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

To: Judith Pringle
 From: **Dr Rosemary Godbold** Executive Secretary, AUTEC
 Date: 17 May 2012
 Subject: Ethics Application Number 12/96 **Career as meaning making: a hermeneutic phenomenological study of women's lived experiences.**

Dear Judith

Thank you for providing written evidence as requested. I am pleased to advise that it satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) at their meeting on 30 April 2012 and I have approved your ethics application. This delegated approval is made in accordance with section 5.3.2.3 of AUTEC's *Applying for Ethics Approval: Guidelines and Procedures* and is subject to endorsement at AUTEC's meeting on 11 June 2012.

Your ethics application is approved for a period of three years until 17 May 2015.

I advise that as part of the ethics approval process, you are required to submit the following to AUTEC:

- A brief annual progress report using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/research-ethics/ethics>. When necessary this form may also be used to request an extension of the approval at least one month prior to its expiry on 17 May 2015;
- A brief report on the status of the project using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/research-ethics/ethics>. This report is to be submitted either when the approval expires on 17 May 2015 or on completion of the project, whichever comes sooner;

It is a condition of approval that AUTEC is notified of any adverse events or if the research does not commence. AUTEC approval needs to be sought for any alteration to the research, including any alteration of or addition to any documents that are provided to participants. You are reminded that, as applicant, you are responsible for ensuring that research undertaken under this approval occurs within the parameters outlined in the approved application.

Please note that AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval from an institution or organisation for your research, then you will need to make the arrangements necessary to obtain this. Also, if your research is undertaken within a jurisdiction outside New Zealand, you will need to make the arrangements necessary to meet the legal and ethical requirements that apply within that jurisdiction.

To enable us to provide you with efficient service, we ask that you use the application number and study title in all written and verbal correspondence with us. Should you have any further enquiries regarding this matter, you are welcome to contact me by email at ethics@aut.ac.nz or by telephone on 921 9999 at extension 6902. Alternatively you may contact your AUTEC Faculty Representative (a list with contact details may be found in the Ethics Knowledge Base at <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/research-ethics/ethics>).

On behalf of AUTEC and myself, I wish you success with your research and look forward to reading about it in your reports.

Yours sincerely


Dr Rosemary Godbold
Executive Secretary
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Appendix B: Advertisement NEXT magazine

**Are you interested in being part of:
A RESEARCH STUDY INTO
WOMEN'S CAREERS AT DIFFERENT
POINTS IN THEIR LIVES?**

- Are you currently involved in teaching within the education industry at primary, secondary or tertiary level?
- Are you aged between 30 and 59 years?
- Are you currently involved in some form of paid employment?
- Are you interested in telling your story of living YOUR life/career?

If you have said YES to the above questions then we would like you to consider being part of a research project which intends to explore how women seek to make meaning of their lives through their careers. Please email margieeb@gmail.com to receive more information about the study.



Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced:

15 April 2012

Project Title

Becoming her own woman: Examining 21st century New Zealand women's life careers

An Invitation

My name is Margie Elley-Brown and I am researching women's careers in New Zealand with particular interest in how women are using work to make meaning in their lives. This research will form part of my doctoral research for a PhD. As you are a woman who has indicated that you are involved in some form of paid employment; are currently involved in teaching at primary, secondary or tertiary level and have indicated a desire to participate in this research, I would like to further invite you to be involved in this research. If you decide to participate you may withdraw from the research project at any time prior to the completion of data collection. Your participation is completely voluntary.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of the project is to investigate how women can use work as a means of making meaning of their lives and how they deal with dilemmas in the process. As mentioned this research is towards the completion of a PhD qualification and as well as a summary of findings for participants, I intend to publish the anonymous summated findings in academic journals and to present them at conferences.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have identified yourself to me by responding to the advertisement in NEXT magazine and have supplied me with your contact email and other details. I believe that you have a story to tell about your career pathway, your interests, influences and motivations, which could be instructive for understanding women's careers.

As a woman aged between 30 and 59, currently pursuing a career with experience in teaching at primary, secondary or tertiary level during your career, you are eligible to be involved in this study.

What will happen in this research?

The research will involve participating in an interview with me which will be between 60 and 90 minutes in length. I will ask you questions about your career, but you will be encouraged to add additional comments as you see fit. I will provide transcripts to you and you may change any comments attributed to you for accuracy. After six months, I will contact you again, and if you would like to add any further comments to the original interview a second brief interview of between 30-45 minutes will be arranged so that you can do this.

What are the discomforts and risks?

None are envisaged. The process should be relaxed and informal and as you will be in charge of responding to my questions about your career. I will endeavour to ensure that the environment is conducive to your needs and comfort. If you do not wish to respond to a question or wish to withdraw entirely from the study, you may do so at any time up until the end of data collection.

What are the benefits?

Research findings show that by being interviewed people can gain new insights of their experiences. During the interview process you will be encouraged to articulate things you may not have previously spoken about. With this in mind, you may experience the benefit of increased self-understanding of your own career and motivations.

For me as researcher, this research will be a vital part of the completion of my PhD. I envisage that your career story will assist me as a career counsellor and other career consultants and researchers to gain a better understanding of women's career dynamics. Such information will be helpful for women clients in developing their career plans and may also be inspirational. I hope to disseminate the findings through conference presentations and to publish anonymous findings from this research in career management journals.

How will my privacy be protected?

Neither your name nor any contact information will be used in the findings. Details that may identify you will be omitted. You will receive a transcript of the interviews. You may request any information you consider confidential to be deleted.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

It is anticipated that a total of 2-3 hours would be needed, 60-90 minutes for the interview and 30-45 minutes to review the transcribed material, with an added 30-45 minutes extra in the event that you should desire a second interview.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Please return the signed Consent Form to me if you agree to participate. You will have 3 weeks to consider this request. I began my research on 1st October 2012.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

A consent form is provided for you to sign and return to me.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

You will receive a draft copy of my findings on completion if you wish. If the anonymised findings are presented at any conference or published in an academic journal you are also welcome to have a copy of the presentation or article.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Judith Pringle, Professor of Organisation Studies, AUT Business School, AUT, judith.pringle@aut.ac.nz, 9219999, ext 5420

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEK, Dr Rosemary Godbold, rosemary.godbold@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6902.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:

Margie Elley-Brown, PhD candidate, AUT Business School, AUT, margieeb@gmail.com

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Professor Judith Pringle, Professor of Organisation Studies, AUT Business School, AUT, judith.pringle@aut.ac.nz, 9219999, ext 5420

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 17 May 2012, AUTEK Reference number 12/96

Appendix D: Consent Form



Consent Form

Project title: Career as Meaning making: A hermeneutic phenomenological study of women's lived experience

Project Supervisor: Professor Judith Pringle, AUT

Researcher: Margie Elley-Brown, AUT

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 15 April 2012.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a copy of the report/s from the research (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

Date: 10th September 2012

Please enclose this consent form in the envelope provided and post to the researcher in the enclosed stamped and self-addressed envelope.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 17 May 2012 AUTEK Reference number 12/96

Appendix E: Indicative Questions

I am going to ask you questions about your life and career. These are just prompts to help you tell your story.

1. Tell me about your current work, home and family situation.
2. Tell me a bit about, your schooling and education. Can you give me a bit of an overview of your career?
3. What about meaning and finding purpose: Do you think that your work has helped you find out who you are?
4. What has driven or impelled you to achieve the things you have? Has there been a need for frequent change and/or re-invention? If so, what do you think has impelled you?
5. Can you tell me how you have been able to manage to balance the needs of family life and relationships amidst the demands of your working life?
6. When you reflect on your life/career have there been defining moments for you – which meant that things changed, or that you changed your perspective?
7. What about sparkling moments – the real high points of your career? Can you describe any of those? And tell me about times to the contrary, low points?

Note: Questions will not necessarily be used in this order.

Appendix F: Letter to accompany stories returned to participants



Dear

It is now several months since I met with you and conducted an interview about your life career. I do hope that the intervening months have gone well for you.

Before I go any further, I want to say how grateful I am to you for giving me the opportunity to interview you for my doctoral studies. The transcripts have provided me with substantive and rich material. I have found the process of reviewing the interviews and the transcripts and crafting the stories fascinating and exciting.

As we discussed at the interview and I indicated in an email to you afterwards, I am now returning the stories crafted from our interview for you to review. There are no names mentioned in the stories, just initials. For anonymity, all names have been withdrawn. If any of the stories are used in any way in publications, other names will be inserted.

In extracting pieces of transcript and using it to craft the stories, I was looking for the 'lived experience' of having a career, how it has felt for you, as captured in the interview process. What you've got now are my attempts to represent this. I was looking not just for intrinsically happy stories, rather for the lows as well as the highs of your career journey and experience.

What will happen now is that the stories will be used in the extraction of themes. Stories will be read and re-read to interpret the meaning behind the story. It is these themes, which will be used in writing up my research.

I'd like to ask you to read over the stories. I'm asking you to do this for two reasons:

- To confirm the information included in them and
- To give me further permission to work with your stories in an interpretive way.

If you are in agreement with a story, please initial it at the bottom of the page as a sign of your permission.

Alternatively

- If you wish to edit any story please make notes on the particular story
- If you have any other concerns over a story, can you also note this on the particular story so that I can contact you and we can discuss it

Once the stories are signed, please put them in the stamped addressed envelope provided and post them back to me.

Thanks again.

Yours sincerely

Margie Elley-Brown
Doctoral Candidate, AUT

Appendix G: Extract from the transcript of an interview crafted into a story

My parents moved to Australia when I was in Sixth Form and I stayed in a little town in Taranaki and rented a house with my cousins. And it was teachers in a time when my parents weren't there, who really made me think that I could definitely go to university. I could move out of that small town and do other things. They would just never accept if I didn't get an A. Of course you can go to university, of course you can get out of this town and not work in the supermarket you're really talented. So I think it was that constant expecting – not expecting you to ever fail. And I don't think that they realised what an impact they had for a young girl in a small town. Because not many people from that area really left. Most people went and worked on farms or in the local factories and things like that. I probably was more likely to become a teenage Mum, than to leave that town. There was always just the expectation that I wouldn't just leave school and I wouldn't just get pregnant or work in the supermarket or become a farmer's wife. But that I would go to university and whatever I did there was okay. They were really instrumental. That's what made me want to teach, because I thought --- the impact they had on my life was life-changing.

When I think about it now – at the time they seemed like amazing teachers, but they weren't doing anything super special. They were just caring that you came to their class, planning good lessons, expecting you to do well. Really basic teaching practice. Good teaching practice. I could tell they enjoyed doing what they were doing. They made me want to be in their classroom.

I

They really believed in me. they said You can be something else.

I always cry about them.

Marge Eley ... 15/10/14 5:26 PM
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Marge Eley ... 15/10/14 5:09 PM
Moved (insertion) [1]

Marge Eley ... 15/10/14 5:11 PM
Deleted: The thing is ... ad I don't think

Marge Eley ... 15/10/14 5:15 PM
Deleted: Yeah. Even ... w ... on I think a

Marge Eley ... 15/10/14 5:09 PM
Moved up [1]: They would just never accept if I didn't get an A.

Click to accept change
Deleted: They would just never accept if I didn't get an A. It was just acceptable ---

Marge Eley ... 15/10/14 5:10 PM
Moved up [2]: So I think it was that constant expecting – not expecting you to ever fail.

Marge Eley ... 15/10/14 5:28 PM
Deleted: Not much. I think I was probably these two teachers who really

Appendix H: An example of a story with description and interpretation

A story from Miriama

I don't think they realised what an impact they had

My parents moved to Australia when I was in Sixth Form and I stayed on in that little town in central Taranaki and rented a house with my cousins. And it was two teachers, at a time when my parents weren't there, who really made me think that I definitely could go to university that I could move out of that small town and that I could do other things.

They would never accept it if I didn't get an A.

"Of course you should be getting this kind of mark. Of course you should be looking at plans for university. Your path isn't to work in the supermarket, because you're really talented," they would say rather than giving me an option out. It was that constant expecting me to succeed, that not expecting me to ever fail.

And I don't think they realised what an impact they had on a young girl living in a small town. Because not many people from that area left. Most people went and worked on farms or in the local factories. I was probably more likely to become a teenage Mum, than to leave that town.

There was always just the expectation that I wouldn't leave school and get pregnant or work in the supermarket or become a farmer's wife. That I would go to university and whatever I did there was okay. They were really instrumental. Because of them, I wanted to teach. The impact they had on my life was huge; those two key teachers were life changing.

When I think about it now, at the time they seemed like amazing teachers, but they weren't doing anything super-special. They were just caring that you came to their class, planning good lessons, expecting you to do well; just good basic teaching practice. I could tell they enjoyed doing what they were doing; they made me want to be in their classroom.

And they really believed in me; they said, "You can be something else."

I always cry about them.

Description of the story

This story tells of a time in Miriama's life when her parents moved overseas and she was left to fend for herself. At that time, two teachers were highly significant for her, and constantly expected her to achieve at whatever she did and to follow a different pathway from other young people in the town.

What does this story mean?

It is about the importance of significant others. Miriama's parents were not there for her, the two teachers were. They became of more import because she was alone. Although Miriama doesn't perceive the two teachers as being special she does acknowledge the 'life changing' impact they had. Because of their belief in her ability and their 'constant expecting' her self-belief increased. The story, which unfolded from that point on wasn't the one typical of other young people in the town. The two teachers enabled Miriama to believe in her ability to write a different story.

The two teachers were significant because of who Miriama was, she was a young girl, alone and vulnerable. DASEIN encounters things that are READY-TO-HAND; it uses them and takes them for granted. Their significance depends on what Dasein we are.

When Miriama told this story she was drawn back into her lived experience of being a young woman alone and vulnerable. Her tears are evidence of the strength of her emotion towards the teachers. They weren't just teachers, they are heroes. From then on, they became in a way 'heroes' to her.

Notion in Miriama's story

Significant others at significant times can enable a young woman to write a new story for her self.