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Intensity and Insight:
Qualitative Longitudinal Methods as a
Route to the Psycho-social

Edited by Rachel Thomson

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CONTENTS

1.   Biographical Notes

Rachel Thomson is a Professor of Social Research in the Faculty of Health and Social Care at the Open University and is the director of the Dynamics of Motherhood project. Rachel has been involved in two qualitative longitudinal studies, the Inventing Adulthood study and Making of Modern Motherhood study. Both studies form part of the Timescapes project. Rachel has also written extensively on qualitative longitudinal methods and the challenge of researching personal and social change. Her research interests predominately focus on personal life and the life course and her empirical research spans late childhood, youth and the transition into adulthood. Rachel's most recent research has been in the area of new parenthood.

Wendy Hollway is a Professor of Psychology and director of the Research Centre for Citizenship, Identities and Governance. Wendy has a BA Hons in Psychology from the University of Sheffield; and a PhD in Social Psychology from the University of London. She has researched and published on questions to do with subjectivity, gender, sexuality, parenting, fear of crime, critical psychology, history of psychology and gender relations in organizations. Wendy has a particular interest in exploring the assumptions about the research subject that underpin qualitative social science research methods. In particular she applies a psycho-social theory of the research subject (psychoanalytic subject located in social contexts, past and present) to methodological questions and to data production, data analysis, ethics and validity. Topics of special interest include the capacity to care, mothering and parenting and the development of self in family and intimate relations. Recent work includes editing and writing for a text book for a new Open University Social Psychology third level course entitled 'Social Psychology Matters' (London: Sage and OU 2007 eds W.Hollway, H.Lucey and A.Phoenix).

Karen Henwood is a Professor in the School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University. Her substantive research interests are in the forging of identities and subjectivities in personal lives and socio-cultural context; troubled and troubling identities; lived experiences and social constructions of gender, risk, embodiment, and well-being. Her methodological work spans interpretive thematic approaches (such as grounded theory), discursive and narrative methods, qualitative longitudinal methodology, visual and psychosocial methods. Her work is mainly published in high quality academic journals (e.g. British Journal of Social Psychology, Social Science and Medicine, Discourse Studies, Transactions) and edited books (e.g. Handbook of Qualitative Methods in Psychology, edited by Carla Willig and Wendy Stainton Rogers). She is currently a co-Principal Investigator (2007-2012) of the ESRC Timescapes network, leading the Men-As-Fathers project.

Mark Finn is a senior lecturer in psychology at the University of East London having held two research posts at Cardiff University, most recently at the School of Social Sciences with Karen Henwood. With a predominant research interest in the psychosocial productions and regulations of non/normative relationships, Mark has also conducted published research into transgenderism, fatherhood and masculinity, and health-related quality of life. His current research is a psychosocial exploration of 'affirmative' therapeutic engagement with practices of open non-monogamy

2. Introduction

Rachel Thomson

There is a growing interest in the research community in methods that capture temporal processes and the ongoing praxis and making of meaning. The term qualitative longitudinal methods refers explicitly to prospective research designs that involve repeat research encounters over time (Elliot et al. 2007). Such methods have particular characteristics which can enable insight into psycho-social processes including the accumulation of often contradictory accounts of self and the presence of researcher subjectivity and intrapersonal dynamics within the data (McLeod and Yates 2006). The psychological depth promised by these intensive methods raises a particular set of ethical and practical issues concerning the invasion of privacy, confidentiality (for researcher and researched) and the representation of data (Thomson, 2007).

This working paper brings together papers presented at a symposium entitled Intensity and insight: qualitative longitudinal methods as a route into the psycho-social that was held as part of the conference Vital Signs: Researching Real Life, organised by the ESRC funded Realities node of the NCRM held at Manchester University on 9-11 September 2008. The aim of the symposium was to explore the value of QL methods as a tool for capturing the interplay of psychodynamic, social and historical dimensions of processual phenomona. We anticipated that contributors would address how hindsight, foresight and insight interact in the research process (Thomson and Holland 2003) and the ways in which researcher subjectivity becomes a central source of data and knowledge (Lucey et al. 2003). The symposium brought together three examples of current research into the formation and remaking of parenting identities, each of which employs a qualitative and longitudinal research design. Approaches to the generation of data included infant observation, repeat interviews, psychoanalytically informed field notes, photo-elicitation and the use of intergenerational research design. Methods of analysis included collaborative working and the use of groups in order to explore hidden meanings, researcher investments and alternative interpretations.

The three studies are associated with two ESRC initiatives, the Identities and Social Action Programme (Thomson, Hollway) and the Timescapes study which brings together a number of qualitative longitudinal investigations of different stages in the lifecourse (Henwood and Thomson). Each of the presentations engaged with the theme of parenting, paying attention to the temporal texture of data, and exploring the ways in which longitudinal qualitative methods may enable us to go beyond the familiar limits of qualitative analysis in order to gain insight into subjectivity and psycho-dynamic processes, understanding these in relation to wider social and historical processes. The term 'psycho-social' is a contested term, and may most usefully be understood as 'a currently enlivened phrase invoked by people doing interesting work who might want to talk to each other' (Burman 2008: 386). This is certainly true of the impulse behind this symposium, the desire to create a dialogue between groups of researchers investigating the experience of parenthood through innovative methods that seek to privilege temporal processes and subjective

meanings. Each of the contributions presented here locates their work somewhat differently within a wider psychosocial landscapes, framing the longitudinal element of their research design in distinct ways. Together we hope that the papers make a contribution to an ongoing debate as to the value of qualitative longitudinal approaches within a wider psycho-social project.

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3. Creating family case histories: subjects, selves and family dynamics

Rachel Thomson

Two compensations for growing old are worth putting on record as the condition asserts itself. The first is a vantage point gained for acquiring embellishments to narratives that have been unfolding for years besides one's own, trimmings that can appear to supply the conclusion of a given story, though finality is never certain, a dimension always possible to add.' (Anthony Powell, Dance to the music of time: Winter: 560)

3.1 Introduction: QLR studies and psychological depth

By observing research subjects and inviting them to reflect on the past and to project themselves into the future, qualitative longitudinal studies can capture something of the process through which the self is made and remade over time, what McLeod has called the 'habitus-in-process' (McLeod 2003) and Stanley describes as 'continued becomings' (Stanley 2007). Explaining their adoption of a qualitative and longitudinal methodology for a study of schooling in Australia, McLeod and Yates discuss how, at the outset of the research in the early 1990s, they were feeling frustrated with approaches that emphasised the part played by discourses in the construction of the subject, creating a picture in which the person was a cipher, a one-dimensional figure on whom social messages were writ' (2006: 31). The researchers were part of a movement of feminist academics wanting to explore the emotional and psychological dimensions of how discourses turn into subjectivity (Bjerrum Nielsen 1996; Hollway 1994, Walkerdine et al. 2001). They were also interested in anchoring developmental discourses on gendered adolescence within particular historical and social circumstances. And it was in order to generate a sense of biographical depth, developmental process and social and historical specificity that they turned towards a research design that involved multiple interviews over time. In their words, a methodology that was 'longitudinal and recursive, to confront a flat linearity, but also sociologically framed, to keep difference and historical specificity in the foreground.' (31).

The experience of conducting a qualitative longitudinal study results in a heightened awareness of the impossibility of separating the researcher from the researched, and of stepping outside the temporal flow that encompasses the whole research enterprise - from the power relations that shape policy agendas and funding decisions, and the ebbs and flows of fashion for social theory, through the biographies of researchers and their subjects through to the sequences of labour that constitutes the research process. Recognition of the mobile subjectivity of the researcher as well as the researched marks a shift in the terms through which reflexivity is generally attributed (Adkins 2002, Moore 2005). It also echoes Anthony Powell's observations quoted at the beginning of this paper, that for the observer of other people's lives 'finality is never certain, there is always a new dimension to add'. The nature of the QL research process demands that we understand the endeavour as socially and temporally located

and as mobile, and this has consequences for our claims about the kind of knowledge that we produce.

In a recent discussion of the characteristics of QLR methods I have argued that the format of the repeat interview that lies at the heart of much QL research enables the representation of a psychologically complex, embodied and mobile research subject constituted in relation to others and within a changing social context (McLeod and Thomson 2009). In this paper I focus on the potential for QLR to represent a psychologically complex, embodied and mobile subject. I will do this by drawing on a study of new motherhood that I am involved with alongside Mary Jane Kehily, Lucy Hadfield and Sue Sharpe (Thomson and Kehily 2008). This study combines QLR and intergenerational methods, funded by the ESRC, initially via the Identities and Social Action programme and the latest phase is funded as part of Timescapes.

In this paper I outline the process through which we developed family case histories as a medium through which to capture and represent qualitative longitudinal data for a family group. The paper begins by locating our approach within a wider literature of psycho-social and critical feminist research, and outlines the reflexive and collective practices that underpinned the different stages of our research process, including memory work, group data analysis and the composing of case histories from the data archive. The second part of the paper presents extracts from a single family case history providing insight into the style of 'thick description' pursued which includes capturing the voice of the research subject as well as an explicit representation of the voice and reactions of the researcher. The extracts from the case history are selected in order to highlight the potential of this method to document the traffic in emotion and meaning that characterizes the reconfiguration of identities and affect arising from the arrival of a new generation. The paper concludes with reflections on the potential of qualitative longitudinal data for capturing a psychologically complex, embodied and mobile subject.

3.2 Psycho-social methods and duration

The term 'psycho-social' has become increasingly prominent in UK based social science, due in great part to the influence of the work of Wendy Hollway and Tony Jefferson (2000), Valerie Walkerdine and colleagues (2001, 2002) and British engagement with the German tradition of Biographical Narrative Interpretative Method (Wengraf 2001, 2006, Rosenthal 1998). Psychoanalysis has long been influential within the social sciences, influencing social and feminist theory as well as the development of critical auto-biography. What characterises the current moment of 'psycho-social studies' is the transposing of analytic tools with their origins within a clinical setting into the terrain of empirical research, in order to realise their potential as methods of data generation and/or analysis. Examples include the exploration of the defences of the researcher when analysing data (Lucey et al 2003.), the adoption of free association methods in interviewing (Hollway and Jefferson 2000, Wengraf 2006), and the adaptation of the training method of child observation as a mode of data collection (Urwin 2007).

The question of whether it is appropriate to adapt clinical methods within empirical research is a source of ongoing debate, with commentators such as Stephen Frosh and Lisa Baraitser arguing that it is possible to recognise the 'psychic reality' of a research

encounter without treating it 'as the same' as a consultation (Frosh and Baraitser 2008). Baraitser suggests that social research can benefit from a 'psycho-analytic sensibility', 'a way of working with human participants that instigates a constant reworking of the knowledge bases that we come with' (2008: 426). Rather than fitting our data to existing psychoanalytic theories, they suggest the value of 'resisting the tendency to invest the events and objects we encounter with a kind of familiarity … so that we can encounter the oddness and newness of these objects' (Frosh and Baraitser 2008: 348). The psychosocial project poses a range of challenges to both clinical and social research knowledge communities, that are ethical, theoretical and political/ institutional, and for this reason there are bound to be a range of controversies arising from the exchange of ideas and working practices. From the perspective of a social researcher it is evident to me that one of the distinctive legacies of adapting clinical or training methods for research is that they bring with them a range of forms of 'duration' – the demand to keep looking/ talking/ listening over an extended period of time. It is this common concern with duration, and looking beyond manifest meaning that is the creative site of dialogue between psycho-social and QL approaches.

The Making of Modern Motherhood study was funded as part of the ESRC programme Identities and Social Action. The research drew on sociological, historical and cultural studies traditions in order to examine the ways in which rapid changes in women's lives in the post war years are expressed and negotiated through ideas and practices of mothering. This programme also included studies that were explicitly psycho-social in their approach, including the Becoming a Mother Study (BAM) which involved Wendy Hollway, Anne Phoenix and Heather Elliott. The two Motherhood studies worked together closely, collaborating in group analysis sessions of data from both projects and sharing aspects of our research practices. For example our project adopted the BAM practice of reading field notes out aloud (adapted from the infant observation seminars that they drew on in their study) finding that this practice revitalises the observation, enriching the possibilities for analysis and insight in the new analytic moment. The BAM team adopted our approach to writing extended reflective field notes in which researchers were encouraged to document the emotional dynamics of research encounters and their personal reactions to fieldwork situations. Through this collaboration we became aware of the complementarities in our practices as well as the differences between our approaches and modes of analysis.

In April 2008 I was invited to contribute to a symposium on psycho-social methods organised as part of the ISA programme[1]. Initially I was uncertain as to whether our project should be there. We did not call our methods psycho-social, seeing ourselves as building on traditions in critical ethnography (Back 2007), autobiography (Steedman 1986, Fraser 1984), feminism (Haug 1999, Crawford et al. 1992) and cultural studies (Kuhn 2002, Popular Memory Group 1982), which, although owing a debt to psychoanalysis, do not draw so directly on clinically rooted concepts such as transference and counter transference, projection and introjection. However, this

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[1] 'Researching motherhood: an engaged approach', presented in a session on 'Psycho-social perspectives on identities' with Valerie Walkerdine and Wendy Hollway at Identities: Theoretical and Methodological Journeys, organised by ESRC Identities and Social Action programme, Loughborough University, 10th April 2008.

invitation also encouraged me to imagine that our research might be located within a broad definition of psycho-social research, and in doing so to expand the meaning of the term. In preparation for the presentation I documented the different stages of our research process and identified some of the principles that underpin our practice. This is not a research tradition with a name, yet it is a tradition none the less and one that privileges engagement with oneself, co-researchers and research participants. Les Back has talked in terms of 'a sociology that prizes patience, commitment and dialogue and careful reflective claims to truth' (Back, 20) rather than an 'intrusive empiricism' which 'claims to know and judge the very souls of its subjects' (Back, 16). I would agree with him that research can have psychological depth without inflicting symbolic violence on its subject, and this is not simply the result of a choice, or a desire to produce ethically 'good' research. Here I describe the kind of work that our research team undertakes in order (in Les Back's words) to 'document and understand social life without assassinating it' (Back, 164), before moving into an elaboration of a case study, revealing the kind of depth and insight possible in qualitative longitudinal research.

3.3 Reflexive and collective research practice

Our approach is based on a number of principles. First, we recognise our own subjectivity as a resource for the production of knowledge, yet not an unproblematic resource. And a number of our research practices seek to document and interrogate researchers' subjective responses. Second, we privilege collective forms of working, recognising in them the potential for enhanced creativity, insight and pleasure. Our approaches to collective work are the result of our training within activist, feminist and cultural studies traditions, and the recognition that collectively we are more than the sum of our parts. The third principle that informs our practice is that analysis and interpretation are unbounded. They do not only take place during that discreet part of the research process called 'data analysis' but begin with the framing of research questions and design, and continue through to the point at which audiences receive and respond to the 'findings'. This means that reflection needs to take place throughout the research process, in order to document how knowledge is shaped, situated and claimed. Fourthly and finally, we are interested in the potential creativity of two specific research practices: listening (to the environment or people that make up the research, and to the interpretations of colleagues, participants and 'audiences), and the acts of writing and representation where we attempt to represent and fix what we are learning through the research. Each are ethically complex and impossible to get 'right', yet are the arenas through which the value of the research is created.

Early study: team building and fieldwork

During the early stages of our research we adopted two complementary group practices, often run in tandem: a reading group and memory work. Although several members of our research team had previously worked together, we were nevertheless a new group, researching what was for all of us, a new topic, first time motherhood. As part of this process we needed to learn more about each other and generate a shared conceptual language. So during the early stages of the research we met regularly with invited others to read key texts and to share our written memories produced in response to trigger words and photographs. The approach to memory work that we adopted drew loosely on the work of Haug, Crawford et al. and Kuhn, and we aimed to sensitise ourselves to the topic of our research and to our own and

others' investments (for an overview see McLeod and Thomson 2009). This was a highly generative practice, helping to forge the team and the relationships within it, as well as informing our approach to interviewing and writing field notes. By exploring our own and each others memories we began to engage with the emotional terrain that we would be inviting others to share with us, helping us both to gain a sense of what was possible within the research, but also to gain a perspective on the sensitivities involved. We also recognised that our different situations in relation to mothering would inevitably shape our emotional responses to and with our research subjects

Mid study – opening up analysis and interpretation

During the middle stage of our research we ran and participated in a number of 'analysis groups' to help us explore our family case study material. These involved colleagues from a range of disciplines working on motherhood and intimacy as well as researchers involved in the 'Becoming a Mother' project[2]. The groups took a number of different forms. Initially they involved parallel analysis of different forms of data from the same research subject (eg photographs, transcript and fieldnotes) and subsequently involved parallel analysis of data from different members of family case studies helping us in the task of 'composing' the case history. The value of groups in psycho-social analysis has been observed by a range of commentators, who point to the way in which a multiplication of perspectives enriches interpretation and allows for interpretations (or their absence) to be challenged (Haug et al. 1999, Lucey et al. 2003, Wengraf 2001, 2006). Our analysis groups drew together individuals from a range of disciplines, and although we benefited from the acute 'psychoanalytic sensibility' of some group members we did not explicitly employ psychoanalytic theory in our analysis. Sharing data with those not involved in generating can also be understood as a form of secondary analysis, demanding that we make explicit the context of the research and encouraging us to notice our own interventions and aspects that we had taken for granted (Moore 2007, for an overview see McLeod and Thompson 2009). We benefited enormously from critical input that enabled us to listen to our data more attentively and to avoid pathologising values and behaviour that we found personally challenging or unfamiliar.

Mature study: writing and presenting case histories

The third stage of our research practice was the forging of a case history methodology, for integrating and representing the data. In this study we have adapted the case history methodology initially forged in the Inventing Adulthoods study where we sought to compose an account of an individual life from a series of interviews collected over a period of years (Thomson 2007, Thomson 2009). For this study the task was complicated in that our unit of analysis was the family rather than the individual, demanding that we understand lives both in relation to each other and over time.

The process through which we built the case histories entailed bringing together the different parts of the case, which included interviews with different family members (the mother, grandmother and significant other) conducted over a series of waves of fieldwork. In order to do this we began by writing up each research encounter and

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[2] We acknowledge the generous input of the following individuals: Lisa Baraitser, Katie Deverell, Heather Elliott, Caroline Gattrill, Jaqui Gabb, Wendy Hollway, Helen Lucey, Anne Phoenix, Ruth Ponsford, Martin Robb, Naomi Rudoe, Jo Sanderson-Mann, Elizabeth Silva, Jane McCarthy, Danielle Turney, Imogen Tyler, Cathy Urwin.

bringing these together within an overall narrative which maintained the original temporal sequence of the research – revealing the unfolding perspective that was integral to the research process. The way that we wrote up each encounter sought to preserve and integrate something of the interview dynamic and included the researcher's voice. Starting with our original fieldnotes and drawing on the transcripts of the interview we sought to create 'thick descriptions' that drew directly on the research subjects own words and style of speaking. We were guided in this process by Gabriella Rosenthal's psychoanalytically informed work on family dialogues (Rosenthal 1998) and Paul Thompson's analysis of family histories which draws on the family systems approach of John Byng-Hall, conceptualising the family in terms of a continuous contractual relationship across time, where unresolved emotional dynamics can be transmitted through the 'symbolic coinage' of family stories, within which motifs, patterns and difficulties are repeated and the 'very phrases echo down the generations' (Thompson 1993: 30). Our aim was to forge condensed narratives capturing successive research encounters, making explicit the contemporaneous interpretations and 'wonderings' of the researchers.

These case histories constituted a first level analysis, capturing and maintaining the overall integrity of the data (as a series of research encounters), yet which enabled us to conceptualise the case as a whole made up of related parts. Each case history concluded with an analytic addendum where we reflected on the case in relation to historical, generational and biographical time. These form part of the common analytic framework for the Timescapes initiative, and can be understood as analytic devices through which the different projects can interrogate our data, privileging differently the relationship between the individual and the collective and between synchronicity and sequentiality. Historical time captures something of the long view and how wider events frame and impact on individual lives. Generational time draws attention to the historical cohort, and how lives lived in parallel may or may not cohere and resonate. Biographical time focuses attention explicitly on the individual and the lifecourse.

3.4 Extracts from a QL family case history: The Fortunes[3]

A longitudinal research design has the potential to provide insights that go beyond those possible in one off interviews with individuals or family groups, revealing a psychologically complex, embodied and mobile subject. By following a family group over time, and documenting their reconfiguration in response to the arrival of a new generation it is possible to gain a sense of changing identifications, and unfolding dynamics. The inclusion of the researcher within the data record also enables us to reveal the creation of hindsight, foresight and insight as forms of provisional and mobile understanding (Thomson and Holland 2003). Case histories provide a condensed version of the full QL data set, providing an overview and a map to guide more detailed textual analysis. The full case history is too long and detailed for full reproduction here, and it is generally a starting point for other strategies for analysis and comparison. What follows are extracts from a case history, beginning with an overview of the QL archive for the case at the time of writing. The extracts have been selected in order to demonstrate traffic of affective meaning between a new mother

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[3] Real names have been changed

and her own mother. It ends with extracts from the analytic reflections on the case interrogating the data in relation to historical, generational and biographical time. The aim here is to provide a sense of the kind of writing involved in a case history, the temporal and relational structure that allows for an unfolding of meaning through juxtaposition, and a sense of how it becomes possible to relate personal and subjective experience to wider social and historical processes.

Sept 05	M1 antenatal interview Monica	Interview, visual data, field note
Oct 06 Birth of Lucien		
Jan 06	G1 interview with grandmother Erica	Interview, field note
March 06	SO1 interview with partner Jamie	Interview , field note
Oct 06 End Maternity leave		
Nov 06	M2 post natal interview Monica	Interview, field notes
	Case History	
June 08	Day-in-a-life observation, Monica and Lucien	Ethnographic note, visual data

Monica interview, 8 months pregnant, Sept 2005

'Monica describes her childhood as 'disrupted' and although she doesn't comment negatively on its impact I gained the sense that her investment in security and stability was in some way a response to this history.' M1 case history

'Although she has always imagined herself as having children it is only recently that they felt 'ready' to try for a baby and they were both pleasantly surprised at how quickly she 'fell pregnant'. At the time of the interview she was 39 years old and her partner 41. She explains that their families had probably assumed that they would not have children.' M1 case history

'Monica explains that she and Jamie are very private people and it was only when she felt secure in the pregnancy that they shared the news with their mothers. For Monica this was the first time that she and her mother had talked about how she felt about having children.' M1 case history

'Monica expects that her relationship with her mother will change as a result of her becoming a mother herself. Both she and Jamie are youngest children who are used to 'listening and waiting' and have learned to be 'self sufficient' rarely asking for help or support. She describes her mother as being pulled in different directions by many demands including her family in Germany and her other children and grandchildren. Since her father's death she also senses that her mother is living life for herself and is uncertain how much time or attention she has for Monica. Yet she is pleased that her mother has promised to dedicate time to her and the baby after the birth and comments on her mother's assertion that although this will be her eighth grandchild it will be special as it is the child of her daughter. Where she is taciturn and secretive she describes her mother as talkative and hard to interrupt.' M1case history

'Throughout the interview I gained a sense of the contradictory elements of Monica persona: both highly secure in her couple relationship and insecure in relation to her ability to socialise; comfortable in her pregnant body and anxious about public display; enjoying attention and feeling neglected, conservative and yet experimental. It was clear that Monica's couple relationship has been at the core of her life and is highly communicative and egalitarian. She word that she chooses to describe their experience of the pregnancy so far is 'interesting' suggesting that the pregnancy and the decision processes associated are a shared adventure. What Monica terms as 'slow' or 'late development' may also be a reflection of a couple habitus where decision-making and life planning are negotiated and where identities and roles are not simply assumed. I found many points of personal resonance with Monica's story: the year of our birth, being the youngest child, being part of a self-sufficient couple, treating parenthood as an opportunity for change and experiment. The strong rapport between us was tangible'. M1 – case history

Interview with her mother Erica, January 2006

Erica began with the statement that she has 'no secrets' and that her life was 'an open book' G1 case history

'it was only ever him and me… no problems, no help'. G1 case history

'She describes her mother as 'very anxious and pessimistic'. She had become a mother relatively late giving birth to her at 37, her sister at 39 and her brother in her 40's. Erica also hints at the traumatic nature of their wartime childhood recalling that 'we were actually refugees, we had to walk out of Czechoslavakia'. Her brother was badly affected by the experience. Having contracted polio at 16 he subsequently had a nervous breakdown at 20. Erica talks disparaging about the way in which her mother pampered him with 'monkey love', noting that he 'came before her husband – I couldn't bear to see that'. She describes her mother as very old fashioned, 'Victorian' and although she came to England for the birth of her first child, Erica deliberately kept her at arms length. In particular she rejected her mother's advice to 'only have one' child, going so far as to imagine that her mother would have 'been happy' that her second pregnancy ended in miscarriage. Later in the interview she hints that her mother might have feared for her daughter's financial position, commenting that 'I married this man who had er.. really nothing, but he was intelligent, no education, poor family in Newcastle, 9 people in 2 bedrooms.. he actually lived it'. Even though she produced the only grandchildren, she comments that her mother she did not visit the family much. Although this was 'hurtful at times' she asserts that having to raise a family without the support of family made them strong and resourceful people. Erica explains that her mother died at the age of 86, during a visit that Monica was paying to the household. Her account of the death suggests that her complicated feelings about her mother continued to the end, expressing both guilt at the responsibility that being present placed on her daughter as well as the hope that her mother's death would mean that her father would be 'able to live a bit'. In fact he died two years later.' G1 Case history

'Erica admits some surprise at Monica's decision to become a mother, observing that 'she wasn't talking about it much'. While she was very much involved in the complicated personal lives of her two sons she recognised that Monica and Jamie are

'very private people'. She describes her daughter as rather fierce, 'not suffering fools gladly' and being 'a bit, "what about me?"'. Although Monica 'sometimes made noises about' 'filling her womb' she did not confide in her mother about her feelings in this area. Erica cites contradictory feelings and evidence. On one hand she observes that Monica has always had a wonderful way with children, getting down to their level and knowing what presents to buy them. In this and many other ways she likens Monica to her own sister rather than herself who she sees as 'not that great with children. I do more the practical thing'. On the other hand Erica also emphasises how much Monica always liked her own space, recalling her earlier view that 'her having a child, it can't work'. The transition that Monica is making from daughter to mother is captured by Erica in the way in which her childhood habit of simultaneously touching her belly button and mouth with opposite hands has melted away in recent months. She is 'amazed how natural' Monica is 'with it all' including the breastfeeding.

'Erica was not involved in the birth, explaining that at this stage Monica 'was still at that point where she didn't see it as having much to do with me'. She feels sorry for Monica that the birth itself was 'a bit of an ordeal', reflecting that it was rather like her own first birth rather than the easy second birth that she finds easier to talk about. Erica tells a story about how when she was visiting shortly after the birth, the health visitor decided that Monica needed to go to the hospital for the treatment of post partum infection. Jamie had been at work so Erica had driven. Unable to park and uncertain what to do she was delighted when Monica was wheeled out of the door just as she was passing. For Erica this story was affirms her personal ethos of letting 'life do it's thing at times' – being brave and letting things slot into place. It is something that she can continue to offer her daughter. She is pleased with how their relationship has evolved since. Erica is careful not to be an interfering mother, commenting that 'I don't like people telling me, so I don't tell them'. She describes Monica as 'opening up more' as she 'realises what it means to be a mother'. They share a 'common sense approach' to parenting. Erica is relieved that Monica does not buy the baby too many toys and has a relaxed attitude towards hygiene, although she wonders if the baby should be on her lap quite so much. She notes that being a grandmother to your daughter's children is much easier than negotiating with daughters-in-law. There is a 'special feeling' and an ease of access. Fortunately Monica does not turn to her for advice as she 'can't remember an awful lot', but they share values, memories and bodies. ' G1 case history

Monica second interview, November 2006
'Monica reflects on her pessimism in the interview – explaining how worrying (for example about breastfeeding and returning to work) has been her strategy for dealing with anxiety. The experience of becoming a mother has begun to change her in this respect. She talks in terms of 'growing up', being less prone to comparing herself with others, more positive despite her anxieties, and 'just getting on with it'. She is learning how to 'live in the moment' rather than dwelling on the past, or worrying about the future. She also feels more connected to other people and the world than around her – crying at the news, aware that everyone is someone's child or parent. She and Jamie are the happiest they have ever been, and although returning to work has been hard, parenthood is an 'enjoyable struggle' M2 case history

'I go into the kitchen and flick through the hair mag on the table while tea is brewing. I ask Monica if she is planning a cut. She is. Her hair is getting very greasy so she is thinking of putting some colour in. Jamie wants her to go blonde. She has been blonde in the past (bleach blonde) but doesn't think that is right for her now. She also hasn't got the confidence for a short cut. Hard to find something, and she wants to avoid the standard mummy layered look with highlights, though jokes that this is exactly what she will get. Looking together at these haircut pics I again got the sense of how children take a toll on your body, age you.

'We move into the garden and sit at the table and chairs and chat: about mothers, cats, social lives, festivals. Monica's eyes fill when she talks about how she 'can't talk to her mother enough' and how important that connection to her German roots is to her now. She feels that her mother is very brave, doing things alone (holidays), driving into London, but that she gets lonely. We talk about how strange confidence is: you may have the confidence for a crop at 18 but fear what others think of you. In some ways the height of your confidence is in middle age.' Observation notes

3.5 Reflections on the case

Historical time
Historical motifs are most evident, not surprisingly in Erica's account and the impact of the second world war and enforced migrations on her families' lives. Her account is underpinned by a subtext of the way in which family fortunes were shaped by economic forces (recession) and social mobility. The gulf between herself and her mother capture a shift (compounded by migration) within the course of generation between Victorian old-world values to a more open and socially mobile world in which individual endeavour determines outcomes.

Generational time
Erica's pursuit of travel and migration constructs her as an independent and free spirit – possibly typical of a certain generational unit – yet she identifies primarily as part of a couple rather than part of a generational group. By joining forces with a man from a humble background she was able to escape the influence of family and to forge an individualised family trajectory. Erica does not mention feminism or women's liberation – but her account does emphasise freedom and equality – values consistent with the permissive moment of the 1960s. [..] like her mother, Monica identifies primarily with her partner rather than her friends. The self sufficient couple is a powerful intergenerational motif. And although on first meeting Monica appears to be extremely different to her mother – going out of her way to distinguish herself from her verbosity, sociability and risk taking – the experience of motherhood provides the conditions for strong identifications between the two, as well as the emergence of a model for the kind of calculated risk-taking that Monica and Jamie are moving towards. A commitment to 'putting family first', to adventure and self-sufficiency come through as strong element of a common family culture, remade in changing circumstances.

Biographical time
A powerful theme in both Monica and Jamie's interviews is their continuing investments in their own childhoods. Where for some, parenthood is constructed as

the end of risk taking, for this couple becoming parents is an opportunity for adventure enabling them to deal with some of the anxieties (possible engendered by their own childhoods) that encouraged them to hold firmly onto the security and strong boundaries in their work and relationships. Parenthood then seems to liberate Monica from the position of a sulky daughter resisting the agency of her unruly mother. That Monica now feels able to let go of the anxiety and pessimism that Erica reports as characterising the demeanour of her grandmother suggests some of the disentangling of complex family transactions facilitated by the arrival of a new generation.

3.6 Conclusions

One of the challenges associated with generating and analysing qualitative longitudinal data is the volume of material that this method gives rise to, compounded in this case by combining longitudinal methods with family case studies. So for example, I have had to omit the interview with Monica's partner in this presentation, not because it is not relevant but because it adds another level of complexity and detail that I do not have the space to reveal. Since this paper was drafted a further round of interviews have been conducted with each key informant, which also cannot be discussed. I have worked from case history data rather than the primary data of the transcripts due both to my need to condense material, and the value of these second level data in capturing the voice of both researcher and researched. What I hope to have shown is the value of QL methods as a tool for capturing the interplay of psychodynamic, social and historical dimensions of processual phenomona, showing how hindsight, foresight and insight interact in the research process (Thomson and Holland 2003) and the ways in which researcher subjectivity is a source of data and knowledge (Lucey et al. 2003).

I want to conclude this paper by saying something about the key terms in the symposium title: intensity and insight. The intensity of research methods refer to their temporal pattern, the frequency of the research encounter. The QL methods described here are relatively slow, allowing time to elapse and for some reworking of narratives. A more intensive design (eg Miller 2005) would produce a different picture. By adapting methods as we go along we are hoping to enrich our QL archives, allowing for different kinds of data, and moving beyond narrative account. The juxtaposition of narratives over time, and between members of family grouping certainly enables us to gain a sense of depth, with repetitions, contradictions and movement providing a sense of the connectedness and dynamism of real lives. Our approach to generating 'insight' has taken researcher subjectivity seriously, as well as acknowledging the limits of individual's insights into their own identifications and defences. Group approaches to analysis as well as the distancing techniques involved in memory work can all contribute to the generation of insight, sometimes uncomfortable insight for the researcher. Yet insight is also generated by the juxtaposition of data: of different accounts, different kinds of sources, and material generated at different times. The danger is that we become overwhelmed by the volume of our data and unable to interrogate data sources in relation to each other. Our technique of creating case histories, that maintain the temporal structure of the data, and which historicise our interpretations, is one way of making such data sets manageable as well as facilitating the process of writing.

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4. Preserving vital signs: the use of psychoanalytically informed interviewing and observation in psycho-social longitudinal research.

Wendy Hollway[4]

In this article, I use the example of a recent qualitative empirical research project whose theme was identity processes, specifically the identity changes involved when women become mothers for the first time, to illustrate the ways in which psychoanalysis has informed a longitudinal psycho-social methodology using intensity and insight. My approach to insight is to explore the use of researcher subjectivity as an instrument of knowing and I describe and give examples of the many respects in which this was built into the research design. I contrast data derived from psychoanalytically informed interviewing and observation, two methods with different intensities – different frequency of data points over one year – to consider the interaction of talk-based methods, generalisation and intensity in producing different accounts. I then take two contrasting examples of the dimension of time (short and long), neither of which is usually apparent in qualitative longitudinal methods. The first involves pace and what an adjustment in pace requires not only of new mothers but researchers at data production and analysis stages. The second is about the transmission of aspects of maternal subjectivity transgenerationally through processes of identification. A psychoanalytic paradigm offers an ontology and an epistemology that, adapted to qualitative longitudinal research, affords insights that go beyond a language-based account to one that includes dynamic, affective, embodied, intersubjective and practical aspects of identity.

4.1 Introduction

The project to which I refer in this article was the first longitudinal study that I had conducted. The first part of the title of our project was 'identities in process', which makes clear that our research design needed to accommodate the dimension of time. As Rachel Thomson clarifies (2010 p6, this issue), this dimension should include attention to biographical depth, developmental process and historical specificity. The repeated interview format (Thomson 2007) has been the staple approach of longitudinal research and our study of the identity changes involved when women become mothers for the first time drew on and supplemented this format. Previous research, which developed the rationale for a free association narrative interview (FANI) method (Hollway and Jefferson 2000), was based on a pair of interviews in quick succession. This required modification for a focus on identity change. This time three interviews were conducted with each first-time mother over the course of approximately one year: in the last trimester of pregnancy (or early weeks of motherhood if we missed this period), at four months and at 12 months after the birth

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of her baby. However, this was not all we did to modify a design and methodology in order to suit it for the purpose of studying identities in process. In what follows I shall describe the ways in which the repeated interview format was modified, the reasons for these, and some of the outcomes that illustrate the application of principles of insight and intensity in our psycho-social[5] method.

Rachel Thomson (in chapter 3 of this issue) described how our two projects – both about first-time mothers – worked closely together in ways that were highly enriching and shared what Thomson calls a 'creative site for dialogue between psycho-social and qualitative longitudinal approaches' (p8, this issue). For me this dialogue meant continuing to find new sources of innovation in pursuing the implications of psychoanalysis which is central to my practice as a psycho-social researcher, both as a way of understanding identity and an approach to research knowing. How could I apply a 'psychoanalytic sensibility' (Baraitser 2008:426, cited in Thomson 2010 p8) without treating research as if it could be 'psycho-analytic' in the same way as in the consulting room (Frosh and Baraitser, cited in Thomson 2010 p7-8). While my previous work (with Tony Jefferson) pursued the implications of using the principle of free association in the research setting, this time I wanted to pursue the implications of the tradition of psychoanalytic observation for qualitative psycho-social research. This tradition is not theory led, although of course it is informed by theory, specifically by the post-Kleinian British tradition theory that took the development of babies as an object of study, rather than just extrapolating about childhood on the basis of the psychoanalysis of adults (Bick 1964, Miller et al 1996, Winnicott 1958, 1965). These methods are double informed by psychoanalysis: they are based on an elaborated epistemology (a methodology of knowing) that, applied to research practice, I call 'using researcher subjectivity as an instrument of knowing' and they are based on an ontology - a theory of being or identity – that emphasises the effects of affect, dynamic conflict, unconscious intersubjective processes and embodied practices on the formation of identity. Nancy Chodorow, a feminist, relational psychoanalyst, sees her perspective as characterised by:

> The radically uncommonsensical and anxiety-provoking understandings underpinning psychoanalysis – that projective and introjective fantasies are ever-changing, that motives are unconscious, that humans interpret and construct the world and our lives in terms of unconscious, emotionally-laden wishes, fears and fantasies, that anxiety generates major aspects of human functioning (including the analyst's). (Chodorow 1999 p103)

Our use of interview and observation methods that were psychoanalytically informed required being sensitised to the way that these 'bring with them a range of forms of "duration" ' (Thomson 2010 p8, this issue). Duration is a central feature of psychoanalytic ontology in the sense that the self is understood as a product of the dynamic conflict that incessantly demands action: conflict between wish and reality and between one desire and another, between dependence and autonomy, between tolerance of and avoidance of frustration.

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[5] A psycho-social analysis is attentive to the co-presence of the psychic and social dimensions of human behaviour, in a non-reductive fashion. This means specifying their joint effectivity on a person's meanings and actions.

In the three illustrations that follow a description of the project, I illustrate how the psychoanalytic sensibility involved in my psycho-social approach informs my understanding of the ideas 'intensity' and 'insight'. In the first example, I compare the way the two methods provided a different story of the same participant's experience of mothering her baby and discuss the way that 'intensity', that is the different frequency of data points in the methods, produced these different effects, mediated by the workings of emotion on memory and narrative. In the second, I describe learning about the importance of pace in the attunement between a new mother and her baby, and what this learning required of my own insight. In the third example, I move from the short duration of pace to the long duration of generational time to show how a combination of data and theory 'revealed' to me the workings of intergenerational identifications between mothers and daughters.

4.2 Project design: towards intensity and insight

The project was based in the 'Identities and Social Action' ESRC-funded programme[6]. The transition to motherhood was chosen as a prime site for studying identity change, understood as dynamic, conflictual, biographical, relational, practical and situated. Twenty first-time mothers were recruited in Tower Hamlets, a Borough in the East End of London containing a high level of deprivation and disadvantage, a history of accommodating waves of immigrants and a recent surge of policy initiatives concerning children and families. A new population of young professionals, many working in the rapidly expanding financial sector also situated within the borough, had increased the Borough's diversity. Our sample reflected these ethnic and class diversities and also differences in partner, employment and accommodation status, as well as relation to family of origin.

I had become aware of the inadequacy of the field notes that I had used in a former project, especially when, long after the interviews, I tried to recall the quality of the experience to bring life back into the record of those research encounters. As Rachel Thomson (this issue) mentions, one of the fruits of our close collaboration was our use of the kind of reflexive field notes that she has developed in a critical ethnographic tradition. Our field notes evolved to include not only a thorough description of the interview setting and interactions but also documented our subjective responses to the encounter, through tuning in to our own subjectivity as a mode of knowing. For example, we adopted the technique used by the 'Making of Modern Motherhoods' team of including in the field note after each interview answers to the question 'What are my hopes and fears for this mother'? The principles and practices of the psychoanalytically informed observation, which was proceeding alongside and drawing on six of the same mothers, were also highly influential (see below).

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[6] Our three-year project "Identities in Process: Becoming African, Caribbean, Bangladeshi and white mothers in Tower Hamlets" was funded by The Economic and Social Research Council (grant number148-25-0058), the government funder of social science research in the UK. The research team consisted of Wendy Hollway, Ann Phoenix, Heather Elliott, Cathy Urwin and Yasmin Gunaratnam. Dr Cathy Urwin led the observation side of the project and conducted the weekly observation seminars attended by members of the research team. She edited a special journal issue on the observations cases (Urwin 2007).

I share Thomson's critique of standard sociological methods (this issue), especially in relation to the lack of psychological depth in their methods. I devise methods that attempt to remain 'experience near' and am critical of the tendency, following the discursive turn in qualitative methods, to reify words as holding the meaning of the research encounter to the extent that they become lifeless and drained of meaning. An example that involves insight from my own experience in the data analysis of data from an earlier research project provides an illustration.

Earlier in my career, following conventional expectations, I would transcribe audio-recorded interviews with participants and never return to the audio record. I depended on the transcribed words in my analysis of meaning. One time, about a decade ago, I returned to a very old audio recording to check the accuracy of a piece of transcript that was ambiguous. I got a shock. The person who came across from the voice seemed different from the one that I had re-envisioned as I worked on the transcript. I listened on; I listened to the whole tape. In retrospect, it seems obvious that the transcript loses layers of meaning conveyed in tone, pace, emphasis, flow, rhythm and so on. Detailed transcription conventions attempt to capture these in technical symbols, but in my view lose the meaning of the whole (the 'gestalt') in their preoccupation with detail: when I read one of these transcripts, the 'vital signs' of the person who uttered the words are lost; I cannot recreate the meaning. It seems to me that, whether we like it or not, we use our imaginations to make meaning out of the information at our disposal, however threadbare, and that the danger is in a denial that this is the case, as opposed to recognising and reflecting on such use, and using fuller forms of data where possible. I now work with audio records alongside transcript.

Listening to the participant's 'voice' means more, however, than listening to the audio record. It requires attention to the initial research encounter in which researchers can use their own relationship to the scene to register the ways that they are emotionally affected by it. The situation in which a string of words emerges to represent experience is always intersubjective (even when there is no one present to hear them, there are other imagined recipients, present in the speaker/writer's imagination). This principle, which I have written about as unconscious intersubjectivity, is fundamental to most current traditions within psychoanalysis. Thus the relation between participant and researcher needs to remain central. This is what I mean by 'using the researcher's subjectivity as an instrument of knowing'. It is an example of tuning the instrument of insight.

None the less I had further, more basic reasons for wanting to go beyond a reliance on interview methods, even though the FANI method is usually capable of eliciting the kind of experience-near accounts that afford psychological depth within particularised social settings. I could only judge its remaining limitations by comparing it with a less talk-based method. It seemed likely that, despite its capacity to elicit free associations, the method must share some of the weaknesses of any talk-based method: by eliciting a mode of communication that is to a great extent under conscious control, perhaps there is too much of a tendency to reproduce the image of a rational, unitary, discursive subject, premises on which interview methods are usually based. An adaptation of the infant observation tradition developed at the Tavistock clinic (Bick 1964) was the result.

Because the infant observation method evolved as a training in infant and young child development, observers become very good at noticing non-verbal, embodied aspects of communication and mental states. It was therefore consistent with our aim to go beyond the consciously aware, talk-based methods of finding out about identity, wishing to pick up a range of other levels, from the unsaid to the unsayable; that is those that reside in and are expressed through the body (the unconscious in psychoanalysis). Two practitioners who have applied psychoanalytic observation in organisations characterise the following five features as defining the method:

o Evenly hovering attention without premature judgement
o Use of subjective experience
o Capacity to think and reflect about the experience as a whole
o Recognition of the unconscious dimension
o Informed interpretation (Hinshelwood and Skogstadt 2000 p17).

Our use of psychoanalytically informed observation aimed to go beyond an exclusive methodological focus on text towards a focus on practices and embodied, affective expressions of states of mind and relationship as they are enacted.

> The observation method was intended … to enable us to see identities that are less the product of conscious, intentional production through narrative, more sensitive to affect, to unconscious intersubjectivity and to embodied aspects of identity. This broadly turned out to be the case. However, it is worth pointing out that words spoken in an interview do not only provide semantic information. (…) In a similar way to how interviews can provide information that goes beyond discourse, so observations are often bursting with talk, including information of the kind that is likely to be provided in interviews (Hollway 2007:334-5).

Together the two methods had the potential to complement each other and to achieve a kind of triangulation that would support the validity of both.

Six trained 'infant observers' (not members of the research team) each observed one of the larger sample of mothers, once per week over the course of the first year of her baby's life. For six of the mothers in our sample (two Bangladeshi, one white English, one African-Caribbean, one West African and one white South African) we therefore have all types of data: interviews (recordings and transcripts), interviewers' field notes, observation notes and seminar notes.

Observers make notes only after the session has ended, at the time paying detailed attention to the baby and mother. The principle behind the note-writing style of representing the observer's experience is another way of describing how insight can be used:

> 'knowledge, theory etc are set aside during the acts of observing and recording in favour of allowing the experience to make its impact … a new concept of the observer is being employed … here the truths which interest us are emotional truths. The observer cannot register them without being stirred … correctly grasped, the emotional factor is an indispensable tool to be used in the service of greater understanding' (Miller et al 1989 p2).

In the psychoanalytic training tradition, the observation method is combined with a weekly observation seminar, in which the group of observers meets throughout the observation period, led by an experienced psychoanalytically-trained observer, to process together the impact of the developing observation. They were not seminars in the sense of being convened for the purposes of applying theory to the data: 'The weekly observation seminars were deliberately devoid of theoretical discussion, both to avoid the tendency for theory to lead or blind observation and because of the assumption that new theory may be required' (Urwin 2007 p249). As in the quotation from Miller et al (above), this illustrates the principle of not imposing existing psychoanalytic theory in a way that closes down the experience of 'the oddness and newness' (Frosh and Baraitser, cited in Thomson 2010 p8, this issue) of a research encounter.

Consistent with the principles guiding the collective research practices and use of reflexivity described by Thomson in this issue, group reflection on the evolving record of each case is a well-established feature of training in infant observation. The group's task is to use members' subjective responses to the case, which the group can then reflect upon together. This helps the metabolisation of observers' experiences. Identifications with any or many of the participants who have been observed will be present in this material. The different identifications in the group can provide a kind of triangulation and contribute to the analysis of the material. An example of group reflection is when one observer was wondering what the significance of the mother's home culture in West Africa was for Martina when her mother visited and wanted to take the baby back with her while Martina and her husband resumed their jobs full-time in London. In this case group members could contribute their varying knowledges of that culture and together think about what the maternal grandmother's offer might signify in that context. We could reflect on our varying feelings of shock at this proposal and explore the extent to which they also belonged to Martina and her husband. This example highlights the desirability of not being a mono-cultural group.

An example of the group's help in metabolising a difficult experience is when one observer who was treated in inconsistent and careless ways by the mother she was observing, 'through the support of the group … was able to process my hurt and angry feelings and to think about them as belonging to Azra and as reflecting her way of communicating them' (Layton, 2007: 260). This example demonstrates the use outside the clinic of the psychoanalytic principle of the unconscious transfer of feelings from one relationship to another (transference and countertransference).

When applied to the observations in our research project, the principle of using observers', group's and researchers' subjectivities as instruments of knowing has radical implications for the ways that researchers arrive at understanding participants, especially because the principle goes against centuries of scientific modernist tradition about methods of knowing that are based on 'objectivity' (see Lucey, Melody and Walkerdine 2003 and Froggett and Wengraf 2004, for examples of using researchers' subjectivity as a way of knowing in psychosocial research.). At an epistemological level, this use of insight involves re-theorising terms like subjectivity and objectivity, reliability and validity as part of a debate that is new to many social scientists and contentious. We need to ensure that this use of insight, using the researcher's subjectivity as an instrument of knowing, safeguards research ethics. It needs to strive

for what conventionally was called 'objectivity', which I prefer to characterise as treatment that is accurate, fair, disinterested and impartial, without sacrificing meaningfulness (Hollway 2008). For example, it is recognised that identifications with a particular family member can act as a powerful vehicle for imposing an observer's personal experiences and related beliefs on to a participant ('countertransference' in a clinical setting) in ways that could compromise objectivity.

At an epistemological level, the idea of objectivity requires retheorising, outside of the tradition of positivist science. Psychoanalysis has had a largely independent tradition of theorising objective knowing which is useful here. For example Donald Winnicott's developmental psychoanalysis traced the baby's crucial move from creating 'subjective objects' dictated by the desire for omnipotent control, to an ability to acknowledge 'objects, objectively perceived' (Hollway 2006 p37). Such dynamics are not confined to childhood.

In our research design, various mechanisms of support were drawn upon to help the objective thinking of those involved. The observation seminar has been described above. Rachel Thomson has described in her article the value of the plethora of group configurations that both teams used for data analytic purposes (the research team, joint team meetings, special workshops drawing in others). A third form of support consisted of provision of a psychotherapeutically-trained consultant whom the full-time researcher could contact when she was in danger of being besieged by experiences that touched closely on her own situation, which was rather similar to the women she was interviewing[7]. The principle here is not that identifications with participants are necessarily bad or to be avoided – they are inevitable. Rather, this kind of support helps to ensure that they can be thought about and a mental separation achieved between the parts that belong to the two people involved – researcher and participant.

In our research project, we adapted the observation method in two fundamental ways: from a training method to a research method and from observing babies - in the mother baby couple - to observing mothers in that couple (see Urwin 2007 pp 244-6 for more detail). In practice, this did not make much difference because of the significance of the relation of mother and baby as the object of study – as opposed to the idea of the mother as a separate individual. This is particularly salient in the first weeks and months of course and is basic to relational psychoanalytic paradigms, for example in Loewald's statement that 'mother and baby do not get together and develop a relationship, but the baby is born, becomes detached from the mother, and thus a relatedness between two parts that originally were one becomes possible' (Loewald, 1951/1980, p. 11). This paradigm helped us to recognise the powerful intersubjective dynamics that impinge on new mothers and the large potential for conflict this produces with women's previous settlement between autonomy and intersubjective relatedness (Hollway 2006).

Although we maintained the traditional observation frame, its setting within a wider research project obviously influenced how the observers experienced what they were

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[7] This is parallel to clinical supervision, which is securely established in psychoanalytic practice. A variant of it used to be a common feature of social work practice. The situation for Ann Phoenix and myself, being of a generation whose children were adult, was different.

engaged upon. The core research team (Elliott, Hollway and Phoenix, also the interviewers) was a salient presence for the observers because we attended the weekly seminar group, with the exception that the researcher who interviewed the mother whose case was being addressed that evening did not attend. This was so that the observers' knowledge through the method was not 'contaminated' by the kinds of knowledge gained through interviews.

4.3 Intensity, affect and narrative

Various dimensions of time have appeared much more salient to me than usual in this research project. This is partly a necessary result of a topic that is about identity changes through time, but it goes beyond this. Longitudinal methods have resurfaced in social sciences (Thomson, Plumridge and Holland 2003), in tandem with the growth of biographical narrative perspectives. One year was a regrettably short period in which to achieve our understanding of the profound changes in maternal subjectivity and indeed the observers, trained in a tradition of two-year baby observations, found the end of the first year to be a frustrating time to have to finish observations, with separation processes in full swing and mothers experiencing another wave of identity upheaval in the face of this, combined for many with the return to employment. 'The absence of analytic closure' (Thomson and Holland 2003: 243) was hard to bear.

'The intensity of research methods refers to their temporal pattern, the frequency of the research encounter' (Thomson 2010 p16, this issue). My purpose here is to draw attention to the way intensity interacts with the style of interview questioning and dynamic and conflictual nature of memory as it affects interview narratives. The two methods provided an instructive contrast based on the frequency of data points: gaps of four to six months between interview visits compared to weekly observation visits. The mundane detail of changes emerging weekly contributed to the experience-near quality of the observation data. Because this quality relies on the recurring nature of the observations, it is hard to convey directly from the observation data in a limited space. The following extract comes from the first level of data analysis consisting of writing pen portraits whose purpose was descriptively to convey a broad ranging sense of each mother while remaining close to the data, avoiding analysis and generalisation (except, as below, where it derives factually from recurrent single incidences). The extract portrays how hard feeding was for Zelda at the time. I wrote different pen portraits, one each from observation and interview data, with a time gap in between, in order to work out what differences of understanding they afforded. This extract is from Zelda's observation pen portrait.

Feeding is usually difficult and the descriptions of Zelda's attempts and Peter's discomfort become a common theme in the observations over many months. Peter often rejects the teat. After many attempts by Zelda to introduce it, he will eventually start to suck in a rapid unrelaxed manner. He squirms and fidgets and turns away from eye contact and close holding. He rejects the bottle before it is finished and pulls his knees up to his tummy:

> Zelda spoke about Peter having some milk but then doing this strange thing pushing the bottle away, drawing up his legs, and getting very uncomfortable, so that at the moment he was never finishing any of h*is feeds... 'Look he hasn't finished this one either,' she pointed to the bottle. She said that he*

seems very hungry, drinks and sucks really fast, and then seems unhappy, sucks at the teat and then wriggles and pushes it away. Peter continued to gaze at me. (Zelda gets some tea)
Zelda said perhaps he'd like to try the milk again now and lay him back and offered him the bottle, he took it eagerly in his mouth and sucked hard but then quickly rejected it and spat the teat out wriggling his legs and squirming as if *uncomfortable. 'You see' Zelda said to me, as she comforted Peter, holding* him up to her shoulder and patting his back and making sympathetic noises. He quietened and Zelda said that perhaps he had wind .. she continued to hold him at her shoulder rocking him gently and patting his back. He gazed towards the window, and she commented on him being interested in the light and in looking at things (Obs.6 note).

The observers' weekly visits succeeded in recording the ups and downs involved in identity change processes that were often necessarily smoothed out in the generalisation required for a narrative of events between interview visits where the gap is several months. The following example comes half way through the second interview, when Peter is five months old.

> *Interviewer: Well how has every day been since you've had Peter?*
> Zelda: Oh tiring – *no I'm joking. (Laughs) I mean you obviously get a bit tired, but he's – like I say, he only wakes up once a night now, so it's really* nice. Um he wakes up <u>generally</u> *between 6.00 and 7.00, but lately it's about* seven, which is really nice. So he wakes up and he has his morning bottle. *And then round about an hour, hour and a half later, he'll have some porridge* then already. [Omitted here is information about his sleeping pattern.] Then *he'll wake up and he'll have some milk again. And then at lunch time we've* started now with milk and stuff as well – *well porridge or ('puree'), depending* what – *'cos now – I had bought one or two, but they're such mixe*d flavours, *and he's only just started, so he doesn't really like them. (Int: Hmm.) So I* make my own purees now, so I just make carrots or peas or butternut, and that *he enjoys, he enjoys a single taste, he doesn't enjoy the mixed. (….) Then he* just has afternoon feed probably at about (pause) well it used to be half past *five, but we're now trying to stretch it. [Omitted here is information about how* much the baby loves his bath] So – *but during the day, oh like I say, he's so* content.

The interviewer's question does not succeed in eliciting a specific narrative of a day's event, but rather a generalising account of the average day. The overall picture is one of a contented baby who has a satisfactory routine. A few minutes after this sequence, the interviewer attempts to elicit a more specific account with a request to describe what the previous day was like, and is told of 'quite a niggly day actually'. I selected references to feeding in order to contrast the information derived from the two methods in an area where there was a striking difference, a difference to do with difficulty. The second interview comes at a time when Peter is being weaned and the account of feeding him his bottled milk passes without comment. Not surprisingly perhaps, the narrative is structured around the current development (eating solids). This borrows from and reproduces the dominance of discourses concerning babies' development, which meant, in our experience that mothers often structured their 2nd

and 3rd interview narratives around the theme of their babies' development since the previous meeting.

Other differences in method no doubt interacted with the different frequency of visits between the interview and observation methods. One further dimension of difference is the inevitably different relationships that Zelda (and Peter) establish with the two researchers. There are many reasons for this, most obviously the fact that Zelda meets the interviewer three times and meets the observer 36 times. Their activities are also distinctly different. The observer's stance involves not asking questions, not setting any topic, but quietly watching and listening. They are trained in what to notice and how to use their emotional responses as an instrument of knowing to distinguish this method from interviewing, even when it is based on principles of eliciting free associations and supplemented with reflexive field notes.

However, the contrasting picture of feeding in data does not, in my view, simply reflect different timing of visits or a neutral application by participants of different levels of specificity in conveying the same information. Zelda's interview account was influenced by her desire not to think about the negative features[8] of her mothering experience, so that these could sink into unremembered history, a process of forgetting that would be aided by the production of a consistently optimistic narrative to the interviewer. This example does not mean that one method produces something closer to the truth: both representations of Zelda's experiences of becoming a mother were reality-based. However, such differences in research design have significant consequences for what a research project can know about the process of identity change in new mothers. Is it smooth and a cause of almost unadulterated pleasure and satisfaction or is it a profound psychological upheaval (despite the pleasures and satisfactions)? There is truth in both versions: our methodological paradigm provides answers that do not render the difficult-to-bear aspects of the lived life invisible.

The intensity of the observation method also produced data that were richly descriptive, situated particularly within families and more broadly in Tower Hamlets. For example, several mothers moved a lot between the family home of their parents or parents-in-law and their own flat (either shared with their husband/partner or occupied on their own) and the observers arranged to visit them in these changing venues. The intensity of the weekly visits therefore afforded wider information about the settings in which the experiences of new mothering were taking place. The same occasionally happened with interviewers, but with only three visits in all, there were far fewer opportunities of this kind. The change in settings was informative because we saw participants situated differently as daughters, sisters, aunts, wives, at the same time as being new mothers. This information chimes with accounts of identity as multiple, as shifting according to the positions afforded in different situations and relationships. Azra, for example, was observed at her father's house, which felt like a lively nursery, most days full of the female members of her extended family with their children. Her demeanour when she was there was in sharp contrast to that at the 15th floor flat where she had moved with her husband, which to the observer felt isolated and full of anxious feelings. These contrasts in the setting were part of a picture that enabled the observer to understand the central significance of Azra's loss of her mother at age 15 (see Layton 2007).

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[8] This claim fits with a pattern that persisted across all the data.

4.4 Pace and everyday practice

I want to start with an extract, which comes from Elspeth Pluckrose's[9] seventh observation, when Zelda's baby son, Peter, is about 10 weeks old and she is waking him from a mid-morning sleep:

> She watched him as he woke, and talked gently to him. She asked him if he was *waking now… his eyes had now returned to shut although he continued to* wriggle and moan. He opened his eyes and Zelda put her hand on his tummy and *said to him: 'You're not quite sure are you?' She stroked him and spoke* to him again, he stilled and opened his eyes, she moved the sheet from his *face, and asked: 'Are you ready now… Are you ready now? She released his* arms from the sheet and touched his chin and lip, speaking to him brightly and *smiling at him. 'Are you ready to wake up Peter? Are you Peter? Are you?'* *She stroked his chin and he smiled at her: 'Ah that's better, perhaps you are* *ready?' She stroked his chin again and he smiled again. 'What a lovely smile:* *you are nearly ready?' She smiled and kissed him lightly on the nose. Zelda* then moved away telling him she was just going to open the blind. He lay in his cot gazing towards Zelda and then following her voice with his eyes as she moved to the window. When she returned she stroked his face and tummy *again and again he smiled, she said: ' You are ready…' She picked him up* *and held him against her shoulder and I said 'hello..' He held his head up* and away from her body looking at her and then suddenly loosing control of *his neck crashed heavily into her chest. 'Oh dear, oh dear,' said Zelda. And* *then holding him up asked if he needed a new nappy: 'yes you do,' she* decided. She took him to the changing table.

I wonder what your responses were on reading this extract. Did you quickly scan the extract focusing on the content? Perhaps you were disappointed at how little of this it contained? My guess is that you were not noticing the dimension of pace involved. It has taken me a long time to notice and involved some experience outside work. I was away for a long weekend, trying to slow down after a busy work period. I kept noticing women with young children, how slowly they were going about their business, whether it was walking along the street or shopping or having lunch in a café. I noticed this because of the contrast with my own pace (if I was stuck behind them on the pavement, I wanted to overtake). I started to think about the data and the potential conflict between adult worker pace and the pace required of mothers by new babies. In this extract, Zelda is demonstrating a careful and caring sensitivity to her baby's slow pace of waking. She is encouraging him without rushing him. Nothing jars until he is surprised by the presence of the observer, at which his neck crashes on to her chest.

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[9] I would like to thank all the observers, in this case Elspeth Pluckrose, for their sensitivity, skill and insight as observers. Each observation case is written up in a special issue of Infant Observation (7,3) 2007, edited by Cathy Urwin, who led the observation side of the research. Pluckrose, E. 'Loss of the Motherland: the dilemma of creating triangular space a long way from home.'

This is an important illustration for methodological reasons because it captures the minutiae of pace which most methods could miss because they are driven by adult pace (for example, in interview talk). To what extent does this apply to ethnographic observation too? This observer does not cut corners: if Zelda repeats a phrase or a movement, the observer faithfully records that and therefore we are afforded a sense of the real time involved in the potentially brief act of going to wake up baby (this is not to claim that the record captures real time by including 'everything'). Of course it is still easy to read the data without paying attention to pace. Once noticed, we will be attuned to other records where the mother's and baby's pace are at odds.

The observation seminar was also conducted at a pace that was mindful of the time required to digest the emotional impact of new information and therefore make it more accessible for processing. Every observation seminar started in the same way: the observer whose case-mother was to be the focus of the session read aloud the notes from her most recent session. Cathy Urwin, the seminar leader, would then ask us to consider what emotional responses we had to the experience of listening to this. The first time notes were read aloud, I noticed my irritation: I was already half way through reading the text of the notes, which we all had in front of us. Would it not be faster to read it that way and save time for the real business of discussion? From experience, however, I learned that reading out loud enabled me to attune to the emotional experience of the text, which was essential to the meaning that the notes could convey. Thomson referred to the effect in similar terms, above, when she wrote that it 'revitalises the observation, enriching the possibilities for analysis and insight in the new analytic moment' (Thomson 2010 p6, this issue). Moreover, the fact of sharing this experience in the group heightened my attention to this layer of meaning: we all shared something and then we could explore the similarities and differences of our responses. Only after that did we proceed to consider the notes sentence by sentence. We subsequently adopted the practice of reading out loud in various data analytic groups, as Rachel Thomson (2010) mentions.

There were implications not only for our methodological practice, but for our understanding of identity also. The extract of Zelda and her baby, above, caused me to ask the question 'how does she know what pace is right for her baby?' It seems to me that she is able to identify with the fragile state that he is in while waking and so recognises the subtle cues that act as a demand on her to slow down from adult pace (in the interviews, she talked very fast, for example) and adapt to his pace. It requires a certain kind of handling, but I think it goes beyond that: it requires changes in her own pace, which is an embodied aspect of who she is. In my experience, pace cannot be slowed down easily by conscious intention. It takes practice, practice that changes the embodied routines that make up the going-on-being of identity. So this kind of data helps us to notice the embodied aspects of identity that have become so subordinated to the discursive aspects, partly because of dominant social science methods.

4.5 Generation time

It is a truism to say that women who have been daughters become mothers when they have their first babies. We have been able to chart the psychological significance of this for identity transition, especially the part played by identifications (and perhaps disidentifications) with these new mothers' own mothers (Hollway 2009).

Identifications are often illustrated through practices, practices that are quite consciously adopted by new mothers, who often talked about wanting to bring up their babies like their mothers. However there are other forms of identification that are less intentional. The following extract is of Liyanna, a 30-year old of Bangladeshi origin, as she tells the interviewer about an unexpected moment of identification with her mother. At the second interview, when her daughter was around four months old, Liyanna had prepared some family photos to show the interviewer. One photo is of her mother with her older sister, Amina. She and Amina, who she describes as having 'always been pretty close', have a difficult relationship with their mother who has been chronically depressed throughout their lives. She says:

> *It's this picture, it's so strange. (baby cries)*. I was showing it to my sister the other day, and I said to her that when I used to look at this before it was like *"oh there's Mum and Amina" ... and you just sort of flick through it, you* know, and I never really stopped to analyse it. But I said to her, *since I've had* Maryam, I look at that picture and I know exactly what my Mum was feeling *when she was looking down at my sister. (Int: Really?) 'Cos I know how I feel when I look down at her, and when I play with her, and it's just taken on a* whole new mea*ning, you know, it's like there's my Mum and that's her first-born child, it's a little girl, same as me, you know, and I can just see the love and the emotion that she's feeling when she* – when she – when that picture was taken.

There is a lot at stake here for Liyanna because she is now able to recognise that she was loved by her mother, which has become possible because she has experienced how she loves her own daughter. She regards this access to a new emotional understanding as 'strange' because the same photo before she became a mother would have held no such significance. If we phrase this in terms of identification, we can say that becoming a mother has enabled her to identify with her mother at the same time as identifying with her daughter through her identity as the daughter of her mother. The bond with her own daughter, through this double identification, then produces recognition of how her mother felt for her own baby daughter. However, the generational identification is not quite as direct as she implies because she is not her mother's first-born, so Liyanna's identification as her mother's baby ('same as me') passes through her close older sister, to enable the parallel with her first-born daughter. Through this she acquires an emotional understanding of loving and being loved that was not accessible before she became a mother herself. It depends (in the language of psychoanalytic object relations theory) on being able to access simultaneously her internalised mother and daughter and to identify both of these as parts of herself.

4.6 Conclusions

The wish informing my attempts at innovation in qualitative research methods has been to find experience-near methods that afford an adequately complex account of identities replete with psychological depth and aliveness. Consistent with the conference title where this paper was originally presented, I have called these the 'vital signs' of participants, which I wish to preserve in the production and analysis of data. Psychoanalysis, adapted from clinical to research practice has provided a paradigm for researching and theorising identity change that goes beyond language to

include aspects of the self that have proved intractable to commonly available qualitative research methods, dependent as most have recently been on eliciting participants' talk. I have discussed in this article the ways in which I adapted my research principles and methods to provide data and data analysis that convey aspects of experience that are difficult to put into words. I have given details of what changes were required in ways of theorising the researcher's ways of knowing, as well as the participants'. Two examples, pace and intergenerational identification, illustrated how different dimensions of time could become available to research attention, dimensions that would usually remain out of reach and therefore not available as part of an ongoing theorisation of the dynamics of identity. These examples were derived respectively from observation and interview data, but both required remaining alive to meaning as it is concretised through particular experiences in specific settings, through keeping open a range of communication between participant and researcher.

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5. Researching masculine & paternal subjects in times of change: Insights from a Qualitative Longitudinal (QLL) and psychosocial case study

Karen Henwood and Mark Finn

5.1 The Symposium: Introductory Remarks

This round table offered a welcome opportunity to present some of the methodological & analytical work of the men-as-fathers project, conducted as part of the Timescapes network (2007-2012), in a forum involving two other projects that shared a common substantive interest in the formation of parental identities and subjectivities. We particularly valued the opportunity to come together to highlight the possibilities and challenges involved in adopting and developing qualitative longitudinal (QLL[10]) and psychosocial methodologies and methods for inquiring into what is involved in becoming a mother, father or parent at the level of the personally and socially experiencing, living, and reflexively meaning- making subject.

In our project, two of our main topics of interests are masculinities and fathering. We have talked to men (two or three times pre-and post their first child's birth) about their experiences of becoming first-time-fathers in Britain around the turn of the millennium[11]. Subsequently, we have asked them to consider again what it means to them to have undergone such a major life transition, and to make sense of their past, present and future lives, in an intensive, psychosocial interview eight years later. We aim (among other things) to highlight the continuities and transformations involved and investigate their personal, relational, and wider social implications. And we want to ask questions about what it means to be a man – about the processes involved in the formation of masculine subjectivity – that are under researched in relation to fatherhood.

We are also interested in comparative questions raised when setting our project alongside the mothering projects. One of our research questions concerns how the men in our study interpret the significance of becoming a parent for their relationships with their partners. To what extent have their life trajectories become linked together with their partners in a shared project? What gendered dynamics are involved? To what extent are the challenges, opportunities and risks involved common ones to do with becoming a parent? Do we (also) need to think in terms of gender specificities about mothering and fathering as distinct from parenting?

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[10] There is no standard shorthand to distinguish between qualitative and quantitative longitudinal study. QLL is used here (QuaL Longitudinal); its opposite would be QTL (QuanT Longitudinal).

[11] We also now have a second cohort of first time fathers in our study, from South Wales. As data collection began with them in 2008, continuing until the end of 2009, this article has been written without reference to the second data cohort.

5.2 Our methodological and conceptual approach

In common with other projects in the Timescapes network we have adopted a micro-temporal QLL study design. The aim of such a design is to generate data that are both qualitative (viz articulate people's everyday subjective experiences and understandings of contextual/socio-cultural meanings) and biographical, dynamic or temporal (rather than fixed in particular moments in time). Such data have the potential to bring into view the times and textures of people's everyday lives, so that it becomes possible to investigate the dynamic ways in which they experience, negotiate, and work out the significance and meanings of their relationships, identities and lives in and through time (Neale and Flowerdew, 2003). Adopting this approach represents one way in which we have set ourselves up to study the ways in which everyday experiences, ideas, understandings and issues of masculinity and fathering are implicated in the dynamic processes of men's identity and subjectivity formation.

As well as tracking people as they make their way through significant moments, episodes and transitions encountered throughout the lifecourse, QLL/temporal study researches the dynamic continuities and changes in people' lives by inquiring into how they live out their lives within historical periods or epochs, as members of particular generations or cohorts. Focussing on the three key dimensions of time – historical, generational and biographical - is a distinctive feature of the QLL approach currently under development across the Timescapes network. In our own study into paternal and masculine subjectivities and identities, we refer to men and fathers' identities being constituted not just biographically but in the context of "changing lives and times in 'modern' Britain". This does not mean that we are setting up a singular, linear model of progressive change with the categories pre- and post modern necessarily preceding sequentially from one to the other (hence the quotes around the word 'modern'). Rather, a key aim in our study is to bring out the (all too often invisible) multi-dimensionalities & directionalities, pluralities, and complexities of time and change associated with the shift to modernity, as they are experienced and created by people (Salmon, 1985), and to explore their dynamic involvement in the unfolding of varied life forms and social processes (Adam, 2008).

The idea of modernity has become important to us in the course of conducting our empirical study, as it represents a pervasive lay category of experience and understanding. Articulating their aspirations and experiences as "modern" fathers seems to be a way for our study participants to capture their sense that, as with other men today, they are expected to practice fatherhood differently to their own fathers, and that fatherhood has, accordingly, undergone some degree of socio-historical – or at least generational – change. Within the social research literature, such articulations are commonly depicted as being part of a particular discursive shift - called the rise of new father discourse - which has made these articulations possible, and we assume in our study that such discursive shifts do play a key part in the dynamic constitution of masculine identity and paternal subjectivity (see also Lupton and Barclay, 1997). At the same time, our approach to QLL study is one in which we are interested in being able to pursue questions of continuity and change within the multiple conditions and flows of time. We specifically wish to avoid the implication that any one modality alone (such as the discursive, as opposed to other experiential/ phenomenological/ sensory modes) is constitutive of men and fathers' subjectivities (Henwood, Finn and

Shirani, 2009). Rather, we are interested in the multiple conditions and flows of time, the variety of continuities and changes they implicate, and how these relate to the making of meanings and working out of lives and futures.

To foreground our interest in the (multiple) conditions and flows of time, we have coined the term "psychosocial temporalities". In our study thus far, our particular focus has been on studying our participants' identificatory imaginings as they become fathers and move on in their lives in and through time (Finn and Henwood, 2008). These identificatory imaginings take the form of alignments with, or distancings from, one's own father's personal and generational ways of doing masculinity and fathering; the resultant tensions and adaptations that are apparent in study participants' aspirations or desires as men and as fathers, and the reflections, revisitings & reworking of meanings of these imaginings as they run through temporal circuits of 'then, now & next'. In sum, we use the concept of psychosocial temporalities to implicate the conditions of emergence of such identificatory imaginings, the ways in which men reflect on these from various vantage points in time, and how their meaning and significance alter in the processes of reworking and reflection.

Four main conceptual and methodological assumptions characterise our study.
  (i)   Subjectivity is a dynamic entity, and two of its main axes - fatherhood & masculinity - multiply contextualised by: prevalent discourses; the nexus of relationships making up men and fathers' lives past and present and contributing to their imagined futures; and social conditions.
  (ii) Arising from this way of approaching inquiry into subjectivity is a need to be attentive to the opportunities and constraints operating in people's lives, and to the discursive positions they take up in relation to risk (i.e. whether it is seen as best avoided or an acceptable way of managing life's uncertainties).
  (iii) We are interested in psychosocial processes as they implicate continuities & changes in subjective experiences and meaning making and, also, as they involve energised (that is embodied & affectively freighted) transmissions within temporal trajectories that are embedded in biographical, generational and historical dimensions of time.
  (iv) QLL study, generating data in & through time, is a valuable means of highlighting & studying such processes.

We next elaborate further on some of the intellectual antecedents of our study that have given rise to these assumptions; in particular, we consider theorising and research that has contributed to our understanding of the two key concepts - relationality and temporality.

5.3 Theorising & researching parental subjectivity; Relationality and temporality

The specific disciplinary home of the men-as-fathers study in (qualitative) social psychology (see e.g. Henwood, 2008; Willig and Stainton Rogers, 2008), has until very recently, concentrated on understanding the processes of masculine identity and subjectivity formation through the study of discourses and psychodiscursive practices (Willott and Griffin, 1999; Wetherell and Edley, 1999; Wetherell, 2003; 2005).

Latterly, the processes under examination have been reconfigured as more "psychosocial" (see e.g. Frosh, 2003; Hollway and Jefferson, 2005; Wetherell, Hollway and Phoenix, 2005).

Psychodiscursive work considers the cultural and discursive inscription of identities and subjectivities, highlighting the ways that cultural ideals of manliness are negotiated so that the making of identity becomes infused with tension, contradiction and dilemma (see e.g. Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman, 2002; Phoenix, Frosh and Pattman, 2003). Much of this work has considered questions about boy's struggles with dominant ideas of masculinity and popularity in school settings. Other work within this psychodiscursive tradition has studied how young men in the mental health services talk about their experiences of psychological distress (McQueen and Henwood, 2002), and asked questions about changing masculinities through studying boy's and men's perceptions of the male body (Gill, Henwood and Mclean, 2000; Henwood, Gill and Mclean, 2002) and the transition to first time fatherhood (Henwood and Procter, 2003). Two key issues addressed in such work are the narrative (McQueen and Henwood, 2002; see also Frosh and Emerson, 2004) and embodied (Gill, Henwood and Mclean, 2000; Henwood, Gill and Mclean, 2002) dimensions of masculine subjectivity. A key issue arising, and that is encapsulated by use of the phrase psychosocial, is that research (e.g. on parenting subjectivities) needs to be pursued with a binocular vision (Frosh and Saville-Young, 2008) so that processes of cultural inscription do not remain on the surface and there is an engagement with questions about their psychological depth. For our purposes here, the psychosocial problematic means finding ways to bring the concepts of relationality and temporality into centre frame, and this has been done in two main ways.

Wendy Hollway (2006; see also Hollway and Jefferson, 2005) has developed the concept of relationality in her work drawing on studies in the object relations tradition (see e.g. Klein, 1988; Mahler, 1957; Benjamin, 1990). Her work foregrounds the intersubjective & inter subject-object relations that mobilise self-other identifications within a network of flowing, unconscious embodied relations between people and objects. Others, such as Valerie Walkerdine (in press) have been drawing upon social theory as developed within critical social psychology to open up to inquiry the complexities of relational social space and affective relations. The echoes are strong here of the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), as stressed repeatedly in the work of Tim Ingold (see e.g. 2007), whose interest is in the constantly moving assemblage of flows across and between bodies; flows that are embodied, psychological, spatial and temporal as much as social and discursive. In the men as fathers project, these theoretical discussions have informed our data analytical work.

In psychosocial research, a key question is the kind of engagement one needs to make with psychoanalytic theory. Like others, we accept the importance of the concept of unconscious as providing the affective architecture of the subject established in encounters with significant others in early life, and continuing to reverberate throughout people's lives (see e.g. Frosh, 1995; Wetherell, 2003). But we wish to pursue the 'what lies beyond discourse' problematic without reliance on [truth-testifying] psychoanalytic interpretation. We see our work as concerned with the psychosocial problematic in that we are interested in what holds the effects of discursive and cultural inscription in place, in multiple mediations of subjectivity, and

in questions about the interiority and exteriority of the individual subject, but without (re)producing dualistic discourse (Finn and Henwood, 2009). What we are doing here is experimental – seeking to engage with processes of temporality & relationality, and not taking as our focus personally owned psychological processes.

5.4 The study & case study

The case study we go on to present is concerned with the identificatory imaginings of one study participant, who we are calling Malcolm; in particular, how they are given form and energised by relational transmissions that emerge from relationships with his own parents, especially his father. The trajectory of alignments and non-alignments with modern – or as he calls it – "motherly fathering" - provides a further condition for the way he imagines and thinks about himself as a father. The theoretically formulated research question spoken to by the case study is: 'how are the identificatory imaginings made, driven, and transfigured through the energised personal and social forces that assemble a set of relations, and hence subjectivity, in a particular way?' In our analytical work we are seeking to throw light on how subjectivities are assembled in relation to temporalities and relationalities.

The data in question are from a study conducted in East Anglia between 1999-2001 when 30 first time fathers were interviewed up to three times – once before and twice after the birth. Subsequently a (fourth) wave of data generation has been conducted involving further, in depth interviews and reflections upon our earlier use of visual elicitation methods (see Henwood, Shirani and Finn, forthcoming). During summer 2008, 18 of the participants in the original study were re-interviewed eight years after the birth of the first child, by which time their lives had moved on considerably. A reputed strength of this kind of QLL research design, as we have employed it, is that it combines intensive interviewing through a time of life transition with extensive tracking of continuities and changes in and through time (Saldaňa, 2003).

At the most recent time of interviewing (for the fourth time), Malcolm is 40 years of age and living with his wife (Lynne) & three children, the eldest being a male child aged 15 years from Lynne's first marriage. At the time of the first interview Malcolm and Lynne had been in a partnership for 5 years, but 8 years on they are married. At first interview Malcolm worked a lot away from home; however, he has since moved jobs to work nearer home. He has very little contact with his own family of birth, and this now includes his own mother with whom he had, in the earlier interviews, lodged with when working away from home.

Malcolm's vision of fathering and disconnections and disconnections with his father & mother; transmissions from a past relational context

Int: So what would you see as a good father?

Malcolm.1: Someone who's there, someone who's approachable, full involvement down to changing nappies, washing nappies, whatever. I would prefer to look at *myself as a 'mother' figure. I know it sounds quite silly, but the role of the mother because they seem to be there & involved all the time, and they're 'best friends' so to speak. My relationship with my father I wouldn't s*ay was particularly very good. He *was quite Victorian, and there's certainly no way I'd like to be like that. I'd like to be* a bit more modern and approachable.

Int: So, if you see your role as being more like the mothering role, what would you see your pa*rtner's role as being?*

Malcolm: Oh she'd do her bit as normal, but I wouldn't want to be, you see, my experience of my father was I was pleased when he was at work. And when he was at *home, I couldn't wait for him to go to work and, although he was a father, I don't think he was approachable. I didn't have anything really greatly in common with him, and I don't think he really had any involvement with the family, which I think is quite a shame. He lost out a lot, and I think we lost out a lot. I wouldn't wa*nt it that way. *I've got quite a good relationship with my mother and I would like to think that me being a father, I could have a likewise good relationship with my children. That's it* really.

We feature Malcolm's vision of fathering, in this first quotation, just before he became a father for the first time; in particular, the way he clearly opposes this vision to his own fathers' fathering. Like the majority of men (especially when interviewed early on in our study), and when talking aspirationally, Malcolm expresses a clear preference for a kind of fathering that is involved and he is particularly clear that this is less masculine than in previous generations of fathers (which he glosses as "quite Victorian"). Malcolm's case study is especially illuminating about the mix of intergenerational connections and disconnections with his own father, discursive alignments with the modern father, and affective/relational transmissions of a sense of loss and lack that he associated with his father's way of fathering, as they are being brought into and given shape in the present.

When Malcolm was interviewed for the fourth time in the summer of 2008, eight years after his first child's birth, it transpired that the relationally transmitted effects and affects that are the source of Malcolm's mother/motherly father aspirations were as acute as before. When asked about how he thought his children viewed him he replied a "grumpy old man". This prompted him to reflect, again, on his negative relationships with his father, suggesting intergenerational conflicts that he may wish to leave behind but is not fully able to do.

We see here the value of having a QLL design in that it is possible to explore issues raised in previous interviews from another point of view in biographical time. This gives far richer bases for reflection and making sense in the present of what was meaningful for participants in the past.

Intergenerational transmissions putting in place the psychosocial conditions for Malcolm's fatherhood ideals and relational positionings

Malcolm *1: ...Like if I go to the park with this little boy now [partner's son], he thinks* of me as a friend first, but he also knows that I am a disciplinarian if I need to be, and I am in control, or whatever you want to call i*t. And I think we've got a good* relationship that way. So I suppose, in theory, if I could have a relationship with my *child like that, as I'm sure I will do, then I think that's the right way to go with it.*

What we can see next, brought out by a more discursive style of analysis of a second selected quotation, is the complex and contradictory nature of Malcolm's identificatory imaginings. When talking about his relationship with his partner's son (again in the first/before birth interview) he talks up his aspirations to be a modern father (who is playful, approachable, talks over feelings) while also being in control.

We can see here, in particular, the kind of intergenerational transmissions that are putting in place the psychosocial conditions for Malcolm's fatherhood ideals and practices, in which the father becomes pivotal for not just what is lacking (emotional non-involvement /distance) but what is good in father-child relationships (giving guidance through being tough and in control).

Eight years later we find that it is the in control father who comes to be sensed as a "grumpy old man" by his children, again signalling lack, and this time giving impetus to the dynamic identificatory imaginings playing out with his partner. This is seen in the next quotation where speaking of his partner's independence of him as mother and partner diminishes him to a "helper" rather than full mothering role.

Malcolm.*1: It'll be interesting to see how much involvement she allows me to have,* which is an issue that has *been raised. I want total involvement. She says 'Yes, I want you to have total involvement' but, when it actually comes down to it, it will be interesting to see whether I get it…So it'll be interesting to see how far she trusts me* with the baby, I suppose…*I think that with Lynn sometimes no matter what I do is* wrong.

Malcolm.1: ... a lot of it goes over my head and I rely upon me partner to point me in *the right direction. I think she knows what's best and a lot of it I go with. So perhaps* she wears the t*rousers, perhaps I'll be washing up now.*

Of particular interest here, we would suggest, are the vestiges of his relationship with his own father: a lack of closeness linked to occupancy of a dominant male position and criticism of his son's lack of manliness. Does this lay the conditions for Malcolm's strong emotional investment in, and accentuation of, his diminished sense of masculinity in his current relationship with his partner – and what surfaces and resurfaces (more or less acutely) throughout the remaining interviews? To us, the resulting relational dynamic does seem to be integral to, and constraining of, his ability to be the mother figure as he is imagining it and as he expresses desiring it.

Malcolm's alignments, non- and re-alignments with motherly fathering; psychosocial temporalities in masculine & paternal subject formation

Throughout the interviews Malcolm reinvokes, and in many ways seems content with, practicing a constrained form of motherly fathering, as seen in the next quotation where he reflects on rejecting the masculine bravado involved in the breadwinner/ disciplining image.

I think also, actually, I think a lot of the bravado in men has gone. The big 'I am, I'm the hard disciplinarian, the breadwinner', or whatever. I think this modern man issue *has come into it. I think men have, aren't so scared to show their feelings.*

But there are also times in the 2nd-3rd interviews when he is prompted to talk against the flow of the generalised positive talk of the modern man, and aligns himself instead with the long established idea of valuing men's emotional detachment. In the second interview he speaks, as he says, as "a bloke", who experiences pride in himself for not, in fact, crying at the birth of his first child, who was able to contain his feelings in public, and of preferring a baby boy which he puts down to being a 'male thing'. He

presents as both an emotionally functional 'motherly' father who is at the same time the in control, rational male.

Here we would argue that constraints from the social conditions of Malcolm's life, especially working away from home and being absent for long periods of time, add to the psychosocial context in which his (re)alignments and imaginary identifications with motherly fatherhood shift and waver. Discourses of masculinity are, also, reinstating ideas of traditional fatherhood, bolstering normative ideas of parenting, and pointing to the limits of new fatherhood. Altogether the social constraints and discourses seem to constitute further grounds for Malcolm's subject formation, pointing to the complexity of his paternal subjectivity that involves various alignments being created, abandoned, and settled on. We can see how Malcolm's relationship with his father is connected up with ideas of fathering and with wider social conditions within multiple, energised pathways that make up the psychosocial movements, transmissions and flows that define and redefine him as a subject.

Malcolm on the moment of the birth of his daughter & after : biographical temporality & lived emotions

In the interviews there are times when Malcolm makes other momentary realignments with his vision of, and aspiration for, motherly fathering, that are part of the energised flows and transformations and sets of relations working to produce him as a masculine and paternal subject. He speaks of his experiences at the moment of the birth of his daughter as opening up "another and better kind of love", love that is 'softening' him, putting him at ease & bringing him "back into the world of the living". Malcolm's relationship to the world, emotion and himself seem to shift in this moment of fatherhood, suggesting that his sense of lived emotions and biographical experiences are not only inscribed by discourse but are at the same time deeply personal in affective & biographical terms. Accordingly, we can begin to understand a defining moment in Malcolm's experiences of himself as a father, psychosocially, by appreciating how subjectivity is made up of temporal connections, the intertwining of experiences in past and present, and how particular moments within temporal sequences come to define relays of affective flows, together with other discursive and phenomenological relations.

QLL method & psychosocial understanding: Malcolm's connections and disconnections with the ideal family

Malcolm articulates a further aspirational ideal centred not so much on the motherly father but on the ideal family. This seems important for Malcolm, and it allows us to give further consideration of the value of utilising QLL and psychosocial methods.

Int: So what do you think is the ideal way of living in a family for you, if you sort of look ahead to how you would like it to be ideally?

Malcolm.2: I suppose, (1) ideally, right – having been (2) never one to settle *anywhere, I've now found I've got a beautiful home, what I consider a beautiful family, great fun, Kyle, Lynn's a good laugh. (3) I suppose tradition, the father* cutting the lawn, the children playing, mother might be cooking dinner. So, I see that, I see that.

Malcolm.3: ideal is pie in the sky, a bit too painful to talk about really [when senses not being needed as a man in the relationship]

Malcolm..3: ...My dream will be eventually, it will be a farmhouse with a couple of acres around it and then that with panelled borders. Very protective of my *own...And I do actually dream when I am at work. 'Right get home, get the kids, get down to the beach, have a walk on the beach, do this do that'. And sort of just* sort of chilling out with the family thing. Whereas before I would be thinking right, like tonight I will get back tonight shower change get out with the lads so now yes it has changed and I think I prefer what I have got now to what I had before.

The ideal family is one that has fun, lives in a beautiful home, and where the father has traditionally done such things as mow the lawn while the mother cooks dinner. It is a future oriented ideal and one that Malcolm aligns with when first asked in the interview to think ahead. But he then proceeds to disconnect with it as being "pie in the sky" and too difficult to talk about at moments when he senses not being needed in his relationship with Lynne.

By interview 3 (5 months after the first child's birth) the risk of insecurity in his relationship continues. Nonetheless his identification as a non-macho man is settled on as an imaginary positioning that he embellishes as a dream: getting home from work to walk with his kids on the beach; bringing him a sense of comfort in belonging, and what he later on in the interview calls a "cotton wool existence".

By interview 4, the perceived risks of relational insecurity have significantly diminished, and marriage has confirmed his cotton wool existence. However, the ideal family man identity is not unquestioned. This is demonstrated when Malcolm gives his reasons for liking and not liking a large family photograph. He likes it for representing his family as happily playing together, but hesitates over two imperfections – his daughter's unkemptness and his wife's orientation in turning away from him – which he interprets as signalling his non-centrality and her apparent disregard for him.

By analysing the connections Malcolm makes with both the motherly father and ideal family across the three interviews, we can see the possibilities for bringing into view how he makes sense of himself as a man, father and person, and how it entails him arriving at positions over time as part of processes that are relational and temporal, involving energised movements of alignment, non-alignment and realignment in and through time. His vision of being a motherly father for various reasons slides and disappears; likewise its successor – the image of the idealised family – becomes no more real. But out of movements through the dismantlings of his ideals, and despite recognition of resulting precariousness of position, he arrives at a "cotton wool" place that for him is better than he had before.

5.5 Concluding remarks

In this working paper, our aim has been experimental - to investigate how masculine and paternal subjectivities are made, driven and transfigured in relations and through energised personal & social forces. We have seen that possibilities exist for exploring patterns of subject forming, psychosocial relationalities and temporalities in a QLL data set generated to study dynamic continuities and changes through a major time of life transition, and then extended to restudy participants' identities and lives 8 years later. Our theoretically informed analysis has sought to steer a 'middle path' between discursive and psychoanalytically oriented approaches to the relational/psychosocial temporal. We also set out on the endeavour hoping to compare insights with others working on dynamics of motherhood. We are interested, in future, to collaboratively explore energised forces and relays of meaning running through assemblages of maternal and paternal subjectivities. However, given the experimental nature of our own work, we are aware that these may be premature questions.

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