

Craft as work-life unity: the careers of skilled working class men and their sons and grandsons after deindustrialisation

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Abstract

This article focuses on the enduring significance of craft in the careers of Kent Royal Dockyard craft workers and their sons and grandsons after deindustrialisation. The closure of this naval shipbuilding and repair yard together with the subsequent move to post-industrial employment did not end men's engagement with their craft practices. Instead this developed into a '*craft outlook*' defined by a motivation for performing actualising labour that interwove paid and non-paid work. Men's careers did not become individualised projects of self as collaborative intergenerational practices gave a long-term narrative to their careers and lives. Therefore, three contributions are proposed to the literature on working class male careers and craft. First, an analytical framework is advanced that empirically distinguishes a '*craft outlook*' from traditional manual trade employment. Second, a craft outlook reflected '*whole life careers*' that were constructed from both paid and non-paid work. Third, the concept of '*human imprint*' is developed to recognise the generational affirmation produced by the transmission of craft practices.

Keywords

Craft / Careers / Deindustrialisation / Domestic work / Men

Introduction

The careers of craftspeople have a symbolic place in the study of work. Marx (1845), Morris (1883), and Mills (1959) all referred to craft as the capacity to transform labour into a self-realising career. In fact, the carpenter's workshop, where master and apprentice talk and work collectively, is still evoked as the central image of self-realising labour in Sennett's (2008) *The Craftsmen*. Sennett (2008) defines craft as the vocational development of a linked

body of skills and knowledge across a working life. Although working class craft labour was the inspiration for this discourse generations ago, the concepts of career and craft are now seen as ever declining features of working class men's lives. Cappelli (1999) and Sennett (1998) argue that the working class career as a 'job for life' in a single company has been replaced by short term employment, while new notions of the career as a subjectively constructed 'project of self' (Giddens, 1991) are based on a largely middle class experience of employment (Skeggs, 2004). Craft as a feature of working class paid and domestic work is portrayed in similar demise. In paid work, craft production was initially threatened by Fordism (Braverman, 1974), and has now lost its traditional manufacturing base with deindustrialisation (see Gorz, 1982; Linkon, 2014). In domestic work, craft practices, once the feature of working class self-reliance, are now conceptually gentrified to adorn middle class pastimes as autotherapeutic labour (Campbell, 2005). We might therefore ask: can working class men still find long-term meaning and a sense of self-realising craft in their careers?

This article focuses in particular on the impact of deindustrialisation on skilled dockyard craftsmen and their sons and grandsons. While this study conceptualizes gender as a social and cultural construction and not a fixed category (Hearn, 2004), it acknowledges that society still produces definitions of what are appropriate masculine and feminine behaviours in everyday practices and social interactions (Butler, 2006) and, therefore, only focuses on the impact of deindustrialisation on the identity of men. Admittedly, the industrial revolution has been central to social definitions of appropriate masculine identity (McDowell, 2003). Connell (1995: 33) argues that, 'definitions of masculinity are deeply enmeshed in the history of institutions and economic structures'. Consequently, masculinities are defined by their historical context and, as such, can be destabilised in periods of historical and economic transition like deindustrialization. Industrial work had a significant impact on the generational construction of a secure male identity within industrial communities, but, as Linkon notes, 'having lost both employment opportunities and the role models of their blue-collar fathers, the sons face continuing challenges as they attempt to reconstruct masculinity in the absence of industrial work' (2014: 150). This study wished to explore how the construction of masculinities was informed by the historical legacy of industrial work and how intergenerational male identities were being renegotiated

in the wake of deindustrialization. This means that this study only focuses on generations of male family kin and cannot speak for female familial relationship such as father-daughter relationships.

Closed in 1984, the Royal Dockyard, the site of deindustrialisation in this study, had been the major employer in this area for over 400 years. The main aim of this research was to explore if deindustrialisation led to a crisis or rupture in male work identity between a generation of fathers (who worked in the royal dockyard) and the generations of their sons and grandsons (who never worked in the royal dockyard). Therefore, the study constructed an intergenerational sample based on 28 career history interviews of familial men organised into two samples and conducted in 2011–2012. The first sample was composed of 14 former Dockyard craftsmen and the second 14 of these men's sons and grandsons. This research found that neither sample experienced a rupture or crisis in their gendered identities due to the closure of the dockyard (Author 2014, 2017). Instead, these men reinterpreted and resituated cross-generational themes together to retain a sense of secure male work identity while navigating a period of employment change. This paper focuses on how these men interpreted the meaning of craft and performed intergenerational unpaid craft projects to produce and maintain meaningful work identities. The significance of these unpaid projects also illustrated that men were not constructing their careers on paid work alone; instead, domestic work was also a formative part of the men's work identities.

In this research, craft arose as a topic because the men in the first sample were all former skilled trade workers, having completed craft apprenticeships of 3 to 5 years in the Dockyard. The Royal Dockyards represent one of the oldest and longest standing examples of craft production anywhere in the world (Lunn and Day, 1999). In this setting, craft workgroups had a monopoly over demarcated aspects of work within ship production (Roberts, 1993). The specialised skills needed to become a craftsman were acquired on an indentured apprenticeship. The apprenticeships would begin in the dockyard school with all apprentices learning universal manual skills such as making their own craft tools and tool boxes. By their second year, apprentices would spend most of their time with craftsmen in their area learning their particular body of skills. For example, in the drawing office, shipwright apprentices would learn to do technical drawings of ships architecture taking into account

measurements of pressure and stress, whilst patternmaker apprentices would learn to make wood models for casting the metal parts of ships in their workshop. In this manner, skills were not learnt in abstract, but acquired by performing tasks that would directly contribute to the work of their craft group. The process of learning and production was so intertwined that some men expressed little immediate difference between their apprenticeships and their job as craftspeople.

In comparison, the domestic craft projects of the men in this study were smaller scale and removed from the division of labour and demarcations of the dockyard. This meant men commonly learnt skills beyond their crafts; for example, in building home extensions, men talked of learning new skills such as bricklaying. Alongside practical necessity, most of the former dockyard men discussed performing domestic projects motivated by a desire to revisit or continue developing their linked body of craft skills. Men whose crafts were based on working with wood discussed domestic projects such as carving wooden cabinets, making wooden toys or building small wooden boats. Moreover, those from metal and electrical crafts predominantly talked of car and motorcycle maintenance. Men's domestic projects seemed actively based on reengaging with skills learnt on their apprenticeships but, in adapting their crafts to non-dockyard work, these also allowed them to continue their development as craftsmen. This domestic work was seldom an individual endeavour; instead, most were family projects involving fathers, sons and sometimes wider family members collectively planning and performing these projects together over extended periods. Therefore, the term 'intergenerational craft projects' is used to define such familial activities. Although most participants talked about discreet domestic projects, one project would often lead to the next. In this way, most men's DIY seemed part of an ongoing familial career.

The occupational and personal importance of craft to these men led this study to produce a craft framework to analyse craft on both a practical and conceptual level. Constructed from normative literature and empirical research, this framework evaluates craft as an outlook and not a narrow occupational role; thus, it allows the inclusion of craftspeople who work in non-manual areas and the post-industrial era. The research found that craft did not disappear or become an individualised consumption activity after deindustrialisation

(Campbell, 2005). Instead, this evolved into a 'craft outlook' through generational family projects. A craft outlook is a concept I empirically developed from Mills' (1959) and Sennett's (2008) depiction of craft as a vocational motivation to actualising labour. This 'craft outlook' produced interpersonal self-realization and created a powerful labour ethic on which to structure a *whole life career*. A 'craft outlook' is different from an occupational trade, since it reflects the personal outcomes that individuals felt they gained from their work, while trade in a simple sense just reflects the skills and demarcated work of a particular occupational group. First, the article will discuss the literature on the changing notions of career and its relationship to class and male work identities. Second, the analytical framework used to evaluate a craft outlook will be presented. Third, the study's methodology will be considered. Fourth, the career narratives of the men in this study will be analysed using the analytical framework. Finally, this paper concludes that a craft outlook provides new insight into how men were constructing 'whole life careers' from both paid and non-paid work.

Conceptual background

As established in the Introduction, current debates suggest that as a 'job for life' has declined, the notion of career is becoming an ever-removed feature of working class men's lives (Cappelli 1999 and Sennett 1998). This article suggests this is not the case, as men's careers were constructed from more than just paid employment. This is also suggested in Weis (2004) and McDowell (2003) empirical studies that found that deindustrialization led working class men to construct multifaceted masculinities that were based on both paid employment and their roles as fathers and care givers. However, these two studies do not directly consider how this impacts on men's notion of career. Therefore, a multidimensional notion of career seems to better conceptualise the types of career a proportion of working class men are producing after deindustrialization.

At present, most definitions of multidimensional careers are based on and emphasise middle class people's employment experiences. Arthur and Rousseau's (1996) concept of a 'boundaryless career', for example, suggests that employees continually respond to changing work structures by investing in new knowledge and skills that cross old organizational

boundaries instead of developing on long term practices and embedded bodies of skill. This characterises multidimensional careers as subjective 'projects of self' Giddens (1991: 112) where the individual sees career transitions as simply 'a break with the past'. Skeggs (2004) believes this emphasis on individualised projects ignores the collaborative and located practices that underpin working class people's careers and identities. Instead, this misleadingly presents a 'self- developmental individualisation, premised on a particular kind of middle class employment relations' (2004: 52) as universal to all people. To find a conception of a multidimensional career that recognizes the role of wider work commitments and embedded social relationships in career construction this research turns to Kirton's (2006) study of women's multifaceted careers. Kirton's (2006: 48) study found paid employment was only one aspect of women's work with 'marriage, family, union activity and other voluntary work' also informing their careers. These activities had an interdependent relationship as 'commitment to, progression in, or setbacks for one mode of career cannot be understood without appreciation of the others' (Kirton, 2006: 48). In order to recognise paid and non-paid work people dedicate themselves to long term, Kirton (2006) proposes the concept of a 'whole life career'. Although Kirton (2006: 50) claims there is no reason why the 'experiences reported in the article are uniquely female', no research has directly explored if working class men also construct such multifaceted careers. However, DIY, a significant life activity that informs men's gender and work identities (Gelber, 1997; Moio et al., 2013), could be considered an aspect in men's multifaceted careers. Gorman-Murray (2011) study is particularly relevant as this also focuses on men dealing with employment anxiety and job loss. The men considered in this study saw home repair as a significant life activity that provided them with an alternative to committing their work identity exclusively to paid work. The performance of DIY resituated 'the role of home in work/life balance, this involves greater commitment to the domestic sphere, spending more time at home, engaging in domestic labour, and prioritising family time' (Gorman-Murray, 2011: 218). In a similar vein, Cox (2013) found men also saw DIY as a duty of care to their family and reflective of the right way to be a man. A coherent principle for all these men was that paying others to do such work was a personal failure of family duty. Cox (2013) concludes DIY should be reconceptualised as care work, as this exhibited Fisher and Tronto (1990: 4) definition of 'caring' as 'a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our "world" so that we can live in it as well as possible. That

world includes our bodies, ourselves and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web'. Cox (2013) argues that domestic home repair understood as care work is an aspect often neglected in discussions of men's work.

These studies capture the subjective role that DIY as domestic work can play in men's careers and lives, but it is still important to not present this domestic work as gender neutral or equivalent to domestic work predominantly performed by women for two reasons. First, although the Multinational Time Use Study defines DIY as domestic work, it reflects that men's DIY is far less time intensive and far more voluntary than the domestic work performed by women in tasks such as cleaning, cooking and laundry (Kan, Sullivan and Gershuny 2011). Second, the connection of paid and domestic work in career narratives is still significantly gendered. Wajcmen and Martin (2002: 999) study suggests such narratives are less problematic for men, as fatherhood is still seen as conducive with prioritising 'paid work responsibilities over private ones'. The prioritisation of paid work is consistent with my study as no man became their families' primary care giver after deindustrialisation; instead, all sought and found new full time employment. This article does not aim to suggest men performed an equal amount of domestic work to their partners. Instead, it aims to understand the subjective meaning domestic work played in men's career constructions. Therefore, in considering men's domestic work and career construction, it is important to acknowledge that these are still shaped by particular gender and career biases (Wajcmen and Martin, 2002).

Historically, paid craft and trade work are prime examples of masculine constructions, as these terms were used to label and demarcate predominantly male only work. The history of craft and the notion of skilled work largely reflect the exclusion of women, with the exception of some trades, such as tailoring. For example, in the dockyard it was not until the 1970s that the apprenticeship system became open to women. However, a craft outlook is advanced to overcome this gender division as this presents a relationship with work in contrast to membership of a strict occupational group. Therefore, the craft framework is not gendered. However, empirically, considering that this study's data was based on a generational sample of men, it should be acknowledged that this paper can only analyse the male transmission of a 'craft outlook' from fathers to sons and grandsons. As such, this study

cannot account for if mothers convey such practices or how fathers and daughters engage in intergenerational craft projects. These are topics that would be interesting to explore in future research, but not ones this study could do justice to.

Analytical craft framework

Craft has been applied to many settings and debates and can be organised into three discrete but interrelated features. First, craft can be seen as a description of practice. Kritzer (2007) argues all craftspeople are propelled by an 'internal aesthetic'. This stems from a process pedagogy and becomes an internalised set of virtues which a craftsperson labours by, even when beyond the observation of other craftspeople. Kritzer (2007) believes this is common to groups as varied as skilled tailors, who notice how accurate stitching is and professional musicians who can hear each note played out of tune. Ability and talent play a role in the development of an 'internal aesthetic'; however, precise craft skills need to be learnt alongside an expert of their craft. Atkinson's (2013) ethnography of glass blowing illustrates this point, as he reflects pressure and posture can only be learnt alongside an expert within the production process itself. As a result, learning is inseparable from technical practice, so production and learning happen simultaneously. Marchard (2008: 245) characterises craft learning as 'largely communicated, understood and negotiated between practitioners without words, and learning is achieved through observation, mimesis and repeated exercise'. Sennett (2008) argues a craft can only be mastered through the slow time development of skills and grounded practice. However, Patchett (2015) sees this as a poor description because crafts are not static disciplines but persistently developing areas of practice. To define craft as a practice learned through a distinct process pedagogy of generational learning, and evaluated by a communal aesthetic, I developed the following category:

1. *Description of practice: The individual's practice demonstrates a development and adaption of skills to versatile contexts with the aim of mastering techniques in contrast to static reproduction. Craft performances are informed by communities of practice as internalised by an aesthetic of technique*

and process. Craftspeople consequently respect the status of experience and enjoy communicating knowledge to enable the development of the next generation.

Secondly, craft is also used as an attitude to meaningful labour. This emanates from Marx (1845) and William Morris (1883), who see craft as a labour of self-realisation. For Morris, craftsmanship has ‘three elements: variety, hope of creation, and the self-respect which comes of a sense of usefulness; to which must be added that mysterious bodily pleasure which goes with the deft exercise of the bodily powers’ (1883: 174). Kritzer’s (2007: 326) empirical study reiterates the harmony created within embodied craft practices but suggests that this engagement is not solely positive for a person’s wider sense of wellbeing. However, a craft attitude is more than just the subjective joy of making. Instead, craftspeople also gain a sense of imprint from the objects they produce. Gorz (1999: 2) summarises this idea as: ‘subjects achieve self-realization by inscribing themselves upon the objective materiality of what they created or produce’. Thus, craft allows workers to exist in what they make and feel they will be recognised long after they are deceased. Sennett (2008) uncouples this discourse from manual trade work and draws on occupations as diverse as conductors and software designers to see craft as a harmonious labour outlook, gained through the enactment of tangible activities and processes. However, Holmes (2014) contests this still needs modification, to include the potential for craft work in service sectors where production provides ‘transient, unstable and intangible objects’ (2014: 480). These amendments allow the inclusion of workers without a practical link to artisan communities. Moreover, removing the production of a ‘stabilised product’ enables a consideration of non-physical forms of imprint. As a result, imprint could denote the human recognition of generations of workers acknowledging the meaningfulness of each other’s work. Like material imprint, this process could allow people to feel their labour is recognised and continued beyond themselves. This attitude to labour is defined in this framework as:

2. *Labour attitude: Craftspeople demonstrate a motivation to quality work, with a desire to conduct meaningful labour guided by personal integrity, variety and the hope of creation. Hence this holistic practice makes labour and human consciousness seem inseparable. Individuals find satisfaction in their practice as a*

reward in and of its own right but need other craftspeople to recognise the imprint of their labour to allow them actualisation. As a result, this should reject distinctions between paid work and personal fulfilment, function and beauty, process and outcome.

Finally, craft has been used to symbolise a career where a person gains a sense of purpose across their paid and domestic work as a lifelong vocation. Mills (1951: 220) characterised a craft vocation as transcending paid, non-paid divisions, referring to this as a unison of 'family, community, and politics'. Sennett (2008) suggests vocation should also denote a disciplined career that over time enables people to sustain a life narrative, but considers this attainable only through a paid career with a single organisation: 'the drive to do good work can give people a sense of vocation; poorly made institutions will ignore their denizens' desire that life add up while well-crafted organisations will profit from it' (2008: 267). Savickes (1997: 2) work rejects this and argues a subjective sense of vocation is fundamental to navigating employment transitions, as this enables people 'to adapt to a sequence of job changes while remaining faithful to oneself and recognizable by others'. However, none of these writers clearly distinguish the role people's domestic work and unpaid craft play in the construction of a vocation.

Thoreau's (1854) *Walden* links the virtue of a craft vocation and the performance of non-paid domestic tasks and is held as the philosophical forefather of DIY (Roland, 1958). Quotes such as: 'Drive a nail home and clinch it so faithfully that you can wake up in the night and think of your work with satisfaction' (Thoreau, 1854: 222) installed home maintenance with a meaning as a measurable accomplishment. Domestic craft is again regaining public interest as reflected by concepts like Campbell's (2005: 23) 'craft consumption'. However, this concept both individualises craft production as a solitary practice learnt and enacted by 'the same person' and considers this an exclusively consumption-based activity. Therefore, this is out of sync with craft as a normative whole life ideal, and collaborative pedagogy. However, Moio et al. (2013) suggests DIY should be seen in relation to people's more rounded identities as they negotiate class and employment role conflicts. Additionally, Cox (2013) and Gorman-Murray (2001) suggest DIY is a significant performance of family and care work. These studies demonstrate domestic craft is an important life activity that, as Kirton

(2006:48) argues, provides a 'constituent part of a person's whole life career'. However, there is still a lack of research on how paid and domestic craft practices intersect as a vocation. To evaluate craft as a vocation this framework uses the following definition:

3. *Vocation: craft is the acquisition and progressive development of a linked body of skills and practices across people's lives. This is not a one-off activity, but a long term vocational dialogue of problem-solving and problem-making. The individual enacts the freedom to test and experiment in their projects. However, their practices must still retain continuity and rhythm as a disciplined, whole life career.*

This framework distinguishes three features of craft, yet these tend to be considered in an intertwined relationship. For example, Morris (1883) and Mills (1951) believe it is through craft as a practice that people gain a normative craft attitude. Moreover, for Sennett (2008) it is only through a continued engagement in craft practices that this becomes a vocation. Therefore, in this study, a craft outlook defines a commitment to all three of these features.

The research project and method

A naval shipbuilding and repair yard, Chatham Royal dockyard was the town's major employer for generations of men over its 400-year history. A multigenerational sample was constructed to explore the generational significance and the long-term effect of deindustrialisation on male work identities in transition. The study used two means to identify its participants: half contacted through the 'Dockyard Historical Society' and the other half was contacted through a quantitative study on asbestosis. All participants' names were anonymised and given culturally appropriate pseudonyms. Biographical interviews were chosen as these are the predominant method of intergenerational studies due to their capacity to evaluate the relationship between social process and social agency (Bertaux and Bertaux-Wiame, 1997). A semi-structured interview guide was given to participants before being interviewed with a range of discussion topics. However, I stressed that what was important 'were the stories and experiences they felt were significant to their lives'. Most participants then constructed their interviews on a chronological account of their lives and

careers. The majority of interviews were recorded in participants' family homes and they lasted on average between one and two hours; then all were transcribed verbatim. This domestic setting allowed participants to also illustrate their memories and interests through showing me photographs or describing their craft projects. Because the focus of the study was on the construction of male work identities after deindustrialization, the sample was constructed on generations of male kin. As mentioned in the Introduction, this is not to say that women did not play a role in the intergenerational transmission of working values and identities for the men in this study, but it was beyond the capacity of this study to represent the role mothers and wives played.

Data analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) phases of thematic analysis. The former dockyard men's interviews and the interviews of sons and grandsons were initially analysed separately to make a comparison of work identities in the different generations. However, during data analysis, it became apparent that cross-generational themes were being continued and reinterpreted by these men. This article focuses on the intergenerational theme of craft as was evaluated using the craft framework above. Thus, 'intergenerational transmission' was fundamental to understanding how these men negotiated the impact of deindustrialisation. Guillaume (2002: 13) defines intergenerational transmission as 'the transfer from one generation to the other of both property and know-how by means of heritage and learning, that is the process by which assets and constraints are handed over'. This study focused largely on the intergenerational transmission of intangible features such as norms, values and practices between family members. Kellerhal et al. (2002: 224) claim most contemporary families try to reconcile generational change through conversation: 'It is through frequent, serious exchanges among individuals that a specific family culture and specific mode of identity transmission take shape'. This intergenerational transmission they term the 'maieutic logic', as values are passed from child to parent alongside the conventional parent to child. In my study, craft projects were key to the exchange of men's 'maieutic logic'. The intergenerational literature tends to focus on the party receiving assets or knowledge with little attention given to the effects on the generations that pass on knowledge. However, this research suggests the process of passing on knowledge is also significant as the intergenerational practice of passing craft knowledge gave men a sense of self-realization akin to that in discussions on imprint. Therefore, this paper highlights the

significance for men of having their labour continued and recognised in a context where their paid work has been transformed due to deindustrialisation.

Research Data

With the exception of one man, who repeatedly interpreted his work as simply a 'means to an end', the other 27 men demonstrated at least one feature of the craft framework. In total, 9 former dockyard workers and 7 sons and grandsons reflected all three factors and were therefore judged to have a 'craft outlook'. The data in this paper focuses on these 16 men and is arranged in an intergenerational manner and organised by the three features of a craft outlook established in the craft framework above.

'TABLE 1 here'

Description of Practice

All 16 men discussed trained practice and experience as central to their work philosophy. The dockyard men all referred to the importance of locating themselves within their trade and the value of occupational learning. The quote below illustrates how men portrayed the ethos to learning in the dockyard as based on knowledge being passed face-to-face between generations in a spirit of collaboration.

When working with apprentices you have to engage with all their abilities. Some may be very good at stressing structures whereas others could be good at thinking out basic structures, [two different types of technical ships drawings] so you can't judge them all on one thing. For example, I had an apprentice called Simon, and when I asked him how he was getting on he said 'well I'm in C4 he said but I'd love to get in the Ordinary National class.' So, I persuaded the head to let him try for the November exam, and took him on myself alongside my other apprentices. So, we worked through each of the problems in practice together until November. Well the head came to see me after the exam and said: 'Simon's finished in the top 10 percent, so we are going to keep him on in the ONC'. That's a thing which was most gratifying to me (Henry).

The circular process of being an apprentice and then training new apprentices themselves was a fond memory for most dockyard men. Dominic, for example, talked about the formative role of experienced craftsmen terming these '*hero figures*'. The confidence built from teaching and learning through practice and developing through experience was consistently emphasised. As Dominic reflected, this made the learning environment one in which people '*wouldn't look down on you, which was different from school*'. In the excerpt above, Henry discusses the other side of this process and the 'gratifying' feeling of transmitting his knowledge to the next generation in training apprentices. The process of training apprentices thus allowed the men to feel their labour had a lasting imprint on the next generation. The generational transmission of their skills was not restricted to paid work but was also practiced with their own kin in the domestic sphere. These intergenerational projects also provided an example of men's whole life careers, as was illustrated in the Carrin's home extension project:

Noel: *My first memories of my dad's work are of sitting on a trestle table watching him working and being surrounded by nails and wood.*

Darrel: *And when you were a bit older, you got your own tools didn't you, and I showed you how to use them, how to hold a chisel so you didn't cut yourself.*

Noel: *me and my brother, we used to bash nails into bits of wood all day long for no reason (laughter). So, from a very young age we were using tools if dad was working we'd start to pick bits up as well. When I got a bit older we started working on the big extension (pointing) out the back here, together. When was that, dad?*

Darrel: *Well that project started in 1996, a conservatory on this level and another bedroom and bathroom upstairs. So, I drafted all of the plans, starting with pencil drawings, you know like I did in the drawing office. That summer you and your brother started to help me. At the start I put them to the unskilled work, but when you were 15 you started to help me with the more technical stuff. Now you're much better at most technical and carpentry work than me, which comes*

*in handy! You were a similar age to me when I was doing my apprenticeship and that was why I let you get on with it more. I think it is through a level of freedom you learn about safety you know, learning through doing, **process learning** (My emphasis). I mean with things like the bricklaying, I wasn't an expert, so I had to discuss things as they came up, too. When we were doing all the finishing, the wooden flooring and skirting boards, the tables were turned, because Noel knew a lot more about that than I did so, really, he was advising me.*

The dialogue above reflects how craft was a kinship activity that transmitted familial male meanings. This was reiterated in many father-son dialogues as Chris Copper put it: *'We're a hands-on, practical people. If I didn't know how to do it, I'd ask dad, still do now'*. The Copper's emphasis on being a *'practical people'* denoted a common sentiment that DIY was seen as a responsibility of working class men. This was repeated by many who could not abide, as Ben Steel's put it: *'getting a man in to fix something'*. This echoes Cox (2013) finding that domestic maintenance was considered part of the right way to be a man. Additionally, this reveals two topics consistent with literature on craft practice. First, the project began with Darrel practicing his draughtsmanship as learnt in the dockyard, then all developed new skills, such as bricklaying. The Carrin's development of new knowledge and skills illustrates Patchett's (2015) point that craft transmission is not based on static practices. Second, as Noel skills were recognised by his father and he became the authority on carpentry, we see that experience was core to leadership but measured by expertise and not age. This *'pride'* in extending craft knowledge across generations was also expressed by most sons and grandsons as Robert discussed:

When I'm training up the work experience students we now get - which gives me such pride because I was in their shoes before - I always start by reassuring them that however well or more commonly badly they did at school, doesn't matter here. As long as they're dedicated and give me their best, they can become excellent gardeners. Because there are only really a few basic rules, the rest is care and observation. You know nine times out of ten a plant will tell you what it needs, which you gauge through look and feel as learnt through care over the years. (Robert).

The experience of teaching students gardening above allowed Robert the vantage to see where he had started and what he had achieved. This circular experience gave most *'pride'*, since it enabled them to see the narrative plot to their own careers. In this quote, we also see the lack of emphasis on development as a product of solitary individual talent. Overall, the men's description of practice reveals there are three essential relationships in the practice of craft. First, the advice and support of other craft experts is needed to develop and sustain a sense of craft. Second, enabling the next generation to start a craft career is a key juncture in men seeing development and pride in their own careers. Third, for labour to be understood as craft, it needed the recognition of other generations of craftspeople. Therefore, craft practices and skills developed as part of a generational and collaborative career, not private individualized pursuits as Campbell (2005) advances. Having established the practice of craft learning, the next section considers how craft promoted an attitude to quality driven labour.

Labour attitude

Central to normative descriptions of craft is that this creates a union between body and mind. Morris describes the *'mysterious bodily pleasure'* (1883:174) generated in such work, while Marx defines this harmony as *'form-giving'* (1970/1859:121). In this study, Peter Wood provided his own normative description of embodied unison:

I enjoyed shaping wood. It makes us human, so to speak if nothing else, as I started out saying, your head and hands are attached, and if you don't use both together, you're not human, and it's a great tragedy that modern humanity doesn't use them together.

All 16 men described finding a harmony between the mental and physical in the practiced routines of their crafts. Dominic referred to this as *'not thinking outside your work'*, while Ben and Darrel talked of their self and labour becoming interwoven: *'it becomes a part of you'*. This unison was described in activities as varied as drawing, landscape gardening and

computer programming. For example, Peter's grandson, Andrew, discussed this in his relationship with his work in music.

People don't often think about music as a physical medium but if you put your hand to a speaker you feel the pulsation, dum, dum, dum, you don't just hear it but also feel it. Like in the Beach Boys song music is just 'good vibrations' right. Now, if we continue in those terms, sound is created by what those vibrations hit. So, when you're working with sound you need to envelop yourself in it. It sounds like a cliché but when you're making music in part it is a physical process. Both because it's your body that absorbs it, but also because it is physical objects that alter it.

Sennett (2009:254) claims such 'craft routines relieve stress by producing a steady rhythm to work'. However, in this study most men seemed unable to separate engagement from obsession in the practice of their crafts. The internal calm in doing craft work caused the men disquiet outside work. The quotes below reflect that the cognitive satisfaction of craft did not naturally produce a balanced working life, as argued by Sennett (2008) and Mills (1951).

Interest drove me at work which is good but, interest, sometimes made work a damn sight harder. You'd have people saying, 'hey come on it's about time you packed up' and you'd be thinking, 'No, let me just finish, I just want to see this through', because it's like a puzzle you'd be turning it over in your head all night not talking. Used to drive my wife up the wall. (Frank)

Sometimes I have to at night almost, almost tell myself out loud, stop, switch off... it's difficult when you know there is a computer in the second bedroom. (Mark)

The majority expressed how the emersion of craftwork, when individually experienced, could have a detrimental effect on their ability to interact with others or 'switch off'. In fact, most discussed externally having to draw a line between engagement and obsession, a process facilitated by their family. It was also in their domestic intergenerational projects

that craft as self-realising work did become a sustainable and balanced part of their working life. This was reflected in the Carrin's dialogue above, but also demonstrated by the Sextons:

Dad was always very hands on with me as a kid. It's funny because when I got older I realised he worked on massive Subs and Destroyers. But when I was young I knew his work through the small wooden inlaid boxes, tea boxes and chairs around the house. So, we would always have a project on the go, and he would teach me little things as we went along. We did my GCSE woodwork project together, made a bedside table, a really simple thing, but he showed me how to carve Celtic knot work panels into the sides. I still have that, and we have other things he has made like Emma's beautiful music box. I think they're really important for the children, those keepsakes, they give them a sense of their family and history (Miles).

For Miles, alongside his father's craftwork embodying a meaningful link to his childhood, these objects also created a family history for generations to come. This meaning was shared by his father: *'I like the idea she will always have something close built by her grandad and maybe she will give it to her children one day'* (Benedict). The family purpose that men attributed to their craft projects suggests a link to craft in its broadest sense, as more than a practice but a set of principles that inform family relationships (Mills, 1951). The focus on family in Benedict's project illustrates well that men's DIY can be seen as care work (Cox, 2013). This also suggests like in Gorman-Murray (2011) that men were using domestic craft work as an alternative to commit their male work identity to only paid work. This was illustrated by many sons and grandsons; for example, Mark's and Noel's formative understanding of their father's work came from their domestic projects and not their paid work. The engagement in family to deal with employment anxiety and job loss was further developed by Benedict and Mark stories. This also reflected the evolving meaning of craft after deindustrialisation. After the dockyard closed, Benedict, like five other men, suffered a period of short term employment, having four different jobs in eight years. He recalled this as being the most difficult time in his working life. However, with the advice and help of his family generally, but son specifically, it was at this point that he consciously changed the direction of his paid career:

That was the most stressful time because (a) I was getting older and (b) there didn't seem to be any work about at the time. But myself and Miles were talking about work because he'd become a social worker by that point. He said do you want to work with kids, because he felt I'd always been good with kids. So, after a bit of encouragement and talking it through with my wife, Miles introduced me to someone, at a kid's home he used to deal with. I never looked back because having had kids of my own; I found a lot of social workers, whilst good can be a little too soft. But being a father myself, I used to say to the children 'look I can't change what's happened in the past but what I can tell you is it'll never happen to you again.

This quote again reveals men using work from their whole lives to construct their careers. Interestingly, here it is domestic work which is used to inform a change in Benedict's paid career. First, it is Benedict's work as a parent that provides the context and skills for this transition in his paid career; second it is his son Miles' advice that inspires this change. The move into social work could be seen as a break in these men's relationship with traditional craft employment. But for Miles this was intimately linked to craft as he likened this to going from apprentice to master:

We always talked through practice, about learning by doing and reflecting. I wouldn't say I instructed but, yes, I try to manage my comments in the same way as my tutor, you know let him talk through his experiences, then suggest some wider links. Gives us both someone who is in the job, but not involved in the day to day

For Miles, we see the process of enabling his father provided him a feeling of having his own career path recognised. For Marx, as reiterated by Sennett (1999: 2), labour becomes humanized through producing things that say: 'I am here in this work, I exist'. This logic was reflected by most men, as in the example of Benedict making a 'music box'. However, this imprint was not just understood in terms of producing physical craft objects. In Miles' quote, we see instead imprint was produced in human terms through the transformative impression his working practices had and left on his father's career. In this sub-theme, in

many different contexts all men described how labour and human consciousness became intimately attached. But to sustain a sense of affirmation, these men needed their work to be validated by family and social relationships. This reflects Fisher and Tronto (1990: 4) definition of caring as a 'life-sustaining web' rather than a simple role; in the quotes above, care is a two-way relationship, since both generations needed care and recognition from each other to feel actualized in their labour. Men's craft projects, as a long-term commitment to developing their body of skills, is also reflective of craft as a vocation, as will now be considered.

Vocation

The development and possession of tools is widely cited as a feature of craft workers' autonomy in both the historical (Reid, 2004) and normative (Sennett, 2008) debates on craft. The production of their own craft tools was a consistent recollection for the sample of dockyard men who all referred to still having and using these tools. This experience seemed to symbolise the origin of most dockyard men's craft vocations:

We made our toolbox first, a small one, and a large one, and this special scraper, hand bone scraper. You'd make all the tools you needed, to become a shipwright. I've still got them out in the shed and I use them now doing the extension.
(Darrel).

After the dockyard closed, most men's paid work moved away from skilled manual work and into new sectors of employment with different skill sets. However, men's apprenticeships did not lose significance. Instead, this background became a leitmotif to connect their developing careers, as was most concisely explained by William:

I think my practical background has helped me innumerable times. It gives you a much better insight into other areas, it helps you to visualize things and think about how you can alter them. People perhaps feel that in a digital age, that's not important, but I really think it is. Going into IT is a good example, I recognised that information technology was the future, but apart from a few technical staff,

very few people seemed interested in the early 90s. So, although it was outside my skill-sets as a surveyor, I did a training course and got on a special project in London to introduce computerisation to business. That was a pivotal move in my career because I ended up writing a lot of the business cases for the implication of computerisation.

William's quote echoes Sennett's (2009) suggestion that craft gives a continued rhythm to a disciplined career. However, as Savickas (1997) suggests, changing employment did not disrupt these men's sense of vocation; instead, the ability to adapt and advance their skills allowed the retention of a clear career story. William believed his dockyard background had taught him the '*technological foresight*' he used to see the significance of information technology. The adaption of craft was also embodied by the younger generation. For example, William's son, Mark, also made the transition from physical trade to virtual computer programming. This was a career change that he saw as in keeping with his craft vocation, enabled by learning through what Sennett (1998) terms '*grounded practice*'. As Mark explained:

To become a Microsoft certified systems engineer, it was tough, very tough. But there were similarities, not similar in material but both were practical step-by-step training. So, my engineering background helped me to see it as a process and to not get annoyed all the time. (Mark).

Men saw the capacity to learn and embed new skills as a rhythm in their evolving whole life careers, but these were not transient projects of self (Giddens, 1991) based on discarding their old working identities each time an opportunity for advancement in paid employment arose. Instead, men's engagement with '*grounded practice*' was also bolstered by their continued adherence to collective classifications of quality work. This was verbalised by most men in the disdain they had for people who did not engage with their occupations in a dedicated manner. While Noel used the term '*cowboys*' to describe workers who had '*no care for the job in its own right or common idea of standards*', Robert discussed a situation where his definition of quality work came into conflict with the people he worked for:

I had a job for a company they had some Japanese business executives coming over. So, they got all excited, 'let's have some orchids'. But I said: 'that will not work, because with the frost they will die'. However, they were not having it, they had more money than sense really. But being a bit stubborn, I did some research on hardy Japanese plants and found some flowers which grow in the mountains where it snows, you know they get a lot of snow up on Mount Fuji. So, I went back in and said look we can get some orchids for the atrium but these flowers would look very special outside, and they're from the same region as where the company is based. A bit of a white lie because they grow in most regions of Japan. But that got the client on side, and I got him a bit of reading material on the plants so he could impress these executives. I always look back on that as a bit of a personal victory.

Robert's and Noel's quotes reflect their personal disquiet in having to be part of a work process that they saw as undermining their standards and norms as craftspeople. However, both men prioritised their internal sense of how labour should be performed instead of adhering to short term or misguided agendas. Kritzer (2007: 325) suggests levels of specification are a common area of tension in the relationships between craftspeople and client. Craft as a vocation was also revealed in men's long-term engagement with their disciplines. Robert reflected this in going to the annual Chelsea flower show: *'it reinvigorates me and shows me how much more I can learn, talking to the gardeners there really excites me as they are the real authority in my area'*. Mark, on the other hand, revealed this in his personal commitment to the continued practice and development of a body of skills over time:

I got asked to speak about mastering computer engineering by someone at the Department of the Environment. But I'm not a master, you can't be with computer software, you're working in a moving industry. Yes, I feel like an expert when I get one project finished but that doesn't stay the same. But I will always be learning new things, it is what drives me, so whilst I would say I had a body of knowledge, it only stays in shape through me exercising and testing it [laughs].

Like Mark, most did not view their development of skills as a complete venture. Instead, they desired to continue enhance and hone their craft as a disciplined career compelled by their vocational desire to perform their body of skills as quality work.

The three features of a craft outlook illustrate, first, that craft practices gave men a means of leaving a generational labour imprint in both paid and domestic work. Second, as a labour ethic, this produced an individual motivation to quality-driven work, but for this to be recognised and sustainable there had to be an occupational and generational relationship of care. Third, as a vocation, craft allowed men to see their career as more than an external path disrupted by deindustrialisation; it was a whole life career that gave them a long-term narrative embedded in social and family relationships. However, this was not based on a job for life or static rehearsal of their skills, but the progressive development and adaption of their learning in new working contexts and challenges.

Conclusion

This study shows craft did not perish with the dockyard. Instead the development of a craft outlook connected men's work across changes in employment and their paid and domestic lives. This craft outlook gave these men long term meaning to work as a disciplined vocation and provided self-realisation through the interpersonal recognition of family and colleagues. Due to deindustrialization, men's career narratives could not be dependent on the external structure of a 'job for life', so they had to be active in interpreting their careers. However, these careers were not projects of self (Giddens, 1991), as they were not individualised constructions. Instead, the collaborative practice of craft anchored the men's careers in a long term and located sense of self, as argued by Skeggs (2004). As a result, a craft outlook produced 'whole life careers' embedded by collaborative kinship practices that adhered to collective occupational aesthetics.

A craft outlook as a drive to quality driven work did not produce only positive outcomes, since, in contrast to Sennett (2009), craft and obsession became intermeshed. The passion for craft work contributed to many feeling they had become workaholics at a stage in their career; an individual drive that they had only learnt to manage through the help and support

of family kin. The part family played in men's work shows that craft only became sustainable as a means of affirmation through collaborative and generational relationships. The generational performance of domestic craft enriched kinship relationships since teaching was based on developing new generations of their family. These generational relationships also gave men a significant party to recognise and value their craftsmanship. Therefore, it was the intergenerational practice of craft that allowed realisation, as this affirmed father-son-grandson bonds. While this study only speaks for skilled working class men, these findings suggest that the current literature on craft and careers needs to be modified in three ways.

First, in contrast to externally dividing the study of craft into paid or non-paid work, this research demonstrates that craft is not the private individualized pursuit advanced by Campbell (2005). Instead, craft should be considered an outlook fostered by collaborative practices performed across paid and non-paid work. Given how core domestic work was to these men's sense of meaningful work, research should not ignore this. Therefore, craft should retain its meaning as a work concept, but with work defined by whole life careers, not just paid labour. This modification allows craft to be analysed as a holistic relationship as the normative definitions of craft by Marx (1845), Morris (1883), and Mills (1959) intended. In this regard, the analytical framework advanced in this study is a useful frame of analysis as this evaluates craft across a person's life instead of dividing this by paid or non-paid work. Furthermore, as an outlook and not a narrow occupational role, this framework engages with how craft can evolve and be sustained despite career transitions. Finally, given this understanding of craft as not exclusive to manual employment it can be used to understand how people may still engage with craft in post-industrial work and employment.

Second, this research suggests that the normative understanding of craft labour affirmation needs amendment. In normative craft literature, affirmation is created by leaving an imprint on the material world, so people can say 'I am here in this work... I existed' (Sennett, 2008: 130). However, in this study men saw imprint not only in the physical objects they produced but also in the human imprint they left on their generational relationships. Therefore, only defining imprint in terms of physical objects overlooks the self-realization craftworkers also gain from the non-tangible transmission of craft to new generations (Holmes, 2015). This

human imprint is produced across generational relationships through human recognition, as reflected in this study where fathers, sons and grandsons acknowledged the meaningfulness of each other's work. Like material imprint, this process allowed them to feel their labour was recognised and continued beyond themselves. This study therefore advances the concept of human imprint to define: the self-actualisation in leaving an imprint on the outlook and labour practice of the next generation.

Third, this research advances the agenda to reconceptualise careers as more than a paid work concept. This study reflects the relevance of this in understanding men's career constructions. In this study, men's views of their careers extended beyond a one-dimensional focus on paid work since these reflected a craft outlook that linked occupational and family values across paid and non-paid work. As a result, to only consider paid work as a career would provide an insufficient understanding of these men's working lives, as this would estrange these from the interdependent relationship they themselves used to construct their careers. However, the men did not see their paid and unpaid work as alternative careers (Kirton, 2006). Instead, their occupational and family values were interwoven as part of a single 'whole life career', unified by a 'craft outlook'. It is acknowledged the 'whole life careers' of these men were enabled by a particular definition of manhood and fatherhood that prioritize paid work (Wajcmen and Martin, 2002). However this is significant to understanding gender and careers, since, far from developing individualised projects of self, these men's careers were sustained and performed in relationship to domestic work and familial care (Cox, 2013). This suggests men's work identity were not just the product of paid employment. Therefore, the 'whole life career', as a concept derived from research on women's careers (Kirton, 2006), also allows a better frame of analysis to understand how these men define the notion of a career.

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