Professional Identity and the Transition from Journalism Practitioner to Journalism Educator

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Abstract

This research explores the journey made by journalists as they leave their former profession to become educators and researchers within Higher Education, with a view to better understanding how this transition affects journalism education and the future of the profession. A high proportion of staff in journalism departments originate from a journalism background, often having worked for several years, and sometimes several decades, in the industry before entering academia, and their shift from one profession to another represents a significant life change for them, both personally and professionally. Known as 'hackademics', their transition is not straightforward, with unfamiliar work practices, a lack of experience in terms of teaching and research requirements, high workloads, and a lack of confidence often characterising their early transitionary phase. These challenges come amidst an on-going disruption within the journalism and Higher Education industries, both of which have experienced structural, financial and technological uncertainties over the last three decades.

The study makes use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis in order to collect and analyse the accounts of a small number of former journalists who have made the transition into academia. What emerges is the depth of the challenges they face, including a lack of support from their institutions, their former industry and their new colleagues; the paucity of a community spirit within their departments and institutions more broadly; their difficulty in shaking off their previous journalism identity; and their inability to regard themselves as true academics, now or in the future. Yet their commitment to their students, to journalism pedagogy and the journalism industry is evident. Such academics play a key role in the past, present and future of journalism and journalism education, and as such, it is argued, should be given greater support and acknowledgement from within and beyond the academy as they make the crossing from one profession to another.

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List of abbreviations

AJE: Association for Journalism Education

BJTC: Broadcast Journalism Training Council

HE: Higher Education

HEA: Higher Education Academy

IPA: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

NCTJ: National Council for the Training of Journalists

OED: Oxford English Dictionary

PTHP: Part-Time Hourly Paid

PPA: Professional Publishers Association

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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Chapter 1: Introduction

When the first newspapers rolled off the press at Rupert Murdoch's new Wapping plant in 1986, it marked the beginning of the end for Fleet Street and its long association with the newsprint industry. Following a protracted and bitter battle with the print unions, Murdoch sacked his workers and moved News International and its titles – among them *The Times* and *The Sun* – lock, stock and barrel to modern, efficient and less expensive premises in the East End. By 1988 most other national news organisations based in Fleet Street had followed, moving to Docklands or elsewhere in London, and by 2003 all were gone – when Reuters news agency sold number 85 that year to relocate to Canary Wharf, it ended 500 years of Fleet Street's press history.

For a while, the UK's national newspapers thrived under this new, cheaper model of production; former Times Editor Simon Jenkins recalled: "While papers were closing across Europe and America, Britain enjoyed a decade of new titles, rising sales, soaring pagination and a boom in journalism." (New Statesman, 2018). It was not to last: just as new technology had enabled Murdoch to transform the newsprint business model, so it revolutionised the entire news production industry and consumption habits. In 1994 *The Telegraph* became the first UK newspaper to launch an online site and other national news organisations soon followed, as did local and regional news providers, leading to a gradual but significant decline in demand for print publications and a corresponding exponential rise in online news consumption. The overall effect was the demise of so-called 'legacy media' and traditional business models built around advertising and newspaper cover prices, and the expansion of new media and online news services offering a much more complex – and often less profitable – advertising template.

It represented a pivotal moment in the history of British print newspapers, which until that moment had experienced fairly consistent circulation figures and revenues during the latter part of the 20th century.

As the newspaper industry was grappling with the onslaught of new technology, another UK institution – Higher Education – was experiencing its own period of change. Until the 1960s, Britain's universities were characterised by their small number and elitism – in 1960 there were just 24 universities across the UK. The Robbins report of 1963 paved the way for their expansion and by the end of the decade the number of universities had grown to almost 50. The late Sixties also saw the creation of polytechnics, mainly established from technical colleges, that were given powers to award Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) degrees for the non-university sector. Both of these developments led to a rise in the number of undergraduate students: in 1967 there were 197,000 full-time students; by 1973 this had grown to 217,000. There was more to come: the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992 gave university status to 35 polytechnics and other institutions such as further education colleges; in 1993 the CNAA was abolished as new universities were given the powers to award their own degrees; and by the year 2000 student numbers had almost quadrupled from the early 1970s to 1.5 million undergraduates across the UK. It was not only the rising numbers of universities and undergraduate students that was changing the face of Higher Education – modifications to the structure of student grants also represented a significant shift in HE funding towards the end of the 20th century. In 1990 the Student Loans Company was set up as maintenance grants were capped, paving the way for the cost of HE to be transferred from the state to the individual. Later in the decade the Dearing Report proposed the introduction of tuition fees and in 1998

the Labour Government set fees at £1,000 a year, rising in 2006 to £3,000 a year and to £9,000 a year in 2012. (Jobbins; 2013).

The success story of growth within the sector was not always smooth running; Cribb and Gewirtz (2013) point to the cuts proposed in 1979 by the then Tory Government to university finances and student numbers, together with the abolition of the overseas student subsidy – an issue that brought together university senior management, lecturing staff and students in opposition. There followed a period of greater Government involvement in HE, the beginnings of the corporatisation of the sector, the introduction of the Research Assessment Exercise, a growing focus on business and industry links, a tranche of 'new professionals' such as business and quality assurance managers, and the advent of widening participation. (Cribb and Gewirtz, 2013). Accompanying this was what the authors describe as "gloss and spin" (2013, p.75), characterised by the relaunch of the Times Higher Education Supplement into Times Higher Education (THE). They note: "The 'glossification' of the paper corresponds, we suggest, to the glossification of the university, which can be seen as both the culmination, and the next phase, of the modernising, marketising and privatising trends…" (2013, p.19). In the 21st century HE has continued to experience more developments such as league tables and Research and Teaching Excellence Frameworks, a growth in non-permanent jobs within the sector, and tensions between academic staff and university management around pensions, pay and working conditions.

The changes within the journalism industry and Higher Education marked a shift in the way in which journalists were trained and entered the profession. The burgeoning of Higher Education institutions in the late 20th century heralded the arrival of undergraduate Journalism degree

courses in the early 1990s; hitherto the profession had been dominated by on-the-job training and apprenticeship schemes accredited by reputable industry bodies such as the National Council for the Training of Journalists. It was deemed a "fit and proper way" for employers to invest in staff development and maintain industry standards (Greenberg; 2007, p.291), but by the 1990s news providers expected such training to be undertaken elsewhere and for their new trainees to arrive "with the rough edges already smoothed by someone else". (2007, p.291). A small number of postgraduate journalism programmes had opened by then, starting in 1970 when Cardiff became the first university to offer a postgraduate diploma course to be followed by City University in 1978, but these were delivered on the conventional wisdom at the time that journalism studies were "suitable only as a postgraduate, practical qualification". (De Burgh; 2003, p.95), with the NCTJ at that point "aggressive in impeding any proposals that departed from the purely vocational". (Delano; 2001, p.101). It was not until the 1990s that the first undergraduate courses emerged. Today, journalism undergraduate and postgraduate programmes are a small but not insignificant subject area within HE – there are now 59 universities offering 242 courses, according to What Uni, representing around 11,500 students (Golding, 2019).

This research was born out of my own move from journalism to Higher Education. After more than three decades in the news industry, starting as a reporter on a local weekly newspaper and finishing as an editor at a national London-based media organisation, I made what was a major employment transition. During the course of my first career, I had witnessed journalism's transformation – its journey had become part of my own journey – and when I left, it was a very different world to the one I had entered. Though I had no hesitation in leaving the profession, shaking off 30 years in journalism, as a journalist, was a difficult task – more difficult

than I had anticipated; settling into the HE environment was far from straightforward and viewing myself as an academic – rather than as a journalist – did not come easily. For a long time, I felt stuck between the two professions – belonging to neither yet supposed to be proficient in both; I was concerned about how my own perception of this transitionary phase would affect the quality of what I was expected to deliver in my new role and whether, ultimately, I would reach the required standard in HE. I also quickly recognised that Higher Education, like journalism, was experiencing its own, at times demanding and challenging, metamorphosis.

It was on this basis that I wanted to explore the lives of other practitioners who, like me, after a successful career in journalism moved into HE; I was curious to establish whether my own experience was mirrored by others'. The journalist turned academic has the benefit of years of accrued knowledge in an industry that is both steeped in tradition yet struggling with rapid modernisation; this experience is a significant asset when it comes to teaching undergraduate students – and future journalists – both the practical skills of the trade and the critical skills related to the history, context, philosophy and ethics of the journalism industry. However, teaching and researching within HE are very different worlds to those inhabited by journalists and the value of the stock journalists bring can diminish rapidly if the new academic does not have sufficient capital within HE. Curiously, little is known or documented about this somewhat perilous crossing from the one profession to the other; there is much discussion in the literature about journalism and the future of the profession, and a large body of work concerning the role of journalism studies within Higher Education and about journalism pedagogy and research. Largely absent from these discussions, however, has been a focus on the journalism academic and, specifically, the journalist turned academic.

The aim of this thesis is to have a greater understanding of the journalist's passage into academia, looking at what has been left behind, how the transition from one profession to another is shaped – and how it shapes the academic and their place within the institution – and what the future holds for those who undertake such a journey. As will be seen, what emerges from this study is a rich picture of the lived experiences of former journalists who all have academia in common; their perspectives are explored through in-depth interviews, using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) in order to shed light on their transition.

In terms of the selected methodology, IPA was first developed in the 1990s as a phenomenological approach to psychology, and its theoretical basis and research applications were articulated in Smith et al's 2009 book *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*. It is, perhaps, an unorthodox qualitative approach in a social sciences study, yet increasingly it has been used for studies that extend beyond the medical or psychological fields. Though rare in journalism studies, IPA has been previously applied to a small number of studies such Tandoc and Takahashi's 2018 research on the lived experiences of local journalists who had covered Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in November 2013 and Bradshaw's 2021 study on the ethical issues facing UK sports journalists. In the case of Gekoski et al's 2012 study, *What Makes a Homicide Newsworthy?*, the first author – who had a professional background in journalism – notes that she had "an 'insider's view' and an understanding of the industry in terms of the day-to-day workings of a newsroom, the structure, culture, language and jargon used", something that she felt allowed her to be "uniquely informed" in relation to the IPA study. (2012, p.1216).

I found myself in a similar situation, having spent over 30 years in the journalism profession, and having also crossed the divide from practitioner to academic, both of which have given me an 'insider view' and in turn allowed me to share, empathise with and visualise the experiences of others who have trodden a similar path. What is more, I felt there was a synergy between IPA's approach and that of the journalist-interviewer; that is, that the first-person accounts so often sought in the professional journalist's working practice were redolent of IPA's mission to find and interpret people's everyday stories. It therefore presented itself as an appropriate means to elicit the experiences of study participants in order to provide answers to the research questions. These are:

1. What are the lived experiences of journalism practitioners as they transition into becoming academics and how do they make sense of this transition?
2. How does their transition from knowledge creator (as a journalist) to knowledge disseminator (as an academic educator) and new knowledge creator (as an academic researcher) impact on their professional identity?
3. How does this process of transition inform and shape the journalist-turned-academic as an educator and support their short and long-term academic practice, including research and pedagogy?

This study offers to explore the gap in the literature around the transition from journalism practice to journalism education and in so doing allows a discussion to emerge that focuses on the personal and professional challenges experienced by former journalists as they move into academia. The participants' experiences detailed below shed new light on this journey, but the ramifications of their accounts spread far beyond the crossing itself; rather, they can, it is argued, help inform how Higher Education can better support journalism professionals as they

enter academia, how the newly transitioned educators can better contribute to passing on their practical skills and knowledge from their previous careers, and how the journalist turned academic can better contribute to academic research and the critical debate around journalism studies. In turn, these aspects have the potential to help shape the curriculum for students studying at HE level and, ultimately, fashion the journalist of tomorrow in what is a complex and fast-moving industry still emerging from its own long-drawn-out period of change and uncertainty. Thus, the study makes an original contribution to knowledge conceptually, with its focus on journalism transition and professional identity; methodologically, with its use of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis; and empirically, with its scrutiny of the one-to-one, in-depth interviews undertaken with former journalists turned academics.

The thesis begins with the literature review, contemplating the different factors that come into play in the journey from journalism to Higher Education – the journalism landscape and journalism as a profession; the Higher Education environment; what it means to be a professional in journalism; and the transition and identity issues that emerge in moving from one profession to another. Firstly, the literature review seeks to understand the shifts and turns that have, over the last four decades, shaped the present journalism landscape – a period of time variously described as "turbulence", "turmoil", "chaos" and "crisis". (Franklin, 2010 and 2014; Pickard, 2017; Wahl-Jorgensen et al, 2016). It explores the new technologies, changes in the delivery and consumption of news and evolving business models that have, it is argued, contributed to the demise of traditional newspapers in the face of the rise of online news content. It considers how local and national news print publications have suffered the consequences with tumbling revenues, widespread closures and significantly reduced staffing levels. The literature review examines how, against this backdrop, there has been heartfelt

debate about what it means to be a journalist in a new age and whether the professionalism which news workers once regarded as fundamental to their job role still holds true in a world where almost anyone can call themselves a journalist. (Deuze, 2005; McNair, 2017).

The literature review moves on to consider Higher Education's period of change and uncertainty over recent decades, seeking to comprehend how developments such as the marketisation of HE, league tables, new financial and funding arrangements, tuition fees and maintenance loans, and Research and Teaching Excellence Frameworks have affected the education climate. It draws attention to the changes that have occurred within the sphere of journalism education, with journalism training now considered to be "fully academised" (Thurman et al, 2016), following the introduction of journalism undergraduate degrees and the attenuation of on-the-job training combined with college qualifications that had previously been the accepted widespread training model. This section also highlights the ongoing debate around the content of the journalism HE degree curriculum and whether there is even a need for formal education, and in particular critical studies, in order for journalists to flourish in what some regard as a practical rather than academic field. There then follows a discussion about what these developments in journalism and Higher Education mean for the journalist turned academic, examining the challenges faced by journalists on entering universities – crossing into a "strange land" (Bissell, 2018), facing unfamiliar traditions and structures, high teaching and research workloads and demands, and often feeling a lack of support from colleagues and the institution. These so-called 'pracademics' or 'dual professionals', the literature review demonstrates, may bring much experience to Higher Education but often feel a lack of belonging and a loss of identity in the early stages of transitioning from one profession to the other. Finally, as the participants in the study are asked to draw extensively on their past

experiences and current academic roles, the literature review discusses the conceptual terms that are later referred to within the dissertation: self, identity, memory and nostalgia.

Turning to the methodology, Chapter 3 explores the selected qualitative methodology for the research – Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). In simple terms, IPA is concerned with the individual's subjective lived experience and how they make sense of that experience. IPA is particularly suited to understanding how people make sense of major life experiences, such as changing jobs (Smith et al; 2009, p.3), and also about everyday experiences that may have a particular significance (2009, p.1), and it is for these reasons that it was deemed suitable for a thesis that aimed to explore the transition from journalist to academic. Six former journalists, who now work as academics at UK universities, were selected through purposive sampling from a number of HE institutions for in-depth, semi-structured, face-to-face interviews; this may be considered a small sample size, but IPA has an idiographic approach "focusing on the particular rather than the universal", according to Eatough and Smith (2017, p.185), with Smith et al proposing that "IPA studies usually benefit from a concentrated focus on a small number of cases" (2009, p.51) due to the complexity of phenomena, and that the sample is representative of "a perspective, rather than a population". (2009, p.49).

In addition to the use of IPA, the study also employs photo elicitation methods as a form of ice-breaker at the start of the interviews, to prompt discussion; participants were asked to bring two photographs or illustrations to the interview – one that they felt represented their former life as a journalist, the other that represented their new life as an academic. 'Photo elicitation' as a term was first coined by John Collier in the 1950s and it has been used in a wide range of IPA studies, with one paper noting that it allowed researchers to "step closer to the experiential

horizon of our participants and facilitate our ability to develop an insider's perspective". (Burton et al, 2017, p.381). As will be seen in the analysis below, photo elicitation brought some valuable additional material to the IPA interviews.

Chapter 4 introduces the six participants who agreed to take part in the study: Geoff, 58; Emily, 38; Rob, 57; Mike 43; Jenny, 39; and Anne, 58. At the time the interviews took place, all were academics at UK universities and had previously worked as print journalists on local and/or national newspapers. In Chapter 5, their lived experiences of transitioning from journalism practitioner to journalism academic are presented and analysed through the lens of four 'super-ordinate' themes, as proposed by the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis methodology; these are: *Tales from the Golden Days; Lost in Transition; Who am I?;* and *Past, Present and Future.* What emerges is a series of individual stories and recollections that come together to produce a rich collective tale of crossing from one profession to another as the participants disclose such aspects as their reason for entering the journalism profession and their decision to later move into HE, their experiences of the transition and their views on professional identity. All show a deep pride in and an affection for their former journalism career, pointing to the camaraderie, the excitement and the richness of their roles. Their reasons for leaving the profession are diverse: chance conversations, life choices and changing life circumstances, and sometimes a disenchantment with journalism and the changes the profession has witnessed. Yet entering HE has been a challenging experience for all participants; they allude to a lack of institutional support, an acute sense of inexperience and being unprepared for what was to come, and a broad sense of struggling to rediscover in their new role the familiarity they experienced with their previous jobs in journalism. The stories display a range of emotions, from nostalgia, sadness, regret, fear and a lack of confidence to determination, pride, a sense

of fulfilment and hope – and their honesty and willingness to share their feelings in relation to their experiences has been a privilege to witness.

Following on from the analysis, Chapter 6 draws together the findings and discusses the implications of the participants' reflections and observations, using the super-ordinate themes as a structure for the debate. The first section explores the participants' professional pride, nostalgia and the level of hindsight involved in their recollections of their working lives as journalists, leading to a discussion about the value of critical thinking skills in the journalism education curriculum. The next section examines the stages of the participants' transition from journalism into academia, evaluating the decisions they made prior to their move away from journalism, the challenges they faced as the entered the academy, and their views on the end point of their transition. The discussion draws on Nicholson's theory of work role transitions (1988) to better understand the implications of the participants' experiences of their transitionary phase. There then follows a discussion about the participants' sense of identity relating to their journalism and Higher Education roles, which observes their struggle to assume the identity of an academic despite often having spent some years in their institution and successfully undertaking teaching and research roles. Finally, the discussion scrutinises the participants' reflections on journalism education, its future and the ramifications for journalism more broadly.

In Chapter 7, I reflect on my own journey into journalism and thereafter from journalism practitioner to journalism academic, picking up on the participants' own accounts and exploring how and why they relate to my transition. As a former journalist turned educator-academic there was a significant risk that my own experiences could present bias when undertaking the

study, in particular around the data collection and analysis steps, and being mindful of this I endeavoured to 'bracket' any preconceptions during these processes. However, having completed the data collection and analysis, it felt apt to revisit my own experiences in light of the participants' accounts and it proved cathartic to reflect at this point. The concluding chapter, Chapter 8, summarises the study and revisits the research questions, reflecting on the the use of IPA as a methodology, highlighting the limitations of the work undertaken, proposing areas for further study and making recommendations on how the journey from journalism practitioner to educator-academic can be improved.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Since the late 20th century journalism has been in a state of transition – many would argue crisis – and there is a great deal of discussion in journalism and journalism education literature about the effects and broader consequences of this ongoing state of flux. There is much debate about 'old' versus 'new' in the context of technology; news content and how it is generated, delivered and consumed; media companies' evolving business models; the Higher Education environment; and, not least, the existential threat to the journalist in the midst of this reconstructed landscape. Yet journalism is not alone in finding itself under assault; over recent decades virtually every profession has experienced some degree of change or restructure whether it be due to such pressures as financial imperatives, the effects of marketisation or, in some cases, at the behest of government. Higher Education, into which a number of journalism practitioners transition, has itself experienced radical transformation that has, it is argued, led to "a sense of crisis and of loss" (Beck and Young; 2005, p.184) – expressions that are mirrored in journalism's own metamorphosis.

This literature review draws together debates around a number of themes relating to the current journalism landscape and how it is shaping the teaching of journalism studies at Higher Education level. It explores (1) studies on the 'crisis' in journalism and the future outlook; (2) the professionalism and identity of journalists and journalism educators set against the shifting values of each profession; (3) the evolution of journalism education in the context of an unsettled Higher Education landscape and a journalism profession that has experienced considerable change in recent decades; (4) professional identities in transition from practitioner to academic; and (5) the conceptual terms self, identity, memory and nostalgia by

reason of the fact that the participants in this study – journalists turned academics – inevitably reflect on their identity and sense of the self, recall moments from the past and may recollect past experiences through the lens of nostalgia.

Pivotal to these debates is the journalist turned educator-academic who may have learned, lived and practised as a journalist through recent decades of rapid change and embarks on a new career trajectory in an equally uncertain terrain: both witness to, and participant in, emerging new worlds in journalism and Higher Education. There can be little doubt that the crisis in the journalism profession has profound implications for the journalism curriculum, journalism pedagogy and, ultimately, the student experience and employment opportunities for those who undertake journalism study at Higher Education level and, as outlined above, it can be argued that the journalism practitioner who enters the HE environment steps from one profession in flux to another; the purpose of this study is to explore the transitionary phase between these two professions in order to better understand the challenges faced by the emerging educator-academic and to evaluate the implications of their experiences in the shift to their new role.

2.1 The journalism landscape

There can be no disputing the fact that journalism has experienced a period of rapid change since the latter part of the 20th century. Terms such as 'turbulence', 'turmoil', 'transformation', 'chaos' and 'crisis' are common terminology in an industry that has seen itself challenged by a raft of new technologies, changing business practices, transformed models of news generation and consumption, fragmented audiences and fundamental questions about the very meaning of being a professional journalist in a free-for-all digital publishing world. (Franklin, 2010 and

2014; Pickard, 2017; Van der Haak et al, 2012; Wahl-Jorgensen et al, 2016). Franklin (2014) notes: "…this is undoubtedly a significant time in the history of journalism when almost every aspect of the production, reporting and reception of news is changing" (2014, p.481), while Wahl-Jorgensen alludes to a "postmodern turn" in journalism following the "catastrophic collapse" in the business model of journalism. (2017, p. 96). Scholars have attributed the crisis to a range of mainly structural issues – technological, economic and social – distinct yet interrelated factors that have combined to form a perfect storm to rain down on journalism, foregrounding fundamental debates about the principles of what journalism is and should be. (Jukes, 2013; McChesney and Pickard, 2011; Siles and Boczkowsi, 2012; Blumler, 2010). It is, perhaps, the decline of the newspaper market and its associated business model that have been cited as most symptomatic of the crisis in journalism, not only in the UK but also in other western democracies. (Blumler, 2010; Downie and Schudson, 2009; Deuze, 2008; Pickard, 2017; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2017).

To better understand this disruption in newspapers, it is useful to explore the late 20th century UK newspaper landscape in order to provide context to the changes and contractions subsequently experienced. In the latter part of the 20th century national newspapers were characterised by their small number of corporate operations – largely Beaverbrook, Associated, Reed International, News International and Thomson – and their often flamboyant and ruthless owners, among them Robert Maxwell, Rupert Murdoch and Conrad Black. Murdoch's battle with the unions in the mid-1980s was to revolutionise the national newspaper industry landscape for good, as he moved production from Fleet Street to Wapping and set in motion a domino effect that eventually saw all national titles depart from what had been their long-time and traditional home. This weakening of the trades unions, says Conboy, "saw a corresponding

increase in the power of a new generation of aggressively entrepreneurial editors who were acting out the editorial identities of their proprietors." (2011, p.66). Circulation figures – and advertising revenues – at the time reflected the significant popularity and penetration newspapers had across the country; in 1987, for example, the Sun averaged 4m copies a day; the Daily Mirror just over 3m; the Daily Mail, 1.7m; and the Daily Telegraph 1.1m; with others such as the Times and the Guardian selling around half a million copies each a day. (Wikipedia, n.d.). Meanwhile, local newspapers – once regarded as the "lifeblood" of local community and local democracy (Freedman et al, 2017) – were similarly typified by their ownership groups, among them Trinity, Northcliffe and Newsquest, as well as by their high circulations, plentiful staff numbers and comprehensive journalism training programmes, with sales peaking during the 1980s across the country's major towns and cities; the Manchester Evening News, for example, had an average daily circulation of 330,000; the Glasgow Evening Times, more than 210,000; and the Liverpool Echo, more than 235,000.

While this picture may suggest a golden age for journalism and newspapers, the industry was not without its problems at this time, with low pay, long working hours and fraught industrial relations commonplace. Nonetheless, the period represents what has to be regarded as a success story for newspaper proprietors, and since the late 1980s there has been a steady decline in their fortunes. National titles in the UK saw a decrease in overall daily circulation from almost 10.3 million in 2010 to 4.9 million in 2019, according to Ofcom (2020). UK local newspaper titles declined from around 1,700 to little over a thousand in the space of four decades (Ramsay and Moore; 2016, p.26); while Tobitt reports that between 2005 and 2020 at least 265 local titles closed down, with figures showing that the majority of the UK (57.9%) is no longer served by a local daily newspaper. (2020). An accompanying fall in circulation and

advertising, together with the loss of at least half of the 13,000 UK regional journalism jobs since 2006 (Ponsford, 2016), have caused many to question the survival of the newspaper and journalism itself. (McChesney and Pickard, 2011; Deuze, 2008; Freedman, 2010; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2017). This loss of local publications has consequences for democracy; one of the fundamental issues at stake is that of scrutiny and the "growing inability of local newspapers to properly scrutinise decisions being made by councils", according to Cox (2018, para. 5). This, he argues, has implications for accountability and raises the spectre of stories about local government simply not surfacing because of either a low level of staff at local publications or, indeed, no local newspaper at all. (2018, para. 9).

A similar picture emerges in the realm of court reporting: an audit of local reporters' attendance at magistrates' courts concluded that the majority of cases went unreported and a potential 15,000 stories were being missed each week across courts in England and Wales. (Bagshaw, 2019). Retired journalist Paul Cheston said that with fewer staff, lower pagination and reduced costs widespread in local newspapers, "court and local council reporting is deemed not time efficient". (Bagshaw, 2019). The threat surrounding "public-interest news", particularly at local level, came under scrutiny in the Cairncross Review (2019; p.6) on the future of journalism. It made a number of recommendations, including setting up a dedicated body to ensure the sustainability of a public-interest news; this, however, was rejected by the Government in its response to the review. Other proposals gained traction, such as the development of a media literacy strategy, eventually published in July 2021, aimed at educating and empowering internet users to manage their online safety. A £2m pilot 'Future News Fund' was also launched by the innovation foundation Nesta in response to the recommendation for a new, publicly-funded and independently-run scheme to improve the supply of public-interest news. Its end

of programme report urged the Government to provide additional funding but none so far has been forthcoming. Other organisations have attempted to address the demise of local news reporting, including the training body The National Council for the Training of Journalists who linked with Facebook in 2018 to work with regional news publishers to train around 80 'community journalists' with an aim to "increase the creation, consumption and distribution of reliable and relevant community news". (nctj.com 2018, para. 3). The BBC launched its own local news partnership scheme in 2017, recruiting 150 reporters across the country in order to cover more local stories and scrutinise local government. Four years on, an additional 15 journalists were recruited and for the first time every local authority in the UK was covered by the scheme. (medium.com, 2021).

While the struggle faced by local newspapers is a significant factor in the changing journalism landscape, it is a symptom rather than a cause and one of the many issues facing all newsprint publications is the shifting demographics of their readers. (Wadbring and Bergström, 2015). While the older generation is more likely to continue to read local and national print newspapers, in addition to online consumption, the younger generation has turned towards social media for their news consumption. Tobitt reported in the Press Gazette in 2020 that half of news subscribers to print and online products were aged over 55, with just 12% under the age of 25, leading Nielsen to conclude: "I expect global news industry revenues to continue to decline for at least another decade as profitable print products die out with their readers". (2020, para. 5). Since 2020 there has been a further decline in relation to the combined use of print and online newspapers among adults: according to Ofcom (2022) it currently stands at 38%. Conversely, social media is the main source of news for teenagers, according to Ofcom's report: for the first time Instagram has become the most popular news source and is used by

almost three in 10 (29%) of youngsters, with Tik Tok and YouTube just behind at 28%. (2022). According to Yih-Choung Teh, Ofcom's group director for strategy and research: "Teenagers today are increasingly unlikely to pick up a newspaper or tune into TV News… And while youngsters find news on social media to be less reliable, they rate these services more highly for serving up a range of opinions on the day's topical stories." (Ofcom, 2022).

There is wide agreement that technological developments broadly have contributed to the demise of the print press: the rise of the internet offering (largely) free to view content via news sites and apps accessed through a variety of computers and mobile devices; news on the move / on demand; the advent of data journalism and audience metrics; and the exponential growth of social media. (McNair, 2009; O'Sullivan and Heinonen, 2008; Franklin, 2014; Nielsen and Schrøder, 2014; Tandoc, 2014; Lee and Tandoc, 2017). Combined, these have been a principal cause not only of the decline in circulations, revenues and jobs, but also in the disruption of traditional newsroom practices and access to and consumption of news. (Conboy and Eldridge, 2014; Downie and Schudson, 2009; Compton and Benedetti, 2010). Add to this the proliferation of citizen journalists, issues of trust and controversies around fake news, together with concerns about how emerging journalism risks undermining the democratic process, and it paints a complex and for some, worrying, picture of journalism's tricky negotiations with its publics in the age of digital media. (Wahl-Jorgensen et al, 2016; Downie and Schudson, 2009; Blumler, 2010; Curran, 2010). Such shifts and concerns come amid growing disenchantment with institutions broadly, including the media. According to the 2022 Edelman UK Trust Barometer, which annually explores trust in the four institutions of government, media, business and NGOs, trust in the media fell to 22% in February, from 31% the previous year; while trust in Government fell to 29% from 42% the previous year with one out of two

respondents viewing the Government and the media as divisive forces in society. (2022). The causes of this growing distrust are many, says Davies, including an antipathy towards elites, a perception that public life "has become fraudulent" (2018, para.17) and that those in power use their authority for personal gain. He goes on to say: "A crucial reason liberalism is in danger right now is that the basic honesty of mainstream politicians, journalists and senior officials is no longer taken for granted." (2018, para.13). Such a scenario prompted then Prime Minister Theresa May to comment in 2018: "When trusted and credible news sources decline, we can become vulnerable to news which is untrustworthy." (cited by Cox; 2018, para 1).

Some remark on the rise of 'individualism' as a way of explaining antipathy to traditional institutions and the media. Using de Tocqueville's early 19th century interpretation of individualism as "an emerging sense of social isolation" (2009, p.34) Elliott and Lemert assert that individualism continues in the 21st century, "albeit as an individualism suitably modified and adjusted to fit the technological innovations and multinational financial transactions spawned by globalization". (2009, p.4). Turkle points to the isolation that new technology and user-oriented consumption can bring when she talks of communal places as a "social collection", where "people come together but do not speak to each other. Each is tethered to a mobile device and to the people and places to which that device serves as a portal". (2011, p.155). In relation to news consumption, say Beckett and Deuze (2016), "Our physical relationship to news is changing because of mobile technology: Rodin's Thinker has become Steve Jobs' Swiper." (2016, p.1). Our mobile devices are always with us and have the capability of personalising content to align with our preferences (2016, p.1) and news content on social media and the ability to share and create content allows the mobile device to be both "personal and social". (2016, p.2). With mobile phone ownership standing at 6.64 billion in 2022,

according to bankmycell.com, and ownership being inherently an individual and personal pursuit, there is an implication in relation to trust in and consumption of the media – research by Fletcher and Park (2017) indicated that people who had low trust in the news were more likely to follow social media, online blogs or online news outlets that did not have a traditional print or broadcast version. (2017, p.1294). Further, they found a correlation between people who had low trust in news media and their preference for non-mainstream news sources and engagement in online news participation. (2017, p.1294). Fowler-Watt and Jukes (2020) identify five key challenges facing journalism, including understanding audiences and analytics, connecting with communities and "listening with empathy" (2020, p.26), developing diversity in the workplace, addressing the power and influence of social media platforms, and seeking novel pedagogies that "foster innovation and critical thinking to focus on civic engagement". (2020, p. 26). They propose a "reimagining" of journalism (2020, p.1) to address these new challenges, practice and pedagogy, arguing that such a reimagining is vital because a "hollowed-out journalism detached from publics and local voices reduces community engagement with local democracy, undermines journalism's ability to hold power to account, and leads to a debasement of public discourse." (2020, p.26).

Despite what appears to be a gloomy picture around the current and future landscape in journalism, many strike a more optimistic note about the future of the profession. Waterford (2000) argues that there has never been a better age for journalists, who now have greater skills and more expertise than before, a much wider range of stories to write about and greater freedom to cover a broader variety of subjects, much improved tools of the trade that allow considerably more freedom of movement in relation to work location and ease of access to contacts and audiences, and many more professional opportunities opening up thanks to

convergence. He says: “I think that there are still challenges of finding hungry journalists, and, particularly ones of keeping them interested. But for those who are looking for meat, I suggest, there have never been so many wild animals out there.” (2000, p.14). Some scholars allude to opportunities for new forms of journalism presented by online platforms, novel business models and funding sources, the growth of hyperlocal news sites, and fresh and diverse audiences with evolving consumption patterns, all of which may counter the decline of newspapers. (Neveu, 2014; Picard, 2014; Conboy and Eldridge, 2014; Nielsen and Schroder, 2014; Zelizer, 2015). Indeed, figures show publishers are beginning to make inroads into paid-for subscription models with the Financial Times and the Guardian in the UK both reaching the one million digital subscriber mark by 2022 (Turvill, 2022), and digital revenues from Financial Times equal to all its other revenue streams combined – though it continues to make a profit from its print version. Zelizer questions the usefulness of the word “crisis” as a lexical choice to describe journalism’s current situation because it creates problems “that obscure our understanding of the circumstances it seeks to describe” (2015, p.904), while Conboy and Eldridge propose a “reconsideration” (2014, p.569) of journalism’s potential, adding: “Despite the appearance of rupture, journalism is in an era of good fortune.” (2014, p. 567).

Yet journalists argue among themselves as to whether there is a crisis in journalism: a public exchange of words between journalist-academic Brian Cathcart and Dominic Ponsford, editor of *Press Gazette,* saw the pair locking horns over Cathcart’s *Byline Times* article (‘The Cairncross Review and the Crisis in Journalism’; January 2019), with Ponsford disputing the notion that the journalism industry was experiencing a crisis. (‘Breaking Fleet Street’s ‘code of omerta’ to discuss the so-called crisis in journalism’; November 2019). In truth, argue Peters and Broesma,

scholars are still "grappling" with what is changing in journalism and whether it implies updating previous concepts – or introducing completely new approaches to journalism. (2017, p.4).

There is also a body of thought that proposes it is inaccurate to associate the crisis in newspapers with a demise of journalism (Picard, 2014; McNair, 2009; Van der Haak et al 2012); rather, it is argued, print is simply a means of delivering journalistic content at a particular stage of technology and at a particular time in history, and journalism, while doubtless bound up with newspapers – at least for the time being – is nevertheless independent from them. (Picard, 2014). Newspapers are being replaced by digital means that will allow journalism to "adapt and evolve" (McNair, 2009: p.134) and journalism is "in a *transition* not a demise" contends Picard. (2014, p.507; italics in original). In fact, the greater challenge to journalism comes from the shift in the production of news and in its consumption, it is argued. (Deuze, 2005; Picard, 2014; Mancini, 2013; Fenton, 2010).

Yet given the rapid decline of traditional journalism print outlets, there is strong evidence to support the view that the industry has been enveloped by crisis for some decades due to a variety of distinct yet related factors, as discussed above. It is this crisis that sets off an unavoidable ripple effect in other, associated fields of the profession – for those who work in the industry; for those who teach; and for those who aspire to become journalists. For if there is crisis at the heart of the sector, then inevitably there must be broader consequences. This literature review now turns to what the crisis in journalism means for the profession itself.

2.2 Professionalism and identity in journalism

There has long been a debate around whether journalism can be regarded as a profession or, rather, should be perceived as a craft or trade. The broadly accepted criteria of the term 'profession' is based on, among other aspects, occupations associated with high status and high income, such as law and medicine, where specialist training, skills and practice, a body of theoretical knowledge, a high level of autonomy, an obligation to serve a societal need, and a strong work ideology linked with a professional body that oversees professional standards and imposes codes of practice. (Crook, 2008; Meyers, 2010; Schudson and Anderson, 2009; Freidson, 2001). It has commonly been argued that journalism can be regarded as only partly fulfilling such criteria. (Aldridge and Evetts, 2003; Tumber and Prentoulis, 2005; Witschge and Nygren, 2009). On the one hand, like other professions, journalists can claim autonomy in their day to day work, a strong occupational ideology, together with the fulfilment of a societal need in terms of their perceived democratic role, and various codes of practice (such as those of the Independent Press Standards Organisation and the National Union of Journalists); on the other, there is not a requirement for the high level skills and training that engender an exclusive professional position: anyone can call themself a journalist and journalists cannot exclude non-journalists from their line of work. (Deuze, 2005; Hartley, 2000; Davis, 2012; Pihl-Thingvad, 2015). Autonomy too can be called into question if there are commercial imperatives that may supersede the journalist's self-determination (Skovsgaard, 2013; McManus, 2009), further evidence to support the case for journalism as a "semi-profession". (Tunstall, 1971; Witschge and Nygren, 2009). Yet most journalists feel professional, believe that journalism is a profession and endeavour to maintain professional standards in their work and outlook. (Aldridge and Evetts, 2003; Davis, 2012). Referring to the 'trait' model of defining professions, Hanitzsch and Ornebring point out it is no surprise that journalism does not meet all of the criteria of being a

profession, but argue: "As it turns out, it is entirely possible to act as a *professional* without unequivocally being a member of a *profession".* (2019, p. 105; italics in original). Furthermore, they propose, what distinguishes journalists from others is that "they are able to perform their work tasks in a *professional* manner". (2019, p.106).

An exploration of what journalism is and its perceived role sheds further light on this notion of professionalism. While a universal theory for journalism proves slippery, due to cultural distinctions between countries (Hanitzsch, 2007; Weaver and Wilhoit, 1991), studies show that the fundamental tenets of a journalist's professional identity are defined by role perceptions and associated professional ideals – and that these perceptions and ideals are widely shared across borders, albeit interpreted differently. (Deuze, 2005; Hanitzsch, 2007; Phil-Thingvad, 2015). Deuze describes this as "a shared occupational ideology among newsworkers which functions to self-legitimize their position in society" (2005, p.446), labelling it as "the social cement" that binds journalists together as a profession. (2005, p.455). Weaver and Wilhoit's 1991 study of American journalists laid the foundations for what is now broadly understood to be the perceived roles of news journalists: the disseminator role (facts); the interpretive role (explanation and analysis); and the adversarial (scepticism towards individuals, organisations and governments). (1991, p.259). From these roles emanate professional ideals – or values – such as impartiality and objectivity, a sense of speed and accuracy, challenging knowledge and policies, and being critical of those in power (Couldry, 2017; Deuze, 2005; Hanitzsch, 2007). Truth, objectivity and accuracy remain the cornerstone of journalistic practice (Thurman et al, 2016) and the journalist's role as the watchdog of democracy, with its implied allegiance to the public interest, provides journalists with their legitimacy, argues Skovsgaard (2013, p.344), allowing the public to make informed political decisions. (Hanitzsch, 2011; Weaver, 2005;

Witschge and Nygren, 2009; Zelizer, 2012). Hanitzsch and Vos propose that these journalistic roles can be mapped across domains that are fundamental to people's lives: "*political life"* and *"everyday life".* (2018, p.146). The former refers to journalists affording their audiences the material to enable them to get involved in political life; the latter refers to journalists offering "advice, guidance and information about management of self and everyday life through consumer news and 'news-you-can-use content'". (Hanitzsch and Ornebring; 2019, p.116).

The American Press Institute highlights Kovach and Rosenstiel's 10 principles deemed essential to the good practice of professional journalism, among them truth, verification, public interest, independence, an ethical approach and holding power to account. But Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) also talk about "journalism with a purpose" – keeping stories relevant and interesting – and keeping news "comprehensive and proportional" through being inclusive and avoiding sensationalism. (n.d., para. 33). The gatekeeping role of the journalist features in discussions about professional values (Janowitz, 1975; O'Neill and Harcup, 2009; Shoemaker and Vos, 2009), particularly in relation to "the search for objectivity and the sharp separation of reporting fact from disseminating opinion". (Janowitz; 1975, p.618). The gatekeeping role, prevalent in legacy news organisations, centres on the notion that journalists select the information they regard as most important when constructing or disseminating news stories, thus functioning as a conduit or funnel between the news event and the audience. (1975, p.618). Gatekeeping, says Vos, is when journalists "selectively gather, sort, write, edit, position, schedule, repeat, and otherwise massage information to become news". (2019, p.90).

Manning White's early study (1950) focused on scrutinising a news editor's decision-making process in filtering many potential news stories for publication to fill what was very limited newspaper space – choosing a tenth of the total volume. Manning White noted "how highly

subjective, how reliant upon value judgments based on the 'gatekeeper's' own set of experiences, attitudes and expectations the communication of 'news' really is". (1950, p.386). The difficulty with this, argue Shoemaker and Vos, is that it can raise accusations of bias, given the subjectivity of choice. (2009, p.97). But Vos proposes that the gatekeeper role in journalism refers to a "normative role" in which "certain actors in the information environment see it as their duty or responsibility to pass along some information and not other kinds of information". (2019, p.93). And in any case, gatekeeping is not the sole responsibility of the individual journalist, but rather a process in which publishers, news organisations and even audiences are party to. (2019, p.93). Others suggest that the role of the journalist as gatekeeper has changed with the rise of online news and social media. These days it is the individual who curates what they read and determines how they access it; journalists now have to fact check news and information that is already in public circulation (but not emanating from the newsroom) as well as fact checking their own work before publication, with algorithms in news content marginalising the journalist as gatekeeper. (Ferreira, 2018; Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2007; Rusdi, 2019; Vos, 2019)

While there is broad agreement on the principles underpinning journalism as a profession, or quasi-profession, there are questions about whether such ideals are realistic in the daily working practices of journalists in the digital era – an area that is explored further in this study, in the analysis chapter below. (Deuze, 2005; McNair, 2017; Skovsgaard, 2013; Witschge and Nygren, 2009; Witschge, 2012). Pihl-Thingvad's empirical study (2015), for example, found strong evidence pointing to discrepancies between journalism's professional ideals relating to societal obligations, such as reliability, objectivity, high quality and autonomy, and the reality and demands of journalists' daily practice. (2015, p.404). Tuchman (1972) describes objectivity

– a key tenet of professional journalism – as a "strategic ritual" that protects journalists from the risks associated with their profession. Others ponder whether such ideals are outdated in an era when views and opinions from the public can and are made freely available via the internet, with a transparency from the authors that is not mirrored in professional journalism. (McNair, 2017; Phillips, 2011; Tandoc and Thomas, 2017; Van der Haak et al, 2012; Zelizer, 2015). Deuze (2019) asserts that the changing landscape of the profession leads him to conclude that journalism as an ideology is no longer reliant on the traditional news industry for survival. Looking back to his own earlier study (2005) he reveals a change of mind, arguing that "…the operational coupling I originally made between the values, ideals, and cultures of journalism with the structure of the news as an industry and the arrangement of news as work simply does not hold". (2019, p.2). Transformed working practices, job losses, freelance and short-term contracts and precarious employment conditions, together with technological advances and the rise of social media, mean that journalists today have to "…commodify every aspect of their professional identities", says Deuze. (2019, p.2). He is heartened by his observation that despite this, most news workers "love journalism, seeing it as the noblest of media professions, going well beyond the call of duty to make it work as a journalist". (2019, p.2). It is not the industry that defines journalism, says Deuze, it is "the idea(l)s, debates, and practices of journalists inhabiting these institutions that do". (2019, p.3).

Some academic studies espouse the view that journalism is experiencing a period of "de-professionalisation" in as much as technological, economic and social developments no longer allow for an unvarying, coherent occupation, particularly in the face of citizen journalism which lacks the boundaries set by the profession itself. (Ornebring, 2009; Wilk, 2009; Witschge and Nygren, 2009;). Singer (2003) argues that professionalism in journalism needs to be reassessed

in light of the industry's move online as many of the tenets are undermined by the commercial imperatives of online content, which news organisations have struggled to profit from. Sponsorship deals and linking journalism content with marketing and advertising functions threaten the key tenets of professionalism such as objectivity and independence (2003, p.163), while in the age of citizen journalism anyone can pull together and publish information online and personalisation of news gives power to the news consumer rather than the journalist. (2003, p.151). The rise of blogs, says Singer, "further blurs any real or imagined line between the professional and the non-professional". (2003, p.151). In a similar vein, Erzan-Essien posits that one of the primary distinctions between online and legacy news is in "perceived standards of ethical behaviour" (2019, p.711), arguing for the introduction of guidelines that are customised to online rather than traditional content. (2019, p.68).

The issue of fake news and its threat to journalism's watchdog role as the fourth estate – and as a consequence, democratic culture – is widely explored, often in the context of major events such as the US Presidential Election and the UK's Brexit referendum of 2016. (Albright, 2017; Beckett, 2017; Boczkowski, 2015; Corner, 2017; Lilleker, 2017; Richardson, 2017). While digital networks and social media have provided the technological means by which fake news has proliferated, its rise is the symptom of a much broader public unease about the credibility of information, argues Beckett (2017), and of an audience "losing faith in what journalism does". (Richardson, 2017). Defined as "false information that mimics news media" by Van der Linden et al (2020, p.461), fake news has taken on new meanings, often aimed at the mainstream press and spread via the internet and social media – most notably gaining traction during the US presidential elections of 2016 when Donald Trump tweeted about "the FAKE NEWS media" (2020, p.461). The problem, says Gelfert, is that this threatens the "credibility of established

news sources" (2018, p.101). However, with threats come opportunities – scholars point to the growth of fact checking business models, calls for improved media literacy in education, core journalistic values that will reinvigorate the profession and counter false and misleading stories. (Beckett, 2017; Lilleker, 2017; Richardson, 2017). Beckett goes so far as to say that "fake news is the best thing that has happened for decades" (2017) because it has allowed professional journalism to reinforce its values to its audiences, and engendered both debate and action, with fact-checking tools and policies flourishing and journalism "generally getting its act together as a better alternative to fakery". (2017).

Like the journalism landscape more broadly, the concept of journalism as a profession and professionalism within journalism is both complex and emerging in the context of new media. While traditional notions of professional ideology may still to an extent underpin the practice of journalism, the changing landscape in journalism as an ideology and as an industry raises questions around what this means for professional identity and the core values of the profession. This in turn has ramifications for journalism education, for if both the landscape and the profession are in a state of transition, then education – on which this paper now focuses – must take stock and give consideration to its role in producing journalists of the future.

2.3 Higher Education

The journalism practitioner turned educator transitions into what may seem like a bewildering Higher Education environment that itself has encountered a tranche of changes and new structures over recent decades, such as the marketisation of HE, league tables, new financial and funding arrangements, and the introduction of teaching and research frameworks. The marketisation of HE institutions – the student as 'consumer', the introduction of competition,

reduction in costs, the commodification of HE, all of which typify capitalist economic principles (Molesworth et al, 2009) – has long been debated and many ponder whether this has resulted in a focus on what comes beyond university, that is, a well-paid job, rather than on the transformative potential of a university education. (Ek et al 2013; Molesworth et al, 2009; McGettigan, 2013). Marketisation has been accompanied by the introduction of the Research Excellence Framework, first undertaken in 2014 and then in 2021, which aims to "secure the continuation of a world-class, dynamic and responsive research base across the full academic spectrum within UK higher education**".** (REF, 2021). Murphy and Sage (2014) attribute the introduction of the REF to a greater emphasis on the measurement and evaluation of university research by government in the last 20 years (2014, p.604) which in turn has its foundations in concerns about public expenditure in relation to research funding and the fact that "politicians now demand that research must show itself to have demonstrable public and policy benefits". (2014, p.604). They point to "adverse outcomes" of the REF in such areas as staff morale, working practices and for "the very development of knowledge itself" (2014, p.603). The Teaching Excellence Framework, introduced in 2017, has responded to concerns over whether students are getting value for money from their university experience. (Neary, 2016). It assesses the quality of undergraduate teaching at HE institutions on metrics of graduate employment, student retention and student satisfaction with the aim of giving students a better-informed choice of where to study.

Like the Research Excellence Framework, there is disquiet about the additional pressure this puts onto educators – Perkins raises concerns about TEF filtering "into performance management and appraisal procedures" while nevertheless pointing to the positive aspects of the framework for excellent educators. (2018, p.314). All of these developments in HE are set

against an increasingly precarious jobs market in which many staff at UK universities are on insecure, non-permanent contracts, with a third of all academics on fixed term contracts and 42% of teaching-only staff on hourly paid contracts. (University and College Union, n.d.) The threat of job cuts is ever-present, with universities culling staff in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and closing programmes in the arts, humanities and social sciences fields, as enrolment numbers have fallen – all of which comes amid controversial cuts to Government funding for the arts and creative courses in favour of Stem subjects. (The Guardian, 2021). It is thus a daunting profession to be entering, especially for those who have already experienced turbulence within the journalism industry. Yet HE offers a tempting route beyond journalism for practitioners – the growth of university courses in the UK providing journalism at degree level has been considerable over the past 20 years and has given rise to a large number of journalists leaving the industry for Higher Education. (Greenberg, 2007; Harcup, 2011a).

Such professionals entering academia – known as 'pracademics' – bring much to the academy, particularly in terms of blending practice and theory. (Panda, 2014; Posner, 2009). Posner points to the "many bridging roles" they can perform (2009, p.17): as "network breakers", to improve collaboration and conversations between academic and practitioner communities; as teachers, researchers and practitioners who are "ideally positioned to make singular contributions to both enterprises"; and as educators who can draw on their practical experience in order to underpin theory. (2009, p.17). "Their research can be informed by fresh insights from exposure to dilemmas and challenges facing practitioners. Their experience serving different communities with disparate values and languages potentially improves their prospects for reaching students with different backgrounds," says Posner. (2009, p.17).

Walker argues that the function of a pracademic "is to actively question practice". (2010, p.2). Pracademics' industry experience gives them the ability to "appreciate nuances and subtle signals" of their previous work environment, and this – combined with their research activities – "allows them to probe deeply into causal issues and to understand implications for practice". (2010, p.2). Dickinson et al point to the ability of pracademics to promote "strong professional values, alongside practical and problem-based learning" as well as offering real life accounts of theoretical scenarios in order to encourage students to develop a more informed perspective about their future careers. One participant in their 2020 study spoke of "the power of stories" – even if they felt other career academic colleagues might disapprove of this approach. Mabry et al agree that practitioners who transition into Higher Education have much to bring to academia with their recent connections with industry, both in terms of their field of work and contacts within industry – and that "students learn a lot from someone who has 'been out there'". (2007, p.401).

Journalism education itself has seen a dramatic shift in the UK and globally over the last 40 years. In the UK, direct entry into news publications and learning on the job, together with college-based qualifications overseen by industry bodies, began to decline as a training model in the late Seventies and early Eighties, moving towards a Higher Education landscape offering a wide range of university undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in journalism. (Frost, 2017; Hanna and Sanders, 2007; Thurman et al, 2016). Research by Thurman et al (2016) shows that almost all (98%) of those journalists who began their careers in the UK between 2013 and 2015 had obtained an undergraduate Bachelor's degree, though not necessarily in the subject of journalism, and over a third (36%) held a Master's degree – leading the authors to conclude that journalism training had become "fully academised". (2016, p.7). Globally, figures show that

almost two-thirds of journalists between the ages of 24 and 40 have a degree in journalism or communication studies (Worlds of Journalism Study, 2017). Yet initially in the UK, the industry training body, the National Council for the Training of Journalists, was opposed to tertiary journalism education, believing that the existing further education training "ensured that a better quality of recruits emerged", according to Hanna and Sanders (2007, p.406). The NCTJ also feared that opening up journalism as a Higher Education subject could lead to "an over-supply" of journalism trainees. (2007, p.406). Other countries have developed different models – "journalism education is strongly shaped within national boundaries", says Josephi, and "deeply bound to national media and their working traditions". (2019, p.57).

There is much debate about what should be taught to journalism students, how it should be taught, and how Higher Education should respond to the crisis in the broader journalism industry. (Bloom and Davenport, 2012; Deuze, 2006; Evans, 2014; Frith and Meech, 2007; Gillmor, 2016; Stephens, 2006; Wall, 2015). Today's undergraduate and postgraduate university courses in the UK offer a combination of vocational skills and theoretical modules, together with – very often – an additional industry body qualification such as those accredited by the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ), the Broadcast Journalism Training Council (BJTC) and the Professional Publishers Association (PPA). (Josephi, 2019; Terzis, 2009; Willnat et al, 2013). Greenberg alludes to the fact that news providers now expect new entrants to arrive with some level of practical experience and that, conversely, undergraduate students "tend to look for a vocational element in a higher education degree, to make it 'pay'". (2007, p.291).

Despite the NCTJ's earlier reticence about degree level journalism courses, today it has become a leading player within many journalism programmes at universities across the UK. The organisation works with employers and education providers to offer "a world-class education and training system that develops current and future journalists from all walks of life for the demands of a fast-changing media industry" (NCTJ, n.d). It is the news industry's awarding organisation, offering industry standard qualifications such as the Certificate in Foundation Journalism, which provides an introduction to the profession, and the Diploma in Journalism available via accredited courses such as those at HE institutions or through distance learning and apprenticeships. Its National Qualification in Journalism is the route to becoming a senior journalist, requiring completion of the diploma to gold standard and 18 months' experience of working within the media industry. The organisation has seen significant changes since its inception in 1951 when it was set up to deliver the newspaper industry's training scheme, with indentured trainees getting day or block release at Further Education colleges. By the late 1980s and early 1990s some news organisations had started their own training schemes, withdrawing from the NCTJ, at the same time as HE undergraduate courses were beginning to emerge. Today, many – but not all – university journalism courses in the UK are accredited and embed NCTJ qualifications into the curriculum. However, some argue that such institutions are simply trying to "stand out in a crowded 'market'" and that accreditation bodies "continue to dictate and, at times, disparage what universities teach and research, with the emphasis falling inevitably on practical skills' development rather than on critical and analytical thinking". (Hughes & O'Neill; 2019, p.84). Steel concurs that accreditation can be seen as a marketing tool, and that universities may use it as "markers of prestige" (2018, p.509), raising concerns over the power that accreditation bodies can have over curriculum content and placing "undue pressures on the traditional values of scholarship". (2018, p.515).

While the NCTJ has, arguably, flourished thanks to university accreditation, the proliferation of HE courses has not always been welcomed by those in the profession, many of whom argue that academia does not sufficiently prepare students for the "realities" of the profession (Frith and Meech, 2007), and that in any case, journalists do not need any formal education in order to succeed. (Glasser, 2006). Oxford-educated journalist Andrew Marr once argued that his degree contributed nothing to his journalistic career (cited in Phillips, 2005), while then Sun Editor Kelvin Mackenzie said in 2011 that all journalism courses should be closed down, describing journalism as a "knack". (Mackenzie, 2011). Similarly, in 2009 the then deputy editor of the Eastern Daily Press, Paul Durrant, said:

> "I'm not bothered about a degree; I'm bothered about NCTJ qualifications. I'm bothered about vocational training … in terms of currency in the industry I need to know someone's got 100 wpm shorthand, that they know what a section 39 is." (Cited in Baines and Kennedy, 2010).

It is a short-sighted approach, argues Frost (2018), because students who are equipped with critical, analytical and tactical skills can help futureproof news organisations against changes that will inevitably come and "ensure that they and their employer … not only keep up with change but can also predict it and make sure they are in the vanguard". (2018, p.155). One of the problems, says Frost, is that employers are interested in graduates who can easily and inexpensively slot into the newsroom while accreditation bodies insist on courses including a high level of practical content, "often squeezing out or at least limiting more traditional university requirements of analysis, criticism, philosophy, reading and researching". (2018, p.155). Some warn against universities acquiescing to employers when it comes to the curriculum: Baines and Kennedy suggest that while it is reasonable for employers to make a

contribution, “journalism educators should be cautious about acceding uncritically to their demands regarding programme design, and beware of taking their views on curriculum content at face value”. (2010, p.98).

Journalism at Higher Education level has also come under scrutiny, as part of the broader field of media studies, from politicians over the last three decades – variously accused of being trivial and a weaker subject for academic study, of offering limited opportunities beyond university, and included among the so-called ‘Mickey Mouse’ degrees, a phrase first coined by the then Minister of State for Universities Margaret Hodge in the 1990s. (Golding, 2019). Such courses account for a small fraction of the overall university student population – just over 2% – says Golding, but this has not prevented “long-standing political attacks on media studies, amplified by popular media commentary, that dismiss media studies as an area that has no legitimate place in a university”. (2019, p.510).

Higher Education is, of course, much more than simply offering practical training skills: what sets university study apart from the former vocational training is its inclusion of theoretical scholarship, which is to be desired if we are to produce professional and ethical journalists who understand their public service role as defenders of the democratic process. (Deuze, 2006; Evans, 2014; Witschge and Nygren, 2009). Yet this is the principal cause of tension between industry and academy; Josephi talks of the “doubts” about journalism as an academic discipline and the “uneasy spot between practical and academic studies” that it has occupied since the inception of college and university courses. (2019, p.56). Early pioneers, he points out, “were mainly interested in *journalism,* not *journalists”* (italics in original) and this debate over journalism professionalism and the curriculum persists today. (2019, p.56).

Deuze alludes to the "perceived dichotomy between theory and practice" and posits that journalism educators and scholars have to defend themselves against the notion that "journalism is not the place to thoroughly reflect on the roles and functions of news media in society". (2006, p.22). Within the field of journalism studies there is broad agreement that it is the responsibility of Higher Education to engender a strong professional identity in journalism students in order to reinforce a free press and democracy in the face of commercial imperatives, as well as emphasising journalism's epistemological role in meaning-making in society. This can only be achieved through providing a more rounded curriculum that introduces historical, cultural and political context to the study of journalism as well as nurturing critical and vocational skills. (Macdonald, 2006; Schofield Clark, 2013; Shapiro, 2015; Skinner et al, 2001).

The journalism academic faces a delicate balancing act in relation to teaching students aspiring to enter a profession that, it is argued, is in crisis; moreover, students are entering a Higher Education environment which has itself been through a period of significant change, as previously discussed. While it is rare for journalists to critique their own industry (Hughes & O'Neill; 2019, p.87), ex-journalists who enter the academy are more likely to reflect on their former practice, and view it in a less favourable light, yet paradoxically their role is to encourage and empower students desiring to enter the profession in the future. There are clearly tensions between the practical and the theoretical components of the journalism curriculum and for journalism academics to simply toe the industry line of equipping students with practical skills without critiquing the industry would be to perpetuate an existing educational and training model – "vocational degrees" – that has to a large extent been shaped by media companies and training bodies. (Hughes & O'Neill; 2019, p.84).

Majin (2023) argues that the journalism ideology of the last three decades is fracturing, resulting in "fragments of competing ideologies" (2023, p.55), leading to a landscape of "rudderless journalisms tossed by the storm, trying to anchor themselves to passing pieces of ideological wreckage". (2023, p.56). For journalism educators this means understanding where the profession stands at present and where it is going in future – and whether it is a place they want journalism to go. (2023, p.56). It raises a number of questions, he argues – around the sort of education journalism schools want to provide to students and the type of journalism needed to confront the future profession. The choice, he posits, is between "Official Journalists" who "understand their ethical-political responsibilities", who do not challenge prevailing consensus and have acquired self-censorship, or "curious, impartial journalists" who have gained critical thinking skills and have the fortitude to confront preponderating doctrine. (2023, p.56).

MacDonald (2006) believes that current journalism education is at risk of encouraging students to "think idealistically" about the profession (2006, p.746), and that efforts within the academy to focus solely on the public service role of journalism – in response to concerns that the media puts profits above public service – may be worthy but nevertheless raise problems; such efforts, she posits, place an onus on educators and students to find a solution to the structural and economic crisis within journalism, and much more critique is required within the academy of such aspects as the power of the media industries and journalists' working conditions, arguing that a teaching model based on the public service role "harks back to traditional journalistic ideals and notions of objectivity that some critics argue contribute to public apathy and damage prospects for participatory democracy". (2006, p.746). Conventional journalism programmes often encourage students "to refrain from critically analysing the media industries" (2006,

p.745), says Macdonald, and a solution, she suggests, might be "reforms that would encourage journalistic praxis informed by the critical literature about commercial journalism practices" (2006, p.746), with a focus on alternative media within the curriculum rather than on the mainstream profit-based media. (2006, p.746). However, she recognises the challenges of this approach, both in terms of time constraints and the "competing demands of skills training requirements" at HE level (2006, p.759), as well as the impact it might have in relation to journalism schools' association with news organisations. (2006, p.759). She proposes that students would be better equipped to serve the public if they have been able to explore the limitations of commercial media and different journalistic practices. (2006, p.758).

For Hughes & O'Neill, today's journalism is used to circulate "ideology, propaganda, distortions, disinformation and outright lies" (2019, p.83) and those who are involved in journalism and journalism education must continue to debate what journalism is for. More than this, they argue, "those delivering journalism education within higher education must further ask 'what needs to be included in the journalism curriculum?' and 'what is journalism education at university level for?'" (2019, p.84). Journalism education may not be able to respond to all of the profession's ills, but it still has an important part to play, say the authors, and through education students should be encouraged to consider societal issues and ways of "resetting" journalism. (2019, p.83). Drawing on UNESCO's view that recognises journalism education as an intellectual and academic pursuit within Higher Education, the authors posit that journalism programmes should draw in experts from "across the breadth of the university" (2019, p.86) to allow students to have a greater grasp of societal issues – which in turn will produce critical thinkers equipped with analytical skills and an ability to understand the world alongside practical skills. (2019, p.89). In this way, the journalism educator becomes a "critical friend",

say the authors and helps re-model journalism, contributing towards the development of novel practices for journalists. (2019, p. 89). The authors contend that academics should seek to promote the civic and social responsibilities of journalism within the curriculum, "which gives agency to many within society to challenge prevailing cultures that would seek to define our role in it as solely a commercial one". (2019, p.89).

For their part, industry practitioners, in addition to questioning whether journalism should be a subject for academic study, appear to be frustrated that – in their view – universities have lost the focus on traditional journalism skills and instead are introducing a wide range of technical, multimedia skills to the curriculum. (Ferruci; 2018, p.145). Ferruci's study showed that the vast majority of experienced journalists felt that graduates did not have sufficient training in traditional skills and that universities should be incorporating "the essence of technology" more than technology itself into the curriculum (2018, p.415), because technologies are ever-changing whereas the fundamental skills remain the same. (2018, p.415). "We've lost the basics," according to one participant in the study. (2018, p.146). They also attacked the lack of critical thinking skills evident in newly graduated journalists, in relation to understanding the context of news and addressing complex stories. "They don't seem to understand why something is important," said a participant. (2018, p.416), while another commented: "These newbies don't get context, not just what context is, but why it's important." (2018, p.146). There is some truth in this, according to Deuze, who argues that the problem at Higher Education level is that students are taught the practical skills needed in the media workplace rather than "different approaches to knowledge" (2006, p.21) which in turn gives rise to "media workers who understand *how* but not *why".* (2006, p.21; italics in original). This, according to Hunter and Nel, comes down to "*training* versus *learning,* and the question

of which approach is best suited to preparing and equipping the journalists of the future". (2011, p.13; italics in original).

Against this complex HE backdrop, support for the newly transitioning academic comes from both within the academy and beyond. Many, but not all, UK universities are members of Advance HE, formerly the Higher Education Academy (HEA), which aims to "help higher education be the best it can be" (Advance HE, n.d.). Advance HE's fellowship programme, to which many institutions subscribe either directly or through their own accredited schemes, offers four categories representing different stages of an academic career; the Associate Fellow and Fellow categories provide early career academics the opportunity for professional recognition, with a scheme that is based around the UK Professional Standards Framework – a set of standards and guidelines for academics who have a role in teaching and supporting learning in Higher Education. Advance HE points to personal and professional development, evidence of a commitment to teaching, learning and the student experience, improved career prospects and being entitled to use post-nominal letters as the benefits of completing a Fellowship, (Advance HE, n.d.) and worldwide there were almost 170,000 fellows as of April 2023. The breadth of Advance HE's programme content and the fact that there is a very clear structure related to academic and leadership career progression make it a valuable scheme for new academics and many institutions make it a condition of probationary employment that staff should complete the fellowship. But some question its impact on the quality of teaching – van der Sluis (2023) found that although the percentage of academic staff with a fellowship in the UK grew from a fifth to half between 2011 and 2018, there was "no significant positive or negative association… between the growing number of HEA Fellowships and the NSS scores indicating teaching quality over the same period" and participants in their study "made little

reference to developing or advancing their skills, competencies or theoretical knowledge". (2023, p.426). Others allude to the complexities of the fellowship programme, of the bureaucracy and of "a set of forms to be completed in the right way, rather than as a genuine opportunity for reflection" (Times Higher Education, 2023, para.18) and of its "largely strategic" value in terms of career progression and job security, rather than as a vehicle for improving learning and teaching skills. Nevertheless, the Fellowship scheme continues to grow, according to Advance HE, with direct applications numbers achieving a new high in 2021 and fellowships "continuing to have a positive impact at an institutional level". (Advance HE; 2022).

Elsewhere, the Association for Journalism Education (AJE) represents HE Journalism educators, with a mission of "Promoting excellence in education, teaching and research". (AJE, n.d.) Its principal aims are to "uphold the highest standards in journalism education" and "to provide a common voice for those involved in it". (AJE, n.d). Its endeavour "to support and promote research into journalism education and journalism" is of particular relevance and use for new journalism academics, with regular conferences, extensive online information and the publication of its journal, *Journalism Education,* providing wide-ranging resources, collaborative and networking opportunities, and a sense of academic community for the newcomer to journalism in Higher Education. However, it must be noted that not all institutions with journalism departments are members of the Association for Journalism Education, meaning that some new academics could miss out on these opportunities, unless joining as an individual member. Other academic journals have also emerged, such as *Journalism, Journalism Studies* and *Digital Journalism* – an indication of the rise of journalism as an academic subject as well as of a growing interest in and appetite for journalism research, debates and innovations among scholars.

The subject of the future direction of journalism education is varied and contested, but there is consensus that its evolution must continue against the backdrop of an ever-changing journalism landscape in which new technologies, new audiences and new business models prevail. (Deuze, 2004; Frost, 2017; Macdonald, 2006; Mensing, 2010). Josephi posits: "The deep uncertainty about the media's future, and how the needs of the industry are changing, has … become a primary concern for journalism teachers". (2019, p.59). Propositions for education's future orientation include a greater focus on critical theory, civic and media literacy and the introduction of global current affairs into the curriculum, grounded in a historical and geographical context (Donsbach, 2010; Gerodimos, 2012; Gillmor, 2016; Picard, 2014; Servaes, 2009; Skinner et al, 2001; Stephens, 2006); improved technological and digital skills (Du and Thornburg, 2011; Gillmor, 2016; Huang et al, 2006; Pierce and Miller, 2007; Richardson, 2017); and a community and audience centred – or networked journalism – approach (Mensing, 2011; Robinson, 2013; Wall, 2015). In a world which is always online, and in which journalists are able to connect with other professionals and the public across the globe, networked journalism is "not a threat to the independence and quality of professional journalism, but a liberation from strict corporate control", according to Van Der Haak et al. (2012, p.2935).

Other proposals include more substantial reflective insight that will engender professional identity (Deuze, 2005; Fowler-Watt, 2014), while Shapiro argues for a fundamental paradigm shift in journalism education towards journalism as "an approach to knowledge, not just a job", contending that learning outcomes rather than career paths would be a more appropriate benchmark for success in journalism education. (2015, p.23). There have been growing calls for "entrepreneurial journalism" in the curriculum (Baines and Kennedy, 2010; Deuze and Witschge, 2017; Hunter and Nel, 2011) as a means of empowering newly qualified journalists

to develop their own ideas for start-ups and enterprises, such as hyperlocal sites, that "rival rather than serve the needs of media organisations". (Baines and Kennedy; 2010, p.98). The prospects of university graduates finding a job in journalism are "dire", say Hunter and Nel (2011, p.10) as newspapers have closed down and news organisations have cut staff. Journalism education has "reached a crossroads" (2011, p.10), they argue, and the curriculum is in need of reform, but the problem facing academics is "how to equip journalism graduates for a career in an industry that is itself undergoing seismic shifts in terms of technology, finance, globalization, and demand?" (2011, p.12). One solution, they believe, is entrepreneurial journalism and a curriculum that has "greater awareness of business imperatives". (2011, p.22).

For some scholars, moves to coerce education to respond to difficulties faced by the journalism industry put an onus to resolve or arbitrate the perceived crisis on the profession, educators and even students rather than on news organisations themselves – even though the primary causes of news outlets' demise are known to be structural, economic and technological. (Creech and Mendelson, 2015; Macdonald, 2006; Mensing, 2010). Educators too come under scrutiny, finding themselves variously seen as out of touch with the real world of journalism; hostile to the needs of the industry; too keen to place theory above practical skills on the curriculum; lacking in updated practical knowledge and techniques; and often derided for being long in the tooth ex-hacks. (Deuze, 2006; Dickson and Brandon, 2000; Greenberg, 2007; Picard, 2014; Wake and Farrer, 2016). Courses tend to be taught by former practitioners who may have spent many years in the industry, adhere to standard textbooks that have changed little, and work experience or internships are encouraged in order to reinforce and preserve this quintessential vision of what a journalist should be. (Bloom and Davenport, 2012; Evans, 2014; Macdonald, 2006; Mensing, 2010). As Picard contends: "Why would anyone think that hiring

someone from a decaying news organization, steeped in old ways of doing things, is an effective way to create the journalists and news organizations for the future?" (2014, p.8). Rather, he posits, it would be much better to hire "digital entrepreneurs in their late twenties who never completed college and think about information provision in completely different ways". (2014, p.8).

For former journalists entering Higher Education, the many debates that rage around journalism education may offer a perplexing, bewildering and disconcerting landscape as they shift between professions. Indeed, the participants' accounts below give clues as to how opprobrium to journalism education plays out in the real world. Yet it is not until former journalists are experiencing the transition into their new job roles in Higher Education that they are likely to feel the full force of the diverse perspectives outlined above, from what they may perceive as coming from unexpected quarters. Given the fact that former journalists are arriving in HE from an industry experiencing disruption and entering an environment that is itself experiencing turbulence, it is not unreasonable to argue that transition and assuming a new professional identity – to which this literature review now turns – could be far from smooth.

2.4 Transition and identity

The concept of work role transitions is described variously as "any change in employment status and any major change in job content" (Nicholson, 1984; p.173) and "a discontinuity in a person's life space" (Hopson, 1981; p.225), while Ibarra uses the alternative term "career change" when referring to a change in employer and work role, "and a subjective sense of moving into a new and different line of work". (2005, p.5). Nicholson's theory of work role

transitions draws together the individual, the role and the organisation when exploring the outcomes of such transitions (1984, p.172). Nicholson regards responses to work role transitions as a form of both personal development, in which "change is absorbed through the person altering his or her frame of reference, values, or other identity-related attributes" (1984, p.175), and role development, when "the person tries to change role requirements so that they better match his or her needs, abilities, and identity". (1984, p.175). His theory, he argues, "shows how transitions, according to their characteristics, can sustain continuity or engender evolutionary change in personal and social systems". (1984, p. 188). Brown et al concur that adjusting to career change "is mediated by personality factors and socio-psychological processes" (2012, p.754) and add the action of learning to the equation, in that a good predictor of an individual's ability to successfully transition into a new role is their ability to learn and develop their capacity to perform new job responsibilities. (2012, p.756). Updating skills, expanding a knowledge base, being prepared to take on challenging work and self-reflection will all contribute towards a smoother transition, say the authors; what is more, "interactions at work" are a key activity – "rich interactions do provide opportunities for substantive development". (2012, p.758).

Career transition is not a recent phenomenon, nor is it peculiar to journalists, yet now more than ever workers are leaving job roles to seek a different trajectory. Since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and widespread global lockdowns, people have been leaving their jobs "in droves" – and in historic numbers – in what has been dubbed "the Great Resignation". (Morgan; BBC, 2021). According to Parker and Horowitz (2022) reasons cited for quitting a job role range from low pay, little opportunity for career advancement and childcare issues to feeling disrespected at work, having insufficient flexibility in relation to work hours and working too

many hours. A BBC study adds a further reason: “For some workers, the pandemic precipitated a shift in priorities, encouraging them to pursue a ‘dream job’, or transition to being a stay-at-home parent. But for many, many others, the decision to leave came as a result of the way their employer treated them during the pandemic.” (Morgan; BBC, 2021). Some argue that the Great Resignation did not start with the pandemic, but rather that there has been a steady increase in the numbers of people quitting their jobs voluntarily for many years; according to the Harvard Business Review, from 2009 to 2019 the average monthly rate for people leaving their jobs voluntarily rose by 0.10 percentage points per year. (Fuller and Kerr; Harvard Business Review, 2022). They cite the ‘Five Rs’ as the driving factors in persuading people to leave their jobs: retirement, relocation, reconsideration, reshuffling and reluctance, where ‘reconsideration’ relates to workers reconsidering their work position, often due to burnout; ‘reshuffling’ implies leaving due to lower wages and returning to a higher paid role; and ‘reluctance’ refers to those who fear contracting Covid in the workplace and are reluctant to return to the office. (Fuller and Kerr; 2022).

Some of these factors would certainly appear relevant in the case of journalists who leave the profession, with many citing burnout as a rationale and others indicating that low pay and job satisfaction are key issues. (Reinardy; 2009, p.135). As far back as 1988, journalists were labelling the profession as “frustrating” and one that was “characterized by low pay, poor management and bad hours” (Fedler et al; 1988, p.15) – and admitted finding “more freedom, better working conditions and real job security” and often a rise in salary when they left the profession. (Fedler et al; 1988, p.15). While alternative career choices for former journalists are varied, with public relations being a favoured route, moving towards a job role such as within HE both opens up new and challenging opportunities and allows a connection with the past to

remain. This is particularly relevant in view of the fact that HE has for many years been seeking people with industry experience as a means to introduce employability and entrepreneurial skills into the classroom, as well as to "provide insights into the tensions between industry and the institution". (Myers, 2017). The so-called 'pracademic', who "works at the interface of practice and academia" (Hollweck et al; 2021, p.7), is widely recruited across many disciplines within HE; indeed, journalists have their own specific phrase in this regard – the 'hackademic'. According to Harcup "much of the journalism teaching within university journalism departments is undertaken by journalists who have switched to academia, usually in mid-career" (2011a, p.35) yet studies around this tend to focus on the tensions that have emerged between the teaching of practical skills and hackademics' apparent reluctance to undertaken scholarly activity (2011a, p.35) rather than on career change itself.

It is against this theoretical backdrop on the meaning of work transition that many former journalists enter academia, and it is widely observed that such new entrants into the field of journalism studies for the most part tend to be drawn from the profession; furthermore, they are likely to enter academia relatively late in their careers. In this respect journalists are not alone in making such a transition. From accountancy and law to nursing, engineering and dentistry, pracademics are sought-after at Higher Education level, because – as Panda notes – they "help bridge the gaps between the worlds of theory and practice as they embody the merged role, carved out of two independent and differentiated roles of an academic scholar and a practitioner". (2014, p.140).

Literature on mid-life career change points to altruism, a desire to give something back to society, and a yearning to mentor young people who are at the start of their careers. (Lachman, 2004; Williams, 2013). Other motivations include a desire to gain a postgraduate qualification

such as a PhD, limited career prospects in a current post, a desire for an improved work/life balance and the perception that academia is a high-status profession. (McCall et al, 2021; Mouratidou 2020; Wilson et al, 2014). Yet the transition into Higher Education is far from smooth with new academics often experiencing confusion, isolation, stress, poor induction processes, a culture shock, and a lack of both institutional support and effective mentoring during their early days in academia. (Dickinson et al, 2020; Fitzmaurice, 2013; Levy et al, 2018; McCall et al, 2021; Smith, 2010; Trowler and Knight, 2000; Van Lankveld et al, 2017; Wilson et al, 2014;). "For many industry professionals seeking a career change, their experiences of transition from industry to academia are far from smooth or unproblematic," note Wilson et al. (2014, p.4). They describe the first six months to a year as the most difficult time for newly appointed academics (2014, p.12) and refer to a "sink-or-swim attitude built into the academy, combined with a lack of adequate teaching preparation" (2014, p.6) as being commonplace across Higher Education institutions.

In the classroom, many new staff feel they are "thrown in at the deep end" (Wilson et al; 2014) and liken the transition to "falling off a cliff" (Dickinson et al, 2020) when it comes to teaching, with a lack of time to prepare for lectures and little training given, and staff often feeling they lack the required teaching competences, at least initially. (Bandow et al, 2007; Bruns and Larocco, 2006; McCall et al, 2021; Wilson et al, 2014). As McCall et al point out: "Teaching requires more proficiencies than being able to lecture about specific topics. Instructors must understand how to employ different pedagogical styles." (2021, p.545). Some observe overconfidence on the part of new pracademics – that because they have been in industry for often many years they "must know all about it" (Mouratidou, 2020) – and that former practitioners may discover their industry skills are in fact not "considered useful" (Wilson et al;

2014, p.15), leading to a feeling of being undervalued by more established colleagues. (2014, p.15). Indeed, new staff may be viewed with "some suspicion or indifference from incumbent staff", say the authors (2014, p.15) and newcomers may be surprised at the level of competitiveness they experience as they transition into Higher Education, with little evidence of the collegiate environment they might have anticipated. (Trowler and Knight, 2000; Wilson et al, 2014). In other areas, new academics can struggle to grasp the culture of Higher Education and have difficulty in understanding "the discourses and practices of the teams and departments" they are joining. (Trowler and Knight; 2000, p.28). Timetables, handbooks, forms and even conversations can prove baffling to new staff, with one describing acquiring information about university culture and processes "by osmosis". (2000, p.32).

These challenges are similarly reflected when it comes to the research component of a new academic's post. There is an assumption on the part of the institution that academics will undertake research and publishing on appointment, yet they are ill-prepared for this and lack the necessary experience, say McCall et al (2021). There is often a perceived lack of research engagement by transitioning journalism educators among established colleagues and it is noted that journalism pracademics may be met with hostility on all sides – both within the journalism industry and Higher Education, from media organisations, fellow journalists and fellow academics. (Bromley, 2014; Deuze, 2006; Dickson and Brandon, 2000; Greenberg, 2007; Mensing, 2011; Picard, 2014; Wake and Farrer, 2016). Within Higher Education, ex-journalists are regarded as lacking academic ambition and unwilling to undertake research activity, with journalism often viewed as a nebulous subject for academic study (Greenberg, 2007; Harcup, 2011a).

The point that research and publishing are crucial both for career progression and for the development of a balanced and wide-ranging curriculum that includes theory and practice is strongly represented (Bromley, 2014; Errigo and Franklin, 2004; Macdonald, 2006; Wake, 2015), with Wake asserting that journalists turned academics must "prioritise learning the scholarship of the academy" and should understand how to "problematise" their work in order to seek solutions to the difficulties faced by modern journalism. (2015, p.59). Harcup's study (2011b), explores the transitional stage from practice to HE in relation to research activity, seeking to understand why only a minority of journalism practitioners turned educators choose to undertake research and how they may be better supported in this area. He alludes to the conflict between the vocational journalism teaching and the theoretical content of the curriculum, timetable constraints, a lack of research skills and limited desire to undertake research on the part of the journalism academic, as well as a sense of unease felt by those "at the intersection of journalism, journalism education and journalism scholarship". (2011b, p.168).

He posits that because many journalists move into Higher Education relatively later than other colleagues, from an industry that appears to lack enthusiasm for scholarship (2011b, p.172), this might simply serve to "reinforce the anti-intellectualism found in some parts of the journalism industry". (2011b, p.173). Harcup proposes that one solution might be to "wait for the current generation of hackademics to die off" (2011b, p.173) which would allow for a new breed of university-educated journalists to replace them. However, the success of the next generation of academics in terms of research inevitably hangs on their own experiences of reflection and critical enquiry at HE level – taught by the very people whose commitment to research is in question. (2011b, p.173).

Part of the problem, suggests Duffy (2015), is around the differences between journalism and academic writing, an issue that breeds distrust between what he describes as academic "lifers" (2015, p.10) and those moving into HE from journalism practice. Yet there are clear similarities in terms of the accessibility of the two types of writing to audiences and the fact that they share a need to present simple interpretations of complicated issues to their readers. (2015, p.6). Both academic writing and journalism writing, he says, are focused on investigation and understanding the world (2015, p.11) and indeed, academic writing can be "viewed as an advanced form of journalism: the methods are more rigorous, the sample sizes more representative, the editing process tougher and done by subject experts rather than expert editors". (2015, p.9-10). It is the lack of transparency and reflection that engenders hostility from academics towards journalism, says Duffy, with little "soul-searching" among news practitioners; in fact, he says, the subject of news comes under more scrutiny from academics than it does from news publications themselves. (2015, p.7).

An answer, Duffy argues, is to encourage academics to practice journalism (2011, p.6) and to allow former journalists to continue with their journalism writing alongside academic papers, because it will earn them the respect of students and allow them to maintain an on-going connection with the news industry. (2015, p.10). Duffy notes: "For journalists to give up their craft and pursue academic journals single-mindedly would be to abandon what made them valuable in the first place." (2015, p.10). Remler et al concur that there are similarities between the two styles of writing but point to journalism's oversimplification and academia's "obscurantism" (2014, p.361) as flaws that apply to both sides. Journalism relies on immediacy and topicality while academic writing "aims to make new discoveries about data of any age, old or new". (2014, p.361). Issues around methodological rigour, how to evaluate the quality of

work and ethical considerations may differentiate academic and journalism writing, but both professions “share core values, including open-mindedness and fairness” (2014, p.264) and as such it is possible to find a middle way for the two styles to complement each other. (2014, p.364).

Professional identity and personal identity are scrutinised by scholars in their exploration of career change. (Beijaard et al, 2004; Meijers, 1998; Teixeira and Gomes, 2000; Williams, 2013). The process of professional change and its repercussions on the individual is examined by Teixeira and Gomes (2000) who assert that professional and personal identity are both apposite when considering career change as they “attempt to translate a personal concept into occupational terms”. (2000, p.80). Meijers (1998) expresses the view that people acquire a career identity in which they link their own “motivation, interests and competencies with acceptable career roles” (1998, p191) while Dickinson et al propose that: “Professional identities constantly shift and adapt through processes of continued reflexivity; being created and refined through action.” (2020, p.4). Teacher identity, it is argued, is an ongoing and dynamic process (Van Lankveld et al, 2016; Beijaard et al, 2004; Williams, 2013); in other words, it is not only about identity at a particular moment in time but also about where one’s identity will be in the future. For Williams (2013), a career change into teaching is “essentially about the construction of a new professional identity”. (2013, p.25). She argues that there is no such thing as one identity; rather, people have and develop multiple identities that are “influenced by a wide range of individual, social and cultural factors, past and present, and by imaginings of the future”. (2013, p26).

Van Lanveld et al identify five psychological senses associated with the development of teacher identity – feeling appreciated, having a connection with colleagues, having confidence in one's ability, feeling committed to one's role and having a career trajectory (2016, p.332), with "strengthening or constraining factors" such as their work environment, the broader Higher Education milieu, contact with students and staff professional development having a positive or negative effect on these psychological senses. (2016, p.332). Their study found that those joining academia from any professional practice continued to identify with their former role for some time and, while they felt that their professional experience was valuable for their academic integrity, the early period was plagued with self-doubt as they realised "their professional expertise was not sufficient for their new role". (2016, p.329).

Dickinson et al also allude to this sense of insecurity among pracademics, often manifesting itself as 'imposter syndrome', with practitioners disclosing that they feel "less like academics than 'lecturers' or 'teachers'". (2020, p.3). This insecurity has been labelled by Knights and Clarke as "fragile academic selves" (2014, p.335) with the authors identifying three forms – "imposters, aspirants and those preoccupied with existential concerns". (2014, p.335). Academics who suffer from imposter syndrome lack self-belief and fear others will discover their "incompetence" (2014, p.341), while aspirants strive for an idealised "superior future more pleasurable than the present" (2014, p.343), and existentialists may struggle to find meaning in their academic work. (2014, p.345). Being an academic can "leave individuals feeling anxious and insecure about their failure to meet the multiplicity of demands", Knights and Clarke assert, (2014, p.341), arguing that insecurity and identity are bound together since identity "is always precarious and uncertain because it is dependent on others' judgements,

evaluations and validations of the self and these can never be fully anticipated, let alone controlled". (2014, p.336).

2.5 Self, identity, memory and nostalgia

This section of the literature review explores conceptual terms that come to the fore in the analysis and discussion chapters below – self, identity, memory and nostalgia. The aim of this thesis is to develop a greater understanding of the lived experiences of journalists as they transition from one profession to another, and questions relating to the self, identity, memory and nostalgia are inevitably raised during interviews with the study's participants. The process of former journalists' reflecting on their journeys into academia and making sense of it – as implied in the first research question – suggests that the participants will recall what has happened in the past through drawing on memories of their previous profession, reflecting on their decision to leave it and on how that decision was shaped; what is more, it is feasible that nostalgia for their past profession is evoked through such recollections. Identity is scrutinised in relation to the second research question, exploring the participants' transition from journalist to academic, as they are prompted during interviews to reflect on their sense of the self and their sense of identity to determine how this change of direction has had an impact on their professional and personal identities and, ultimately, how the process of transition informs their academic practice, as alluded to in research question three.

The Self

The terms 'self' and 'identity' are often used interchangeably, yet scholars argue that there is a difference between the two. Whalley Hammell explains that, "'identity' is used to refer to one's social 'face' – how one perceives how one is perceived by others. 'Self' is generally used to refer

to one's sense of 'who I am and what I am'." (2006, p.185). The self implies "reflexive capacity", say Oyserman et al: "Reflecting on oneself is both a common activity and a mental feat. It requires that there is an 'I' that can consider an object that is 'me.' The term *self* includes both the actor who thinks ('I am thinking') and the object of thinking ('about me')." (2013, p.71). In fact, though the two terms do not have the same meaning, self and identity are "nested elements", say the authors. (2013, p.71). Ganesan points to three "domains" of the self - "the actual self, the ideal self and the ought self". (2020, p.2127), where the ideal self is built around an individual's "hopes, wishes and goals" and the ought relates to a person's "duties, obligations and responsibilities". (2020, p.2127). Indeed, the author asserts: "When a person's ideal self is congruent with their actual self (self-attributes a person believes he/she actually possess), self- actualization occurs and the person is progressing toward becoming a fully functioning person." (2000, p.2127). It is the sense-making embedded in the concept of self that is important, say Oyserman et al, describing it as a "core self-project": "Making sense of oneself—who one is, was, and may become, and therefore the path one should take in the world—is a core self-project." (2013, p.70). Though separate concepts, the self is constituted by identities, say Oyserman et al, alluding to the self as a "stable anchor" and identities as "dynamically constructed". (2013, p.70). Thus, both self and identity work to motivate people, to make sense of themselves and others, to influence actions, feelings and self-control. (2013, p.70). The ability to make sense of oneself and others, implicit in the concept of the self, is particularly apposite to this study, which seeks to shed light on how former journalists make sense of their transition into academia.

Identity

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) identity can mean, among many things, "The quality or condition of being the same in substance, composition, nature, properties, or in particular qualities under consideration; absolute or essential sameness; oneness". (OED, n.d.).

And

"The sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances; the condition of being a single individual; the fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else; individuality, personality." (OED, n.d.).

Hekman points to the two opposites implied in these definitions – "sameness and difference". She argues that having a particular identity infers that it is both identical to others who also share that identity and at the same time that "it possesses unique qualities, that is, an identity". (1999, p.5). She asserts: "To have an identity, that is, to be unique, is to be the same in two senses: to be identical to others in your class and to be identical to yourself over time. The paradox at the root of identity is that sameness creates individuality and personality: being the same makes you different." (1999, p.5). Tatum posits that identity is "shaped by such aspects as individual characteristics, family dynamics, historical factors, and social and political contexts" (2000, p.9): "Who am I? The answer depends in large part on who the world around me says I am… other people are the mirror in which we see ourselves". (2000, p.9). Gender, race, class religion, ability status, nation of origin or citizenship status, age and sexual orientation are often referred to as the 'Big 8' when it comes to identity and scholars point to the complexities surrounding the concept of identity. For Guenther et al identity is multi-faceted and is rooted in "an individual's organized constellation of traits; attitudes; self-knowledge; cognitive structures; past, present, and future self-representations; social roles;

relationships; and group affiliations." (2020, p.2136). The authors discuss Sedikides et al's distinction between "the individual self, relational self, and collective self elements of identity". (2000, p.2136). The individual self relates to a person's "idiosyncratic dispositions, skills, interests and goals", while the relational self alludes to social relationships and an individual's role and responsibilities, and shared qualities within such relationships. The collective self points to the "valued social group affiliations at the core of one's identity". (2000, p.2136). Erikson (1968) introduced the notion that identity is grounded in a social, cultural and historical context, with both the individual and their communal culture using a process of "simultaneous reflection and observation … by which the individual judges himself in the light of what he perceives to be the way in which others judge him in comparison to themselves and to a typology significant to them". (1968, p.22). It is an aspect picked up by Fearon, who similarly suggests that identity connotes two senses – social and personal. The first category, social, indicates "a set of persons marked by a label and distinguished by rules deciding membership and (alleged) characteristic features or attributes", while the second, personal category, offers "some distinguishing characteristic … that a person takes a special pride in or views as socially inconsequential but more-or-less unchangeable". (1999, p.2). Burke agrees that individuals, their roles and their part in groups provide a set of meanings for them and defines "what it means" to be who they are. (2004, p.5). He labels this an "identity standard", a reference point which allows people to "compare their perceptions of self-relevant meanings in the interactive situation". (2004, p.5).

Professional identity, as discussed in section 2.4 above, is a distinct concept from personal identity, as it "describes how we perceive ourselves within our occupational context and how we communicate this to others". (Neary, 2014). As with personal identity, there is a variety of

academic definitions of professional identity but put simply, says Neary, it "can be established and supported by the infrastructure which contributes to creating a shared sense of commonality amongst practitioners." (2014). Neary argues that professional identity can mean different things to different people, but her research into the professional identity of careers officers highlighted the importance of having a clearly stated and understood job title as this led to a greater sense of professional identity: "What we call ourselves and how we communicate this defines who we are professionally." (2014). Not dissimilar to personal identity, Neary proposes that professional identity is affected by how we observe ourselves, how we assess how others regard us, and how we are perceived by broader society, and that it is a fluid rather than undeviating concept.

Identity is a key concept for this thesis as one of the study's main focuses is on the professional identity changes that take place when a journalist leaves the industry to become an academic. As will be seen in the analysis and discussion chapters below, it is a notion that participants struggle with in as much as they find it difficult to shake off their journalism identity and embrace an academic persona. While professional identity may be regarded as being distinct from personal identity, there is undoubtedly crossover between the two concepts and the latter emerges frequently as the participants reflect on their early lives, their journey into journalism and their new roles in academia.

Memory

Squire (2009) points to the importance of memory in the fields of philosophy and psychology, as well as more recently in biology. (2009, p.12711). He argues that memory "is not a unitary faculty of the mind but is composed of multiple systems that have different operation principles

and different neuroanatomy" (2009, p.12711), and differentiates between "declarative memory" – a conscious memory related to facts and events – and "nondeclarative memory", which is unconscious and related to learning skills or gaining habits. "In the case of nondeclarative memory, experience modifies behavior but without requiring any conscious memory content or even the experience that memory is being used". (2009, p.12711). Thus, nondeclarative memory is represented through performance whereas declarative memory "is expressed through recollection, as a way of modelling the external world". (2009, p.12711)

In popular culture, "memory is often thought of as some kind of physical thing that is stored in the brain; a subjective, personal experience that we can recall at will", according to Zlotnik and Vansintjan (2019, p.2). But such a definition has been overtaken by advances in science in recent decades, they argue, so that memory is no longer considered as a "fixed thing" but rather as "more of a chemical process between neurons which is not static". (2019, p.2). Psychologists have identified different groupings for memory, such as sensory, short-term and long-term, with their different characteristics – long-term memory, for example, "can store an indefinite amount of information" whereas short-term memory is much more limited, while sensory memory is not "consciously controlled". (2019, p.2). In their extended definition of memory, the authors propose that thanks to advances in information technology, memory can now be stored outside the brain through such devices as "smartphones, mind-controlled prosthetic limbs, and Google Glasses" (2019, p3) and that this "opens the door to a very different world. The mind is not static. Rather…it incorporates information from its surroundings, which in turn changes it. The brain, and the memory it uses, is a work in progress; we are not now who we were then." (2019, p.4).

Williams et al (2008) allude to autobiographical memories, which are "episodes recollected from an individual's life". (2008, p.22). They argue that such memories are unconsciously stored and can be of different types, such as based around biographical facts rather than experiences; or may be copies of original events which "incorporate the interpretations that are made with hindsight"; or can be labelled "specific" – a memory of a specific incident at a particular place or moment in time – or generic; they can be represented from an "observer perspective" or a "field perspective" – that is, recollecting an event "from the original viewpoint of the experiencer" or "like viewing the event from the outside, from the point of view of an external observer". (2008, p.23). It is the field memories, recalled from the original viewpoint, that are more vivid, they suggest. (2008, p.23). The authors propose that the purpose of autobiographical memory is threefold: directive; social; and self. The directive function serves to use memories "to guide and shape current and future behaviour, as an aid to problem-solving, and as tool for predicting future behaviour". (2008, p.24). Autobiographical memories can also provide a social purpose as we exchange memories with others. "Self-disclosure of autobiographical memories with someone who was not there at the original event is a means of increasing intimacy, of pooling experiences, of giving and receiving understanding and sympathy, and of 'placing ourselves' in a given culture and context". (2008, p.24) In terms of the self, the authors argue, past events have a great deal of personal significance "and are the database from which the self is constructed". (2008, p.25). However, they warn that specific autobiographical memories can wane over time and become more generalised and less vivid and accessible – "…accuracy declines with time and dating of memories is imprecise". (2008, p81).

It is the concept of autobiographical memory that offers much to this study, as the participants are asked to draw in some depth on memories from their past profession and on the transition into academia they have experienced. It is useful to better understand the purpose of such memories and be aware of the implications of memories that fade over time, as this suggests the participants' accounts of their previous profession may not always be entirely accurate. It is also interesting to note the connection between memory and the self and how the former is one of the building blocks of the latter.

Nostalgia

Nostalgia is defined as "a sentimental longing for one's past" (Sedikides et al; 2008, p.305). Typically, says Burton, it focuses on "a particular period or place with positive associations, but sometimes also for the past in general, 'the good old days of yore'". (2014). Hepper et al describe nostalgia as "a complex emotion" that maybe triggered by such things as a "familiar smell, sound, or keepsake, by engaging in conversations, or by feeling lonely". (2011, p.113). Nostalgia is linked to memory as it emerges from the recollection of a moment from one's past, usually a happy moment and a memory that has meaning, and often one "views the memory through rose-tinted glasses, misses that time or person, longs for it, and may even wish to return to the past". (2011, p.113). Nostalgia evokes emotion, usually happiness but there can also be a feeling of loss and longing, with other less common emotions including "comfort, calm, regret, sadness, pain or an overall sense of bitter-sweetness". (2011, p.113).

For a long time, nostalgia was associated with the concept of homesickness, having first been introduced as a concept by Swiss physician Johannes Hofer in the 17th century and thereafter viewed as a medical or neurological illness. By the 19th century it was regarded as a form of melancholia or depression and it was not until the late 20th century that it gained its own

separate conceptual status (Wildschut et al; 2006, p.975). Wildschut et al's study of undergraduate students showed that nostalgic experiences were often prompted by people, momentous occasions, settings, particular periods in one's life and past selves. (2006, p.978). Nostalgia moments caused a greater level of happiness than sadness, but "there was evidence of bittersweetness. The authors concluded that nostalgia has the capacity to "generate positive affect, increase positive self-regard, and bolsters social bonds". (2006, p.985). Sedikides et al posit that during moments of nostalgia: "Symbolic ties with close others are affirmed, and close others come to be momentarily part of one's present". (2008, p.306). In this respect, they posit, nostalgia can help provide "enduring meaning to one's life". (2008, p.305). Batcho (n.d) asserts that nostalgia helps give us a sense of identity and of how that identity changes over time, and "helps to unite us to that authentic self and remind us of who we have been and then compare that to who we feel we are today". (Batcho, n.d). In this way, it offers a sense of who we may want to be in the future. Nostalgia is therefore a concept that can be linked to memory, the self and identity; it is a theme that emerges in the participant accounts in the analysis chapter and is further explored in the discussion chapter below.

It can be seen that the conceptual terms self, identity, memory and nostalgia can provide a useful framework around which to further explore the participants' accounts of their transition from journalism into academia. As will be disclosed in the analysis chapter, these accounts are frequently laden with emotion, reflective of the participants' gamut of feelings as they tell stories from the past and look forward to the future – from anger, fear and anxiety to remorse, grief, mourning, confusion and doubt, mixed with occasional hope, enthusiasm and optimism – and it is through the lens of the self, identity, memory and nostalgia that their journeys and how they make sense of them, and of themselves, can be better understood.

2.6 Summary

This literature review has sought to examine journalism's current and emerging position through exploring the causes of its turbulent state as well as relational issues such as professionalism in journalism, Higher Education and the educator, what it means to transition from one profession to another, with an exploration of the conceptual terms self, identity, memory and nostalgia. As has been identified, causes of and solutions to the so-called crisis are wide and contested with much pessimism, and great optimism, about journalism's future articulated. What is clear is that journalism, for a variety of reasons, is changing – and must continue to meet the challenges it faces if it is to survive and flourish. Journalism education plays a key part in the profession's development and there is much deliberation about the curriculum and its content in terms of vocational skills and critical inquiry as well as the importance of academic research. It is apparent that the experiences of the journalism practitioner turned educator as he or she transitions into the Higher Education environment are relevant to the debate on journalism's crisis and future, as it can be argued that such individuals play a key part both in journalism's current state, having been practitioners, and in its future prospects, in terms of educating future generations of journalists. While much analysis of the educator has focused on research capabilities and opportunities to nurture greater critical content in the journalism studies curriculum, little is known about the journalists' own stories in terms of their roles, views and values as they cross the divide from newsroom to classroom; how this move impacts on issues of professional identity, teacher and research qualities; and – ultimately – how this is manifested in the student experience. This, the author argues, is a sphere that would benefit from further investigation if the challenges facing journalism education are to be more fully understood.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

There are now more journalism degree courses at Higher Education level than ever before, with thousands of young people applying for places at universities across the country each year. Journalism has been described as "fully academised" (Thurman et al, 2016) on the basis that almost all of those people entering the industry today have achieved at the very least an undergraduate qualification in journalism or other subjects, and may often have continued to study at postgraduate level. Yet as identified in the literature review, the industry itself is, and has been for many years, in a state of flux with old practices transformed by new technology, emerging consumption patterns and innovative business models. In addition to such structural challenges, issues of trust in journalism and the press have brought the integrity of the profession into question, while concerns about fake news and its threat to journalism's watchdog role as the fourth estate – and as a consequence, democratic culture – are raised.

The question of what universities should teach undergraduate students and how they should be preparing them for an industry still in the midst of transformation is a debate that continues both in the journalism profession and academia. Journalism education finds itself in an uncertain place, barraged by ideas on what could, should and must be delivered via the curriculum and feeling the burden of responsibility for breathing new life into a weary industry, while also facing accusations of being out of touch with the modern-day profession, putting theory above practice or lacking in updated digital skills. It is common for journalists to move from professional practice into Higher Education; given the precarious state of journalism there is merit in having experienced practitioners whose years in the field and understanding of the industry's evolution can inform teaching and learning. However, there is an assumption that

the practitioner moves seamlessly into education and little is known about what takes place during the transitionary period between moving out of journalism and into higher education. It is against this background that the research questions are framed. To recap, the research questions are:

1. What are the lived experiences of journalism practitioners as they transition into becoming academics and how do they make sense of this transition?
2. How does their transition from knowledge creator (as a journalist) to knowledge disseminator (as an academic educator) and new knowledge creator (as an academic researcher) impact on their professional identity.
3. How does this process of transition inform and shape the journalist-turned-academic as an educator and support their short and long-term academic practice, including research and pedagogy?

3.1 The choice of IPA

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) has been selected as an effective qualitative methodology for exploring these research questions. IPA was first developed by Jonathan Smith as a qualitative approach to studying individuals' subjective lived experiences and, more specifically, how they make sense of that experience. Smith et al argue that IPA is particularly suited to understanding how people make sense of major life experiences: "When people are engaged with 'an experience' of something major in their lives, they begin to reflect on the significance of what is happening and IPA research aims to engage with these reflections." (2009, p.3). The focus for IPA researchers is around everyday experiences that may take on a particular significance – usually "when something important has happened in our lives". (2009, p.1). This could relate to such moments of major transition as bereavement, childbirth or

starting a new job. It is the detail of how someone makes sense of the transition that is of interest to the researcher (2009, p.3) because it permits the researcher to gain insight into "what the experience for *this* person is like, what sense *this* particular person is making of what is happening to them". (2009, p.3; emphasis in original).

Larkin et al espouse the view that IPA goes beyond the simple description of the individual's insider experience; rather, it focuses on both the individual's account of a particular experience and also on an interpretative account "of what it means for the participant to have such concerns, within their particular context". (2006, p.113; emphasis in original). It is IPA's association with scrutinising periods of transition that is deemed to be particularly apposite to this research, which seeks to examine the changes in professional identity during the transition from journalism practitioner to journalism educator, and how this transition informs the new role in Higher Education. Smith's study, *'Identity development during the transition to motherhood: An interpretative phenomenological analysis'* (1999), explored how women's identities may change during the transition to becoming a mother, while other studies using IPA for researching life transitions and identity have focused on migration (Timotijevic and Breakwell, 2000) and the experiences of homeless people (Riggs and Coyle, 2002). Smith et al note: "One of the interesting things to emerge from the growing corpus of IPA studies is how often identity becomes a central concern… An even more specific commonality is that much IPA work is around identity changes associated with major life transitions." (Smith et al, 2009, p.163). Eatough and Smith concur, arguing that, "IPA studies explore existential matters of considerable importance for the participant." (2008, p.186). Often these may revolve around change in an individual's life and subsequent reflection and interpretation of this change. As a consequence, patterns can be discovered by the researcher around identity and a sense of self,

the participant's meaning making and interpretation, and even around "bodily feeling within lived experience". (2008, p.186). Etough and Smith argue that IPA has a "microscopic lens arising from its idiographic commitment, emphasizing the way in which the study of how psychological meanings are constituted can be very usefully pursued through the detailed examination of unique individual lives". (2017, p.184).

IPA has been used widely within studies around health and psychology and it is only in recent years that it has broadened out into the field of social sciences. Eatough and Smith point to the range of research in organisational studies, education and sports science as evidence of the appeal of "IPA's explicit commitment to understanding phenomena of interest from a first-person perspective". (2017, p.193). Smith's own studies have ranged from exploring experiences of depression (Rhodes and Smith; 2010) and recovery from drug addiction (Rodriguez and Smith; 2014) to receiving a kidney from a living donor (Spiers et al; 2016) and the complexities of parenting a child with cystic fibrosis (Glasscoe and Smith; 2011).

For this research study, which raises questions around the participants' lived experiences of transitioning from practice to education, a methodology that recognises and embraces a moment of change and how people make sense of it offers a useful approach. Additionally, it is known that IPA studies frequently raise issues linked to identity and changes in identity – also an area for study in this research. Further, as a journalist for over 25 years, I feel IPA offers a fitting approach to the study. Harcup describes journalism as "a form of communication based on asking, and answering, the questions Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?" (2015, p.6) but this is, perhaps, a simplistic description of a job role that focuses almost entirely on people and people's behaviour – "powerful people, interesting people, inspiring people, heroes,

villains and victims". (2015, p.7). Journalism is about talking to people to hear their stories, and to interpret their stories for a wider audience; interviewing is the key tool for journalists to be able to understand and interpret these stories. It is not a description that journalists seek when interviewing, but rather a first-person account that allows the journalist insight into both what the person has experienced and how they have interpreted that experience. Both of these aspects are integral to IPA as a methodology; furthermore, it is always the journalist's intention to capture individual stories – even if they are part of a wider, communal response to an issue or event – and this too is an aspect that is embedded within IPA. It is for these reasons that I have found an affinity with this specific phenomenological approach and, having used it successfully in a pilot study, remain convinced that it is appropriate for this study.

My own situatedness within the journalism profession and in the transition to journalism academic must be acknowledged, both in terms of the subject of this thesis and the selection of IPA as a methodology. In devising the research and research questions, I was drawing on my own experiences of having been a journalist and of experiencing a career change into academia, thus from the outset there was an implicit subjectivity in my choices. In terms of IPA as a methodology, at the point of starting doctoral study I was still attempting to make sense of my own journey into academia and was drawn to the central component of sense-making represented by IPA. I was experiencing a significant period of change and struggling with my own professional identity: having spent a lengthy career as a journalist I found myself thrust into what felt like an alien world in which I lacked confidence, was devoid of a sense of belonging and struggling to adopt the title 'academic'. Such characteristics are resonant with IPA's aim to understand how people make sense of major life experiences. Furthermore, my personal knowledge and experience of the journalism profession and my lived experience of

the transition into HE guided me towards IPA because of its focus not only on describing but also interpreting people's stories, a notion that is evocative of journalism practice. These aspects are subjective and require a high level of reflexivity in order to be as transparent as is feasible in relation to my processes of data collection and data analysis, as well as ethical considerations concerning my own role, prejudices, assumptions and judgments surrounding the research process and in particular the importance of bracketing. The ethical implications of my situatedness will be further discussed below in 3.13 of this chapter.

Smith et al draw on Heidegger's notion of fore-conception when discussing bracketing in relation to IPA, arguing that the researcher "cannot help but look at any new stimulus in the light of their own prior experience" (2009, p.25) and that it could create "an obstacle to interpretation". (2009, p.25). They propose that when it comes to gathering and interpreting data, "priority should be given to the new object, rather than to one's preconceptions". (2009, p.25). Indeed, by making the participant the only focus of one's attention during the interview process, it is more likely that as the researcher, one can bracket preconceived ideas through "the attentive listening to what your participant has to say". (2009, p.64). What is more, say Smith et al, fore-structure is not necessarily a one-way process; it is quite feasible that one gets a greater understanding of one's own previous experiences and preconceptions following, for example, reading a text or undertaking an interview, with the process working in reverse to shed new light on prior assumptions. (2009, p.25). I have endeavoured throughout this research to bracket my own preconceptions, but recognise that prior experience cannot entirely be ignored. I have included a personal reflection in Chapter 6 of this dissertation: it comes towards the end of the study rather than at the start because, firstly, I did not want my reflections / preconceptions to risk influencing the data collection and analysis; secondly, by

reflecting after the data collection and analysis I believe I can better acknowledge and understand my own experiences and assumptions, as suggested by Smith et al.

3.2 Photo elicitation

In addition to IPA, this study will use photo elicitation as an 'ice breaker' method, to allow participants to reflect on their early and current careers through the lens of images. Photo elicitation is a term first coined by John Collier in the 1950s and brings a photograph or photographs into a research interview in order to generate discussion. In IPA studies, photo elicitation has been adopted for a wide range of studies including Lachal et al's 2016 research into the role of food in family relationships. They noted that the use of photographic material provided by the subject was "used as the basis for the interview, enabling the verbal material to be steered and also enriched". (2016, p.1099). Silver and Farrants' 2016 study on body dysmorphic disorder used IPA and photo elicitation in its design. The authors contended that "the use of open-ended questions and photographs in this study gives us a deep understanding of what it is like to be a person with BDD looking in the mirror". (2016, p.2649). Bates et al concur that interviews have been the conventional means of drawing out participants' experiences and their understanding of these experiences in IPA research, and that photo elicitation, by generating memories, can elicit richer data. IPA positions the participants' lived experiences at the heart of the interview and it follows that participant-driven photo elicitation is appropriate for the study of the transition from journalism practitioner to journalism educator because, as Bates et al note, "implicit in every participant generated photo are several personal decisions". (2017, p.473). Burton et al, whose quality of life research used photo elicitation and IPA methods, argue that the use of photos in interviews benefits both the researcher and the participant. (2017, p.380). The authors say: "We found that the opportunity

to discuss an image of an actual event in the lives of our participants helped us to take one step closer to the experiential horizon of our participants and facilitate our ability to develop an insider's perspective". (2017, p.381). Further, for the participants photo elicitation allowed them to take control of the essential characteristics of the data. (2017, p.382). Importantly, the authors note, this ultimately led to the discovery of unique examples of personal experiences "that may have been lost or missed in a researcher-led interview". (2017, p383). The authors allude to "in-the-moment" experiences offered by photographs, and the chance for participants to reflect on these, and gain greater understanding of them through a conversation with the researcher – leading to "enhanced sense-making and reflection" (2017, p.384) which in turn allowed for a "thick description" of the meaning of photographs. (2017, p.386).

For Harper, it is the collaboration between participant and researcher that is key in photo elicitation; the discussion that arises from scrutinising a photograph leads to those taking part "to try and figure out something together" (2002, p.23) which, he posits, is an ideal research model. Harper argues that photos "evoke deeper elements of human consciousness than do words" (2002, p.13) and help the interviewer gain not more information but "a different kind of information". (2002, p.13). According to Banks, photo elicitation can aid and sharpen memory and enhance interview responses, as well as help put the nervous interviewee at ease by providing a different focus, "a kind of neutral third party" (2007, p.88), while Dempsey and Tucker assert that photo elicitation produces "richer data" than interviewing by itself (1994, p.55). It is therefore appropriate that photo elicitation is selected for a study in which participants will be asked to recall previous lived experiences as journalists and new roles as academics, and consider how they have made sense of their experience of transition. Photos relevant to a previous career in journalism, spanning possibly decades, could do much to

prompt discussion and recollection. As Dempsey and Tucker argue, the visual cues allow for reflection that engenders much greater consideration than straightforward interviews: “Photographic images solicit both differences and similarities in individual perception which can be validated and analysed across groups of perceivers”. (1994, p.57).

3.3 Research design: IPA

Smith et al situate IPA within the field of qualitative data analysis, arguing that “it tends to focus on meaning, sense making and communicative action” evidenced through observing behaviour (2009, p.45) as opposed to quantitative research which attempts to examine what has happened and make connections between events. (2009, p.44). Acknowledging that there is a wide range of qualitative approaches, Smith et al propose that IPA nevertheless fits within the field with its focus on “personal meaning and sense-making in a particular context, for people who share a particular experience”. (2009, p.45). In comparison, phenomenology more broadly explores the common structures of an experience and grounded theory seeks a “willingness to develop an explanatory level account (factors, impacts, influences, etc.)”, they argue, while a narrative approach seeks to explore story structures and “how narrative relates to sense-making”. (2009, p.45). Ultimately, however, the choice of qualitative approach is rooted in the research question itself and the choice of IPA as a qualitative approach “should be because it is consistent with the epistemological position of your research question”, say Smith et al. (2009, p.46).

This study seeks to explore the transition that takes place when a journalism practitioner becomes a journalism educator-academic, examining previous and new professional identities that may emerge in such transitions. It is the specific transitionary phase – and how the

individual makes sense of it – that is of particular interest to this piece of research, with the aim of gaining a better understanding of former journalists' identities, roles, values and effectiveness as newly-appointed educators and to determine whether identity as a journalist can influence the attitudes and behaviours of the academic educator-researcher.

Using IPA as a basis for the research project, the study incorporates six in-depth, face-to-face interviews in order to explore the lived experiences of journalism practitioners turned academic-educators, and how they make sense of the transition between the two professions. Smith et al argue that because IPA seeks to gain a detailed interpretation from individual participants, the sample size needs to be small: "The issue is quality, not quantity, and given the complexity of most human phenomena, IPA studies usually benefit from a concentrated focus on a small number of cases". (2009, p.51). Smith et al point also to the selection of participants who can "grant us access to a particular perspective on the phenomena under study. That is, they 'represent' a perspective, rather than a population". (2009, p.49). Furthermore, a small sample size allows for a detailed account to be recorded, transcribed and analysed. (2009, p.49). While this is not a comparative study, in order to reflect a breadth of experiences participants have been selected through purposive sampling from a range of HE institutions. This is consistent with a qualitative paradigm, say Smith et al, because participants can "offer a research project insight into a particular experience". (2009, p.48). Effort should be made to find a homogeneous sample, according to Smith et al, for whom "the research question will be meaningful". (2009, p.49). Participants for this study share the common experience of having made a transition from journalism practitioner to journalism educator-academic, but may be at different stages of the transition; that is, they may have made the transition some years previously or may have only recently have made the career change, which

allows for a broader range of perspectives to be included in the study. Gender and age are not considered to be crucial variables for the sample. Smith et al point to the "inductive logic" of sample specificity in IPA and the impact it has on the relevance of findings: "Cases and accounts are held to be local, and so analyses are cautious and are built cumulatively. They must therefore be dealt with in detail, and in context." (2009, p.50). What is more, they argue, it is not always necessary to consider IPA analysis in the context of "empirical generalizability" (2009, p.51); rather, "theoretical transferability" allows those who read the study to make links between the analysis, existing literature and their own experiences, whether they be personal or professional: "This should enable readers to evaluate its [the analysis] transferability to persons in contexts which are more, or less, similar." (2009, p.51).

3.4 Research design: Photo elicitation

Bates et al outline three types of photo elicitation: participant-driven (open) in which participants provide photographic material that they feel is appropriate to the phenomenon under discussion; participant-driven (semi-structured) in which the participant is made aware of questions in advance and asked to bring suitable photos to link with these; and researcher-driven in which the researcher provides photos. (2017, p.467). In terms of this piece of research, participant-driven photos – open or semi-structured – are a suitable approach, as it allows the interviewee to freely select their own photos around a known phenomenon, theme or set of questions, whereas researcher-driven material would not be representative of the interviewees' own experiences.

Bates et al argue that photo elicitation can bring about emotional recollections of previous memories and it this aspect that helps to provide richer and more meaningful accounts than

interviews alone. (2017, p.461). What is more, they posit, photo elicitation can go some way towards reducing the power imbalance of semi-structured interviews because – at least for participant-driven photographs – it allows the interviewee, rather than the researcher, to select appropriate images and determine the direction of the discussion. (2017, p.461). In this way, participants can take control of the discussion, "by actively selecting relevant photos, pictures they feel represent the phenomenon of interest and thus lead the direction and content of the interview". (2017, p.463). It is important to note that for this study photo elicitation will be used as an aid for prompting discussion and the images themselves will not be analysed as data; rather, it is the responses of the participants to questions about the photos that will be analysed and reported.

3.5 Data collection: IPA

As a qualitative approach, the primary method for addressing IPA research is the semi-structured interview. Smith et al argue that interviews are "optimal" for most IPA investigations (2009, p.56), because they provide the participant with the opportunity to speak freely, convey their stories, feelings and thoughts, and to reflect at length: "In terms of devising a data collection method, IPA is best suited to one which will invite participants to offer a rich, detailed first-person account of their experiences." (2009, p.56). Alternative methods such as highly structured interviews or questionnaires would not elicit such rich data, they argue, due to their inflexibility. (2009, p.56). Reid et al point to the "flexible collaboration" between the IPA interviewer and respondent in establishing and understanding meanings and in sense-making. (2005, p.22).

Semi-structured interviews on a one-to-one basis are instrumental in this process, as they allow the interviewee to both speak and be heard, and for a rapport to develop between participant

and interviewee. (2005, p.22). Establishing a rapport at the start of an interview is essential, say Smith et al, in order to extract strong data from the participant. (2009, p.64). Smith et al discuss the value of approaching the questions posed to interviewees "sideways"; that is, avoiding abstract questions that may flummox the participant and instead raising relevant and clear themes for discussion. (2009, p.58). They stress that both the researcher and the interviewee are "active participants" in the interview process, with the researcher directing the initial conversation through pre-determined questions and following up the participant's own concerns as they emerge through the interview – even if they are not on the interview schedule. (2009, p.58). "These unexpected turns are often the most valuable aspects of interviewing: on the one hand they tell us something we did not even anticipate needing to know; on the other, because they arise unprompted, they may well be of particular importance to the participant." (2009, p.58). The interviewer should allow the participant to determine the direction of the interview, argue Eatough and Smith, which means that the researcher must be prepared for the interview to become less structured as it progresses, with "the participants as storytellers rather than respondents". (2008, p.188).

In relation to the research questions outlined above, the use of in-depth interviewing permits participants to express experiences in their own words, allowing the specific moment of transition from journalism practitioner to journalism educator, and its consequences, to be more fully explored and interpreted. For me, as the researcher, interviews are a natural response to finding out about people's lived experiences, because as a journalist it was the primary method of drawing out individual versions of events around a news story or feature. Smith et al propose a schedule for semi-structured interviews in order for the researcher to be clear about what will be covered (2009, p.58) and to prepare for any potential problems, such

as how to word difficult questions or address sensitive subjects as well as to prepare for the more timid interviewee. (2009, p.59). They describe this preparation as "thinking of virtual maps for the interview" which will allow the researcher to draw on a schedule if there are any awkward moments during the interview. (2009, p.59).

However, they caution that even with a schedule of questions, the direction of the interview can change once it is underway; in this respect the schedule is a "loose agenda". (2009, p.58). They suggest between six and 10 open questions for the schedule, each with "possible prompts" that will encourage the respondent to elaborate further. (2009, p.60). The themes for such questions (see Appendix 2) focus on the participants' careers as journalists and their identities as journalists, what led to career change, their experiences of the process of transition and how they perceive themselves in their current academic roles.

By using interviews, IPA is following a traditional route in phenomenological research: the use of interviews has a long history in the social sciences and it is a technique commonly practised by qualitative researchers. Van Manen argues that verbal accounts of lived experiences can be easier to elicit than written accounts, because people "talk with much more ease and eloquence and with much less reserve than they will write their thoughts on paper". (1990, p.64). Kvale notes that the qualitative interview allows the researcher to explore and understand the participant's world: "It provides a unique access to the lived world of the subjects, who in their own words describe their activities, experiences and opinions." (2007, p.9). Interview participants are "meaning makers, not passive conduits for retrieving information from an existing vessel of answers", argues Warren, and interpretations rather than facts should be elicited through such methods. (2002, p.83).

Cohen et al concur that both parties in an interview – whether they are the researcher or participant – discuss their interpretations of the world, and that the process is not about collecting data that is external to humans, but rather about viewing knowledge "as generated between humans, often through conversations". (2006, p.267). In this way, says Van Manen, interviews for the purposes of gaining an account of the personal life story can help explore the meaning of an experience. (1990, p.66). Brinkmann notes that the interview has been "naturalized" in qualitative research, so widespread and accepted is its use. (2018, p.577). This implies that interviews may be taken for granted as a standard qualitative method and he urges researchers to question and reflect on the practice (2018, p.595). In this sense, argue Bates et al, it is the epistemological positioning, the research question itself and the ethical considerations underlying the selected methodology and method of inquiry that are paramount in securing "robust research" in qualitative interviewing. (2017, p.460).

3.6 Data collection: Photo elicitation

For this study participants are asked to bring two photographs or illustrations to the interview: one that they feel represents their former life as a journalist, the other that represents their new life as an academic. Participants are given guidance to bring photographs of themselves, colleagues, friends or family, as they deem appropriate; or pictures of objects or personal belongings; or images that they have sourced online. They do not need to have taken the images themselves. The participants are assured that the images will not be reproduced in the thesis but that the aim is to stimulate discussion at the start of the interview; therefore, it will be the conversation rather than the content of the images that will be analysed, following the qualitative interviewing principles set out above.

3.7 Data Analysis: IPA

Smith et al concede that there is no definitive way of analysing IPA data; however, of paramount importance is focusing on analysing "participants' attempts to make sense of their experiences". (2009, p.79). Others concur: analysing qualitative research data is not straightforward, as Cohen et al point out, because, "there is no one single or correct way to analyse and present qualitative data". (2017, p.643). Thorne argues that qualitative data analysis is "the most complex and mysterious of all the phases of a qualitative project", with a wide variety of analytical strategies available to the researcher. (2000, p.68). Roulston outlines three broad steps in qualitative analysis – data analysis, data reduction and data representation – but agrees that within this framework there can be a range of approaches (2014, p.301), while Kvale offers a "toolbox" for analysing interviews (2007, p.103), including "meaning coding" or attaching keywords to different parts of a transcription; "meaning condensation", or short forms of interviewees' meanings; and "meaning interpretation", which involves deeper interpretation of the transcription. (2007, p.104). Part of the problem with qualitative data analysis is the sheer volume of prose that is likely to have been collected, says Bryman (2016, p.570), pointing out that "there are few well-established and widely accepted rules for the analysis of qualitative data" and therefore broad guidelines must be adopted. (2016, p. 570).

While acknowledging that there is scope for many different approaches to analysing data (2009, p.80), Smith et al propose a six-step guide to IPA analysis for novice researchers which involves listening to the audio interview and reading and re-reading the written transcript; taking notes from the transcript; looking for emergent themes within the transcript; finding links between these emergent themes; moving from one case study to the next; and looking for patterns across the different case studies. (2009, pp.82-103). The first step, say Smith et al,

involves “immersing oneself in some of the original data” (2009, p.82) by reading and re-reading a printed version of the transcript from each participant interview and, if an audio recording has been taken, to listen to it while reading the transcript so that future readings of the data will allow the researcher to imagine the participant’s voice. It may be that the researcher notes down memories and observations from their own experiences of the interview “in order to bracket them off for a while” (2009, p.82) and ensure that the focus at this stage is on the data itself. The next phase is to start making initial notes on the transcript itself about the content and language in the data, in the form of free textual analysis (2009, p.83), according to Smith et al, keeping an open mind while becoming acquainted with the participant’s words. Descriptions of events and what they mean to the participant will have “a clear phenomenological focus”, they propose (2009, p.83).

After initial note-taking a more interpretative note-making should be undertaken with Smith et al suggesting “descriptive comments”, that will help provide a detailed account of a participant’s experience; “linguistic comments”, which explore use of language and its potential meaning around the use of such content a metaphors, pronouns, repetition – even laughter and pauses; and “conceptual comments”, which may be in the form of questions around the participant’s account that may lead the researcher towards more conceptual or abstract ideas of the that account. (2009, pp.87-89). “This more questioning and abstract style of thinking is critical in moving the analysis beyond the superficial and purely descriptive”, according to Smith et al (2009, p 91). The third step in the analysis process is to draw together emergent themes that have arisen from the previous note-taking for each individual participant’s account, to be followed by the fourth stage in which the researcher must search for connections across these emergent themes.

Ways of looking for patterns can be categorised under “abstraction” – by drawing together similar themes under one “super-ordinate” or higher level theme (2009, p.96); “subsumption” – where one of the emergent themes is sufficiently significant to be deemed a super-ordinate category in itself, that is, it subsumes other themes (2009, p.97); “polarization” – focusing on differences between emergent themes rather than on similarities; “contextualization”, exploring contextual elements in an account, such as temporal, cultural and narrative themes; “numeration” – examining how frequently a theme is referred to (2009, p.97); and “function” – noting a specific function or functions of emergent themes. (2009, p.98). Following this analysis, a table or figure should be compiled that summarises the themes and super-ordinate themes. (2009, p.99). Stage 5 of the analysis process requires moving on from one participant account to the next and repeating the previous steps once again; finally, in step six, all the cases should be scrutinised to establish patterns and interpret these patterns. The authors stress that such analytical steps are not designed to be prescriptive but are rather offer a range of tools, and they urge researchers to “use the ones that work for you and the material you have”. (2009, p.99).

3.8 Data Analysis: Photo elicitation

As an ice-breaker exercise, the comments of the participants as he or she discusses the content of the images and their choice of selection are included in the overall IPA analysis of the interview. While there may be some description of the content of the image during the interview, the photos themselves are not analysed.

3.9 Theoretical underpinnings of IPA

IPA as a methodology is underpinned by three principal theoretical approaches – phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography. Smith et al argue that the leading figures in phenomenology, such as Husserl and Heidegger, have much to offer IPA researchers, with Husserl's focus on the examination of the lived experience and Heidegger's exploration of meaning-making both useful as a focus for reflection and inquiry in IPA. (2009, p.16). Heidegger was a proponent of hermeneutics in phenomenology – the theory of interpretation – which is also key for IPA in terms of making sense of a phenomenon, according to Smith et al. (2009, p.28). Hermeneutics "makes the shift away from description to interpretation of a phenomenon", according to Oxley, with an emphasis on contextual meanings that may emerge. (2009, p.56). IPA is, additionally, appropriate for an idiographic methodological approach, "focusing on the particular rather than the universal", according to Eatough and Smith (2017, p.185). Rather than establishing causal laws and universal claims pursued in nomothetic approaches, idiography is more concerned with grasping the meaning in the individual's life. (2017, p.185). Small sample sizes of five to 10 are therefore essential for IPA analysis, according to Smith; each participant's account is valuable in its own right, he posits, and while common themes may emerge among a group of participants, it is important to learn about individual stories. (2004, p.42).

IPA has its roots in psychology, and therefore recognises the role of the 'analyst' in making sense of research participants, according to Pringle et al – and it is this that sets it apart from other, more descriptive, phenomenological approaches, (2011, p.20). Smith et al refer to the 'double hermeneutic' in which "the researcher is making sense of the participant, who is making sense of x." (2009, p.35). In this way, the researcher therefore has a dual role – being

both like the participant as a human who is making sense of the world by drawing on everyday experiences, and unlike the participant, because the researcher can only gain insight into the participant's experience through his or her reported words. Additionally, the researcher has his or her own experiences that may influence how they interpret the participant's experiences. Thus, "the participant's meaning-making is first order, while the researcher's sense-making is second order". (2009, p.36).

However, despite the extensive and growing use of IPA as a methodology, it has come under scrutiny in some quarters – most notably from Giorgi, who has pointed to weaknesses in the phenomenological basis of IPA. Among other criticisms, Giorgi argues that IPA has little to do with "philosophical phenomenology" (2010, p.4); that it lacks a theoretical basis (2010, p.5); and that it is not scientifically robust. (2010, p.6). Willig (2013) alludes to the practical and conceptual limitations of IPA in relation to the role of language, the suitability of participant accounts, and the issue of explanation and description. She questions whether language is an appropriate means for participants to encapsulate an experience, arguing that "language constructs, rather than describes, reality". (2013, p.95). Furthermore, the words selected when describing a phenomenon present a specific version of that moment: "The same event can be described in many different ways. This means that language can never simply give expression to experience." (2013, p.95). Willig probes whether participants' accounts of an experience are necessarily suitable for the rich texture that is sought in IPA analysis, given its focus on seeking meaning rather opinion: "How many people are able to use language in such a way as to capture the subtleties and nuances of their physical and emotional experiences?" (2013, p.95). She also argues that IPA, which pays particular attention to people's perceptions of an event, fails to explain the lived experience but rather describes and documents it: "…such research does not

tend to further our understanding of why such experiences take place and why there may be differences between individuals' phenomenological representations". (2013, p.95). Smith's response to these points is that IPA "clearly has theoretical underpinnings in phenomenology and hermeneutics" (2010, p.187), and in their critique of IPA, Pringle et al conclude that it has much to offer phenomenological research, being consistent with "guidelines regarding rigour and validity". (2010, p.24).

3.10 Epistemological and philosophical position

Given that the research is focused on journalism education, it is apt to first explore the epistemology of journalism itself. Epistemology is important in the study of journalism, argues Ekstrom, because "the legitimacy of journalism is intimately bound up with claims to knowledge and truth". (2002; cited in Hanitzsch, 2007, p.375). According to Hanitzsch, epistemology in terms of journalism culture "is concerned with the philosophical underpinnings of journalism that are instrumental in doing news work". (2007, p.375). In this regard, questions raised about epistemology centre on whether or not news can be presented in a way that is an objective and value-free account of the truth and – if it can – how truth claims can be justified. (2007, p.376). Harcup (2015) argues that journalism "informs society about itself and makes public that which would otherwise be private". (2015, p.6). Establishing facts using the values of truth, accuracy, objectivity and impartiality may be the cornerstone of good journalistic practice, he says, but truth is "slippery", (2015, p.75), accuracy is not straightforward, impartiality difficult to achieve and objectivity – with its associations with positivism – is claimed by some to be a "myth". (Knight and Cook, 2013, p.106). Journalists are expected to establish the veracity of a story through checking the facts, yet often this is no more than a "strategic ritual", according

Tuchman (1972) that differs significantly to the rigours of the scientific approach to establishing facts. (2015, p.85).

Frost acknowledges the positivist perspective of objective truth and its association with scientific study in relation to truth and objectivity, but he argues that this approach "does not serve so well when it comes to understanding the world of relationships and behaviour" inherent in journalism. (2016, p.77). He makes a distinction between an understanding of physical things, which can be externalised, and the internal components of issues that largely make up the news, such as immigration, which are viewed subjectively by journalists and their readers. (2016, p.78). The difficulty with truth and objectivity, he argues, is that it is impossible to prove that a reader takes the same meaning from a story that the writer intended; or the same meaning as another reader might have. (2016, p.79). The journalist, he posits, would be foolish to think that they could convey exactly the same understandings of any identical issue through their writing. (2016, p.79).

In his discussion on journalistic objectivity, Lehtinen (2012) describes journalism as "an epistemic practice providing knowledge of current affairs" and argues that journalism should be studied in the context of a "pragmatist" approach to objective knowledge, with ideals such as "trustworthiness" and "credibility" requiring epistemic objectivity. Yet Lehtinen acknowledges the temptation to adopt a constructionist approach to understanding journalistic knowledge and points to journalism as constructed both epistemologically and ontologically: "Surely, the journalistic product is human construction and the journalistic institution is social construction?" (2012). In his analysis of how truth can be attained in journalism, Hanitzsch points to an objectivist viewpoint in which there is a correspondence between "what is said"

and “what exists” (2007, p.376) on the one hand, and a subjectivist perspective in which “all news is selective and that human beings perceive realities based on judgments” (2007, p376), concurring with Lehtinen that there can be diverse epistemological approaches to journalism.

This discussion within the parameters of journalism epistemology is reflective of the broader debates on the theory of knowledge. My choice of IPA is based on my belief in a constructionist epistemology that holds that truth and meaning are constructed through interactions and engagement with the world around us – as opposed to an objectivist perspective that sees an objective reality waiting to be discovered. The focus of this perspective is on human practices and interactions within a social context, says Crotty – “meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting”. (1998, p.43). But because meaning is constructed rather than discovered, inevitably individuals will construct their own meaning in different ways, says Gray – which means they may have different interpretations of exactly the same phenomenon, so accounts will be individual. (2004, p.17). Constructionists, argues Andrews (2012), regard knowledge and truth as being discovered by the mind rather than created; reality “is socially defined but this reality refers to the subjective experience of everyday life, how the world is understood rather than to the objective reality of the natural world”. (2012).

Given its focus on the social context of meaning-making, a constructionist epistemology lends itself to an interpretivist theoretical perspective and associated methodologies for social science research, such as ethnography, phenomenology and grounded theory, with the use of qualitative methods such as interviews and interpretative methods. As Opie posits, if one’s epistemological assumptions assume that knowledge is experiential, personal and subjective,

then researchers "will have to ask questions of the people involved". (2004, p.21). In this way, posits Bryman, interpretivists put an emphasis on "*understanding*" of human behaviour whereas for positivists it is the "*explanation*" of human behaviour that is key. (2016, p.26; emphasis in original). For researchers this implies that social phenomena cannot be separated from people's perception of them; indeed, "it is these interpretations/understandings of social phenomena that directly affects outcome", according to Furlong and Marsh. (2010, p.199).

In light of the epistemological positioning outlined above, which identifies a constructionist epistemology and an interpretivist approach as an appropriate paradigm for the proposed research, it can be argued that a methodology incorporating phenomenological research is one that is suited to the research question, due its focus on the study of human experience and its theoretical viewpoint that behaviour is determined by experience rather than by an external and objective reality – as espoused by positivists.

An interpretivist theoretical perspective underpins inductive methodologies, in which patterns and possibly theories can emerge from data analysis that moves from the specific to the general, using such techniques as phenomenological inquiry. This usually leads to qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups and case studies**.** The overriding principle of phenomenological inquiry, according to Smith et al (2009) is that, "experience should be examined in the way that it occurs, and in its own terms". (2009, p.12). The key to phenomenological methodology is to gain the subjective experience of the subject, says Gray – "an exploration, via personal experience, of prevailing cultural understandings" (2004, p.20) – thereby seeking an internal logic, rather than an external logic, on the subject. This inductive approach aims to construct theories and models using qualitative methods to elicit data from

subjects. David and Sutton argue that in order to understand people, their thoughts and behaviours need to be sought, because humans are conscious beings and "their consciousness shapes their reality". (2004, p.38). But it is more than simply using a different method to get to the crux of human reality; it is about the "dispute over the very nature of social life" evident in the polarity of objectivism and constructionism. (2004, p.39).

3.11 Phenomenology

Phenomenology can be regarded as both a philosophical approach and a method of inquiry. Philosophically, it deems that people's experience of social reality has to be the basis for any attempt to understand that social reality. Husserl, widely regarded as the founder of phenomenology, argued for the careful and detailed scrutiny of the human experience as the foundation for phenomenological study. The word 'phenomenology', says Cerbone, means the study of phenomena, "where the notion of a phenomenon coincides, roughly, with the notion of experience". (2014, p.3). Crotty asserts that phenomenology raises questions about what we take for granted and alludes to the attempts in phenomenological research to "identify, understand, describe and maintain the subjective experiences of the respondents". (1998, p.83). It is the subjective view of the individual that is sought, through their personal experiences, and for the researcher this means putting aside preconceptions and presuppositions so that he or she is not prejudiced or biased in collecting and analysing data. "Current understandings have to be 'bracketed' to the best of our ability to allow phenomena to 'speak for themselves', unadulterated by our preconceptions," according to Gray (2004, p.21), where 'bracketed' means separating out or putting to one side, according to Husserl's thinking.

Creswell argues that a constructivist perspective is best suited to phenomenological studies "in which individuals describe their experiences" (2013, p.25). It is the lived experiences of an individual or group of individuals in relation to a particular phenomenon and their common meaning of it that defines a phenomenological study, says Creswell (2013, p.76), with the aim of reducing individual experiences to "a description of the universal essence". (2013, p.76). Pring posits that in order to understand people it is necessary to grasp their interpretations of what they are doing (2015, p.120) and that this cannot be done simply by observing; he points to the subjective interpretations of a phenomenological approach and seeing things from the participant's perspective when endeavouring to understand a particular event (2015, p.120). However, he strikes a cautious note about phenomenology, because "there are different ways in which 'interpretation' might be understood and in which it relates to the meaning to be attributed to what we do or say". (2015, p.120).

As a methodological approach, phenomenology seeks to identify "the phenomena that is perceived by actors in a particular situation", with the researcher focussing on interpreting the lived experiences of participants from their own subjective viewpoint. (Qutoshi; 2018, p.219). Research may be carried out with just one participant or with many; methodological approaches can range from interviews and observation to focus groups, text analysis and action research. (2018, p.220). Ultimately, a phenomenological approach is about "being faithful to the phenomena as it appears to be, at the experiential level". (2018, p.221). For a study that seeks to explore the lived experiences of journalism practitioners as they transition into new roles in Higher Education, my belief is that a phenomenological approach is appropriate to eliciting such experiences, particularly in relation to journalists whose own endeavours centre

on investigating phenomena, seeking the truth and creating new knowledge for public consumption.

3.12 Alternative methodologies

Taking into account the position outlined above, it is my belief that an interpretivist / phenomenological approach is appropriate for inquiry into people's experiences of journalism and journalism education. However, there are several approaches that could be taken, and the following section will outline some of these as well as discuss why they have been discounted.

3.12.1 Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is one of the most widely used approaches to qualitative research (Bryman; 2016, p.573). It offers researchers the opportunity to initiate theory in relation to a specific phenomenon and is perceived as one of the main alternative methods for an IPA study. (Smith et al; 2009, p.282). Bryman says that the act of initiating theory, along with an iterative process used in the research steps, means that "data collection and analysis proceed in tandem, repeatedly referring back to each other". (2016, p.381). Bryant and Charmaz define the grounded theory method as "a systematic, inductive and comparative approach for conducting inquiry for the purpose of constructing theory" (2007, p.1), while Wimpenny and Gass explain that the position is "not to begin with theory and then set out to test it, but to begin with an area of inquiry and allow whatever is theoretically relevant to emerge". (2001, p.1486).

There is some lack of clarity over the terminology, with the phrase 'grounded theory' often used to describe both the theory that emerges from the research process and the method itself. (Bryant and Charmaz; 2007, p.2). Sbaraini et al refer to the "chequered history" of

grounded theory, which leads to such confusion, with researchers claiming to use the method yet failing to follow its structures (2011, p.1471). Part of the problem, they suggest, is that that the methodology – based on Glaser and Strauss's work *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (1967) – now has a number of variations and there has been much discussion about what the attributes of a study must be in order for it to conform with grounded theory principles. (2011, p.1472). They posit that the defining features of grounded theory study are a focus on inductive analysis, immediate and ongoing analysis of data, coding and comparing, memo writing, theoretical sampling, theoretical saturation and the emergence of a substantive theory. (2011, p.1473).

Grounded theory has been used previously for journalism research, such as in Martin's study on how people negotiate news as a daily regimen (2008) and Gynnild's PhD study of news professionals which produced a theory of "creative cycling" (2007). More recently, Opiniano et al devised a model called the "infinity reflective cycle by journalists in newswork" following the grounded theory study of journalists' reflective practice. (2021). Smith et al accept the "clear, systematic and sequential guide to qualitative fieldwork and analysis" (2009, p.281) that grounded theory offers, and acknowledge the similarities between what the two approaches to research can achieve, but point to issues of a larger sample requirement that sets grounded theory apart from an IPA study. On the one hand, an IPA study seeks a detailed account of the lived experience from a small sample of participants; on the other, a grounded theory study "is likely to wish to push towards a more conceptual explanatory level based on a larger sample and where the individual accounts can be drawn on to illustrate the resultant theoretical claim". (2009, p.282). It is the discrete micro analysis underpinning IPA that contrasts with the more macro level approach of grounded theory, they argue (2009, p.281). For these reasons it is felt

that this approach would not be suited to a study on the transition from journalism practitioner to journalism educator, in which the lived experience of a small number of participants will be sought.

3.12.2 Ethnography

Ethnographic research is a means of studying people in their natural environment in which the researcher takes a direct role, immersed in the group or individual setting over a period of time, in order to gain an insider view. The data collection will "capture their social meanings and ordinary activities", says Brewer (2000, p.6), while Silverman notes that ethnography is about gaining insight into cultures, within their context and temporal setting, and observing activities and interactions that are particular to that setting. (2020, p.249). In the context of journalists who transition into Higher Education, this approach could provide some thick descriptions as it would allow the participants to simply go about their everyday business while allowing the researcher to tell "a convincing story using language of community members" as well as introduce observations about the culture and practices of the journalist turned academic and their community into the subsequent analysis. (Geertz; 1973, p.3). However, whilst this could undoubtedly return some very rich data, the practicalities of such an approach would rule it out. Ethnography is a lengthy and detailed process, and there would be issues around the amount of time such a process would take and how long it would last, given that it would be difficult to ascertain the exact period that transition between industry and academia would take.

Whitehead proposes that the nature of ethnography makes "the collection of daily field notes necessary simply as a means of recording what is being observed and

experienced by the ethnographer". (2004, p.21). Further, Moustakas points out that ethnography "involves extensive fieldwork" (1994, p.1) and can take months if not years to undertake. Such an approach would also require finding participants who are at the exact point of making the transition from practice to academia, which is not a simple task given the lengthy process that Higher Education recruitment can take. Further, it can be argued that much of the data collection around the transitionary period can only be undertaken after the event, rather than contemporaneously; that is, that participants would need time to reflect on their experiences in order to evaluate what has happened during the transitionary period and, indeed, whether that period has ended. In this respect, an observational approach may not be appropriate for capturing the participants' lived experiences.

3.12.3 Narrative Account

A narrative account is an interpretive approach that uses people's stories as a means of gathering and analysing data around lived experiences, often through interviews. It is therefore associated with people's own history and biographical accounts, and with the fact that people have a natural propensity for telling stories about everyday life, says McAlpine (2016), along the lines of "a beginning, middle, end – a past, present and future" (2016, p.33). She describes it as: "Each account, whether told only to oneself or to others, provides a robust way of integrating past experience into meaningful learning, locating oneself and others into the account and foreshadowing the future." (2016, p.33). A narrative account draws on temporality, says Bryman, and "the focus of attention shifts from 'what actually happened?' to 'how do people make sense of what happened?'." (2016, p.589). McAlpine argues that in addition to temporality, there is a social context and "an evaluative conclusion" that results in

the creation of a reasoned and orderly story that can shed light on identity construction. (2016, p.33).

Examples of research using a narrative account approach include O'Shaughnessy et al's study into women suffering from anorexia (2013) for which a single question was posed to participants, which read "I would like you to tell me the story of your life, all the events and experiences which are important to you; start wherever you like". (O'Shaughnessy et al, 2013, p.47; cited in Bryman, 2016, p.591). Smith et al note that IPA has "a strong intellectual connection" with a narrative analysis (2009, p.196) due to IPA's focus on meaning-making, and the fact that devising a narrative is itself a way of making meaning. (2009, p.196). They go as far as to say that they can "see the potential for a fruitful exchange with IPA" and a narrative account approach. (2009, p.197). However, for a study that focuses on the lived experiences of participants as they move from one profession in journalism to another in education, it was felt that a narrative approach might detract from the exploration of the lived experience in relation to the principal focus of the study around the transitionary phase, added to which for some participants who may have left the journalism profession many years ago may no longer have detailed recollections of specific timings of and experiences.

3.13 Ethical issues – qualitative interviewing

The nature of qualitative research is to explore the subjective human experience and it can, therefore, give rise to ethical issues because it puts private, personal accounts into the public domain, argue Brinkmann and Kvale. (2005, p.158). They question the widely held assumption that qualitative research is "inherently ethical" (2005, p.162) and point to the power dynamics of the interview situation as an example of where ethical issues may arise. (2005, p.164).

Brinkmann too challenges the common portrayal of qualitative research as "a free exchange of viewpoints" (2007, p.129), arguing that "research with human subjects necessarily involves issues of power" (2007, p.129), and that the imbalance of power between researcher and participant is at the heart of ethical dilemmas in qualitative research. (2007, p.130). Kvale proposes a series of ethical questions that researchers should ask before undertaking a research interview, which variously address issues such as consent, confidentiality, anonymity and power relationships. (Kvale, 2007, p.26). But it is not only the treatment of the qualitative research participants that raises ethical issues, say Cohen et al; it is also the research project itself and the rigour and robustness shown: "The research design, and indeed the research itself, have an ethical duty to demonstrate quality." (2017, p.112).

For Smith et al the starting point for an IPA research project, or any research project, is the avoidance of harm. (2009, p.53). The authors advise that informed consent must be gained for both data collection and outcomes of the data analysis because verbatim responses from interviewees are likely to be reported. (2009, p.53). It is, they suggest, useful to reintroduce consent while the interview is underway, especially if sensitive issues are raised by the participant. (2009, p.53). Furthermore, by drawing up a schedule of questions in advance of the interview, the researcher can identify topics of a potentially sensitive nature that may arise, and warn the participant beforehand. (2009, p.58).

For this study, those interested in being involved with the research received a participant information sheet before agreeing to take part and were asked to sign an agreement form in which they gave consent for research activities such as interviews and photo elicitation. They were made aware that participation was voluntary, that they could withdraw at any time and

that they would not be identified in the report. Anonymity was guaranteed beyond the point at which the audio interviews were transcribed. Audio material was stored on a secure, password protected database and destroyed after transcription. None of the questions asked during interviews required personal information to be disclosed; however, participants could have chosen to disclose information of a personal and possibly sensitive nature. If introduced by the participant, it was confirmed with the participant that appropriate action would be taken if necessary, such as concluding the interview.

Reference was made earlier to my own situatedness within journalism and in the transition from practitioner to educator, and consideration has to be given to the ethical implications of these. My own, sometimes difficult and emotional, lived experiences of the very same experiences about which I was interviewing the study's participants could have created a scenario in which I introduced my own feelings and perceptions into the interviews with participants who may – like me – have faced similarly challenging circumstances. Allmark et al warn of ethical implications of the "dual role" in which researchers assume additional roles (2009, p.50) – in my own case I could have worn the mantle of journalist, researcher and counsellor, for example. The authors assert: "At its simplest, the researcher wants to protect the participant from harm. She may, therefore, try to bolster his self-esteem or put a positive interpretation on described events". (2009, p.50). What is more, they argue, there is a risk that in endeavouring to produce high quality material, the researcher "may use the techniques of counselling in order to draw out the participant". (2009, p.50). If the researcher has an additional professional role – in my own situation, journalist and teacher – "she may find herself drawn into that role and away from that of researcher during an in-depth interview". (2009,

p.50). Bracketing, as discussed above, is an important method in putting aside one's own preconceptions and will be further discussed in Chapter 7's Reflective Account below.

3.14 Ethical issues – photo elicitation

There are be a number of ethical considerations in regard to photo elicitation, including those raised by the questions asked by the researcher in relation to the images; the photos that have been chosen, either by the participant or the researcher; and issues of consent and anonymity. Many studies using photo elicitation have focused on highly sensitive matters, such as Martel and Ives-Baine's study of photography and the end-of-life care of new-born babies (2014) and Lachal et al's study of obese adolescents (2016). Bates et al observe that: "The potential for distress is high when asking people to gather photos of and to discuss an upsetting and unpleasant experience." (2017, p.465). This may be exacerbated if the aim is to elicit memories and experiences that may generate emotional responses. In this respect the solution can be in giving participants control to select images and to determine how much they might say about the photographs. (2017, p.465). Indeed, the use of photo elicitation does not have to imply negative consequences in terms of sensitive issues – Martel and Ives-Baine's study highlights the response of one participant for whom the research project was "healing" and had made "a huge impact" on her life. (2014, p.323). Burton et al note that photo elicitation can enable participants "to enjoy the research process" because it empowers them to take an active role. (2017, p.389).

For the purposes of this piece of research it was not anticipated that the photographs would cover highly sensitive issues relating to the participants. However, it had to be recognised that participants may, through the selection of images and subsequent interviews, disclose

information of a sensitive and possibly upsetting nature. All participants were required to give informed consent on an agreement form that highlighted photo elicitation as a data collection method. Participants were asked to self-select photographs to bring to the interview; photos selected were for discussion purposes only and not to be used for analysis other than in the responses they evoked among participants.

3.15 Summary

This chapter has explored the theoretical underpinnings of my choice of IPA and photo elicitation as appropriate methods for the study, based on an interpretivist epistemological perspective which in turn has led to the selection of phenomenology as a methodology, using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. This thesis now turns to the participants selected for the study followed by an analysis of the accounts of their transition from journalism practitioner to journalism academics.

Chapter 4: The Participants

This chapter introduces the six participants who agreed to join the study, offering background detail about their former lives as journalists and their journey into Higher Education.

4.1 Participant A: Geoff

Geoff, aged 58, *"stumbled by mistake"* into journalism in the 1980s. After doing a history degree, he began a two-year NCTJ training course working on a local weekly newspaper, covering news, sport and crime. He stayed for six years before joining a large news organisation where he stayed for almost 30 years, working his way up from a reporter to news editor and finally becoming head of content for a group of regional newspapers. He moved into academia in his fifties and is now a senior lecturer in journalism at a UK university. He has gained a doctorate and is an active researcher as well as teaching undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Geoff looks back on his life as a journalist with pride and talks about the *"privileged position"* he was in; he says it did not feel like a job, because *"I was so involved in life and people's lives … I was just immersed in life and just happened to be reflecting, recording it".* However, he also questions his behaviour as a journalist, not in terms of his ethical approach but rather his ability to detach himself emotionally from the stories and people he was writing about. He says:

> *"From where I am now looking at me then, it's slightly perturbing to think that I could, um, I could be as detached and remote and feelingless or emotionless about involvement there… so now I often think back and think, how extraordinary it is that an individual in order to be professional – just like the medical profession, I imagine – can just detach themselves*

from humanity and just see them as a story, and that sort of interests me and also quite concerns me."

Geoff asserts that although he found great satisfaction from his work as a journalist, he was not defined by journalism, as many in the profession seem to be. He says: *"I didn't have a massive, how can I put it, I didn't have a massive, um, like, you hear some people talk about this massive, like, love affair they have with journalism, it is them, it is them. I never, I've never had that with anything I've done."*

Just as Geoff stumbled into journalism, he also fell into Higher Education five years ago by chance after spotting a newspaper advertisement for a lecturing position at his local university. He had not been planning to move jobs, but says that the description of the post *"just felt right".* The job included a requirement to complete a doctorate which, says Geoff, was a big draw: *"I was losing my creativity (in journalism) and, um, and I wanted, and this gave me the opportunity, the doctorate gave me a creative outlet, and also learning how to teach was another creative outlet."*

He labels the transitionary period into academia as being *"in no-man's land"* and describes it as hard work, stressful, challenging but exciting, and also points to the misapprehension that teaching would *"be a question of just pouring in, not old boring war stories, but be pouring in the skills and, you know, how to interview, how to research, social media and all that stuff, you know, pour that in and job done".* He returns again to the notion of the *"privilege"* of being in the profession and teaching young people yet also reflects on his difficulty in accepting the term 'academic' as a description of his professional identity: despite several years in HE during

which he has gained a doctorate, he does not regard himself as an academic. Nor does he regard himself as still identifying as a journalist, though he adds: *"I do feel as though I've left it – it never really leaves you because it leaves quite deep footprints."*

Rather than bring photographs to the interview Geoff brought objects, because, he says: *"It may sound a little bit bizarre but I was thinking of photos and nothing came to mind really."* He brought a pencil, because it *"just epitomised what it meant for me to be a journalist in that I very much equated it with the ability to write, to explore my writing and to tell stories and it always was very much a sort of a creative enterprise".* He also brought a philosophy book, and said: "*What I like about this chap is that he really opened my eyes in terms of different ways of interpreting my own past and, and, er, he really opened my eyes, a sort of a way of thinking about education."* Geoff says that reading the book helped him to understand journalism because "*it makes you aware of, you know, the full weight of the past when you enter a profession, the full weight seeps down and the question is, how much of yourself remains once you're just flooded with the traditions of the profession?"*

4.2 Participant B: Emily

Emily, 38, wanted to be a journalist from the moment she could talk; she would create family newspapers and worked on school and college news publications. She gained work experience on local papers from the age of 14 and it was a natural choice to take a university degree in journalism once she left school. She describes her background as *"poor"* and says it was hard to get into university to study journalism as she had low grades and had attended *"quite a bad school"*. Doing an extra year of work experience after A levels helped secure a university place. She says that becoming a journalist was always really important for her because *"I've always*

liked, um, and kind of, I suppose, sticking up for the underdog in a situation". Once she graduated, she began working on her local evening newspaper where she stayed for 12 years, covering local and national stories and focusing on investigative journalism and crime reporting.

She had a short spell as a freelance journalist before moving into academia at her nearby university, where she has been for six years. She teaches on a range of undergraduate journalism degree courses and has started doctoral studies. Emily attributes her move into Higher Education largely to the difficulties of working in journalism and raising a family. She left her newspaper to have children and says: *"I found it really hard working at daily newspapers with young children. I just found that impossible. So I left when I was pregnant with my second child. I think if I hadn't perhaps had children, I would probably have been on a bit of a different path."*

Emily found the transition into academia *"quite difficult"* and recalls that she felt nervous about the change to a new profession – *"I wondered whether me being passionate about journalism was enough to warrant me being here".* While she had peer support from colleagues, she felt a lack of support from her institution and an expectation that her previous experience would be sufficient for her to step into teaching seamlessly. Emily admits that she still identifies as a journalist and says: *"I'm not sure I ever won't feel a journalist."* She does not yet feel as if she is an academic, though concedes that with more experience, gaining her doctorate and carrying out research she might in the future accept the label. She feels that the transition into academia is on-going and is not certain at what point it might end; in the meantime, she does not want to relinquish her journalist identity and does not rule out returning to the profession in the future.

Emily brought a photograph of one of her front page leads written during her time as a local journalist. It was, she says, representative of the many investigations she did at her newspaper and focused on the death of a woman in hospital and the subsequent inquiry over who was at fault. She recalled: "*This was the end of probably about a year of work and interviews, the investigation into this."* She said she was given *"great opportunities*" to do investigative work at her news publication and refers to the responsibility she felt that as a journalist she should write stories such as these so that people should learn from them. Her second image was of a large group of students at her university accompanying her on a visit to the local law court. She put out an advert and was told only three or four students would join the visit, but ended up with over 100, who are featured in the photograph. She commented: *"I think for me that that's my passion, being able to work with students on that level."*

4.3 Participant C: Rob

Rob, 57, wanted to become a journalist from the age of 14. He came from a working class background and does not know where the idea came from, but recalls living in a house where there were always a lot of newspapers, both local and national. Despite having no connection with journalism nor knowing any journalists, he *"worked it out for myself … so I always wanted to be a journalist."* At the age of 18, after leaving school, he did a one-year pre-entry NCTJ journalism diploma course and went on from there to his local weekly paper where he spent a couple of years as a junior reporter before moving to an evening local newspaper in his home city. Five years later, he decided to go to university, having not previously completed an undergraduate degree at 18. He studied politics for three years and subsequently moved to a

national broadcasting company. After five years he returned to his home city to work with a regional news broadcaster.

He does not recall what prompted the move into academia, though he started some part-time lecturing work at his local university which he did alongside his TV role. Eventually a full time HE job was offered to him five years ago and he made the decision to accept it. He now teaches undergraduate students and has completed an MA. Rob recalls being very unprepared for academic life and says: *"I was surprised that I was… let loose."* While he felt reasonably confident teaching practical aspects of journalism, he felt much more anxious when it came to academic research and admits to having imposter syndrome – *"I really didn't feel like I had the skills to do it"*. Despite his MA and presenting papers at academic conferences, he does not regard himself as an academic – his view is that academics carry out research and it therefore excludes him from using the title at the moment, though he does not rule it out in the future. He feels that the transition into academic life is still on-going and does not know when he will be able to acknowledge that the transitionary period has finished. Rob still regards himself first and foremost as a journalist and admits that when asked his profession, he always describes himself as a journalist. He has no desire to return to journalism, but cannot shake off the professional label. *"I don't know why, but am I still clinging onto something?"* he reflects.

Rob did not bring any photographs to the meeting. He said: *"Do you know, I've got so few. I don't know what it was – we weren't really a photographed generation really, were we?"* However, during the initial part of the conversation we discovered that we had shared colleagues from our early careers, and Rob felt that in discussing this *"we've broken the ice".*

4.4 Participant D: Mike

Mike, aged 43, went through a traditional print route to become a journalist. He knew early on that he wanted to be a journalist with a love of writing that led him to work for his school newspaper and later for his university paper. He says: *"My mind was made up at a pretty early stage. Um, yeah, I just couldn't see myself really sort of doing anything else."* After leaving university he did an NCTJ training course before joining his local evening newspaper where he worked as a general news reporter before moving to the sports desk. Three years later, while still with his local paper, he started doing shifts for a national news organisation and ended up being offered a contract. He worked at national level for a further nine years, before moving into Higher Education and now teaches undergraduate journalism students, has achieved an MRes, carries out research and is working towards a PhD.

Mike recalls that the move into academia was prompted by a changing set of circumstances in his life – he was in his mid-30s, he had got married and was looking ahead to having a family: *"I didn't really want to still be doing evenings, weekends, and saw the guys on the desk having a bunfight over who was taking the school holidays off."* He was seeking a new challenge and liked the idea of teaching and working with young people and to get back a better work/life balance. He spotted a university vacancy, applied for it and was offered the job, but admits it was a tough decision to accept it: *"I thought, am I doing the right thing? Because nobody walks out of a job on a national desk, it just didn't happen. There was a feeling that you've worked so hard to get to this point, are you just sort of throwing it away?"*

Mike says that the transition from journalism practitioner to academic practitioner was not an easy one and that it took him about three years to get used to his new role, both in terms of

the teaching and the research. He feels the challenge was switching his mindset from thinking as a journalist to thinking like an academic: *"When I first started teaching, I was kind of behaving like a sort of editor to students and being quite, um, quite brash. Um, and that took me a while to where I was, actually, this is ridiculous, what am I doing, and yes, gradually sort of ease a bit more into it."* He alludes to a lack of institutional support during the transition and the assumption that new members of staff should be up and running from the start. Having been in his role for 11 years, Mike considers himself as an academic, mainly because it is so long since he has practiced journalism that he cannot claim to be a journalist any longer. However, he cannot shake off his journalist identity completely and while he would not contemplate returning to journalism, he feels that a part of him will always relate to being a journalist; at the same time, he struggles to contemplate a point in the future at which he might consider himself a true academic.

Mike brought a photograph of a front page lead from his time on a national newspaper, which he keeps on his office wall at home and therefore sees every day. He described it as a "*permanent memorial and reminder of what I used to be … but it's also something that was a moment in time and, you know, you kind of move on from there"*. His second choice was his university staff profile picture. He said that he does not normally like photos of himself, but felt there was something ubiquitous about his profile image: *"It's everywhere … it's a window on the world that says to people, you know, or a Google search, this is what this is, this is who I am, this is what I look like."*

4.5 Participant E: Jenny

Jenny, aged 39, recalls enjoying writing from a young age and at 18 went to university to study English. She went on to complete a Journalism Masters degree, which included an NCTJ qualification, and after she finished secured a job with a local weekly paper as a junior reporter where she stayed for two years. She then moved to a local evening newspaper as a news reporter followed by stints on the news, features, health and environment desks. She took a career break in 2009 to undertake postgraduate study during which she had the opportunity to do teaching; she followed this with part-time teaching contracts that led to a full-time university academic post around 2012. She now teaches undergraduate and postgraduate journalism students but also continues her freelance journalism career.

The turning point in Jenny's career came when she decided to do postgraduate study and take a break from journalism, largely driven by changes in work practice that legacy newspapers experienced from the late nineties. Her company experienced redundancies, her workload grew and she became disenchanted with the change in direction of local news content. She had grown up in a family of academics and thought *"it'd be interesting to research something, have a PhD, be able to call myself a doctor"*. It was a leap of faith, although she did not turn her back on journalism entirely. It was during her PhD and early teaching that she feels the transition from journalism began but adds that, *"I always felt that I had at least one, like, toe in journalism".* She continues to identify as a journalist rather than an academic although she accepts the title of lecturer; she feels that the term 'academic' is more appropriate for staff who primarily carry out research although she does not rule out becoming an academic in the future. She reflects that during the transition into academia, she *"never felt comfortable not being a journalist".*

Jenny brought a copy of a photograph of herself taken in Bosnia when she joined the army to report on their peace-keeping mission in her first local newspaper role. She now keeps the photograph in a frame in office. She recalls the thrill she experienced from the event: *"Yeah, the excitement and the unknown and learning about new things. I mean I hadn't a clue about the conflict over there or what the army were doing, I wasn't really aware the army were still there or what it was like, to be, you know, a soldier. But, um, it was really interesting."* Jenny said she struggled to source a second image to represent her role in academia, adding: *"It's a lot more static and not as exciting."* However, she brought a photo of a recent trip to Europe where she delivered a lecture at a journalism conference. She commented: "*I guess I chose that because that's sort of one of the more interesting and one of the good opportunities with, um, my academic work … we were going off to a nice location, it was, you know, interesting to meet other academics."*

4.6 Participant F: Anne

Anne, 58, always had a love of writing and at 18 went to study English at university before getting a job on her local evening newspaper. Coming from a working class background, she wanted to be a journalist so that she could *"be a voice for the voiceless … I felt like the community I came from was never properly represented and never really got much of a say".* After working for a range of local titles, she moved to a national newspaper and spent 11 years there, latterly becoming a foreign correspondent. Returning from abroad in the late nineties, she found the paper she had joined was changing and she did not like the direction it was going in. In 2002 she decided to leave and take up freelancing journalism work alongside studying for another undergraduate degree. This led to occasional lecturing work through a friend who taught at her local university and eventually a full-time job came up in the university's

journalism department. She has now been in Higher Education for over a decade, teaching both undergraduate and postgraduate journalism students.

For Anne, the transition into academia was a difficult one, partly, she feels, because as a journalism practitioner she felt looked down on by colleagues from different subject areas – regarded as having come from a *"grubby profession"*. She observed *"a lot of snootiness"* in relation to the journalism course and feels that this attitude inhibited her ability to transition more fully into life as an academic. Anne recalls that though she never set out to be an educator, she has found the teaching side of Higher Education rewarding and enjoyable. However, her heart remains in journalism: *"Did I like it [teaching] as much as journalism? Not really, never really liked it as much as journalism. Did I ever dislike it? I've always found satisfaction in it."* Even after more than a decade in HE she does not consider herself to be an academic because she does not identify with people whom she considers to be academics – those who have spent their entire working lives researching in HE. She admits her heart remains in journalism and she still thinks of herself as a journalist, though she adds: *"But I don't do it any more, that's the sad thing."*

Anne brought photographs of features she wrote for her national newspaper during her time as a foreign correspondent in Africa; she said she often talks to school groups and shows these press cuttings to her students to *"remind them that you did actually do the job, you know, and you did the job rather well"*.

The one image that stood out among the features was of a woman who talked to Anne about being raped by a soldier during war and subsequently becoming pregnant and having a son.

Anne recalled: *"It's a fantastic job but there are lots of things about it that are troubling. So you just go in for a couple of hours, you speak to a woman and then you come out with a story… basically she learned to love this child."* Anne said that when she shows such images to her students she does it in a critical way because, looking back, she realised that she had approached the story unethically, particularly in relation to taking a photograph of the woman. She said: *"I was quite prepared to take a full, frontal picture of her because it was out in Africa, it was far away, and I was using different standards."* But Anne felt that she had a very rich past, and the stories that now looks back on "*are hugely meaningful to me and I still remember".*

Chapter 5: Analysis

5.1 The double hermeneutics of IPA

A detailed account of the participants' lived experiences of transitioning from journalism practitioner to journalism educator follows, through the use of four 'super-ordinate' themes: *Tales from the Golden Days; Lost in Transition; Who am I?;* and *Present and Future Imperfect*. It is important to revisit the role of my own interpretation of the participants, as covered previously, of the double hermeneutics of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis – "the researcher is making sense of the participant, who is making sense of x". (Smith et al; 2009, p35). Smith et al argue that on the one hand, the researcher – like the participant – draws on everyday life to make sense of the world; on the other, the researcher can perceive the participant's experience through the participant's reporting of it. (Smith et al; 2009, p.36). What is more, the researcher will perceive the participant's experiences through their own "experientially-informed lens". (2009, p.36).

Smith et al also distinguish between two interpretative positions – a hermeneutics of empathy and a hermeneutics of suspicion. (2009, p.36). "The former approach attempts to reconstruct the original experience in its own terms; the latter uses theoretical perspectives from the outside (eg as with psychoanalysis) to shed light on the phenomenon." (2009, p.36). They suggest the researcher can take a middle ground position, both standing in the shoes of the participant and standing alongside the participant to ask questions and give thought to what is being said. "Successful IPA research combines both stances – it is empathetic *and* questioning, and the simple word 'understanding' captures this neatly." (2009, p.36; emphasis in original). Therefore, the researcher attempts to understand what it is like for the participant and

attempts to analyse their thoughts. (2009, p.36). Within the context of this double hermeneutic it is thus important to note that the super-ordinate themes drawn from the participants' lived experience – their reflections on and responses to questions posed during the interviews – have been selected by me, as the researcher, using my judgement and interpretation of their experiences. Some of their experiences have been left out altogether; others may cross over into several super-ordinate themes but I have selected to allocate them to only one in order to draw out a more focused analysis.

5.2 The process of analysis in IPA

As outlined previously, analysis in IPA is an iterative and inductive cycle involving close scrutiny of participant accounts in a process that begins with a "close, line by line analysis of the experiential claims, concerns and understandings of each participant". (Smith et al; 2009, p.79). This is followed by the researcher identifying patterns and themes within each participant account and then widening the analysis to include all accounts, to find broader associations and relationships between the accounts. (2009, p.79). The process of analysis is one of reading and re-reading participant accounts; making initial notes to become familiar with each transcript and to identify and distinguish "descriptive comments", "linguistic comments" and "conceptual comments". (2009, p.84). Beyond this point, associations and relationships across all accounts can be identified as emergent themes come to the fore, after which an overarching theme – or super-ordinate theme – can be articulated.

5.3 Super-ordinate theme 1: Tales from the Golden Days

This analysis begins by exploring the participants' prior experience within the journalism profession. All have previously held jobs within print journalism and their experiences within the profession range from very recent to sometimes more than a decade ago; however, all of them have worked within the field from the late 1980s up to the early 2000s during a time of rapid change and transition across the journalism industry. The table below (fig.1) illustrates the process of identifying themes from individual accounts, the ordinate themes that emerged from these accounts and the resulting super-ordinate theme.

Themes	Ordinate Themes	Super-ordinate Theme
• Strong sense of identity • Pride in journalism career • Nostalgia for the camaraderie of life in newspapers/journalism • Critical of working conditions and lack of ethical framework • Perception that journalism as a job role made a difference to society – they made their mark • Sense of wistfulness for lost journalism career	• Pride and privilege • Personal and professional • Tribes and tribulations	Tales from the Golden Days

Table 1: Themes, ordinate & super-ordinate themes, Tales from the Golden Days

5.3.1 Geoff

For Geoff, in the industry for 28 years, being a journalist allowed him to offer a public service yet there was a high degree of self-interest throughout his career, he admits. On the one hand he wanted to convey people's stories through the very powerful medium of the press; on the other, being a journalist allowed him to pursue his love for writing and also, he admits - *"for reasons of pure vanity"* – made him feel a *"more interesting person"*. He talks about being

subjected to the forces of an occupational ideology when he began his career and conforming to the norms of the journalism profession, such as being objective and impartial, and the public service motivation of the role, yet he describes being a journalist as feeling *"quite surreal":*

> *"Well, it often felt quite surreal, because, I did often feel, it felt quite surreal because I was often writing about things which personally interested me, so there was always this sort of strangeness, it was quite surreal at times. I found, I found, I found it difficult really to equate with even a job at some level because I was so involved in life and people's lives, it didn't really feel as though there was um, me, and the job, I was just immersed in life and just happened to be reflecting, recording it."*

It is Geoff's use of the word "immersed" that stands out as being significant in his recollections of his life as a journalist; it indicates that Geoff felt subsumed by his job role and that his personal identity melded with his professional identity. His repeated use of the word "*surreal*" is suggestive of an unreal or dream-like quality of world that he inhabited – it is almost redolent of an out of body experience – but it is difficult to gauge whether he was aware of this at the time or whether it is the process of looking back that has created such a perception for him. That being a journalist made him feel more interesting as a person is a narrative that suggests his professional identity created a persona which he deemed would give him greater stock within his personal life – in turn implying a lack of self-confidence in how he believed others perceived him. He notes:

> *"I think it made someone like myself who is naturally quite, um, quite shy, you know, dispositionally, and introverted, and I think it gave me a lot more confidence and, um, made me more interesting, and I think, er, yeah, it made*

me feel, it was, it was, it ticked lots of boxes, you know, from an egotistical point of view."

Geoff's admission to being an introvert is, perhaps, at odds with the gritty world of journalism where the expectation is that journalists are confident, outgoing and extrovert; indeed von Rimscha's 2015 study found that journalists as a whole were more extrovert than the general working population. Geoff's further disclosures, in which he says he felt something of an outsider in the journalism industry, could be explained by his introverted personality as he questions whether he conformed with the norms of the profession – alluding to a friction between his sensitive nature and the demands of being a journalist. He compares himself to other journalists whom he felt were more successful, and talks about his awareness that the people he worked with *"were very different to me"* thus revealing a struggle within himself in relation to his profession that was only seemingly resolved by *"just getting on with"* the job. He recalls:

"I was aware always at the back of my mind, just like a little nagging thing sometimes, that, you know, should I really be more like you or that person there, you know, I was always struggling to reach what I thought might be more of an idealised, perfect form of the journalist."

For Geoff, the *"stamp of authenticity"* in journalism came with getting the NCTJ qualification, because it allowed him to conform with the occupational ideology, and he recalls that at the time he thought the qualification would enable him:

"…would sort of flood me with a sense of arrival, that I am now and journalist, but of course you realise it's just a marker, but what you do become, there's

a degree of agency, and it's a question of just coming to a self, sort of, a self sense that, yeah, I'm happy with my own definition of what it is."

One senses from Geoff's account a degree of self-doubt that pervaded his working life as a journalist yet he clearly relished his role, alluding to the "*privileged position*" of being a journalist – *"I was in a really privileged position to build relations and, and record life…"* – once again pointing to the surreal nature of his role by continuing *"…so it didn't feel like a job, it felt surreal, it felt very privileged".* This attitude to his job role suggests a narrow boundary between the personal and professional in Geoff's eyes – being a journalist was an all-encompassing, all-consuming job role in which he remained a journalist regardless of whether he was at work or not, gaining from the professional aspect in his personal life through feelings of privilege and regarding himself as a more interesting person to others thanks to the prestige of being a journalist. There is some truth in what he says: journalism as a profession may not be highly respected, as discussed further below, but it remains a sought-after role and the NCTJ today describes it as "one of the most exciting careers around".

5.3.2 Anne

The notion of privilege is also picked up by Anne, who describes her career in local and national newspapers as *"a fantastic experience… just fantastically privileged"*. A repetition of *"lucky, lucky, lucky*" serves to emphasise Anne's affection for her journalism career and the iteration of the word "*loved*" below displays a nostalgic emotion years after leaving the profession:

"I loved the people, I loved journalists. I just loved journalists. I can't explain it. It didn't matter if they were left wing or right wing or whatever … it was just

– there's an attitude in most journalists…. and I just thought that journalists were the bees' knees."

Anne talks about the sense of belonging she found in journalism; coming from a working class family with no association with journalism, she says she found *"my tribe"* – unlike Geoff, for whom journalism appears much more of an individual enterprise. It is noticeable how Anne switches between the past and present throughout the interview, particularly when talking about journalism, as if her job as a journalist remains with her rather than belonging in her distant past; it is as if she continues to feel that sense of belonging:

"I found my tribe really quickly. I was really happy. And basically you work hard every day because what are you going to do, you're just there to do good stuff and to get the praise, I mean basically. So yeah, I loved it, I loved it."

This switching between the tenses is also evident when she recalls the idealism of her early career – *"I want to tell real people's stories and I just felt like the community I came from never was represented properly and never really got much of a say".* Anne displays a confidence in her ability to fulfil the role of journalist, believing she had something to say herself and could also speak on behalf of *"the voiceless"*; she takes pride in the work she produced, describing one memorable written feature as *"almost poetic… almost mystical".* These words come across as profound – and almost spiritual – declarations about a profession that Anne entered at a young age, after she left university; she follows it by saying: *"I could still do it, I'm confident I could still do it."* There is a sense in this latter comment that Anne is talking to herself rather than to the interviewer and that she is convincing herself that her professional abilities remain, suggesting that she did not leave journalism because she lacked the ability but rather through

choice – thereby justifying in her mind her decision to leave the profession. It is suggestive, perhaps, of an inner debate that is still rationalising her decision to leave journalism and that, conceivably, there is still a longing to be back in the profession.

Anne, who became a foreign correspondent for a national newspaper, alludes to the greater autonomy she had the higher she climbed within the industry, linking this with greater job satisfaction – "*it was more exciting the further I went, and you got more control the, the, the more you were in it, the more control you got".* This independence, she believes, allowed her to have a more ethical approach to her role, because she was not at the beck and call of newsdesk staff who were telling her what to do and how to write her stories. Anne comes across as a person who relishes her independence yet wants to be part of a tribe; she returns several times to the frustration of being told what to do by news and feature editors and her anger is palpable when she talks about returning from abroad to a changed national newspaper, dismissing the features desk staff and stories she was expected to produce as *"fluffy".* Almost two decades since she left journalism, the profession still appears to arouse an array of emotions within her – love, passion, frustration, anger and a wistfulness about the job she no longer does.

5.3.3 Mike

Like Anne, Mike – who worked on local and national newspapers – also uses the phrase *"fantastic"* to describe his time as a journalist. The fact that he has a framed front page picture of one of his lead stories from his national newspaper days hanging from his home office wall serves to highlight an apparent need for a daily reminder of his life in journalism. He describes it as "*fabulous*" and says:

"It's kind of good, from an identity point of view, to still have that reminder. Erm, you know, that this is kind of what you used to do. It's something that I think, you know, it's something you are sort of essentially proud of really."

He labels the picture as a *"permanent memorial"* to his life as a journalist, a phrase that implies he considers his career as journalist is dead and gone, yet still present; but more than that, his phrase suggests that it is a career that he is still mourning. He is nostalgic about his time on a national tabloid – like Anne, alluding to the camaraderie of life in the newsroom, the fun, laughter and banter with his colleagues, and says: *"When I think about what the things are that I really miss, you know, about the paper, it's very much the people, it's that sort of spirit and sense of fun, so yeah, yeah..."*

There is a wistfulness in Mike's voice tailing off at this point; it is as if his reflections have taken him back to a particular moment in time and place, many years prior, that still evoke a sentimental memory for him. Yet looking back on his national tabloid career Mike reflects a degree of discomfort related to the ethical stance of his newspaper and it is clear he struggles to reconcile his working life as a journalist then with the more reflective practice of being in academia now. His words betray a sense of shame, almost – and certainly self-criticism – about his behaviour as a tabloid journalist:

"I mean, I look back and sometimes think how did I ever work there? What was I thinking of, because actually, there's so much about it I feel quite embarrassed about… I think to be associated with it is quite embarrassing. I do look back at it and struggle to reconcile that now, the more I think about it

the more I kind of feel uncomfortable. I do think, you know, why, why did I do that?"

What is more, he talks about becoming *"institutionalised"* as a journalist, of "*how you almost lose that, that sense of speaking for yourself … it's a bit of a Stockholm Syndrome, that there was a kind of news editor telling me what I should be doing".* The use of the words *"Stockholm Syndrome"* implies an abusive relationship in which he is the hostage who builds a bond with his captor or abuser; it resonates – though in stronger terms – with Anne's perspective of being under the control of newsdesks in her early journalism roles. So although Mike has clear affection for his previous life as a journalist, and in particular the comradeship he experienced, it is also tempered by a sense of regret and of relinquishing control in his professional life.

5.3.4 Rob

Rob demonstrates an affection for his life as journalist when he says he *"absolutely loved it".* As a working class boy, he went straight from school, via an NCTJ pre-entry course, to his local city newspaper. He recalls: *"I just couldn't believe it when I got there, just, when I look back, I just think, I think that was the best of times because, because I was young, um, I was in my home city and I just loved it, I just loved it."* The repetition of the words *"I just loved it"* serves to emphasise the excitement he felt at the time and the evocative memory that remains today: there is a specific timeframe in his mind as he reflects. Rob took three years out of journalism to complete a degree in politics, but returned to spend the remainder of his career in broadcasting. Yet he too has a more critical perspective on his career, seen through the lens of a journalism educator, as he looks back with a sense of frustration at the lack of industry

knowledge, political awareness and ethical grounding that journalists of his generation experienced.

> *"It's this lack of knowledge we had about our industry back then, and also a lack of knowledge of, like, the political dimensions. I mean we never learned anything about press ownership or, you know, spin doctoring or manipulating or whatever. Or let's be honest, ethics – I don't think we did, I don't, I don't recall very much about it."*

He also talks about the uncompromising nature of journalism and recalls how his time in journalism was devoid of sentimentality or empathy:

> *"It was really hard-faced, when you think back to the office. You know, they were really upset, this person you interviewed, they were really upset. Whatever. They're just going, so what, did you get the story? You go, well, yeah. And then you do, just didn't think about it, you bottle it up. And you feel really bad about it, you know, I can't tell anyone."*

There is an interesting transition from the third person to the second person in this recollection, illustrating that Rob himself has been through this experience that he describes and that he is now looking back in on it from the outside, as if he is an observer or onlooker rather than the player. The fact that Rob recalls such incidents with apparent clarity is an indication of the effect it must have had on him at the time; his use of the words *"bottle it up" and "I can't tell anyone"* suggests it might be a memory about which he has not spoken or articulated before. It also presents an empathy with the feelings of others that was not acknowledged within his profession at the time – and an incident he could not then acknowledge publicly to peers and

superiors – as well as a discord between the demands of the job and the sensibilities of some of those doing the work of a journalist, redolent, perhaps, of Geoff's experience.

5.3.5 Emily

For Emily, becoming a journalist was the fulfilment of a long-held ambition, one that she had aspired to from her teenage years. She says: *"I was really focused on it and I think for me, becoming a journalist was really important. Um, I always just felt a great fit with it."* She goes on to say that she always wanted to work at a newspaper, adding: *"So it was not necessarily a choice; I think it was more just that I really wanted to do it."* There is a sense from her use of words that becoming a journalist was a part of her identity even before she gained a job in the profession; the expression *"great fit with it"* implies a deep-felt affinity with journalism – the analogy being, for example, of a hand fitting into a glove or a foot fitting into a shoe, and her belief that it was not a choice over which she agonised suggests an inevitability within her mind that she had to become a journalist, that there was a natural segue from school to university to journalism. This empathy with journalism is further reinforced when she says: *"It's been a lifelong dream to be a journalist. I've loved being a journalist and I'm proud to be one"* – talking in the present tense about a job she left more than eight years ago. Like other participants, including Anne and Rob, she alludes to coming from a working class background when she says:

> *"So yes, I came to university, it was quite hard for me, I came from quite a poor background, I found it very hard to get to university. I didn't necessarily have the right kind of grades, I went to quite bad schools, worked really hard to get the grades and then to get an extra year of work experience to get into the course."*

There are negative connotations throughout this sentence with the repetition of the word *"hard"* and references to poor academic performance and *"bad"* schools; however, these contrast with Emily's clear determination to rise above her circumstances, of her doggedness in pursuing a path towards journalism that did – and remains – an integral part of her personal and professional identity. Her reflection on her background helps explain, perhaps, her desire to *"stick up for the underdog in a situation"* in relation to her journalism career. It is relevant to note here that as recently as 2016, a Social Mobility Foundation report found that only 11% of journalists came from a working class background compared to 60% of the population, while Kirby's study (2016) on social mobility for the Sutton Trust found that 51% of leading journalists were privately educated. It tells us something about the character of the participants who raise their working class backgrounds as a factor: that though the odds were stacked against them, they nevertheless successfully pursued careers in the field of journalism and demonstrated a determination to exceed the expectations of their class. As Emily comments: "*I'm always a great believer of trying to do, get yourself in the best position you can in life, really."*

5.3.6 Jenny

Jenny enjoyed writing from a young age but it was not until she went to university to study English Literature that she decided on a career in journalism. She went on to complete a postgraduate Masters degree in print journalism, subsequently joining her local newspaper. She recalls the advice at the time was to have a career in journalism, starting at a weekly newspaper, moving on to a daily, then a regional and then a national; yet now, she questions this conventional wisdom: *"And you work your way up. Which I think was terrible advice in hindsight, because that system was starting, starting to get on the way out."* Jenny is referring to the changes taking place within journalism following the rise of the internet from the early

1990s, pointing out: *"Actually, if I'd done web journalism it probably would have been a whole different story."* It is interesting that even before Jenny talks about her early journalism experiences she is questioning her choices in relation to the route she took into journalism and, as is so often the case with hindsight, there is a hint of regret in her words and arguably it suggests that she has a sense of under-achievement in the present, despite the fact that she has pursued a very successful journalism and academic career.

When Jenny recalls her early career in journalism she talks of *"the excitement and the unknown"* in her local newspaper roles and recollects that she was offered *"a lot of really good opportunities"* that gave her the chance to *"learn about new things… going to new places and having new experiences"* – citing a short spell in her early twenties with British peace-keepers in Bosnia as one of the highlights of her local journalism days. She says:

> *"I guess I kind of look back on that and think, that was kind of, not the height, but that was kind of when we do journalism, when I was young and not at home with kids, it was kind of exciting because I could go to those sort of places."*

Jenny is juxtaposing the carefree days of her twenties with the ties and responsibilities that were to come with parenthood in her thirties and, like others, she alludes to the camaraderie of working in journalism, recalling house shares with colleagues during which *"we made our own fun and worked really hard. Yeah, and it was really good, and I really enjoyed it".* One gets a sense of wistful nostalgia as Jenny talks; a kind of mourning, also redolent of Mike's account, in relation to the early days of her career as she looks back on this particular moment in time.

And yet such times were contrasted by the long hours and hard work associated with small, weekly publications at the time:

> *"Had a brilliant, awful, great time… it was proper boot camp. The editor thought we were working for the News of the World or something like that. He treated us terribly. I mean in hindsight it was, it was good but you wouldn't get away with it now. I mean we were working like 14-hour days, seven days a week, we were getting sent to do death knocks on dodgy housing estates on our own… all sorts, and told to go back and knock again, knock again, again…"*

The use of the oxymoron *"brilliant, awful"* is effective in conveying Jenny's dark humour in relation to her past experiences and her point is one that is arguably reflected to some degree in all of the participants' accounts: the notion that newsroom practices in the past have been questionable in terms of ethics, wellbeing and duty of care to employees, and that this way of life was, at the time, an acceptable – even an expected – part of journalism culture; that if you wanted to get on in journalism, you had to put up with a bullying and sometimes oppressive environment.

5.3.7 Summary

This section has explored the participants' perspectives on their previous careers as print journalists. What emerges, broadly, is that all of them have a deep affection for and affinity with their working life as journalists – carefree days, camaraderie, excitement and pride in being a journalist are highlighted as very positive aspects of being a part of the industry. Yet this is countered by other stories relating to the tough working environment, a lack of ethical standards – both within the workplace and in relation to journalism practice – and even a sense

of becoming institutionalised by the profession. It has to be taken into account, however, that these reflections are made through the lens of the participants' roles as academics and that they may see things very differently now, at a point some years on from journalism practice, than they did at the time.

5.4 Super-ordinate theme 2: Lost in Transition

This analysis now moves on to the transitionary phase between being a journalism practitioner and becoming an HE educator. It explores the events and situations that prompted participants to make the move into Higher Education, their initial experiences on joining an academic institution and their reflections on the phase between leaving one profession and joining another.

Themes	Ordinate themes	Super-ordinate Theme
• Cast adrift, sense of loss, isolation • Lacking support • When / where will it end? • Losing journalism stock • Negative attitude to journalism within academia • Academic research as a way to gain respect • What is an academic? • I will never be an academic • Stuck between academic and journalist • Sense of the mundane of academia versus excitement of journalism • Adapting to different work practices	• Everyone's world • No man's land • Alone and adrift	Lost in Transition

Table 2: Themes, ordinate & super-ordinate themes, Lost in Transition

5.4.1 Geoff

Geoff insists that he was not planning on a move out of journalism, but that a chance conversation with his wife began to sow the seed in his mind. She was reading the local newspaper and spotted a job advertisement at his local university. He recalls: *"She said, 'Oh,*

you could do this', and the more she, she just read it out, a lecturer, and it just felt right." There was a requirement to complete a doctorate, which was a draw for Geoff – being a bookish person, he felt it would offer a new, different way in which he could explore and expand his writing skills; he similarly saw learning to teach as another creative outlet. He had presented occasional teaching sessions as a journalist and was the father of young adult children who were at the university phase in their lives, and felt *"it would be great to do all that lot"*.

He acknowledges that there had been a slow build-up towards this point in his job role – he had been in journalism for many years, the industry itself was in transition which inevitably brought stresses and strains to his working life, there were fewer staff and those who remained were expected to take on greater workloads. His management position had limited his opportunity for writing and he recalls he no longer found journalism as fulfilling as it had once been. He says: *"It just felt right… it was the right time,"* and adds that the decision to leave journalism was not difficult despite his length of time in the profession:

> *"There's always been a part of the real me always interrogating, so I had my own view of journalism, but it wasn't, it wasn't like, um, it wasn't like, er, it didn't define me in that respect and so transition, going, so I was always open to new ideas and new ways in which I could write."*

The hesitancy in Geoff's words suggests that as he looks back, he is struggling in his own mind to make sense of his move out of journalism; what is more, his words seem to be at odds, perhaps, with his previous reflections in which he suggested that his professional persona seeped into his private persona, allowing him to become a more interesting person in the eyes

of others. It is a conflict that Geoff resolves through the use of the analogy of an open marriage, indicating both a commitment to yet a freedom from journalism:

> *"It wasn't like a divorce, it wasn't a messy divorce, it was, because it was always quite an open relationship if I can use that analogy, it didn't define me, I've always been motivated by, um, yeah, being as creative as possible, and I think, and I think the more deskbound I'd become in journalism… I was losing my creativity."*

There are all manner of connotations that can be connected with Geoff's personification of his relationship with journalism, particularly in his use of the word *'divorce'.* The word suggests that there has previously been a romantic alliance, with courtship, love and commitment implied; the fact that Geoff alludes to this through his use of *"divorce"* infers a very deep level of involvement with the journalism profession – that it for him it was a wedded association that went beyond the professional and into the personal. But by using the words *"an open relationship"* he is allowing himself a get-out clause from the perceived shackles of the profession, permitting himself to switch careers seemingly without regret or responsibility – just as one might leave a real-world marriage – and it is true that he does not dwell on leaving the profession when discussing his transition into HE but concentrates on what was to come rather than what he left behind.

Geoff says that when he started his HE job he did not miss his former life as a journalist but nevertheless describes a feeling of being in a *"no-man's land, of no identity"* and of being in *"a void"* when embarking on his new career:

> *"In my own mind I was aware that I was like, it's like doing a space walk, I was nobody, I was nobody at that point, I'd relinquished one (profession) and*

there's no going back to that, and, but I hadn't, but I didn't sense that there was anything, nothing had replaced it. So there was sort of, um, there was a sort of, um, yeah, it's like a sort of no gravity thing really, it was a strange feeling."

The word *"nobody"*, which is repeated for emphasis, allied with phrases *"doing a space walk"* and *"no gravity thing"* evokes a significant sense of isolation and of being lost – one can mentally envisage and physically feel Geoff's aloneness in what is an unknown and alien world. For someone for whom his previous journalism career meant so much to him, in terms of his personal and professional identity, and of being *"immersed"* in being a journalist, it represents a profound change and challenge in his life. He goes on to say that it was *"quite surreal being in, um, a place of no occupational identity",* and that although he felt that journalism stopped immediately, he nevertheless *"didn't feel like a teacher",* adding: *"I didn't realise what that would feel like, because there was nothing professionally, there was nothing…"* His words indicate that for him, the early transition into academia had a deep effect on him and his sense of identity.

This feeling of professional emptiness continued, he recalls, until he gained a postgraduate certificate in education – *"it was a stamp of, just a minor stamp saying, well, we think you are, you know, fit for purpose, not too many red flags at this stage, so when I got the PG Cert I viewed that as a massive achievement for me because then I'd, I'd put on a new identity in a way."* His thought process is redolent of his days in journalism, and how gaining his NCTJ qualification gave him a *"stamp of authenticity".* Yet there is an anomaly in the way he regards the paper qualification as a marker in terms of career progression and his apparent diffidence to his

abilities as a teacher and academic, when he asserts that he is *"absolutely amateur as a teacher … and I'm an amateur with the academic work".*

Geoff goes on to say that he entered his new role in Higher Education with a mixture of excitement, over-confidence and naivety – his repetition of the word "*excitement"* in his phrase *"I was very excited, I was very excited; I felt more excited professionally than I'd been for a long time"* serves to underscore the feelings of optimism he experienced at the time. However, he also assumed his job would simply be to *"pour"* his prior practical skills and experience of journalism into the heads of students – *"and that would be it".* He comments:

> *"I envisaged, initially, it would be a question of just pouring in, not old boring wars stories, but be pouring in the skills, and you know, how to interview, how to research, social media and all that stuff, you know pour that in and job done."*

Similarly, he approached the idea of undertaking doctoral study as a straightforward task: *"And I thought, the doctorate, well, I'm quite good at writing and that will look after itself."* However, he soon realised there was a significant disconnect between his perception of the job and the reality of his academic role, and it led to what he calls his *"biggest wake-up call"* as he realised the transition would not be as effortless as he had anticipated.

> *"The biggest wake-up call I had here was the realisation that … the privilege of teaching young people is so much more than saying, you know, if you've got 100 words per minute shorthand, you can just take me through the defamation act, um, yeah, you're fine, you'll be a journalist. From where I*

am now, just even the fact that I was there once, thinking that was all that was required, is laughable."

Geoff is admitting his own misjudgement and berating himself in relation to this part of his academic transition and he use of the words '*the biggest wake-up call'* is hard-hitting; the fact that this moment in time still plays on his mind is indicative of the strength of feeling he had – and has – about what he perceives as a significant error. It also suggests that for Geoff, his realisation of what journalism education entails, through the lens of an academic, has also given him the chance to reflect – from a critical distance – on how journalism practice has changed, even though he was once in it; it is indicative of his growing awareness not only of the gap between his perception of HE and the reality of it, but also about his perceptions of the journalism industry, having left it, and of a realisation that journalism education is much more complex than he initially believed.

Geoff describes the first two years as the hardest and recalls the feelings of stress and anxiety in relation to the teaching – *"can I hold them, can I entertain them, can I make this sufficiently interesting … can I inspire them?"*. The academic requirements of postgraduate study were also demanding and he recollects that it felt as if he had to learn two professions at once. While he says he was never going to *"crumble"* under the strains of the early years, he does admit that:

"You have low moments and there's always, you know, can I teach, teach properly? But I've never beaten myself up about that because I'm still trying to get better at it, and I'm still making terrible mistakes, I am making mistakes, I make mistakes with my teaching, with my research, but that's life, and you know, we can't improve unless you sort of reflect on all that."

There is a perception of both self-criticism and self-deprecation in Geoff's words, and the repetition of the word *"mistakes"* – including *"terrible mistakes"* – is striking, all the more so in the knowledge that he has now spent several years teaching in Higher Education and has successfully completed doctoral study. However, it also reveals his aptitude for reflection and self-improvement, which he says have been important for him during transition; for example, he will make notes to himself after lectures on where his material was well received or how the delivery could be improved. He alludes to confronting *"the good and the bad"* through reflection and comments: "*I don't mind revisiting things that have been hurtful, you know, professionally, and, er, trying to make sense of it."* We do not know exactly what *"hurtful"* relates to, but its use here is an interesting lexical choice, indicative of Geoff's deep personal connection with his professional persona.

It could be that it is this perspective that keeps him constantly striving for more and to improve professionally – certainly for Geoff the transition into Higher Education is on-going and is *"still absolutely a work in progress";* nor does he see an end point: *"No, never, no, no, no, I think it's endless really".* The repetition of the word *"no"* is insistent; Geoff is unwavering in his view that the transition into Higher Education is an on-going journey, yet there is a perception that this is a burden to him as he describes it as a *"problem":*

> *"The problem is that the older, as you go on … you've got more to look back on, the more introspective you become and the more you learn and the more you, sort of, you're constantly reinventing yourself in the present, based on your past."*

5.4.2 Anne

For Anne, her move into HE also came at a time when she was questioning her future in journalism after returning to the UK following many years as a foreign correspondent: *"So mid-40s, and I'm thinking, I've got another 20 years to work at least and I don't want to just be paddling around in the shallows of this industry anymore."* The metaphor *"paddling around in the shallows"* reflects her disenchantment with the industry she once loved and provides a rationale for her leaving journalism. Anne was asked by a previous editor, who had himself started work at her local university, whether she would do some guest lecturing. Her academic career developed from there, but unlike Geoff it was not a deliberately planned move into academia: *"It wasn't because I was desperate to get into teaching, it was because it was another thing for me and it was like spreading your, spreading your kind of talents, if you like."* But it came at a time when she felt her journalism career was no longer progressing:

> *"It wasn't conscious. It was like falling and I know many journalists who no longer can find work in journalism, who would be delighted to be teaching because they haven't found a place to take what they've got and adapt it to a new reality. So I was one of the lucky ones, um, in terms of managing to find a job in education."*

Her use of the simile *"like falling"* suggests a loss of control in her journalism career – that she was gripping on to something and finally had to let go; it is also a phrase that is laden with meaning and emotion – sadness, fear, emptiness, powerlessness – and implies a reluctant move from one profession to another, caused by necessity rather than desire. Anne admits that she always thought she would remain in journalism until she retired but on returning from abroad had to recognise the world of newsgathering had changed, as had her part in it. She

comments: "*I feel old now, I do, I feel old. So you're actually, and your best years, you feel they're behind you, and you feel you've made, it was good, that good things were the best years."* Anne is the only participant who alluded to her age, even though she is some years away from retirement, and her comment has both physical and mental connotations and a weariness about her current life together with a nostalgia and sadness for her lost journalism career.

Reflecting on her transition into academia, Anne – unlike Geoff – will admit that she is a good teacher, reflected in the positive feedback she receives from her students:

> *"I think I'm a good teacher … I think I speak in very plain terms. I think that I'm not talking to them in a way they don't understand. I'm also really supportive, so I'm, I think I'm a good teacher and that makes me pleased."*

However, she also confesses that she does not like her role in academia as much as she relished her journalism work: "*Did I like it as much as journalism? Not really, never really liked it as much as journalism. Did I ever dislike it? I've never, never disliked it. I've always found the satisfaction in it."* It is interesting to observe the way in which Anne questions herself in the past tense to probe her present situation; one senses that she is setting herself apart from her own situation – the outsider looking in – and the nature of this metacognition perhaps allows her to be introspective rather than critical or judgemental about her feelings and motivations relating to her transition from journalism to Higher Education. It is almost as if she regrets the move into HE but does not want to acknowledge that she might have made a mistake. What she had not expected when she moved into HE was that there would be a focus on academic development as well as teaching; she did, in fact, start a PhD but it remains unfinished and she has found that the issue of teaching versus academic research has presented a conflict she has been unable

to resolve. On the one hand, she feels her lack of a postgraduate qualification means she has been held in lower regard by colleagues within her institution; on the other, the lack of a doctorate stymies any ambition she may have for promotion or moving to another university:

> *"So the difficulty is you're a journalist, you're not an academic. You come in, you realise you don't have 'doctor' in front of your name, that they don't think you've made the grade here. Without a doctorate you can't move very easily, it's very difficult to go anywhere else."*

There is frustration and resentment evident in her phrasing; Anne expresses further irritation with what she perceives as a delineation between new members of staff who previously held a career in journalism and those who are long-established academics. She says:

> "*So the journalists are thought to be unthinking practitioners, as if we didn't think as journalists about what we were doing, you know, like ethical dilemmas. It just irritates the hell out of me, and there is this attitude in academia."*

She alludes to the inconsistency she experienced in the university seeking former practitioners in journalism and welcoming their skills, yet working alongside colleagues who do not have prior experience in journalism and who are *"highly critical"* of the profession:

> "*I find it insulting sometimes when I hear the way they speak of it, something they don't really understand. There's an awful lot of snootiness about what they see as a kind of grubby profession."*

There is some irony in Anne's criticism of fellow academics in that she has also criticised the journalism industry she left yet the loyalty she has for journalism seems to outweigh the allegiance she feels for the academic community as she reveals a sense of injustice towards colleagues. It could be that more than a decade after she started her role as an academic there are issues that remain unresolved in her mind. When Anne says,

> *"You did feel like they didn't think you quite made it as an academic and in many ways you were quite glad you weren't making it as an academic because you didn't really respect it in the way you had, what you, compared to what you came from,"*

she steps into the second person to further explore her own feelings – a technique described by Kross et al (2014) as "self-talk as a regulatory mechanism" (2014, p.305). Their paper explores whether the language people use to refer to the self during introspection influences how they think, feel, and behave under social stress, with research showing that "using non-first-person pronouns and one's own name (rather than first-person pronouns) during introspection enhances self-distancing". (2014, p.305). Used here by Anne, it suggests that she is distancing herself from what she considers to be unfair attitudes towards her from colleagues, that she clearly found hurtful.

Anne touches on the immediacy of journalism and the camaraderie of her previous role that she found lacking when she started her job in HE – she feels there was a greater collegiate culture in journalism than in education and observes that she and HE colleagues who were former journalists share the experience of making something every day and working together to meet deadlines. She says: *"None of us are academics first, we're all journalists first. What we share is that we made something every day so we still have that kind of can, let's make it happen*

kind of attitude." It is a comment that betrays her belief that she remains a journalist at heart and that despite her transition into academia she does not recognise she has become an academic.

5.4.3 Rob

Like some of the participants, for Rob the move into academia came at a time in his life when he was seeking change, when he had a young child and wanted to settle back in his home city. He was offered a job with a local news broadcaster and combined this with a period of part-time work at a nearby university and was eventually offered a full-time post. He recalls being *"quite daunted"* by both the teaching and the research he was expected to undertake for an MA, and says there were *"all sorts of difficult situations"* to begin, reflecting that he was ill-prepared for what lay ahead when he took the job:

> *"I'm amazed how, sort of, perhaps, ill-prepared, that I was allowed to go and do this, and it's because I think it was at the time universities were interested in recruiting practitioners. I think it's less so now, to be honest with you, but they wanted practitioners. I was surprised that I was sort of let loose."*

His choice of words suggests a lack of confidence in his ability to fulfil the role expected of him when he started the job, reinforced when he describes his occasional one-off lecture prior to his full-time post as being *"like show time",* adding *"that's the good bit and it's just not like that all the time".* It meant, he felt, that he had to learn about teaching and research as he went along, rather than having support or training from the institution or colleagues – a situation he

does not feel is unique to his university but commonplace in Higher Education. However, he recalls that he continued to wear his journalist 'hat' for some time after he began his job role.

> *"My attitude was virtually, right, I'm a journalist, this is how you do it. And it was quite often, the gag was, obviously this never happened but kind of like, you know, why do I, why do I have to do this or why is this a news story? And I'd just say, because it is. Because as journalists we just sort of learned by doing, didn't we? There's no, this is the story because it's x, y and z. We just knew it was a story."*

His views echo those of Geoff, who also thought teaching would simply be around covering the basic skills of journalism, but over time Rob's style of teaching led him to reflect on whether it was a sustainable approach and he began to question himself about why a particular incident was or was not worthy of a news story. He recalls:

> *"So I had to start unpicking all that and I had to start asking myself, yeah, why is this a story? I can't just say because I say so. I was guilty of saying look, well, I'm a journalist, this is what you do, instead of getting the students to think through it themselves."*

There is a juxtaposition in Rob's self-assuredness as a journalism practitioner and the self-doubt he displays towards his role as an academic. Though he acknowledges that the journalism expertise and communication skills he brought to the HE job were valuable, he also admits to feeling anxious about his teaching role: *"There were a lot of times when I thought, oh God, why am I doing it like this? I just know that I did do it like that. So there's a little bit of anxiety."* His switch from the past to present tense implies that as he reflects on the early days

in academia, he is recollecting in the present his emotions from a specific moment in the past. Furthermore, Rob uses the term *"imposter"* to describe his response to the fact that he was expected to undertake academic research, suggesting that he considered himself to be less competent than he was perceived to be by others, particularly in relation to his MA study. He says: **"***I just thought, oh my God, what's this? Because I really didn't feel like I had the skills to do it."* Later, after he had completed his Masters, he says the imposter syndrome returned when he presented a paper at a conference, recalling, "*I did at that point think, what on earth am I doing? You know, what? You know, I'm not quite sure what to do, what's the format?"* It connotes an unexpected lack of confidence in his own ability despite having what Geoff would call the 'badge of honour' that a qualification such as an MA should bring.

But Rob found that the practice of journalism had not equipped him well for his introduction to the field of journalism studies at university and alludes to how little curiosity practising journalists have about their own profession or the people who inhabit it:

> *"A young footballer will sit around and talk to his fellow footballers about great footballers of the past. Well, journalists have never done that, I've never done that… we'd never sit around going, 'Oh, I want to be like so and so.'"*

What seems evident is that for Rob, entering HE gave him the opportunity and the motivation to reflect on his journalism practice and ultimately on his teaching methods which, similar to Geoff, brought a light bulb moment that led him to challenge his own preconceptions. Like Geoff, Rob does not believe his transitionary phase is yet over – because in his mind that would

mean that he has reached a point where he knows it all, and he believes *"you never stop learning how to do it, do you? I think you're always learning."*

5.4.4 Mike

Like Rob, Mike also experienced a changing set of life circumstances that led him towards Higher Education. Having started his journalism career in his early twenties as a single person without family responsibilities or financial commitments, by his mid-thirties he was married and the demands of working for a national morning newspaper, with expectations that he should undertake evening and weekend work, were no longer appealing. He says: *"I just felt as I was getting into my mid-30s that actually my priorities were starting to change."* He talks about a *"new phase"* in his life, seeking a better work/life balance – *"something a little bit slower and a bit more considered than the really hectic, manic, fast paced environment that I was used to".* Like Anne and Geoff, he also alludes to the changing nature of journalism at the time – that the workload was increasing and that the turnaround to produce copy was so fast that it was becoming *"mechanical";* he talks about believing that HE would offer him *"more control"* and *"freedom"* for his writing.

Mike was drawn to the idea of teaching and working with young people, so began looking for jobs in the HE sector; he spotted a university post, applied for it and was offered the job, and took it even though it meant a major move for him and his family to another part of the country. *"I just thought, I'm ready, I'm ready for a new challenge, I thought, at this point"* – not dissimilar to Geoff for whom a job in academia *"felt right".* However, Mike found it difficult to make a clean break – for a while he continued to do a weekend shift at his old paper – *"so it didn't feel like it was going to be a massive break from it".* There is resonance with Anne's account here –

a reluctance to cut all ties with his previous job role, yet a realisation that circumstances dictated a different career path. And as with Anne, there appears to be a love/hate relationship with his life as a journalist – it was a job he aspired to do and loved doing, yet he found that the pressures of the job and the demands it made on his life became intolerable. But Mike has previously alluded to being *"institutionalised"* in relation to his journalism role, and it is feasible that this could have made his move away from the profession more difficult; that the ties were so almost too strong to break.

Mike divulges his apprehension of the transition into HE and says that it was not easy to begin with; he feels it took him some time to *"kind of get used to it*" because of the very different working environment and culture that prevailed in journalism. Having previously alluded to having experienced a *"Stockholm Syndrome"* in his journalism role, it is perhaps not surprising that it took him some time to shake off the shackles of daily newspaper life and to adjust to a different way of working, and the use of the word *"freedom"* here underscores his view that he was in some way constrained by his previous job:

> *"That sense of academic freedom is not something that came, even though it's what I was looking for, when it actually came I really didn't know what to do with it and it just took me a while to sort of just get to grips with it."*

Similarly, his reference to what could be regarded as an abusive relationship in his journalism role could be associated with the lack of confidence he expresses when recalling his move from journalism to HE:

> *"One of the things I think you have when you're, you come from a vocational background, you come into academia, I think a big question you have is, is this going to work? Am I going to be able to cut it?"*

Mike says that he *"loved"* the teaching side of his job role but, like Rob, found it difficult to shake off the journalist persona, and found himself behaving more like a news editor than a lecturer in practical sessions, describing his behaviour as "*brash*". It took him some time to leave behind the behavioural traits of the journalism profession: *"It did take me the first three years to really, I would say, get to, properly get to grips with, to make that adjustment."* His words suggest that his previous work environment left a deep impression on his psyche that was not easy to reverse; one could argue that three years is a significant length of time in which to adjust to a new role and settle into a novel work environment, yet Mike is firm in his opinion and the fact that he has given this phase such a well-defined timescale suggests that it has made an impact on him while he was experiencing it as well as now, as he looks back on it.

Mike says he found the demands of the institution to be research active and publishing academic papers from the moment he moved into HE were unrealistic and he feels there was a lack of support from the institution as well as from established colleagues when he first joined HE; in fact, it took him four years to publish his first article. Like Rob, he was unprepared for expectations that he would be familiar with the theory of journalism studies – he recalls that in the journalism industry there were no conversations nor any real comprehension about the theory of journalism:

> *"I didn't know any field … I didn't know anything really about journalism studies… because in the industry, I mean, there was no… you just had no idea. I mean, there was no link there whatsoever."*

Mike's tone suggests that from his standpoint as an academic, he is bemused that there was so little discussion of theory when he practised journalism, yet ironically this lack of knowledge proved to be held against him when he joined academia; he vents his frustration at what he considers to be a *"negative"* attitude from colleagues towards journalism staff and towards journalism as a subject area – an issue that mirrors Anne's perspective. He reflects:

> *"I think there's something, there's something about, um, journalists in academia, which I think, academics look at you a little bit differently even though, I don't think, I don't think anything can be done to change it. Whatever I do I'll always be, you know, we get described as, you know – the journalism lecturers' collective group – as 'the journalists'. It's quite interesting but I think there's quite a sort of disparaging undertone."*

There is a sense here that Mike feels an inferiority imposed on him by colleagues, and indeed he recalls having had to *"banish"* his journalism background in order to gain the acceptance of colleagues – otherwise, *"you're just seen as a sort of journalism trainer".* His response has been to publish work and gain postgraduate qualifications, but even then, he says, colleagues still make the assumption that as a journalism lecturer he lacks research capability:

> *"Even now I've got a colleague who, you know, turns around to me and says to me, oh, I'm doing a writing class for beginners to academic research, are you interested? And I'm like, what are you talking about?"*

Over a decade since he moved into HE Mike believes that colleagues would still regard him as a journalist, rather than as an academic. In the classroom, this attitude towards ex-journalists

has been compounded by staff who do not have prior journalism experience being critical of the profession and having a negative attitude to journalism broadly, he says:

> "*Certainly in the past, you know, we've had wider staff teaching journalism students, it hasn't gone down well, because I think they've ended up spending sessions in front of students slagging off journalism.*"

Mike is highlighting what is a little discussed issue here about the schism that can exist between former journalism practitioners and media theorists who invariably take a critical approach to journalism and news – an issue that will be discussed further below.

Overall, there is much that could be read into Mike's account of his transition into Higher Education; one senses a lack of self-confidence during the early part of his academic career, particularly in relation to research, and there is also evidence of frustration about his lack of acceptance among colleagues. However, it is an anecdotal account that is based on his own perception and it could be emblematic of low self-esteem or doubts about his professional self (in his academic capacity), rather than a true reflection of other colleagues' views about journalism staff. Interestingly, like Geoff, he aims for acceptance via postgraduate qualifications yet like Anne, he finds that acceptance is elusive because of what he perceives as dissonance among colleagues about the academic status or potential of journalism staff. There is certainly a paradox in the fact that he left a career in which he felt so much a part of the environment that he had become institutionalised and joined a profession in which he has struggled to feel accepted and acknowledged.

5.4.5 Jenny

Unusual among the participants, Jenny's entry into academia came while studying for her PhD studies, during which she undertook teaching activity. She recalls that she really enjoyed the teaching and reflects, "*I started to think, yeah, this is what I'm going to do, this is my new career",* later commenting, *"I started, definitely started to see myself as a lecturer."* For Jenny there was an affinity with her students in the sense that she was close to them in terms of her age, and was researching new media journalism techniques that allowed her to put theoretical perspectives into practice in her teaching: *"I enjoyed the fact that there was a circle, that I was researching, and that was feeding into what my students were doing and then they were going off and putting that into practice."* But like other participants, she alludes to the fact that journalism as a profession still had a presence in her outlook:

> *"I found, I guess, looking back, I felt like I was still in touch with journalism through my students, and they were doing journalism but I was sort of like a news editor supporting them. I still felt like I had that connection with journalism."*

The fact that Jenny's route into Higher Education was through her PhD appears to have given her greater self-assurance during the transitionary phase than indicated by other participants, together with her earlier experience of doing a Master's degree immediately following her undergraduate course. She feels that having done journalism for only seven years has meant that the gap between leaving HE and returning for her PhD allowed her to fit into the university environment with relative ease. It could be that being younger, and closer in age to her students, gives Jenny more confidence when addressing them and their needs, and that starting an academic career in journalism at a similar lifecycle stage to other younger academics in different fields has allowed her to feel a greater sense of belonging – and

confidence – than other participants who have joined academia at a later stage. She says: *"Yeah, definitely having a PhD once I got a job, I didn't feel an imposter because I had the PhD whereas a lot of my colleagues didn't. So I definitely, a PhD kind of, kind of validated you as an academic."*

Jenny continued to practice freelance journalism, writing feature material for newspapers and magazines, alongside her teaching and research role; she says that in the early part of her academic career she *"never felt like I'd gone from one to another and then cut that off completely".* On completing her PhD she was offered a full-time role and recalls that although she now had a postgraduate qualification under her belt, it was *"the teaching side of it that I really enjoyed, um, I never, I was, I was never going to go off and be a full-time researcher, an academic. Um, that didn't appeal to me."* Following the birth of her first child she reduced her university work days from five a week to four to allow her time to undertake freelance work. She says: *"Basically that one day, that one day was like my freedom."* Her use of the word *"freedom"* implies a feeling of being trapped or imprisoned by her academic role and, conversely, a feeling of being liberated by journalism. Ultimately it led her to question whether an academic career was the right choice for her.

For Jenny, the connection with journalism proved impossible to break despite the fact that her career in HE was progressing well. She was asked to apply for a more senior position as well as to undertake more research. She recalls:

> *"I was like, I don't want to do either. I don't want to be a full-time researcher, I don't want to be a full-time manager, I actually like doing a bit of everything. Um, and I didn't feel like I fitted into any of those categories … I*

liked that balance [of lecturing and research] and I just kind of wanted to throw journalism into the mix as well."

Jenny recalls that she became so confused by her career choices that she felt *"miserable"* for a year, had various conversations with her boss and went to see a life coach: *"I was like, I don't know what I'm doing with my life, had a bit of a midlife crisis".* In her candid account of the transitionary phase Jenny reveals the anguish she faced; the fact that she recalls the period in time with such clarity is an indication, perhaps, of the emotional turmoil it brought. She now splits her week equally between university and freelancing and says she feels she has found the balance that she was seeking. However, it is significant that she recalls a particular instance during the early part of her HE career in relation to her professional identity when she says:

"What I remember is on my – and to this day it still bothers me – on my son's birth certificate they ask your occupation, don't they, and it said 'lecturer', and I really didn't like that, I wanted it to say journalist, and I should just have said 'journalist' really, because they don't know any different."

That such an issue should leave such a deep imprint on Jenny's mind says much about where her professional identity really lies. She admits that if she was asked what she did at the start of her academic career she would say that she was a lecturer, but would always qualify it by adding that she used to be a journalist:

"That transitioning period when in reality I wasn't [a journalist], I always felt uncomfortable with that. I got on with it and I developed my career as a lecturer and as an academic, but I never felt comfortable not being a journalist."

The quandary she found herself in was made no easier by the fact that there were times when she did not feel accepted by either the academic sphere or the world of journalism; attending academic conferences, she says, made her feel that, *"I don't belong here basically … I don't belong in this world"*, while attending journalism conferences as an academic made her feel *"an imposter… because I was like, I'm a lecturer here and there's all these journalists and they don't view me as a proper journalist anymore".* Her experience is reflective, perhaps, of taking an interdisciplinary approach to work or trying to combine two different careers. While Jenny accepts that her transitionary phase into Higher Education has been accomplished, for her it has not been a clean break from one profession to another; rather, the allure of journalism has kept her straddling both professions and in terms of her identity – which will be further explored in the next section – for her, it seems that journalism has eclipsed academia.

5.4.6 Emily

Emily moved from journalism into Higher Education when she had a family and found it *"really hard"* working at daily newspapers with young children. She left her previous newspaper and set up a magazine company, and at the same time received a call from her local university asking if she would do some guest lectures. *"So, um, that's how it happened really, I think it was a set of circumstances. I think if I hadn't perhaps had children I would probably have been on a bit of a different path."* She also had a strong belief in Higher Education as a route through which young people could enter journalism – *"for me, that's my passion, being able to work with students on that level".* Like other participants, Emily recalls that she was struck by how different the pace of working life was at university compared to journalism; the short, daily deadlines of a newspaper contrasted sharply with the longer deadlines and detailed planning for the future that came with Higher Education. Emily also felt, at the start – like other

participants – that being an academic would be about *"standing in front of a group of people and talking about your job, and that's fine… but obviously there's a lot more to it".* She notes that she tended to gravitate towards those members of staff who came from similar backgrounds to herself – former journalists who had worked on newspapers and were teaching practical journalism content. Like other participants, this admission discloses a sense of belonging with other former journalism practitioners rather than established academics, a theme that continues when she discusses her enthusiasm for teaching journalism at HE level:

> *"Coming into academia, there's obviously, you know, lots of different ways you can go into things. And for me, particularly, I love working with other colleagues who are very practically involved in journalism. And I love coming in and taking groups of people – my passion is, you know, taking those and really showing them the tools they need to be a journalist and giving them a toolkit that they can use and grow."*

Emily comes across as a thoughtful, empathetic and principled person whose innate passion for journalism is manifested in her desire to preserve the profession through educating future generations of journalists. Yet she admits to feeling nervous when she began her career in academia, disclosing that she felt *"not very equipped with education",* and that it was three years before she was given education training by her university. She recalls that she "*found that transition quite hard … there were certainly nerves",* adding that she "*had some quite difficult situations, where I think I maybe wrongly assumed that you're coming in to teach adults who want to be there. And that isn't always necessarily the case."* Emily struggled somewhat with the attitude and behaviour of students, which she felt had changed in the relatively few years since she left university herself. She found them to be less confident and recalls that they did

not want to ask questions in class, but over time she has reflected on this in order to support and engage her students:

> *"I'm not sure anything can equip you for that other than the more I've learned about educational theory and ways to engage, the more I've been able to maybe adapt my classes and make them more interactive... it's almost like they have to be told that it's okay to ask a question."*

In the early part of her HE role, Emily found that being in her early thirties set her apart from older members of staff and that she was *"very conscious that I was very young in age compared to lots of my colleagues who had a far greater lifespan here".* She found support in others who, like her, were relatively new to academia. It is indicative, perhaps, of a self-doubt or an insecurity that could be attributed to the assumption that older colleagues are wiser, more learned and have greater experience that allows them to feel comfortable with the academic environment; yet we know from the accounts of previous, older participants that they too have shared Emily's lack of confidence. Furthermore, Emily recognises that she had much to bring to the undergraduate journalism course, with recent experience of social media, digital journalism, local newspapers and hyperlocal news organisations, yet she comments: *"I suppose I wondered whether me being passionate about journalism was enough to warrant me being here."* There is a poignancy in her words when one considers Emily's palpable commitment to journalism and its future; her reason for becoming an academic was largely to give students the opportunity to share her own experiences of accessing journalism as a career and yet she is doubting her own ability to successfully deliver this.

Emily says she *"absolutely"* believes she is still going through her transition into Higher Education and she is not sure when it might end; she admits she does not feel part of the academic community because she does not have a postgraduate qualification, although she concedes that *"when you're stood up in front of a lot of students and they're asking you for advice, certainly you feel like an academic in that sense".* She has started a PhD programme and is excited for the innovation that it could bring to her teaching, and she also observes that achieving a PhD could be a turning point, *"because then you feel that you're part of that community that I don't necessarily feel part of now".* It is striking that Emily, like other participants, expresses little sense of professional belonging within the academic sphere in which she now resides.

5.4.7 Summary

The transition from journalism practitioner to journalism academic has been scrutinised in this section, with the participants expressing a range of different experiences and emotions around this phase, including feeling a lack of confidence, questioning their approach to teaching, doubtful about their career choice, feeling ill-equipped to tackle research and feeling undervalued by their university and colleagues. All of the participants acknowledge that the transition came with some significant challenges, and several feel that their transition into academia is ongoing – and they are not certain when it might end.

5.5 Super-ordinate theme 3: Who am I?

The participants' sense of professional identity is now discussed. The section explores the complexities the participants face in leaving behind one profession to join another, and the

internal conflicts they have experienced when considering which profession they now align themselves to more closely.

Themes	Ordinate themes	Super-ordinate theme
• Always a journalist • Not an academic, although may be a teacher/lecturer • Keeping a foot in both camps – wanting to keep journalism connection going while moving into academia – unable to make a clean break • Associate journalism with greater degree of creativity and freedom than life in academia • Importance of journalism as a profession • Sense of continuing connection with journalism through teaching journalism	• The story of journalism • Academically speaking • An in-between space	Who am I?

Table 3: Themes, ordinate & super-ordinate themes, Who am I?

5.5.1 Geoff

Geoff felt he left his journalist identity behind him when he left his previous newspaper job, but he still does not regard himself as an academic, although he qualifies it by adding, *"well, I am a type of academic, but I'm not… again, I have a view of what an academic is, just like I have a view of what a journalist is".* Geoff's interpretation of what an academic is means that he cannot yet identify with being an academic though he says he is *"evolving towards, you know, the occupational demands of that category and … I'm getting there".* Just as he felt that getting the NCTJ qualification gave him a stamp of authenticity in journalism, he feels that gaining a doctorate gives him credibility within Higher Education, regarding it as *"like a stamp of authenticity, that you're conforming to the occupational identity".* Yet though he believes he is a type of academic in his own mind, he has constructed a view of what an academic should be – and he does not feel he fits the mould. Geoff continues to be self-deprecating about his

achievements within his academic career, just as he was about his work as a journalist, and as he speaks it is as if there is a debate going on in his mind about his entitlement to be regarded as an academic. There is also a contradiction – or tension – between his apparent desire to conform, through his approach to gaining qualifications that will permit him to become a part of his chosen profession, and his persistence in remaining outside of the elevated sphere into which he appears to have placed the term 'academic'. For him, being an academic means:

> *"Somebody who's got a lot of experience, is very learned, is very well read… The serious academics, as I call them, have a great deal of dexterity and don't just have their area, they can interconnect and have this great range, this great range of, I mean Aristotle calls this phronesis, this sort of practical knowledge as well as all the intellectual knowledge. And they're just incredibly impressive individuals who can just flit from one area to another and they're fascinating people – but I'm not that."*

It is easy to believe from his words that Geoff is putting academics on a pedestal beyond his reach, and yet he says that he does not aspire to be an academic in the way that he perceives an academic to be. *"I don't care if I don't get there… it was never a question for me of trying to get anywhere because … there isn't anywhere to reach, it's just a question of what you are comfortable within terms of your own definition of it."* He describes it as *"the meeting of you and it"* and says he is happy with the place at which he has arrived within Higher Education – that there has never been an end destination in sight for him to reach so that he could feel *"I've done it"*. Geoff says that he wants to be defined by having been a good father to his children rather than by his profession:

> *"I've never been carried away by a job, the job made demands on me but I've always felt that I've had that element of freedom and to get in touch with myself and that the stuff of myself that's most important are my relationships. So I've never allowed myself to be so flooded by a profession that it defines me to the detriment of my relationships. I've always felt, um, that I've been holding the reins of the horse rather than it getting away from me."*

Geoff's use of the metaphors *"flooded"* and *"the reins of the horse"* suggests that he considers his professional life as one that needs to be kept under tight control, and this could be why he does not consider that there will be a point in the future at which he regards himself as an academic – because it would mean compromising his personal life. Yet he does admit that although he considers himself to be an academic in his own way, *"it's a very small scale way and I want to feel, feel it in a bigger way"* – words that perhaps belie his claim that he does not aspire to be a fully-fledged academic. There is certainly some inconsistency in his account and it conflicts with his recollections of his life as a journalist, in which he immersed himself into his job and it became a part of his professional and personal identity. There is also an irony that, with his PhD, teaching practice and research activity, Geoff would very much be regarded as an academic by others yet cannot acknowledge that position himself.

5.5.2 Anne

For somewhat different reasons, Anne does not consider herself as an academic either. She says: *"I don't really think of myself as an academic, no. I don't identify with people who are academics – I don't feel I'm one of them."* For Anne, an academic is someone who has remained

in Higher Education since being an undergraduate, and professionally has not experienced anything other than a university setting. She comments: *"Very few of them have ever been outside and come back in and I find that it breeds a narrow-mindedness."* Part of the problem, she believes, is that journalism is not a traditional subject in academia, which means that journalism staff will never be accepted as academics by colleagues. Anne considers herself to be a teacher, but at heart a journalist – and remains saddened that she no longer has the same opportunities in academia that she had in journalism. She says:

> *"I always wanted to be in the world, I never wanted to be in, kind of, some esoteric setting. So I just feel I don't identify with permanent educational settings, which is what they've done all their lives. I don't. I don't identify with that. And I get on well with certain academics but I just, it's not the way I think of myself."*

By categorising academics as *"they"* Anne is othering them; she is setting herself apart from them and suggesting that as a group they are intrinsically different to her. She admits that she began to feel more of an academic when she began her PhD, and that it made her "*feel good*" and that she was *"good at it",* but she lost that feeling when she gave it up after two years due to lacking time to complete it. While she would have liked to have the title of 'doctor' she says it would not be a title that she would use, for example, on her cheque book, adding that she does not see a doctorate qualification as a significant achievement, despite the effort and time it takes. Furthermore, *"do I think it makes you cleverer than anybody else? No, I do not, I don't, that's the problem. I don't. But if I see a really fantastic piece of journalism do I wish I'd written it? Yes, I do."*

One discerns with Anne an overriding sense of regret about leaving her journalism career behind, and a professional vacuum in terms of her current role as an academic. She describes herself as a *"good teacher"* and states that she no longer thinks of herself as a journalist professionally, but adds: *"Do I think that I was, that my personality was better suited to journalism and my values? Yes, it was. I think my values and my, my, um talents, if you like."* Her self-questioning approach to the answers she gives suggests a probing of herself in the moment as she considers her current and previous roles, and a degree of self-doubt – as if she is trying to convince herself that making the move into academia from journalism was the right choice, even if it meant giving up something she held so dear, reinforced when she comments: *"I did think I'd do it (journalism) till I retired, I did think I'd do it forever… when I look forward I think it's more a case of surviving."* There is a despondency in her final phrase and a sense of resignation that her journalism career is over and that she is bound to a profession with which she is not entirely engaged.

Anne believes her best years are behind her – *"it was good… good things were the best years"* – and that her present trajectory is about trying to stay relevant in academia until she retires: *"Can you get through to 65, can you get through to 65 on this? So yeah, you think, how can I keep myself relevant when the world is changing so fast around me?* Anne, it seems, feels trapped in a job role that she does not identify with and mourns the career she had in journalism, while recognising that the world she once inhabited no longer exists. There is a sense that she is stuck in the *"no man's land"* to which Geoff alluded, unable to go back yet struggling to move forwards, with retirement at some point in the future regarded as the only – yet distant – escape route.

5.5.3 Mike

By contrast, Mike would describe himself as an academic, purely because he hasn't practised journalism for more than eight years and does not feel he can justify labelling himself as a journalist any longer. However, he does not consider himself to be a *"true academic".* He says that he brings his professional journalism background and positionality into his research, but that everything he has written over the last eight years has been academic rather than journalistic. However, he notes that colleagues would still regard him mainly as a journalist rather than as an academic and he says he makes, *"a big thing, I really, yeah, er, I really flog the fact that I'm from a professional background, so yeah, it works well… the phrase is 'hackademic' isn't it – I'm probably one of those".* Mike alludes to the conflict of identity he feels in his role in Higher Education:

> *"I think sometimes, as a journalism educator, you feel this weird in-between where you don't feel like you're really a part of the journalistic community any more, but equally you don't feel like a fully-fledged academic – you feel like a little bit of an imposter in that sense. You don't feel hardcore enough. You know, I don't feel hardcore enough – I do the qualitative stuff, I do interviewing, but I don't really know anything about content analysis, discourse analysis, I don't feel like I'm really, I'm really that clued up on it all."*

For him, a true academic will *"eat, sleep and breathe it",* and he is not that type of person – he is not thinking about the subject of journalism in relation to academia constantly. He uses the phrase *"I don't really feel that about it*", with an emphasis on the word *"feel"* suggesting that he expects some sort of physical – or emotional – embodiment in relation to identifying as an

academic. As Mike has previously noted, journalism academics often lack a sense of acceptance from colleagues and that is part of his own difficulty in recognising himself as an academic:

> *"I don't think I will ever genuinely feel a proper academic. Honestly, I just honestly don't, but you know, I like that fact that, you know, I come from a journalism background, I still think it's a big part of the identity, the credentials."*

Like other participants, it appears that Mike's previous role in journalism is not one he can entirely shed. His words suggest an on-going quandary in his mind: he says he feels more of an academic than a journalist, and believes that the further he gets from the journalism industry the closer he will be to accepting that he is an academic but that *"there will always still be a part of you that thinks, still relates to journalism, to being a journalist".* Yet despite having a perception that he could at some point in the future regard himself as a true academic, he does not believe that gaining his PhD will be a staging post and reflects that he does not know what it will take to recognise himself as an academic, partly because journalism was such a significant part of his life: *"I did it for the best part of 12, 13 years, you know, it was a serious, properly a journalist for a long time. I don't know if that will, kind of, go away. To be honest, I don't know if I want it to."* Despite this apparent internal conflict taking place in Mike's mind, it appears he is comfortable with the point at which he has arrived in terms of his professional identity and working in HE. He says:

> *"I do think it comes with a bit of an identity crisis – are you one or are you the other? – and actually you end up feeling like you're neither. But I'm all right with it, I'm actually all right with that."*

5.5.4 Rob

Rob faces a similar dilemma to Mike in terms of his professional identity. He says that having thought about the question of who he is, professionally, he is unclear, but uses the example that if someone he does not know were to ask him what he did for a living, he would say he used to be a journalist but that he is a journalism lecturer now: *"And I just thought, that's really interesting. Why am I still saying, I was a … they don't want to know what I was, they want to know what I'm doing now, but I can just feel it coming out of my mouth."*

He feels he still wants to be known as a journalist and poses a question to himself – *"I don't know, am I still clinging on to something? I don't know."* Using such a self-questioning technique suggest that Rob remains uncertain about his identity and is attempting to navigate a way through a conundrum. He is implying that he cannot shake off the identity of being a journalist, even though he has spent many years in Higher Education and has achieved a postgraduate qualification, and adds that he would not call himself an academic – *"because I'm not, yet. Because I don't think… academic to me means research and I don't think I've done enough research to call myself an academic".* Rob argues that it does not mean he does not enjoy the academic side of the job; rather, that he does not yet feel sufficiently experienced or qualified to be regarded as an academic: *"I like, I like the research. I like the academic bit. Academia interests me, the research interests me. The problem with research is I just find it very difficult to get a grasp of it."*

Rob has gained an MA, has had papers published and has attended conferences but struggles to find time for further research. *"But I'm not frightened or bored by it. I'm really interested in it,"* he says. It appears that for Rob, his role as an academic would be validated by greater

research and doctoral study and that he can visualise himself as an academic, unlike other participants. The issue, he says, is not about regretting leaving journalism or a yearning to return to it*: "Sometimes I do, but most of the time I don't. When there's a big, interesting story I miss that. But not, not really, not really."* He does not contemplate a return to journalism, even though he has colleagues who have left Higher Education to go back into the industry, yet he still struggles to categorise himself as an academic and his first instinct when describing his professional identity relates to his previous life as a journalist. Like other participants, it seems that Rob remains trapped between the two professions, and he appears to recognise this absurdity when he concludes: *"If you ask me in five years' time, I might say I'm a journalism academic. But isn't it weird?"*

5.5.5 Jenny

For Jenny, there is no question about her professional identity: *"I've always identified as being a journalist."* Even when she was lecturing full time she would say, *"I'm a lecturer but I still do journalism",* but now, as she divides her time more equally between academia and journalism, she feels *"much more comfortable and confident… because I don't feel like I'm having to justify it. Now I always say I'm a journalist and then later on in the conversation comes this and that."* This distinction is important to her, she says, because:

> *"I just feel like that is my world, that's, that's where I feel comfortable. That is the kind of person I am, I'm kind of curious and challenging, I kind of want stuff out there in the public domain. Um, and I see lecturing sometimes as a bit removed from reality, and I don't kind of feel I sit in that, you know, world as comfortably, and I think journalism sounds better, it's more*

exciting, and it's kind of, that every time you see a journalist, 'ooh, should I be careful what I say?', and I like that."

Jenny's use of the word '*comfortable'* suggests being physically, as well as mentally, at ease with the role of being a journalist; there is an embodiment implied, like wearing a favourite jumper or sitting in a treasured chair when she talks about her relationship with journalism, further accented when she says she does not *"sit in that, you know, world as comfortably"* in reference to academia. She is not the only participant to allude to the excitement of the journalist's world, and it is interesting to note that she switches persona from being a journalist / academic to mimicking a member of the public when she asks the rhetorical question *"ooh, should I be careful what I say?"* as an exemplar of why journalism generates intrigue. It is an empathetic gesture that attempts to imagine what others are thinking – a way of putting oneself into another person's shoes, used here to reinforce Jenny's preference for identifying as a journalist and at the same time voicing a statement from what could easily be a real-world situation. But more than this, Jenny is foregrounding the public engagement and impact roles that are inherent in journalism practice, as well as the truth-seeking principles that give practitioners their social and utility role.

By contrast, Jenny proffers that lecturing is *"removed from reality"* and makes the same assertion about academic research; she considers an academic to be someone who primarily undertakes research and even though she spent three years doing her PhD she says, *"I do find academia sometimes a bit obtuse and just removed from reality."* She has co-written a paper about journalism with a colleague whom she considers to be an academic and who has spent his working life in academia, and says she finds it strange that someone who theorises and

comments on journalism has not actually practised as a journalist. Her view is that without the practical experience one cannot fully grasp or interpret the theoretical perspective: *"It's one thing to sort of say, well, this is what it all means and this is why it's happening, but actually, it doesn't, you don't really understand why things happen like they do."* She refers to academics she has met at conferences as *"all a bunch of twits"* and asserts that *"I don't belong her basically… it's just, I don't belong in this world".*

Jenny is strident in her views about academia, to the point of being disparaging about the academic world, yet despite this she does not entirely rule out identifying as an academic in the future, because she recognises that her career path could still take her deeper down the Higher Education route. She says: *"I've learned that it's silly for me to rule anything out. Because I think about going down the reader route, because I could, I could still do that and do journalism".* Her words indicate that wherever her future career takes her, Jenny is unlikely to be willing to shed her journalism identity entirely, and she recognises that she would need to be committed to an academic post – a commitment she does not currently feel. She also observes that her career is *"so, bit of this, a bit of that, so kind of mixed up",* that she does not have the same authority as a journalist who, for example, had worked with the BBC for 30 years and moved into academia in order to teach and research around TV work and the corporation. She says: "*So I just don't, I don't think I've got enough, I think you have to be very committed to one pathway to be an academic or you do a big stint in industry and then you come out and be an academic."* There are some contradictions in what Jenny says and unlike other participants, at times she seems to be talking herself out of pursuing an academic role, whereas others have attempted to talk themselves out of the journalism profession.

5.5.6 Emily

Emily alludes to a changing mindset as she gets older and feels that her career is becoming less important than it used to be; for her, identifying as a journalist has allowed her to be less concerned about career ambitions within academia. She believes that most of her academic colleagues who come from an industry background still regard themselves as journalists, like her – "*they all still refer to themselves as journalists and I think that, that's, er, quite normal*" – but that she has always felt she must legitimise her journalist identity. She says: *"I'm realising that, um… I'm very fluid in my career and, not necessarily in my identity, but yeah, I'm not one thing or the other, so I'm probably a bit of an anomaly in that respect."* Ultimately, for Emily, identifying as a journalist relates to her personality – and in that sense is ingrained in her psyche, perhaps echoing what others have previously expressed. She says:

> *"It's, it's that little, it's almost like you're a little bit out of society in a way, you know, people think being a journalist is being quite combatant and to me, that's kind of my personality as well, so yeah, I've always identified with that."*

Emily similarly shares Jenny's feelings about clinging to her journalist identity. She says: *"If I'm honest, if… so, I feel a journalist. I'm not sure I ever won't feel a journalist."* What is more, she believes it would be a retrograde step if she were not able to identify as a journalist any longer: *"I would, in my heart of hearts, I think I would almost be feeling that I was taking a step backwards if I said I wasn't a journalist anymore."* This admission suggests that for Emily, journalism remains embedded in her future as well as her past; that she does not contemplate a professional career without journalism being a part of it. She says she would like it recorded on her death certificate that she was a journalist – *"yeah, I absolutely view it on my death*

certificate" – an indication of how deep-rooted her affinity is, professionally and personally, with the profession.

However, Emily questions whether there has to be a single identity for her, either journalist or academic, and argues that she could identify as both. She regards the teaching side of her academic role as an extension of her work within journalism, because it allows her to nurture and encourage the next generation of journalists and also to be a part of and influence change in the journalism profession:

> *"I feel that even if I have a long career in university and, you know, reach those academic heights one wants to get to, I do think my heart will always remain in teaching people to be good journalists, seeing journalism progress."*

Emily points out that there are many different fields within the journalism profession, just as there are within academia. Within journalism, there are different genres such as crime reporting, feature writing, newspapers and magazines, yet the identity of being a journalist remains the same across each; similarly, within academia, she believes there are different types of academics, and for her the word 'academic' embraces those aspects, including teaching, mentoring and research. She would like to draw the two professions together, identity-wise: *"It's like two ends of the scale and I would like to be in the middle. I'd like to have a strong research background but still be a journalist."* She reinforces this notion of the two professions meeting in the middle by discounting the idea that she would want to be a *"purely academic researcher"* in the future: "*I don't think I will, I mean, I don't think that's a place I necessarily would want to be in 100 per cent, anyway."* Emily admits that she misses her journalism career

– *"And oh, yeah, God, I miss it"* – words that are hard-hitting – and does not rule out returning to it if the opportunity was right; but now, having had the experience of an academic life, she would still want to continue teaching journalism – *"even if the best opportunity in the world came, I still would like to retain some teaching time".* The idea of training future journalists and still being a part of the journalism industry is important for Emily:

> *"And at the end of the day, however much things change, it always goes back to the storytelling because, yeah, how you can talk to people. So I'm looking forward to working with the changes in the industry. And I, you know, I've worked in an industry where people have felt like they're old hat and a lot of people have been made redundant, and there's been a lot of losses, but been able to move with it. And I think if you can teach people to move with it, that's the ultimate goal isn't it?"*

Out of all the participants Emily is, in many respects, the one for whom journalism is all-encompassing, crossing over the boundaries between the journalism industry and Higher Education and between the professional and the personal; this melding of the two professions in Emily's mind would seem to indicate that she has successfully reached a compromise that suits her, yet her words continue to suggest that being a journalist surpasses being an academic. At the end of the day, she says: *"I like being an academic in journalism, and teaching people, but I also feel that I will always be a journalist."*

5.5.7 Summary

In this section the participants have reflected on their identity, and what becomes transparent is that all of them struggle with perceiving themselves as academics – even several years after joining HE. For some, their allegiance to journalism remains paramount; for others, while they

accept that they have left the journalism profession behind, they still cannot regard themselves as being true academics, for various reasons. There is a profound sense that the participants remain trapped between two professional universes.

5.6 Super-ordinate theme 4: Past, present and future

This section now turns to the participants' views on journalism as an academic field, teaching the next generation of journalists and the future of journalism education.

Themes	Ordinate Themes	Super-ordinate Theme
• Passion for / importance of HE degree education • Frustration that journalism industry is still focusing on training needs rather than on critical thinking / ethics • Disappointment that the journalism industry does not value degrees • Change in relationship with students due to tuition fees • Optimistic / pessimistic for the future of journalism • Confident about journalism as a profession / identity	• Challenging the past • Improving the present • Hope for the future	Past, present and future

Table 4: Themes, ordinate & super-ordinate themes, Past, Present and Future

5.6.1 Geoff

For Geoff, his own transition into academia has allowed him to reflect and learn lessons that he can now apply to his students and their journey into journalism. Completing requirements contingent on becoming an academic, such as his doctorate and postgraduate teaching certificate, has made him feel certain that it is not only the skillsets and paper qualifications that are important for student journalists; while these are part of the journey, he feels it is also imperative to look beyond them to the individual student's disposition and perspectives: *"We've got to get into how they feel about themselves, the insecurities they have, and to*

somehow try, try to encourage them to, um, to have some sort of independence within journalism." It is indicative of Geoff's own experiences of journalism and academia, in which he has alluded to being somewhat of an outsider, that he is promoting what could be perceived as an unorthodox route for his students in their academic and professional development yet he feels this process is about building on the purely skills-based education:

> *"So my journey has informed me in terms of, it's widened me to the complexities of what it is to be anything, that's what it is, and I think I was looking at it in a very narrow way, very narrow way indeed. I think the journey of becoming anything is fundamental to who we are as human beings."*

Throughout his account, Geoff has alluded to a sense of 'becoming' so it is not surprising that he perceives this as being significant for his students personal and academic development. Geoff recalls conversations he has had with students, in which they tell him they do not believe they have what it takes to become a journalist; a common phrase he hears is *"I just don't think it's me".* This has enabled him to have discussions with students about what it is they feel are the 'right' personality traits or characteristics of being a journalist, such as being forceful. We can hear echoes here of Geoff's earlier reflections on his career as a journalist and his struggles to become what he believed to be *"the idealised or perfect form of the journalist*". As an academic, he now feels that dialogue with students about what it means to become a journalist is just as important as teaching the standard techniques such as the pyramid style of news writing or being a social media expert, pointing out: *"It's made me very holistic."* Furthermore, this holistic approach produces better, more rounded journalists, he asserts:

> *"So there's all the practicalities of the world and then there's all my sort of nebulous philosophy on the side but, um, I'm not daft, you know, I know that, I know that, um, industry requires certain things but I, I firmly believe that even if they don't know it, the students that are reflective and have more of this philosophical, holistic look are better candidates for them."*

Geoff recollects a discussion with the editorial director of a national news organisation, during which he (Geoff) asked what they sought from newly trained journalists. The reply was: *"People who can bring the magic dust… people who can bring something different, they think about the world differently."* Geoff says this indicates that though the industry may not understand what this means in the way that he perceives it, equally *"they don't just want clones who can replicate, they actually want people who are curious about themselves and the forces they're working within."* For Geoff, journalism education is about taking the best of practice and marrying it with a holistic understanding of what is required from an individual, and he says: *"I think that's where teaching gets really much more exciting and more important because industry just doesn't, you know, it cannot exist and progress just because someone is really good at analytics."* One senses Geoff's strength of feeling about producing rounded journalism students who have not only gained the practical skills of the trade but who have also learned much about themselves along the way; it mirrors his own experiences of becoming an academic – when one thinks back to his early assumptions that teaching would be simply about *"pouring in*" his prior journalism skills, it becomes clear that Geoff's own journey has been very much about his development as a professional academic and as a person, exactly what he aspires for his students.

Geoff is confident about the future of journalism, arguing that the profession is in the midst of a "*revolution"* that represents a period of enormous change, but that there is hope for the future:

> *"There have always been journalism revolutions and there'll be a period of, you know, retraction, experimentation, regulation probably of the internet, so there's a period of like, of, um, contortion at the moment but we'll come through the other side and we can reflect and hopefully there will be a period in which we can look back and realise that, yes, there has been a degree of democratisation, inclusiveness, you know."*

Further, he talks about *"independence, that element of freedom"* for journalists in relation to coming through the *"revolution",* evoking a sense of conflict within journalism that will ultimately lead to liberation in the profession. He alludes to corporatism and the restrictions it places on journalism freedoms, but he believes journalism education will play its part in ensuring that the journalism profession will be more inclusive in the future, if journalism education is rooted in a more holistic and critical approach, "*because of course they [students] will eventually be the people who are making the decisions in journalism, so we've got an absolutely critical role in that".* He describes accreditation as *"strait-jacketing"*, and that a more holistic approach to education is important because "*if you become constrained into corporate journalism that is never going to help anyone but an elite".* Geoff's choice of words such as *"freedom", "independence"* and *"revolution"* evoke a sense, almost, of a military battle in which different sides are pitted against the other; a struggle that he believes could be resolved through students of today becoming journalists of tomorrow. He concludes: *"If we can just create freedom in the students more, there's always going to be hope, there always will be."*

5.6.2 Anne

Anne, by contrast, is gloomy about the future of journalism and the role of big business in controlling the media. In particular, she is concerned about the lack of verification in newspapers: *"The fact that nobody really cares about verifying it, the way that politicians realise they can just say something and it doesn't really matter, nobody's, nobody seems to be keeping them in check."* Like Geoff, she is hopeful that the next generation of journalists will address this issue: *"There'll be a sufficient number of young people who are bothered about this to do something about it. Why would I think they'd be any less successful than the generation before? It's just, you just have to leave them to it."* Anne's self-questioning suggests that she has some doubts in this respect, reinforced by her subsequent comment, *"I'm not that optimistic, no, not at the moment".* At the end of the day, she believes, newspapers are simply a business that the public buys into – *"the public complains and the public buys".*

As has previously been the case, when Anne has discussed her past and current roles and industries, she presents an air of weariness and despondency; there is little optimism in her reflection. She recognises a tension between university education and journalism practice which she feels can be attributed to the fact that editors and newspaper owners would *"prefer to have them (students) unthinking, the point is they just want you do to their bidding, or at least the less thought you give it the better for them, because it just means they come back with what they want you to get".* She feels that universities step in to provide a strong ethical framework for students to take forward into their professional practice, but that the profession itself wants *"unthinking journalists who are good at getting the story".* She does not believe universities can change the industry, but that Higher Education should nevertheless endeavour to make students reflect on what they do as journalists and look for job opportunities that make

them feel comfortable – even if that means entering journalism through such avenues as the trade press. She says:

> *"There are places to go still where you can be a good journalist and it's just a question of knowing when you feel sick about something there's a reason for that, and asking yourself is this the very best way to make a living if that's the case? Or when you're in a position of power, could you change something? Could you make it not like this?"*

It is, perhaps, reflective of Anne's broader perspectives on journalism that she is pessimistic; her own experiences during her professional life and within academia, as detailed previously, have not been wholly positive. Anne does not feel that the tension between journalism education and the industry is one that can be resolved but suggests that if universities can encourage students to discuss ethical issues then it will at least give them awareness and the ability to make judgments once they enter the profession. She points to the 'death knock' scenario where journalists may be asked by their paper to visit bereaved relatives: *"You may have misgivings - it doesn't always mean it's unethical, but you have to understand why you feel the way you do. The point is to talk about all of that."* Anne is talking from personal experience, from her days in local newspapers at the start of her career, when a particular incident involving a house fire in which young children died brought her much distress due to the demands made on her by the news desk. It is notable that she still recalls the incident with much clarity, as if the experience remains etched on her mind. She says: *"I had this horrible experience … I found it really harsh. When I was trained we never did any ethics and we certainly never questioned things like walking up to the door of a family of a dead child. We never questioned any of that."* However, there is a resignation in what she says, as she notes that if journalists today behave

ethically, they are not necessarily going to get the leading jobs or salaries, especially in the age of social media: *"You'll never solve it because there'll always be people willing to walk up the path and they will always get a better story and the public will buy it."*

5.6.3 Mike

Mike shares Anne's frustrations about the industry's approach to journalism training, describing it as *"very one way"* – and that it's *"very much the industry saying to academia, this is what we want graduates to do… they dictate to you"*. He says he still hears journalists and editors say that journalists do not need a degree, and believes that some organisations are *"stuck in caveman times"* with Fleet Street editors who remain *"old school"* by perpetuating the notion that school-leavers are the best candidates for journalism training. Some organisations are beginning to realise the benefits of critical reflection and the debates about issues such as racism that take place in the academic environment, he believes, and like Anne and Geoff he is hopeful that journalists who have entered the profession since the inception of Higher Education degrees in the subject in the 1990s will bring with them a more ethical approach – *"I think it will change as graduates start to take key positions in journalism."* He is disparaging, however, about the emergence of journalism apprenticeship schemes:

> *"I mean, I just despair. I think this is an industry that just, just can't quite recognise that things have moved on. You know, I really think that when you consider how important ethics are, for instance, the emphasis now on socially responsible reporting is, you know, the fact now that I think journalism is, being a journalist is much more complex now."*

His use of the word *"despair"* underscores how frustrated Mike feels. He describes apprenticeships as *"almost a performing monkey thing"* and argues that they do little more than teach students the working practices of the individual organisation rather than the much broader and rounded perspectives of being a journalist offered by HE. He describes it as an *"aggressive"* move that does not reflect how complex journalism is today compared with how it was in the late 20th century, and says journalism education to degree level *"makes journalism better placed, I think you have journalists who challenge, question the way things are done and I think that elevates journalism, I think it elevates news organisations".* Mike's emotive language and tone demonstrate how passionately he feels about university education, yet he questions the future of journalism – *"I mean, it's an interesting one isn't it? I mean, I don't know, it's not in a great place is it?"* He is referring to the advent of such developments as click bait and what he regards as the ideological attacks from politicians such as Donald Trump and Boris Johnson. He says:

> *"Journalism is getting a right hiding at the moment. But that might lead to it actually emerging from it, sort of, probably stronger really. And we're seeing some interesting new models. I think these are really interesting times for, I think, the main, the traditional media is starting to lose its stranglehold."*

Mike feels that the introduction of tuition fees has changed the dynamic between lecturer and student; that before fees rose to the current levels there was a more collegiate environment, *"there was a kind of camaraderie, there was a sort of sense of working together."* Now, however, it is much more consumer and customer focused which he feels has driven a *"massive wedge"* between lecturers and students and has completely changed the nature of the

relationship. He confesses that he feels he is being constantly judged and monitored, and that this has "*a really sort of inhibiting effect, it just feels like there's this invisible line now between lecturers and students where, it's a real shame".* Further, he believes that it has made students less conscientious and there is much more of a sense that students do the minimum of work to obtain a degree – *"there's the means to an end thing, and it just goes completely against my own views of, you know, what Higher Education is about".* He feels that it is difficult to get some students to buy into the type of challenging journalism that is part of the university education and adds: *"I just think it's just such a shame, and how do we get this back to it being sort of more of a learning journey?"* For Mike, it seems that this has taken away some of the pleasure of teaching that he initially experienced when he joined HE. The depth of his feelings is revealed when he says:

> *"When I started here, I really enjoyed teaching, I loved it. But I would say… I probably need to rediscover that, I don't know how but I think, yeah, I've got to be honest, I really think, I feel, right now that if somebody was to say to me, right, you're not doing any teaching next year, you just concentrate on research writing, I'd be quite happy with that."*

We can hear Mike's despair in his words. He feels that student evaluation is not a true reflection of the effort put into the curriculum by academic staff and that student response is often based on broader issues than study. He says it is *"massively demoralising"* when scores are low – *"you're doing the best you can but you genuinely feel like it's just not being appreciated"* – and that it often feels as if students are no longer working with academic staff but rather are working against them. For Mike, teaching has become just another part of his job and much of his passion for it has gone – *"I wouldn't say it's something I feel particularly enthusiastic about*

right now". There is emotion in what Mike says, including anger, frustration and sadness, and a tone that suggests an apathy or even antipathy he now has towards the teaching side of his job. There is also a sense of loss – both in terms of his relationship with students and his own relationship with teaching, in that he feels he has misplaced an aspect of his work that he once cherished and has also experienced a loss of equilibrium in his dealings with students.

5.6.4 Rob

Like previous participants, Rob believes that Higher Education is the place where journalists of the future can gain the ethical framework to challenge the profession and question people in authority. But he is more realistic than other participants about the limitations for students as they enter the journalism industry:

> "*Of course, you want journalists to be asking questions of people in authority. But that doesn't mean… you can't really walk into the Sun newsroom and go, you know, what am I doing? Why am I doing this totally rubbish story about some minor celebrity?"*

He feels that in the real world, *"lines have to be drawn somewhere about expectations"* and that it is impractical to think that once students are employed, they will feel confident enough to challenge their managers and employers about the ethical nature of the work they are undertaking. It is interesting to note that out of all the participants, Rob is the one who is not working towards a doctorate and during his early years as an academic he continued to practice in broadcasting; perhaps because he is not entrenched in research and has fairly recent industry experience, he recognises that while ethics is desirable in university education it is not always easy to put it into practice in the workplace.

Rob says he is broadly optimistic about the future of journalism, but admits he sometimes feels nervous about its direction:

> *"I hear lots of, well actually, not just students, staff as well, saying oh, well, newspapers are dead, aren't they? And television's dead, you know, nobody watches, you know, terrestrial TV any more, or appointment, you know, appointment to view TV. But the facts are, that's how most people still watch television."*

Rob's repetition of the word *"dead"* underlines his perception of the drama around the supposed demise of journalism, but he feels that the debate has been raging for some years on the future of journalism yet it has still survived: *"You know, there's shock. Well, there's been shock for about the past 15, 20 years now."* He is surprised that more newspapers have not closed down and is interested in how publications have wrestled with the transition to online, some more successfully than others. He also feels that hyperlocal journalism could be a way forward in terms of the fall in revenues, staff and numbers of local newspapers. Ultimately, he is unsure of how the world of journalism will emerge: *"Interesting times. Things seem to have levelled off now and I'm not quite sure which direction, you know, where it's going."*

For Rob, there is another issue facing academic staff around students who are doing journalism undergraduate courses, yet do not enter the journalism profession:

> *"Some of them aren't here for the right reasons. Do you know what I mean? And, you know, I'm not really one, I don't feel that I'm the one to judge, if they've applied for the course and they've got on it, even though I just think, I*

don't think you really want to be a journalist, it's not really my job to say. It's my job to try and enthuse them, make them want to be in journalism."

These words display Rob's sense of responsibility about the students he is teaching, yet at the same time reveal a sense of disappointment that students who sign up for study in a specific profession may not end up in that line of work.

5.6.5 Emily

Rob's perspective that is echoed by Emily when she refers to the quality of journalism students she now observes: *"I think the level of students coming in, I think we may have seen, maybe the heyday on that."* When she moved into academia from journalism, Emily struggled with the attitude and behaviour of students, which she felt had changed in the relatively few years since she left university herself; she felt they were less confident and did not want to engage in class in the way that she once had. However, she nevertheless recognises the value of a degree in the training of journalists, not least because of the chance it offers for students to mature over the three years at university. She says:

"It's very easy to make big life shattering decisions in journalism and I really think that you watch the maturity of someone going from first to third year – would I want some of those first years going straight out into industry? No, and that's the maturity there. So yeah, I think a degree is important… just the life skills of being away from home for three years."

For Emily, compared to other participants, there was a shorter period of time between leaving university and returning to it following her career in journalism, and her words suggest that she

is re-living her own experiences – that she is visualising students' current experiences through the lens of her own previous time in Higher Education. Unlike Mike, who regards some of industry's focus on practical experience as outdated, Emily places more emphasis on the practical side of degree level education in journalism and the importance of professional accreditation via, for example, the NCTJ or the BJTC, to optimise student opportunities, describing it as *"the absolute perfect situation".* Since joining academia, Emily has become involved with an accreditation body whose exams her students sit. The combination of academic subjects and professional accreditation, she believes, is compelling*: "I think it's absolutely vital and key … it's so fundamental to it."* For emphasis she says: *"I know some people don't really agree with professional bodies, but certainly in journalism, for me, I think it's absolutely key."* Again, it might be that being much closer in years to the practice of journalism gives Emily a different perspective to others about the importance of combining practical skills and professional accreditation with critical skills; this view is reinforced when she talks about how vital such skills as court reporting and shorthand continue to be, referring to news organisations as wanting *"a well-rounded journalist"* in terms of their practical skills.

She admits that if she were still recruiting journalists in newspapers she would only take those who had achieved the gold standard NCTJ qualification and posits that degree level journalism *"is not necessarily the only route"* into an industry career. Here, more than with other participants, we can see evidence of Emily thinking as a journalist; that she is putting herself in the position of an editor rather than an academic when she considers the future career prospects of her students. It is an interesting juxtaposition, as one would expect her to align herself more closely with her current role in academia as other participants have done, yet she appears to be viewing the situation through the lens of an editor, reverting back to her

journalism practice days – perhaps not surprising when one considers her previous assertion that she will always consider herself a journalist.

Emily is confident that journalism will remain strong and that the world needs journalists more than ever in the era of fake news: *"We need journalists more than ever to be able to take information and really look at it and understand where that's coming from and do the checks and verification."* She says that journalists need to be more innovative and understand how and why they need to adapt to the new landscape, arguing that old practices need to be modified: *"We're just coming to a period where we think actually, that's not working, is it?"* By using the plural first person Emily is situating herself very clearly within the journalism profession and with being a journalist, reinforcing her earlier reflection that she is unable to shake off her journalist identity.

Emily maintains a close link with her previous employers and recognises that this gives her an ability to implement change in the industry that she would not have had were she still working in the journalism industry, recognising that her role in academia allows her to wield an external influence. She says: *"I've tried to highlight quite strongly to them how terribly they treat people who decide to have children… I find it easier to talk to them about that and inform them now in my position than I did when I was in the company."* This is an interesting point to make, as it demonstrates that Emily feels she now holds more power and influence outside her previous organisation and that her role as an academic gives her more respect and leverage than she had as a journalist. Family life and childcare is an issue about which she feels strongly, but she says that raising it when she was an employee was *"really, really difficult"* because she felt her commitment and ability to carry out her work may have been questioned at the time, *"and you*

only need to be in that situation to realise that". With a foot in both camps, Emily is perhaps now having the best of both worlds: continuing to be involved in the world of journalism, yet gaining from academic status in order to influence and shape the profession – and, as we have previously learned, she has not ruled out a return to journalism implying that she keeps her professional options open.

5.5.6 Jenny

Jenny is reasonably optimistic about the future of journalism; she sees it as an industry in transition with legacy publications expressing *"doom and gloom"* because the changing landscape has affected their business models. The upside to the transition, she says, is the fact that there many developments and different models emerging in relation to news, both in the mainstream media and beyond: *"There's a lot of start-ups that are doing interesting things, and NGOs, and it's all becoming a bit of a melting pot. Fundamentally I think journalism is still the same - there's just a lot more noise out there."* Like other participants, Jenny believes that many of her own students will not end up covering hard news, current affairs or investigative reporting and most will go into *"the lighter side"* of the profession – if they enter the profession at all: *"A lot of the students that we get will not end up in journalism… they're just doing a degree which they think will be interesting."*

Furthermore, Jenny believes that the emphasis within HE has shifted from education to employability: *"It's an argument we have all the time – are we educating our students or just giving them employability skills? And that is really frustrating."* However, unlike some participants, Jenny does not feel it is necessary to have a degree in the subject of journalism in order to enter the profession, but says having a degree in any subject is important. *"It's about*

attitude, not skills," she says, and adds: *"I've always said, why would anyone do a degree in journalism?"* Jenny believes that the problem with journalism degrees is that they are often too heavily practical and students do not engage with reflective, more academic modules, she argues – *"it doesn't matter how much sort of context you teach them, it doesn't mean that they're going to engage with that context."* Over time, she says, the critical skills components *"kind of gets squeezed out".* Other degree subjects can offer more in the way of critical skills, she believes, and while there are certain practical aspects, such as media law and story structure, that are important to journalism*, "I think the number one thing you need is initiative… it's problem solving, and it's confidence, curiosity".* Jenny recalls the argument she had with colleagues, relating to final year dissertations as opposed to journalism projects:

> *"I wanted dissertations … I tried to make dissertations mandatory. I was, like, I don't care if some students want to do a project. It's a university degree, you should do a dissertation, you should have those reflective skills and you need to understand research as a student. I've been banging on about it but I've lost the argument so many times, so we still have project or dissertation."*

Her irritation – and passion – about this issue is evident in her words. Jenny attributes her strong feelings to having done a PhD and realising that it informed her approach to journalism and the choices she made as a journalist: *"I do think that's because I've had that space to reflect so I do think it has had a positive impact. We are too skills based in journalism but I don't necessarily think the journalism degree is always where you learn any of that."* There is an irony in Jenny's thoughts: out of all the participants she is the one for whom journalism remains a part of her working life, she still identifies as a journalist and does not visualise herself as being

an academic. Yet she feels the academic component of a degree should override the practical content when it comes to shaping students for the journalism profession.

She describes journalism degrees as *"a training college"* and says: *"We just want to churn out journalists and we don't want to change journalism, we're just giving industry what they want, and we're not teaching our students to challenge that."* The profession, she says, *"doesn't give two hoots"* about university-educated students and news organisations simply want journalists who know what a story is and can go out and get it, she asserts. Her views contrast quite sharply with Emily's perspective on the importance of practical skills and her close associations with the newspaper industry; Jenny's tone appears somewhat dismissive of the journalism industry. It could be that as a freelance journalist she is her own boss and not beholden to editors in the same way as employees would be, allowing her the freedom to question industry leaders and challenge current thinking in terms of HE education in a way that Emily, with her close links to news publications and accreditation bodies, is not inclined to do so.

5.5.7 Summary

This section has explored the participants' views on the future of journalism and journalism education. There are some diverse perspectives relating to both aspects, with some participants expressing strong views that critical studies in Higher Education are crucial for students' intellectual and reflective development and also for the real world of future journalism, while others place greater emphasis on the practical elements of degree level education in acknowledging the reality of current needs and demands of the journalism industry. There is much to be gleaned from the participants' accounts examined in the

super-ordinate themes of the analysis chapter, and this study now turns to exploring the meanings and implications that emerge from the analysis.

Chapter 6: Discussion & Implications

In the previous chapter, the lived experiences of the participants were scrutinised through the use of IPA and my interpretation of their thoughts and recollections; this chapter will now draw in the literature and theoretical perspectives to provide further context to the findings, using the super-ordinate themes as a framework for discussion.

6.1 Super-ordinate theme: Tales from the Golden Days

The super-ordinate theme "Tales from the Golden Days" was concerned with the participants' reflections on their careers as print journalists. The participants share a number of experiences in relation to their journalism careers: all of them previously worked in local newspapers before joining Higher Education, some for decades, others for a shorter period, and prior to leaving had spent their entire careers in the profession – either entering straight from school or after completing an undergraduate degree.

While those who became journalists in the 1980s or 1990s have perhaps witnessed the most significant changes in the broader industry over the course of their newsprint careers, others who joined at a later stage – around the turn of the century onwards – have nevertheless experienced similar turmoil due to significant technological advances during their shorter period in journalism. Moreover, coming from a local news background all participants have observed the transformation within the print press at the coal face: it is widely acknowledged that local newspapers have been among the hardest-hit sectors in the journalism industry, with substantial job losses, much reduced revenues and a significant decline in titles across the country, and for those journalists who have remained at local level, workloads and responsibilities have dramatically increased – as alluded to in the participant accounts. As

Bagshaw says: "Local newspapers in the UK are in big trouble. They have seen their budgets slashed and staff numbers cut while others have disappeared completely." (2019, p.30).

Yet despite such professional turbulence all express a deep affection for their former careers as journalists, articulating a professional pride together with a sense of community and belonging with their former colleagues. They validate their career choices through emotion-laden phrases such as "love", "lucky", "privilege", "fabulous" and "fantastic" when discussing their former careers and talk of finding their "tribe" and of the colleagues who made their working lives so fulfilling. This display of professional pride suggests job satisfaction, according to Jansen et al (2010) who argue that it is important and meaningful: "Work based on professional pride means that *you yourself* value the dedication and the content of your own professional practice, and you display this openly and self- confidently." (2010, p.16; italics in original). What is more, say the authors, professional pride generates a response from others which in turn motivates the individual: "Others respond – with recognition, space and trust – to the good feeling you get from your work. This positive response is enormously motivating." (2010, p.16). Certainly, one senses from the participants' accounts of their working lives as journalists that they were highly motivated during their careers as they highlight, for example, being involved in people's lives and reporting their stories, representing marginalised communities and sticking up for the underdog as prominent reasons for becoming and remaining journalists.

The notion of professional pride is linked closely to the concept of honour, according to Jansen et al, and in turn with identity, as both allude to "the delicate relationship between emotions of self-esteem, self-appreciation or self-respect, and social recognition and social respect."

(2010, p.16). Among journalists, Schudson argues, there is a "high moral purpose" in their work, and they routinely have at the start of their career – or develop it – a "pride in their familiarity with practical life" (2013, p.163); the literature review introduces Deuze's assertion that journalists "love journalism, seeing it as the noblest of media professions". (2019, p.2). It can be surmised from this articulation of professional pride that the participants still have a great deal of affinity with their previous roles in journalism and as a consequence their interest in and loyalty to the profession remain beyond their transition into academia – an aspect that will be discussed later in relation to identity. While Higher Education welcomes former journalism practitioners for their practical experience, and their ability to bridge academia, education and practice and theory, there would seem to be much more at stake here: that former journalists not only have the practical skills to pass on to students but, crucially, also remain invested in the future of their former industry because of the pride they still hold for their previous jobs and profession.

We cannot be certain how accurate the participants' memories are of their newspaper days and it could be that being asked to recall their previous careers has prompted them to engage with nostalgia when they look back on their journalism days; that is, that they are demonstrating a wistful affection for the past and often putting a more positive spin on their previous careers than might actually have been the case. After all, it is evident from their reflections that for the most part they experienced low wages, long work hours, a demanding environment and the uncertainties of employment and the industry as a whole that came with new technology. It is also evident that there is a sentimentality with regards to their prior lives and the analysis chapter above highlights instances where nostalgia appears to be an emotional response to looking back. Wildschut et al (2006) point to three psychological affects of

nostalgia: positive, which produces positive evocations of the past such as happiness, pleasure and joy; negative, which relates to "sadness or mourning" about the past (2006, p.976); and mixed, or bittersweet, which implies nostalgia "is a happiness-related emotion, yet, at the same time, it is thought to invoke sadness because of the realization that some desirable aspects of the past are out of reach". (2006, p.977). The authors' research found that nostalgia centres on interactions with people who are significant to the individual, such as friends or family, and on important moments such as the birth of a child or graduation. (2006, p.988). Nostalgia, they argue, has the effect of strengthening social bonds, improving self-esteem and overall has a positive effect, adding that:

> "The narratives often contained descriptions of disappointments and losses but, in a large majority of cases, these negative life scenes were redeemed or mitigated by subsequent triumphs over adversity." (2006, p.988).

Such conclusions would fit with the participants' nostalgic narratives on their former careers. However, the participants are also looking back at their careers from the perspective of the academic and in this respect their reflections show that they have adopted a more critical stance in relation to journalism practice that they did not necessarily consider while they were practising journalists. We have a phrase from Mike, who describes being "institutionalised" as a journalist, being told what he should be doing by the news editor and losing his sense of speaking for himself; similarly, Anne suggests the control held by the newsdesk over reporting staff, telling them what they should write and how they should write it. Rob recalls the "hard-faced" environment in which he worked, which did not allow for any display of emotion when

it came to some of the difficult stories covered by newspaper staff; and Jenny's expression – "we had a brilliant, awful time" encapsulates the duality of her experiences in local newspapers. Ethics and critical thinking were not issues that were actively discussed or considered during their journalism careers, Rob points out: "Let's be honest, ethics, I don't think we did, I don't, I don't recall very much about it," with Anne concurring, when she says: "We never did any ethics and we certainly never questioned things like walking up to the door of a family of a dead child."

It is, perhaps, surprising to learn that the participants are now questioning the practices of their former career, given that there have long been accepted ideals – or values – underpinning the profession, such as impartiality, truth, objectivity, accuracy and holding those in power to account; yet we know from the literature that ideals are one thing, daily working practices another – as Pihl-Thingvad's study demonstrates, there are discrepancies between professional ideals and the reality and demands of journalists' daily practice (2015, p.404), while Tuchman argues that ideals are often no more than a "strategic ritual". (1972, p.660).

Certainly, there would appear to be hindsight at play in terms of the participants' reflections on the reality around such ideals as ethics during their own practice; that is, if they were not aware of or practising the core ideals of the journalism profession at the time, they are now considering them from a distance. Freeman (2010) refers to hindsight as looking back at past behaviours and situations from the perspective of the present and seeing things in a different light or deducing links that could not have been made at the time (2010, p.4). He argues that hindsight is at the core of self-understanding and that it is "not only about memory but about narrative" (2010, p.4) – that looking back at a particular moment in one's life involves "the

experiences of times past now being seen as parts of an emerging whole, episodes in an evolving story". (2010, p.4).

It is this narrative reflection that allows self-understanding to happen, says Freeman, and there is also a moral implication, he argues, if we regret our actions when it is too late. The common phrase "What was I thinking" (2010, p.5) when one regrets past actions in hindsight echoes the words of Mike as he talks about working for a national tabloid newspaper. It can be a painful process to reflect in this way, says Freeman, but it also allows us to grow morally as we are able to gain greater perspective by looking back and understanding how and why things that seemed to be right at the time are in fact wrong. This, he concludes, means that "hindsight plays an integral role in shaping and deepening moral life". (2010, p.5).

It points to a situation in which former journalists, having stepped back from their jobs and industry, are better equipped to view their former profession more objectively and with the benefit of hindsight, having considered the ethical nuances of their experiences in journalism through being prompted to self-reflect in their role as an academic. This is important not only to journalism academics, their students and the industry; it could also be significant in terms of improving the public's perception of journalists. We know that standards in journalism matter to the public and that trust in the media fell to 22% in February 2022, from 31% the previous year; according to Edelman's Trust Barometer of 2022. Toff et al's Reuters study, *Overcoming indifference: what attitudes towards news tell us about building trust* (2021) reported that many of the respondents to their survey had "highly negative" views about basic practices in journalism: "Large minorities… have very negative or cynical views about how they think journalists do their jobs, including allowing personal opinions to influence coverage, accepting

undisclosed payment from sources, or deliberately seeking to manipulate the public." (Toff et al, 2021).

6.1.1 Implications for Super-ordinate Theme Tales from the Golden Days

The implications of the above points are three-fold: one, that in hindsight journalists turned academics have a deeper understanding of ethical and moral perspectives around the profession than they did while they practised; two, that they now grasp the value of entrenching critical thinking skills in the curriculum alongside practical journalism skills, even if they did not fully understand this value while they practised (this latter point is particularly pertinent in relation to what the journalism industry believes it needs from student journalists to be discussed later – as Anne comments, the industry wants "unthinking journalists who are good at getting the story"); and three, that there are implications beyond the profession itself in relation to the public's often negative perception of journalists and journalism; that is, that the value of critical thinking at undergraduate level is and should remain a vital part of the curriculum if future journalists are to become more than "unthinking journalists" and if trust in journalists among the public is to improve.

One further consideration to make in relation to the participants' reflections on leaving journalism and entering Higher Education is that they chose this path above other possible career choices, suggesting they had a desire to remain associated with their former industry in a fairly direct way. While there is little data about what journalists do when they leave the profession, there is more visibility when it comes to new graduates in journalism – according to Prospects (2021) 15% go on to work as PR professionals, 13% enter journalism as newspaper or magazine reporters, and 9% go into in marketing, with marketing, public relations and sales

combined more popular as a graduate destination (29.4%) than arts, design and the media combined (27.5%). That the participants did not choose a second career in, for example, the field of PR or marketing could, arguably, be a further indication of their ongoing affinity with journalism as a profession and their desire to continue some association with it.

6.2 Super-ordinate theme: Lost in Transition

The super-ordinate theme "Lost in Transition" explored the participants' experiences of transitioning from journalism practitioner to journalism educator-academic. The participants discussed their rationale for leaving the profession, their experiences of moving out of one profession to another and their feelings around the transitionary phase and beyond.

6.2.1 Transition: the beginning

The participants' decision to leave journalism is largely framed around their individual life stage and their changing perceptions of the journalism industry and of being a journalist. Family life and seeking a job with more regular hours that fit with childcare are among the reasons cited, with Emily saying that she found daily newspapers "impossible" once she had children; Rob also talked about the challenges of combining journalism and having a young child, and Mike similarly alluded to a better work/life balance and not wanting "to still be doing evenings, weekends" as he looked forward to having a family. Those at the later end of the career spectrum pointed to a weariness around the journalism industry and their jobs – Geoff felt that he was losing his creativity, as his promotion into management roles hindered his opportunity to write stories, and that his workload had significantly increased as newsroom staff levels fell; Anne questioned her future in a career that had spanned more than 20 years and the fact that on returning from a foreign correspondent role she found the news agenda had changed and

her old paper was seeking lighter, “fluffy” content that did not suit her hard news background. Such examples are not at odds with broader perceptions of people move into academia: the literature points to such factors as a desire to improve work/life balance and limited career prospects in a current role as among the main motivators of transitioning into HE (McCall et al, 2021) and even as far back as 1988 journalists were highlighting poor working conditions as a reason for leaving the profession. Yet for the participants, regardless of age, gender and how long they worked in journalism, these aspects had not previously persuaded them to leave and despite their misgivings about their prior profession it was not an easy or quick decision – Geoff, for example, talks of a “slow build up”, while Anne remained a journalist for some years before moving into academia, despite her frustrations.

Picard’s study, *Journalists’ Perceptions of the Future of Journalism Work* (2015), suggests that although journalists recognise their working lives could become “more stressful, individualistic, and less stable” (2015, p.1) due to changes within the industry, they are realistic about the effects on their jobs in relation to the pressure of work and work/life balance, and they “are not particularly pessimistic about the future of journalism as a professional practice”. 2015, p.1). This is certainly an aspect echoed by the participants’ reflections in this study: their comments do not suggest they have fallen out of love with journalism per se; rather, their particular life stage and experiences of the changes within the profession have led them to reconsider their positions and seek change. Ibarra (2005) refers to ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors in relation to career changes, where ‘push’ can imply restructuring or downsizing within a company that leads to employment change and ‘pull’ implies an individual leaving a career voluntarily in search of better opportunities. Further, he argues, ‘trigger’ events can prompt people to move on: “Triggers may be positive or negative, momentous or small. They range

from major job, organizational and personal life changes or shocks … to jolts produced by more mundane interactions". (2005, p.9).

It would appear that this model fits in well with the participant accounts of their move away from journalism, that a series of trigger events with the 'pull' of academia being a persuasive factor led ultimately to a decision to leave journalism. Ibarra asserts that the process of leaving can begin with "simmering doubts that give way to a search for alternatives" and that often such endings are "long and gradual" with the individual not even aware that they are preparing the way for leaving their career, perhaps picking up an activity outside of their job that eventually leads to a new opportunity. (2005, p.15). Such a scenario can certainly be applied to those participants who took up casual lecturing while still working in journalism, such as Anne, Rob, Jenny and Emily. It suggests that the participants were, in some cases, playing safe with their career move, which in turn could indicate an uncertainty about whether or not to leave their previous profession.

6.2.2 Transition: the middle

All participants refer to a range of challenges they faced when transitioning into Higher Education, among them that they felt ill-equipped for teaching and research; that they were unsupported by their institution; that they lacked confidence and suffered from imposter syndrome; that they had little understanding of journalism theory in relation to the practice of journalism; and that they felt isolated from and undervalued by career academic and media theorist colleagues. Their experiences are variously described as being "in no man's land, of no identity", of "being in a void", describing it as "like falling" and recollecting "difficult situations"

and finding it “really hard”, and there are references to suffering from the imposter syndrome and “feeling like an amateur”.

These are very negative perceptions and indicate that the transitionary phase has left a deep impression on the participants’ minds, an aspect that is all the more significant given that they had reached, for the most part, senior levels within journalism before moving into academia and one would expect a greater level of confidence and ability to handle the challenges. Their observations are not unusual for industry practitioners transitioning into academia and the literature in this area highlights the difficulties faced by new members of staff; as Wilson at al point out: “For many industry professionals seeking a career change, their experiences of transition from industry to academia are far from smooth or unproblematic.” (2014). In terms of teaching, the participants came into their roles with virtually no experience yet were expected to start instructing students with little knowledge or qualification from the outset and they expressed concerns about their early experiences such as “feeling like an amateur” and being ill-equipped to teach.

Studies highlight a lack of institutional support for incoming academics (McCall et al, 2021; Trowler and Knight, 2000; Wilson et al, 2014) and what emerges from the participant accounts is that it was the early stage of the transition they struggled with in particular; teaching qualifications such as a PG Cert, which many were offered and followed, were not immediate and while useful over the longer term could not address the insecurities the participants felt in the classroom from the beginning. One of the consequences was that the they made assumptions about how and what they should teach and quickly learned that these assumptions were not necessarily correct, subsequently having to adapt their thinking and

teaching style. Geoff describes it as “laughable” that he envisaged teaching to be simply “pouring in skills” while Rob says he continued to behave like a journalist rather than a teacher, and Mike concurs that he too took on the mantle of a news editor and was “brash” in his approach to teaching.

It highlights that there is a gap, quite feasibly a lengthy one, between new academics’ starting point within HE and the point at which they gain a teaching qualification – or at least feel confident with their teaching skills – an issue that Kernohan (2022) explores, remarking that there are many universities where students may be taught by someone who is untrained in teaching and “just bases their teaching practice on what they remember experiencing as an undergraduate”. (2022, para. 3). Arguing the case for a more formalised, professional body for HE staff who teach, with some “good quality training” and mandatory standards, Kernohan points to barriers often raised against such a proposition, largely from academic staff, including that research staff should focus entirely on research and not on teaching, that those who join HE from industry “should not be expected to know how to do the job they are brought into do” and a view that teaching is effortless and uncomplicated, that there is too much focus on educational theory, or “just something they don’t respect”. (2022, para. 5). While not suggesting that the participants in this study articulated such attitudes, there is nevertheless a perception that on entering HE they had misconceptions around how straightforward teaching would be (even if they realised their error over time) and that there must have been a period of time during which the quality of their teaching was left wanting. However, their accounts suggest that individually they became aware of this situation and reflected on how they could improve the quality of their teaching; what is more, it can be surmised that their reflection also led them to consider from a critical distance the industry from which they had just come and

the changes it was experiencing, and grasped the effect these changes would have on journalism education and their new role. Ultimately, their teaching role has given the participants the means to both reflect back on the journalism industry and forward to how better to educate students of the future, yet there remains a gap in this process during the transitional phase that could, plausibly, have an impact on the quality of teaching.

Just as the participants were expected to be accomplished at teaching on joining their institutions, so they were also assumed to be research active, even though they had no prior experience and little time to consider what areas of study would be appropriate for them. There is an overwhelming sense that the participants did not comprehend what their research workload required of them during their early transition and that structurally there was nothing or very little in place to guide or inform them of how to tackle this aspect. It is also evident that they were affected by the attitude of career colleagues in relation to their status as journalism academics: a feeling that they were not taken seriously and looked down upon. Anne refers to "snootiness" of colleagues and of journalism academics being regarded as "unthinking practitioners", while Mike alludes to a "disparaging undertone" from non-journalism members of staff. The literature backs up such assertions: it is noted that within Higher Education, ex-journalism practitioners are regarded as lacking academic ambition and unwilling to undertake research activity, with journalism regarded as a nebulous subject for academic study (Greenberg, 2007; Harcup, 2011a) – notions that would explain colleagues' attitudes to journalism academic staff as perceived by participants in this study.

One effect of this attitude is that it appears journalism staff tend to gravitate towards each other as a group – as Anne notes: "None of us are academics first, we're all journalists first,"

while Emily admits that one of her priorities is to work with colleagues who are practically involved in journalism. Their observations denote the lack of a sense of belonging within their broader institution which, arguably, is important when it comes to integrating into a new job role – Maslow (1954), for example, placed belonging in third position in his Hierarchy of Needs. Hagerty et al describe a sense of belonging as "the experience of personal involvement in a system or environment so that persons feel themselves to be an integral part of that system or environment" (1992, p.173), where the word "system" can apply either to a relationship or an organisation. They identify two dimensions of sense of belonging, the first being that there is "valued involvement" – that is, that the individual feels valued, needed and accepted; the second, described as "fit", such that the individual has a perception that "his or her characteristics articulate with or complement the system or environment". (1992, p.173). We know, too, from the literature review that identity is invoked by a sense of 'sameness' and how we perceive the world around us and how the world around us perceives us, both professionally and personally.

Teng et al's 2019 study concluded that a strong sense of belonging helped facilitate retention among academic staff (2019, p.87) and had important implications for the learning and teaching environment (2019, p.98), while according to Jetten et al (2015), being able to identify with a group can enhance self-esteem, because "those group memberships (and the social identities they support) provide a common perspective on social reality and a lens through which to perceive and understand the world". (2015, p.3). The participants' views about this issue contrast with their experiences in journalism, about which they expressed positive attitudes to the camaraderie and sense of community within the industry; what was not

explored in this study was how – or if – a sense of belonging has developed over time, and this could be a subject for further study.

6.2.3 Transition: the end

The majority of the participants feel their transition has not ended and they do not know when it might finish, alluding to it variously as "work in progress", "always learning" and "endless". Only Mike and Jenny feel that they have achieved the transition into academia but even then, for Mike it took the best part of four years and for Jenny, she has taken an interdisciplinary approach to academia and journalism. The literature acknowledges that the transitionary phase can be long drawn out; for example, Wilson et al (2014) suggest that the first six months to a year is the most likely adjustment period for new academics. Yet the participants' reflections indicate that their transitionary period has lasted much longer, if it has in fact been achieved at all. Ibarra (2005) draws on Van Gennep's model (1909) relating to the three phases of transition, which are separation (from a previous job role), transition (between the two jobs) and incorporation (into the new job role), arguing that often, the stages of separation and incorporation overlap, because the new career can be undefined or uncertain for some time, meaning, "it is the fact that both are occurring simultaneously that defines a transition stage that is indeterminate in length and not necessarily finite". (2005, p.10).

This would help explain the difficulties the participants have in identifying an end point to their transition, if the process of separating from their previous journalism roles is ongoing. What is more, the magnitude or novelty of the new job role will have an impact on how easily and how quickly the transition will occur, argues Ibarra: "The greater the magnitude or novelty, the more difficult and longer the transition process" (2005, p.15) with determinants coming in to play

such as the ease with which skills can be transferred from an old job to a new one and the degree of interests and experience between the former and new post. (2005, p.16). For the participants, as noted above, their move into academia can be regarded as a major career shift and therefore the novelty of their new role is significant and could act as a barrier to a swift and straightforward transition. Indeed, Geoff described his teaching and research roles as like "getting to grips with two careers", indicating the high degree of novelty implicit in transitioning to an academic post.

There is further evidence in this respect from Nicholson's theory of work role transitions (1984), which is premised on four predictor variables: role requirements (of both former and new role), motivational factors, previous occupational socialisation, and organisational induction or socialisation practices in the new role. (1984, p.172). Nicholson draws on identity changes and behavioural outcomes in positioning the main principle of the theory, which is around the individual adapting to the environmental requirements of their new role or, alternatively, manipulating that environment in order to meet their personal needs. (1984, p.174).

In the first instance, the individual responds to the transition by "altering his or her frame of reference, values, or other identity-related attributes"; in the second, "a person's adjustment strategy can be proactive: when the person tries to change role requirements so that they better match his or her needs, abilities, and identity." (1984, p.175). Nicholson characterises these aspects into dimensions of low and high development: replication (low) in which there is minimal change to identity or behaviour; absorption (low), in which the individual bears the burden of adjustment rather than attempting to change the new role parameters – this can be regarded as "role learning"; determination (high), in which the individual actively changes the structure or content of a new role but there is little change to identity; and exploration, where

there is “simultaneous change in personal qualities and role parameters”. (1984, p.176). Further, Nicholson proposes that two characteristics – novelty of role demands, and discretion, which he describes as “a multidimensional construct, having as many dimensions as there are elements to a role” (1984, p.177) – have a direct impact on an individual’s adjustment to a new work role.

Low discretion + low novelty	→	I.	Replication
Low discretion + high novelty	→	II.	Absorption
High discretion + low novelty	→	III.	Determination
High discretion + high novelty	→	IV.	Exploration

Table 5: Figure 5: Nicholson’s Theory of Work Transitions

Predictors for an individual’s adjustment to a new work role (1984, p.178)

Thus, if a new job role implies low discretion and low novelty, replication can be predicted as an outcome, according to Nicholson’s model, while low discretion and high novelty would indicate absorption. High discretion and low novelty suggest determination, and high discretion and high novelty imply exploration. (1984, p.178).

There is a strong argument to suggest that from the participants’ reflections, their experience of transition would lead them to an outcome as identified in the final category, with high discretion and high novelty, given that they have multiple dimensions to their academic role and there is a high degree of novelty to their work. This further explains the participants’ assertions that the transitionary period is ongoing – as Nicholson says: “Paradoxically, exploration can be an almost steady-state mode when transition is into a role with continual renewal of discretionary possibilities and recurring novelty of job demands … Indeed, one could say that occupancy of such roles is tantamount to a permanent state of role transition.” (1984, p.186).

6.2.4 Implications of super-ordinate theme Lost in Transition

There are many implications emerging from the participants' lived experiences in relation to the transitionary phase between leaving journalism and becoming an academic. It is clear that the decision to leave journalism was not an easy one for the participants and that the process was long drawn out, suggesting that there is a deep connection with the profession in terms of the role itself and the identity of the individual. This could have a positive effect on the participants' academic roles, in as much as the journalist turned academic is invested in the future of the journalism profession. Conversely, there is an argument that it could have negative implications if the journalist turned academic continues to identify with his or her former career rather than as an academic. The transitionary period has been shown to be fraught with difficulties, both on the teaching and research front, suggesting a need for greater support through and a better understanding of this phase by the institution and academic colleagues in recognising the immense challenges faced by new members of staff.

For various reasons, the participants highlight the combination of teaching journalism practice and theory as one of the issues early on in the transition, in relation to teaching style and a lack of experience and knowledge around critical theory, and it is important to address this aspect if journalists of the future are to be educated and empowered in professional skills *and* critical thinking. That most of the participants feel that the transition is on-going, and in some cases never-ending, is an issue worthy of concern – for if the participants do not feel fully integrated into their educator / academic roles and into their institution, there could be consequences for their teaching and research practice, which in turn will have an impact on the student experience. The importance of understanding this transitional phase is because "the underlying dynamics of social process are most tellingly revealed at points of discontinuity and change",

argues Nicholson (1984, p.172), and such transitions can have a deep impact on the future for both the individual and the organisation. Furthermore, posits Ibarra, career change has increased in recent years due to companies closing, restructuring and downsizing – certainly a scenario that has been unfolding within journalism over the last two decades – yet there is scant empirical research on why, how and what the consequences are in relation to this important societal issue (2005, p.4). Studies such as this thesis can therefore help contribute to building a better picture about the transition from one career to another.

6.3 Super-ordinate theme: Who Am I?

The super-ordinate theme "Who Am I?" explored the participants' sense of identity in relation to their previous job as journalists and their new roles as academics in Higher Education.

It is striking that all the participants manifestly struggle to consider themselves an academic; even those who accept they have left their journalism identity behind do not seem able to assume the mantle of 'academic', while the majority remain firm in their view that they continue to regard themselves as journalists. Both Emily and Jenny, for example, state that they still feel like a journalist and do not want to lose that identity; Anne says she accepts she is a teacher professionally but that she remains a journalist at heart. Rob questions why he struggles to admit to being an academic and feels he could be "clinging on to something", while Mike feels that he is neither one nor the other and has an "identity crisis". Similarly, Geoff acknowledges that he has left his journalist identity behind but cannot accept that he is an academic. What is more, it appears that staff within their institutions appear reluctant to consider their new colleagues as academics, often referring to them collectively as "the journalists" or viewing them as inexperienced or unwilling to carry out research. Yet the

participants clearly have the right to call themselves academics: they are professionals, both in journalism and academia; their professional capabilities are recognised through their job title, salaries and positions within Higher Education; and their roles in teaching and research carry a high degree of responsibility. It raises the question of why they cannot identify as academics and what effect this might have on their performance as teachers and researchers.

Their perceptions of what it means to be an academic suggest they are putting the role on a pedestal that is beyond their reach; they variously allude to academics as those who have never left education, who are research active, very learned, well read and dexterous – meaning that they are knowledgeable about subjects beyond their own area; furthermore, they deem academics to be those who eat, sleep and breathe their world, people who are esoteric and removed from reality – all of which suggests the participants perceive academics to have an exalted status. In this regard they are not alone: a 2015 YouGov survey placed being an academic as the third most desired job in Britain, behind being an author and librarian, implying a widespread admiration for the profession, while in the annual IPSOS Veracity Index 2021 professors – or HE academics – were in 9th position, again indicating a strong regard for them among the general public, so it is not unnatural that outsiders coming into academia may also hold these perceptions.

Further, it is well documented in the literature that those joining academia from professional practice continue to identify with their former role for some time and have self-doubts about their ability in their new position, often realising that their professional experience is not enough by itself to succeed in their new role (Van Lankveld et al, 2017). In their study about newly transitioned pracademics, Dickinson et al point to former practitioners feeling "less like

academics than 'lecturers' or 'teachers'" (2020, p.3), which is mirrored in the participants' perceptions of themselves. Yet the issue here is that they appear to be saying that they do not believe they will ever consider themselves as academics and that their journalist identity will prevail. Perhaps, having come from a different profession – particularly one which is held in much lower esteem by the public (while the 2015 YouGov survey positioned journalism as the sixth most desirable job, the 2021 IPSOS Veracity Index placed it 27th out of 30, with a trust rating of just 28% compared with 81% for professors) – the participants do not feel worthy of achieving academic status or it could be that there is a stronger pull from their journalism career that keeps them identifying with their former role; certainly, their reflections on their transition would appear to substantiate these possibilities.

Much of the participants' antipathy towards identifying as an academic centres on their poor or low research activity; as Henkel points out, "research reputation is the strongest academic currency in Higher Education" (2005, p.164) and it is a vital component of academic identity (2005, p.166). This could be at the root of the participants' inability to identify as academics: even for those who have pursued postgraduate study and produced research papers for publication, there is an impression that they feel so far behind what they consider to be true academics that they have concluded they will never be able to catch up with them. For those who have not undertaken doctoral study or research, it implies that for them, there is little chance of being able to achieve academic status. However, this by itself does not fully explain their situation.

Henkel (2005) says that identities are shaped by "strong and stable communities and the social processes generated within them". (2005, p.158). In academia, it is the discipline and the

institution that act as the key communities around which academics develop their identities, with the discipline having a "tangible form and defined boundaries" within the structure of the university, thus reinforcing academic identity. (2005, p. 158). Lieff et al posit that this sense of belonging is connected with the individual's academic identity and "has been found to be a great predictor of academic success", (2012, p.123), arguing that membership of academic communities can provide a feeling of validation as well as career opportunities (2012, p.123). What is also interesting in relation to the participants' accounts, is their finding that "comparing oneself to others may have the potential to reinforce or inhibit emerging identities". (2012, p.123). We have learned from the participants that they may not feel a sense of belonging within their institution and that they compare themselves with career academics in a somewhat negative way, both of which suggest an additional rationale for their inability to identify as academics.

What is more, say Lieff et al, having an academic identity is important because it plays a part in the "wellbeing and productivity" of HE educators (2012, p.208) and having or developing an academic identity can have a positive effect on such aspects as motivation, commitment and job satisfaction, which in turn contributes to academics' performance in the classroom. (Lieff et al 2012). There is evidence from some of the participants' accounts that they lack motivation, both around teaching and research, and while none of them overtly suggested wellbeing issues it was clear during the course of the interviews that some of these aspects played on their minds in a negative way.

If this situation is playing out in the academy, account must also be taken of the ex-journalists' affiliation with their former career. Reinardy and Zion's exploration of how job losses among

journalists affected their professional identities (2020) found that 36% of respondents continued to identify as journalists, even though they no longer worked in the industry. (2020, p.1221). They argue that this could be seen as a coping mechanism which allows individuals to continue to have a sense of belonging – the participants had an average age of 52 years old and around 21 years of professional experience when they left their newspapers, so had spent a considerable part of their careers within the industry and therefore had an identity "that has been carefully cultivated and deeply rooted for years and possibly decades of their professional and personal lives". (2020, p.1221). While the participants for this study did not have an enforced departure from their previous roles in journalism, there is nevertheless a resonance with Reinardy and Zion's findings particularly relating to the longevity of their time in journalism and their entrenched identity.

Further, the authors concluded that "many of those who left journalism appear to have continued to embrace their former identities through a nostalgic lens" (2020, p.1221) which, as noted earlier appears to have played some part in the participants' recollections and reflections about their former careers. Sherwood and O'Donnell's research into whether identity changed for journalists when they lost their jobs came to similar conclusions, with 31% of respondents claiming that their identity remained. For those who articulated a loss of identity, it related to "a change in occupation or employment conditions" (2018, p.1033) often implying a move from a long-term job with an established legacy publication to a smaller company in a different field and part-time or freelance work with less stability. It led the authors to conclude that "journalists perceived their professional identity to be linked to particular types of work, and, importantly, particular types of workplace in which this work occurs" (2018, p.1033). However, they also noted that there was evidence that former journalists used their

professional identity as a means to cope with uncertainty, but that this related to a minority who found new work within journalism (2018, p.1033) – a view that can be applied to participants in this study whose career change to academia has allowed an association with their former careers to continue.

6.3.1 Implications of super-ordinate theme Who Am I?

It can be argued that the participants' struggle with an academic identity relates both to their strong attachment to their former roles as journalists and the challenges they face in being recognised and accepted as academics within their institution and feeling part of the academic community. While maintaining an involvement in and knowledge of journalism are important for their practice as lecturers and researchers, there is more at stake when it comes to academic identity because, as Leiff et al suggest, it may have an effect on wellbeing and productivity (2012). There appears to be a discord between the participants' positive representations of their careers as journalists and their more ambivalent – or in some instances, negative – portrayal of their lives as academics, and the fact that they continue, largely, to identify as journalists rather than academics is a cause for concern, particularly if it has an effect on their morale and performance in the classroom. It as an issue about which institutions should take note and it suggests that HE Journalism departments and their institutions should be offering greater support to newly-transitioned journalism professionals, and indeed those from other professions, so that such staff can better manage their various roles and assimilate more easily to academia in order to nurture a deeper sense of belonging and identity.

6.4 Super-ordinate theme: Past, present and future

The super-ordinate theme, "Past, Present and Future" explored the participants' thoughts and feelings on their current experiences of being a journalism academic and also on their views on the future of journalism education and the journalism industry broadly.

The participants' reflections on the current and future outlook for journalism education foregrounds their wider uncertainty about the profession's prospects; there is a diversity of opinion among them that suggests an almost equal measure of optimism and pessimism focused around their experiences within Higher Education as teachers – often expressed as a challenging and demanding role both from the internal perspective of the institution and externally from the industry. This section, perhaps more than others, discloses the full extent of the participants' concerns, doubts and hopes for the future of journalism and journalism education and positions them as an essential cog in the continuation of the profession.

Their sense of responsibility for shaping future journalists and the broader industry is clear. We hear, for example, from Geoff, for whom journalism education is about allowing students to find independence within journalism and about marrying the practicalities of the profession with a holistic understanding of being an individual, thus creating a freedom that he hopes will secure the future of journalism. Anne similarly believes that HE should encourage students to reflect on what they will do as future journalists and offer a strong ethical framework, but she believes the journalism industry seeks "unthinking" students and is not confident that the industry wants to or will change. Mike alludes to the changing nature of HE following the introduction of tuition fees, and the shift in the relationship between academic staff and students, which has in turn tarnished his passion for teaching. Nor does he feel that the

journalism industry is willing to change in its desire for practical skills above critical skills, and his hope lies in the current generation of HE-educated journalists challenging and changing the profession in the future. Rob agrees that an ethical framework grounded in HE is important for future journalists but argues that in practice, it is difficult for young journalists to question newsroom demands in relation to ethical issues; for him, the greater concern is that HE is not attracting the calibre of student that can help shape the future profession, a view also shared by Emily. However, Emily is passionate about the training model of HE that covers practical and theoretical perspectives and sees this route as key to the future of journalism. Jenny, in contrast, believes HE education for journalists should be about attitude not skills, and is frustrated that employability rather than education appears to be paramount in HE; she fears that journalism degrees are little more than training colleges and that they simply provide the industry with the type of journalist it wants rather than encouraging students to challenge the prevailing consensus among editors and proprietors.

This diversity of perspectives was similarly highlighted in the literature review. Journalism education, it was argued, needs to evolve against the backdrop of the changing landscape and new audiences, novel business models and consumption habits. (Deuze, 2004; Frost, 2017; Macdonald, 2006) with proposals for the education curriculum including a greater focus on critical theory, media literacy and intellectual skills alongside improved technological and digital tuition. Shapiro argued for a shift in education towards “an approach to knowledge, not just a job” (2015, p.3), a theme that echoes Jenny’s view on journalism education striving towards knowledge rather than employability.

This debate around practical versus critical skills is ongoing and demonstrates the schism between academia and industry, and the participants' concerns about ensuring an ethical framework within HE education in the face of the largely practical skills desired by the journalism industry are valid in view of training bodies' perspectives about journalism and journalism training. Jonathan Baker, author of *Essential Journalism* – the guidebook for NCTJ journalists – argues that much remains the same in the 21st century for journalists despite changes within the industry over the last decades. Reporting, he says, "is still about finding things out and telling people about them; journalism is still about building on that by adding context, explanation, background and anything else the audience might need"; news gathering techniques, he says, have changed little despite the plethora of platforms now delivering news. (Baker, 2021). Further, he posits, practical skills are vital to the future of the profession regardless of whether news is in a paper, on a computer or via a mobile phone:

> "What matters is the quality of the practice and the reporting skills that have been brought to bear in creating that news. These are things that do not and should not change. They are fundamental and critical to the quality and eventual survival of professional journalism in the digital age." (Baker, 2021).

This focus on practical skills, promoted by a key national journalism training body, must inevitably reflect the demands of the broader news industry and with so many HE journalism courses using accreditation as an important marketing tool it is not difficult to understand why there remains such an emphasis on traditional reporting techniques within academia. Yet the participants have also previously alluded to the challenges they face within their institutions, that journalism courses are somewhat derided and regarded as training courses rather than as a valid academic subject by their colleagues. Thus, they are caught between industry and

academia, which – as Greenberg notes – implies that they face a battle on two fronts, "arguing with theory-based colleagues for more practical course content, and making the case to industry for more contextual study". (2007, p.292). This is despite the participants' enthusiasm for journalism as a knowledge-based subject rather than as a craft and despite the fact that the journalism industry has and continues to go through a period of significant transformation that should cause the industry to re-evaluate not only its business model but also what journalism is and how education can respond and adapt to the changing landscape.

In other words, the Higher Education curriculum does not appear to be going through its own metamorphosis in response to the changes within the industry, yet this is through no fault of journalism academics if one considers the participant accounts; though the participants express a desire for greater critical skills to be embedded into their programme, there are clear influences from the industry and industry training bodies that position practical skills as the desired and principal outcome from gaining a degree qualification, above critical scholarship, and this in turn perpetuates the view within academia that journalism degrees are little more than a training course. Picard laments the lack of change within journalism education in response to the crisis which has engulfed the industry, and apportions blame largely on employers who influence the HE curriculum so that degree courses produce "news factory workers who can be dropped into a slot at a journalism factory". (2015, p.8). At the same time, there has been no significant development of the subject on the part of educators, because journalism at HE level "has not developed a fundamental knowledge base, widely agreed upon journalistic practices, or unambiguous professional standards". (2015, p.7). While it is for journalism educators to precipitate change, he argues, there has to be support from stakeholders; it is this aspect, perhaps, that is most challenging for educators because based

on the participants' reflections, they feel both frustrated and powerless to act on implementing change within the curriculum.

6.4.1 Implications of Super-ordinate theme Past, Present and Future

All the participants have previously worked in the newspaper industry, which itself values the core tenets of the profession above the critical skills of Higher Education, yet during and beyond their transition into academia they have acquired a commitment to critical scholarship and, crucially, see it as a vital component in shaping the journalists of the future and ultimately changing the face of journalism. Some of the participants alluded to their initial perception that journalism education would simply be a matter of "pouring in" practical skills or "telling war stories" but admit they rapidly changed their outlook as they transitioned into academia from journalism practice; several of them refer to their belief that university educated journalists with critical thinking skills have the potential to introduce greater debate into the industry once they move into the profession. It suggests that the participants consider the parameters of professionalism within journalism are not set in stone, that there is capacity for those in the industry to question what journalism is and should be, and that there is scope for journalism to adapt and find its way forward as the profession emerges from the last decades of change through a new generation of journalists entering the profession.

However, both journalism and Higher Education are driven by market forces and there is an argument to say that it is wishful thinking to expect today's students to become the saviours of tomorrow's journalism. Applications for journalism degree courses are competitive, as are job applications to news organisations beyond university, and it is the role of journalism educators to produce students who are prepared and equipped for the jobs market with course content

meeting the demands of the industry. As Steel notes: "This not only involves selling their programmes to prospective students and their parents, it also means that departments have to sell their programmes to the industry". (2018, p.504). It highlights the dilemma faced by educators and the struggle they face in changing the emphasis on course content away from the vocational to the critical. Meanwhile, news publications are also market-driven with commercial imperatives and often political allegiances that might conflict with the professional values of journalism relating to truth, honesty and holding power to account. With a competitive jobs market and newly-trained journalists eager to gain experience with news providers, it is easy to comprehend that students will not have the confidence, at least initially, to challenge established editors and senior management. Such a conundrum would benefit from further study that follows up undergraduate students and their views on critical skills once they have entered the journalism industry.

The paradox of newly transitioned journalism academics teaching journalists of the future whilst also critiquing the profession was referred to in the literature review above, and it is an issue that is also pertinent to this discussion about the future of the journalism industry, journalism education and the public's perception of journalism. It offers another argument for the inclusion of critical thinking into the journalism studies curriculum and the rationale behind encouraging journalists turned educators to challenge the current orthodoxy in Higher Education journalism programmes, to seek curriculum change, to question what journalism and journalism education is about and to entrench societal issues that draw in experts from different academic fields into journalism teaching with a view to resetting journalism itself. Yet it is clear that the journalist turned educator is very much caught between a rock and a hard place, placating students and the industry while making their own compromises as journalism

academics. Despite this difficult position in which they find themselves, the participants' reflections demonstrate the key role they play in the lifecycle of journalism, with a foot in the past, the present and the future of a profession they so clearly cherish. Furthermore, they have faith in what they are teaching students in terms of practical and critical skills and it is this determination that will keep – and possibly expand – such content on the curriculum, despite external pressures.

Chapter 7: Reflective account

7.1 The purpose of reflection in a professional doctorate

In this section I will be reflecting on my own experiences of transitioning from a journalist to an academic, in the context of the findings of the previous chapter which analysed the participants' accounts of their transitions. Cunningham (2018) notes that self-reflection is particularly apposite in Doctor of Education studies because it allows candidates to consider their professional experience and their professional identity (2018, p.63), contending that, "it has great potential to enhance and deepen their insights into the nature of their professionalism". (2018, p.64). Cunningham points to Bruner's emphasis on the link between "*telling stories* and the construction and validation of self" in the reflective process (emphasis in original) (Bruner, J.; 1990, lll; in Cunningham, C.; 2018, p.654) and posits that rather than being constructed early on in professional life, professional identity "evolves" – and appears to be "fundamentally buttressed by the ongoing reflection promoted by the major opportunity for professional learning that following a professional doctorate represents". (2018, p.67).

Burnard et al (2018) describe the researcher carrying out a professional doctorate as "the instrument" and argue that it is important for the researcher to identify themselves through reflexivity. (2018, p.43). They describe it as a "privileged place" to occupy – "the insider – with both feet firmly balanced between the cultural systems and organizational learning specific to their workplace" (2018, p.43). Fook and Gardner (2007) allude to reflection in professional life as a way of "'standing back' and seeing the issues from a different perspective" (2007, p.10) as well as it providing an opportunity to consider the value of one's own experience as a practitioner in generating knowledge, describing it as a "making and remaking" of knowledge. (2007, p.10). Further, it can be regarded as a means of researching and devising theory around

one's practice – "in this sense, practitioners become researchers of their own practice, and creators of practice theory, when they engage in critical reflection". (2007, p.26-27).

I am mindful that my long experience in journalism and my transition into HE inevitably engendered my own preconceived ideas and bias, and that these could have affected the steps of this study, particularly in relation to the data collection and analysis processes. I have endeavoured throughout the research to put aside my own prejudices or, in Husserl's terms, to 'bracket' any suppositions. Husserl called this the *Epoché* which, according to Moustakas, is when "we set aside our prejudgments, biases and preconceived ideas about things." (1994, p.85). Moustakas acknowledges that this is a difficult exercise and that it "is rarely perfectly achieved" (1994, p.90), but that it is a means of "clearing of mind" in order to have a more open approach to phenomena. (1994, p.86). As Gray notes, in phenomenological research "current understandings have to be 'bracketed' to the best of our ability to allow phenomena to 'speak for themselves', unadulterated by our preconceptions." (2004, p.21).

7.2 Reflections on my own transition

As I look back on my career as a journalist and my current role as an academic, I have considered the questions I posed to the participants during the interview process so that I can reflect on my own transitionary phase between the two professions adopting a similar approach. I have additionally selected two images that I feel best represent my time in each profession in order to find a starting focus for my reflection, similar to the photo elicitation process I used as an ice-breaker for my participants.

The first image I have selected as representative of my time as a journalist was taken after I started working on a weekly newspaper in North Yorkshire. It was my first job, fresh from completing a year-long diploma in journalism, following a BA degree in French and Politics at a London university. It was here that I gained my early experience of real-life journalism and, though it was a small town, it offered a microcosm of life. From murders and the miners' strike to parish council meetings and wedding write-ups, it gave me the opportunity to cover all aspects of the exciting and the mundane in a rural community. Some months into the job, a military pilot from a nearby RAF base became the winner of the TV show *The Krypton Factor* and I was offered the chance to fly with him in his Tornado jet for a feature. The photo shows me with the pilot, by the aircraft, somewhat nervous – but it encapsulates so much of that moment in time: my youthfulness, my excitement, my enthusiasm, my fearlessness, my spirit of adventure and my hopes for the future; as I look at it now, decades on, it also invites me to consider what came beyond that moment in the subsequent years of my journalism career.

The second image I have selected as representing my time as an educator and researcher is one of my son, who was 10 when I started working as an academic. I was a reluctant academic – it was not a career I had anticipated nor desired but one that I felt I had to do for financial, professional and personal reasons. I needed the money, which was much more than my salary at the time offered, in order to cope as a single parent; I needed a job that would challenge me intellectually and offer a career progression path – both lacking at the time; and I needed a job that would help restore my self-

esteem after what had been a very difficult period in my personal life. Ultimately, I took the role for my son and his future security, and over the course of the 10 years I have been in academia that goal has remained. He has gone from a child to adult, from school to university, and is proud of what I have achieved and of the fact that I work in HE – I know I am a strong role model for him. What is more, in rising to the challenges of adapting to a new profession and having a more structured career path – including the opportunity to complete the EdD – I have found my confidence and self-esteem restored.

I look back on my career as a journalist with affection, pride and a sense of achievement. At the age of 12 – awkward, painfully shy and lacking confidence – I was told by my school careers teacher that I would never become a journalist. I did not have the personality and I was too introverted, she told me. It should have shattered me and ended a dream, but I was determined to prove her wrong – because it was the only job I wanted to do, the only job I felt I *could* do. I was an avid reader of my parents' daily newspaper and through its news and feature columns I learned about a world beyond my small Derbyshire coal-mining community – the people and places, the global conflicts, the crime, the passion and the politics. All of it pointed to an exciting and creative endeavour that would take me away from the East Midlands and into a job that seemed far removed from the mundane office role my teacher imagined for me.

Fast-forward 40 years and I can look back on a long and successful career in journalism that began on a small weekly newspaper in Yorkshire and ended with a large national media company in London, via a short spell on an English language newspaper in Spain. It brought me the excitement and variety I had been seeking: one day interviewing a best-selling author or celebrity film star, the next reporting on the death of Princess Diana, and the day after jetting

off to Alaska on an all-expenses travel press trip. What is more, I was good at what I did. I became an editor in my first job, a features editor at a national news organisation in my second, and an executive in my final role. Wherever I worked, I gained promotion, led teams, sat in on editorial conferences and contributed to both the news content and corporate strategies of the companies I worked for. I enjoyed it – for the excitement, the camaraderie, the humour, cynicism and irreverence that pervaded every newsroom I worked in, and for the privilege of being allowed into people's lives to hear their stories. It gave me a window on the world that I cannot imagine any other career could have offered me.

Yet, as I reflect, I realise that there is a degree of looking back through rose-tinted glasses: I remember the highlights rather than challenges that often came from the prevailing culture of the profession and the demands from management. Long hours were standard and unpaid overtime was the norm, and from the late 1980s redundancies became commonplace as the industry began to transform – I remember the shocked silence when the first round of redundancies was announced in my then Fleet Street workplace, and the fear of future redundancies that hung over every member of the newsroom thereafter. The once familiar rapport between journalists and management was replaced with a much more hard-edged relationship. Although I had not anticipated leaving journalism for good at the point that I took a break, I know now that I could not have survived the job for much longer than I did and once I left, there was no return.

For a number of largely personal reasons, my work in journalism came to an abrupt halt and for a while I picked up low-paid admin work where I could. A chance conversation took me into academia and I started at my nearby university as a part-time hourly paid journalism tutor, was

then offered three days a week on a contract and finally, after four years, I was given a full-time, permanent post. It was an unexpected career move – I had never had any desire to teach and, had I seen the job advert, I would not have applied – but the introduction by way of a friend persuaded me to give it a try. I recognised something in an academic role that I thought was not so far removed from journalism – the opportunity to meet people, to write and learn, to have a working day that would be unpredictable and at times exciting, the chance to work independently and be trusted to work independently, and to have the privilege of helping to shape people's lives, albeit in some small way. It gave me the opportunity to undertake postgraduate study, and this research emerged from my own experiences of transitioning from journalism practice to journalism education. As I settled into my new career, I wondered whether other former journalists had experienced a similar journey to my own and how – or whether – they grew into their academic role and felt able to shed their journalism identity. I pondered on how my own previous experience in journalism was shaping my transition into Higher Education and contributing to my development as an academic. I considered how different my new career would have been if I had begun this path years earlier and whether I would be a better – or worse – academic had I not previously spent time in a different profession. And I contemplated whether I was actually any good at teaching and researching – that is, was I really contributing anything useful to my students' learning and the university's broader education strategy?

Like many of the participants, I did not find the transition into HE easy; nor do I consider it is complete. Starting out as a part-time hourly paid tutor did not allow me to integrate into university life early on; there was little attempt to invite me to join team meetings or discussions and I did not get to know colleagues. I was simply there to deliver teaching at an allotted time,

and I quickly realised I was dispensable – as it seems many PTHP members of staff are. It was difficult to invest in the role and I felt like an outsider; the fact that I continued to do journalism-related work separately meant that I did not regard it as a career move but rather as a second job. However, this period of time allowed me to become acquainted with university processes, particularly in relation to teaching and assessments, which gave me a head start when I was given a full-time contract. For me, the transition started at this point. When I think back to that initial time, the move into academia felt like being hurled into a whirlpool, thrown around for month after month desperately clinging on to keep my head above water, and eventually being cast out to recover slowly on dry land. A large teaching workload, a lack of teaching experience, high expectations in terms of developing a research profile and additional responsibilities such as pastoral care and a year tutor role made me feel overwhelmed in terms of the volume of work; professionally, I felt utterly out of my depth and for a lengthy period of time suffered from imposter syndrome. I believe an institutional lack of consideration to the needs of a newcomer from a professional background was largely at the root of this very difficult period: other than a brief induction session, much of what I learned was largely gained through trial and error; in the early days there was much to take in but more often than not, I was unaware of what I needed to know until it became a problem, hence I was reactive rather than proactive. Colleagues who could have helped were themselves submerged by their own workloads. It had a professional and personal impact: previous references have been made to the wellbeing of academics and these early experiences caused a lack of confidence and much anxiety for me.

For my own part, I could have done more to prepare for the new post by endeavouring to have a greater understanding of the HE landscape before I joined; my assumption that prior PTHP would give me a flavour of life in HE was misjudged and more background reading and talking

to colleagues would, perhaps, have allowed me to better prepare for what lay ahead. Of course, over time my perspective has changed and I now feel much more familiar with the institution and its ways of working, as well as being more equipped to meet the demands of the teaching and research roles. However, looking back I feel that in the early days the quality of my teaching delivery was probably quite poor and while I have improved in this respect, I know I still have much to learn and have yet to feel entirely confident. Like many of the participants, I do not see a point in the future when I might consider the transitionary phase to be over, as the journey feels like an on-going, seemingly never-ending process. I often wonder how different this would be if I had gone straight from university into an academic post in my early twenties. While I would not describe myself as an academic, I believe that my research skills are developing well, largely through this doctoral process; yet I still feel much more of a journalist than an academic. Curiously, I take pride in being regarded as an academic by others, yet I would describe myself as a journalism educator and former journalist when asked – the term 'academic' is not a space in which I have a sense of belonging because, to me, it feels like an elevated position occupied by greater minds. Journalism still feels like a natural home for me and teaching and researching has, if anything, revived my passion for news. In teaching and researching journalism, I have rediscovered all those aspects that first took me into the journalism profession – the excitement, the variety, the stories – and I endeavour to convey these to my students.

I feel that I am now able to stand back from the journalism profession as an observer rather than a participant, involved at a distance, and that this rejuvenation of my interest in journalism has allowed me to become a more engaged teacher. In this respect I take some pride in being able to contribute to the education of the next generation of journalists through drawing on

my previous experience of and on-going commitment to the future of my former career. The teaching aspect of my role brings much pleasure and it has been a privilege to be part of the student undergraduate journey; their fresh perspectives and creativity give me food for thought and I learn much from their ideas, thoughts and experiences that helps me to reflect on my own situation in terms of journalism and journalism education. While teaching and researching has been rewarding, I have become sceptical about the future of the journalism profession and I fear that despite efforts to introduce students to an ethical journalism framework and to provide critical thinking skills, once they enter the industry they must make compromises. It is wishful thinking to maintain that students of today will become saviours of tomorrow and I believe there needs to be considerably more debate within HE about the journalism curriculum and how it can realistically contribute to the future of the journalism profession more broadly.

It has been enlightening to hear my participants' stories: so many of their observations resonate with me; so much of what they say speaks of the pride, regrets, fears and hopes that I also share when I look back on my journalism career and reflect on my academic role, and the transitionary period between each. More than this, their accounts have prompted me to reflect in much greater depth on my own experiences and how they contribute to shaping my identity as an academic. Like all of the participants, I have a pride and a deep sense of belonging with journalism that is not as evident, perhaps, when I refer to my academic role. Certainly, I do not feel a part of the broader academic community at my institution, but I am uncertain whether this is because I have held back from joining it or because it has not welcomed me into it. I feel that the time I would have most appreciated joining the academic community was when I first entered Higher Education, because at that point it could have offered me support and

mentoring through my transition; however, as an educator in the field of journalism I felt marginalised and unwelcomed, and subsequently sought to carve my own path through the complexities of academia. Perhaps the fact that I chose to undertake my Doctor of Education programme at an alternative institution to my own is indicative of the lack of a sense of belonging I felt. Despite having now worked at a university for a decade, journalism – for all its faults – remains at the heart of my own sense of who I am professionally and personally.

This process of reflection has also led me to consider what a more positive transitionary experience could look like; that is, how might my own (and others') move into HE have ended differently? I have made recommendations in Chapter 8 about how the institution, line managers, department heads, and journalism and academic colleagues might better support pracademics through their transition into HE; these aside, when I think back to my own early experiences, a different outcome to the one I have described above would see me by now as a confident educator-researcher, innovative and energetic, confident about the future of journalism education and the industry, proud of her achievements, at ease with her pedagogic role and comfortable with the title 'academic'. Journalism would be a loved, but left behind, former career. Some of these aspirations have been met, and others could be achieved in the future, but I have little doubt that a smoother transitionary phase could have produced such outcomes much earlier than a decade on from moving into HE. A small number remain elusive, and the challenges and difficulties faced during the transition into HE have left their mark on me, professionally and personally.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Summary of the study and research questions

This study has sought to explore the perceptions of journalism academics as they journey from journalism practice into Higher Education and to understand the ramifications for their professional identity, their teaching and research roles, and their part in shaping the future of journalism education and the journalism industry. As noted above, the participants' move into academia has been set against a backdrop of significant ongoing structural, financial and technological changes, both within the journalism sector and Higher Education, and in the face of a somewhat hostile attitude in relation to journalism degree courses from the industry, politicians, and at times academic colleagues. (Golding, 2019; Frith and Meech, 2007; Wilson et al, 2014).

The questions posed in this study were:

1. What are the lived experiences of journalism practitioners as they transition into becoming academics and how do they make sense of this transition?
2. How does their transition from knowledge creator (as a journalist) to knowledge disseminator (as an academic educator) and new knowledge creator (as an academic researcher) impact on their professional identity?
3. How does this process of transition inform and shape the journalist-turned-academic as an educator and support their short and long-term academic practice, including research and pedagogy?

The participants have shared some deep insights into their lived experiences as they have made the transition from journalist to academic. They have divulged stories about their former journalism careers, their decision to leave the profession and what prompted them to aspire to become academics, as well as voicing their experiences of moving from one profession to another. What emerges from the study is a picture of journalism academics who have an intense affinity with their former lives as journalists, who are struggling to shake off their past professional identity and who are grappling with embracing an academic persona. Yet it is clear that they are highly committed to their new roles as educators and researchers and the future of the journalism industry more broadly. The participants' journeys into academia have been fraught with difficulties, with isolation, lack of support, little sense of belonging, high demands of teaching and research, and 'imposter syndrome' all punctuating their early experiences of transition. The outcome is that, almost unanimously, the participants do not regard themselves as legitimate academics and do not envisage they will achieve that status, even in the long term – all of which raises questions about what more universities and departmental colleagues can do to better support newly-transitioned academics from industry, the implications of which are covered in chapter 5 above.

One of the most significant factors to transpire from this study is the tension between journalism practice and journalism theory within Higher Education, and the discrete approaches of each to knowledge creation. The former journalist arrives in HE with extensive experience and skills in storytelling, an expertise which can be used not only to convey practical skills of the journalism profession to students but also to nurture among them an empathy with and consideration of the deeper human qualities implicit in storytelling. The journalist seeks to listen, interpret and understand the context of a story and the emotions surrounding it, as well

as conveying its significance and consequence to the broader community. The process of disseminating a story through the craft of journalism writing ensures that it is accessible to a wider audience who can grasp the nuances of the human emotions and identify with the significance and consequence of the story. By contrast, academic study is, by its very nature, more interested in the rigid structures of data collection, the anonymity of participants, and with what could be regarded as cold, hard facts – often in order to prove or disprove a point. What is largely lacking in academic study is an allusion to the emotions behind a narrative. Yet, as Duffy notes above, the processes of journalism and academic investigation are not so far apart and, he proposes, there are merits in academics writing pieces journalism and in ex-practitioners' journalism writing being recognised as an academic output. (2015, p.6). This issue is, perhaps, a core reason why former journalists struggle so much with the academic identity: to trade a pursuit that is based on people and people's behaviour, that brings knowledge alive through its focus on what it means to be human, and that is largely told through the lens of emotional responses, for one that seemingly distances itself from emotion represents a complex choice.

While the challenges relating to making sense of their identity are ongoing for the participants, they demonstrate a determination to make a success of their career path even if they remain connected to their previous journalism identity. The road to becoming an academic has enabled them to reflect critically about their previous careers, encouraging them to interrogate their former behavioural ethos and ethical perspectives as journalists. This appears to indicate a watershed moment for the participants, whose more enlightened approach to the journalism profession has had an impact on their pedagogy and apprised them of a future profession that does not perpetuate the norms of the profession as laid down by the journalism industry. It is

also clear that their commitment to academia is profound and that while they may articulate some weariness in relation to the institutional processes they face, they nonetheless have endeavoured to carve a route through the maze that is presented by the combination of the evolving journalism landscape, the complexities of the academic environment and the diverse demands of students and the industry. Their ongoing professionalism in providing a journalism education that will be of value to students, the academy and the journalism industry is evident, as is their confidence in and commitment to the future of journalism.

8.2 Recommendations

In response to the findings of this study, I make below a number of recommendations relating to the transition of journalism practitioners into Higher Education, both at institution-wide policy and departmental levels.

8.2.1 Recommendations for policy at institutional level

One of the interesting findings in relation to former journalists turned academics was the high level of investment they retained for the journalism industry. It was evident that the pride in their former roles remained long after leaving and that their commitment to the profession was channelled into their new careers as teachers and researchers. They nevertheless developed a fresh mindset on journalism as academics – standing back from the profession allowed them to be more critical of it and to value the critical thinking skills embedded within Journalism undergraduate studies. Such experiences and perspectives are of immense value to teaching and learning within Higher Education, not only within journalism but also within many other professions, yet a conventional university job application form does not normally reflect such deviations from the standard academic requirements, with – very often – essential criteria

for journalism posts prescribing postgraduate qualifications and prior teaching experience which can be beyond the scope of a practicing journalist. In view of this, the following recommendations are made for policy at institutional level in the following areas:

- *Recruitment*: There should be recognition in academic recruitment processes of the different experiences and skills brought to Higher Education by former practitioners, and human resources policies should reflect this. Aspects of recruitment such as the job advertisement, job description, person specification and application forms could be customised for this group rather than adherence to the conventional academic recruitment templates.
- *Selection*: Existing staff who are former journalists should be included as a matter of course in the initial selection of candidates, alongside academic colleagues and human resources staff, and sit on selection panels.
- *Induction*: Induction processes that meet the needs of former practitioners entering HE, as opposed to those who come from an academic background, should be embedded into induction policy.
- *Teaching, learning and research*: There should be an implementation of polices to reflect the value that former practitioners in any discipline bring to HE, that include, promote and celebrate diverse experiences, practices and cultures of former professions.
- *Ongoing appraisal/personal development*: Appraisal and personal development policies should take account of the previous experiences of the incoming former practitioner so that the institutional expectations are not simply bundled together under the academic umbrella.

8.2.2 Recommendations at departmental level

One of the most significant findings of this study relates to the evidence that former journalists who move into Higher Education struggle to perceive themselves as being academics, clinging on to their identities as journalists. Furthermore, they feel that the transitionary phase into their new role is ongoing and, for some, never-ending, and also express a deep lack of a sense of belonging within their department and wider institution. As discussed above, these aspects can have an impact on their teaching and research capabilities, career progression, wellbeing and even on their desire to remain at their institution. It points to the need for far greater awareness within the academy of the specific requirements of those who move from industry to academia and of the value of a more tailored and considered approach to new academics' introduction to HE, their transitionary phase and longer-term assimilation into the HE community, through the implementation of the following proposed recommendations:

- *Line manager/departmental head*: Take greater responsibility for integrating practitioners into the lived realities of being an academic by implementing the above policies through effective induction and appraisal, to include but not limited to:
    - Regular team and departmental meetings to promote a sense of belonging and wellbeing.
    - A long-term buddy or mentoring scheme in which the former practitioner can be connected with both a journalism colleague and an academic peer, to promote a sense of belonging, wellbeing and to gain greater insight into the pedagogic and research challenges and structures.

- Bespoke teaching, learning and research programmes at the start of employment, addressing the discrete needs of former practitioners in order to enhance pedagogic skills and research capabilities in this group more readily and speedily.
- Encourage and recognise the value of research through practice by former journalists.

8.2.3 Further recommendations: beyond the academy

The participants of this study have all demonstrated a great sense of responsibility in relation to the teaching of future journalists; their desire for the profession to endure and for students to contribute towards the shaping of the profession is clear, particularly in terms of their embrace of the merit of critical thinking skills. Yet the tension between academia and industry remains, with news organisations seemingly putting value on the acquisition of practical skills at university degree level above all else. With both news publications and Higher Education at the mercy of market forces, it is difficult to envisage how academics can resolve this discord in order to implement curriculum change, yet the foundations are already in place for a greater debate to emerge thanks to organisations such as the Association for Journalism Education and the growth of subject-related academic journals. With more substantial input from HE, steps could be taken to address the schism between industry and academia, via the following suggested recommendations:

- Greater dialogue, through such means as research, conferences and policy proposals, between universities offering degree level education and journalism professional bodies to create a mutual understanding that HE is a possible future career path for journalists that should be recognised and supported by the industry.

- Greater dialogue between the academy, industry and training bodies through conferences and research towards a better understanding of the importance of practical knowledge and critical skills at HE level and the role played by the former journalism practitioner in the training of future journalists.

8.3 Reflections on IPA

I selected an interpretivist approach in order to find answers to the study's questions. By using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, I was able to explore the lived experiences of a small number of former journalists turned academics through a series of in-depth interviews, followed by an analysis of their personal stories through the lens of four 'super-ordinate' themes. The participants' journey from journalism to academia was chronicled, covering a wide range of recollections, reflections, fears and hopes in relation to their past and future in order to shine a light on the transitionary period between the two professions.

As previously noted, IPA – a qualitative approach to studying individuals' subjective lived experiences and, more specifically, how they make sense of that experience (Smith et al, 2009) – is a somewhat unorthodox approach for a social sciences study, but increasingly this methodology has been used in this field and for journalism studies. My initial thoughts about IPA were that it suited a journalism study because of its resonance with that of the journalist when it comes to interviewing and eliciting information from an interviewee; the journalist seeks a first-person account of their interviewee's experience and how they have interpreted that experience. IPA is also concerned with seeking individual detailed accounts of a phenomenon, which is followed by seeking similarities and differences across cases. (Eatough and Smith, 2017). Journalists too seek individuals' stories as part of a wider, community response to an event and this, for me, represented another relevant association between IPA

methodology and journalism practice. My belief is that IPA has been a successful means to elicit the lived experiences and sense-making of the participants as they have transitioned from journalism into Higher Education. The interview process and subsequent analysis has captured the challenges the participants faced and the range of emotions they experienced, allowing insight not only into the descriptions of what happened but also into their mindsets during the process of transition.

However, I acknowledge that I am a novice researcher and already, having completed this thesis, I can observe some areas for improvement in the interview and analysis undertaken that will help improve future study if I were to employ IPA as a methodology again, and I would modify my approach. For example, I believe that two consecutive interviews for each participant – perhaps a few weeks apart – could have gained greater insight; that is, had I done an initial interview covering their broad journey and followed up with a second interview focusing on specific aspects of the transition, it may have resulted in more in-depth data. Some of the questions posed to the interviewees could have been better answered, I believe, had the participants had longer to consider them; that is, responses to on-the-spot questions did not, at times, elicit in-depth responses and by requesting a second interview at a later date the participants could have had time to consider issues more thoroughly. Furthermore, a second visit may have produced more candid responses as the interviewees would, by then, have gained confidence and trust in me as the interviewer, although the responses to the initial interviews are more likely to elicit authentic answers that risk becoming more curated in a second interview phase.

Another example relates to the questions posed to the participants. During the analysis process I recognised that some questions had been poorly phrased and that I had omitted other,

perhaps important, questions that could have added to the overall accounts and analysis. I believe this is reflected in the quality of some of the responses from the participants. However, this was my first undertaking of an IPA study and, as Smith et al note: "…the process of analysis gets easier with experience. The first analysis attempted will probably seem the most difficult." (2009, p.81). It is, perhaps, the 'interpretative' part of IPA analysis that has been most challenging through this research process; that is, the researcher making sense of the participant, who in turn is making sense of the phenomenon in question. I believe I have captured much of this aspect in the analysis and discussion chapters, and that I would now be more confident in future IPA studies. As Smith et al posit, having mastered the set of steps of IPA in an initial study, "one is more able to recognize that IPA is an approach and sensibility, as much a way of thinking about and seeing, as of doing something". (2009, p.81).

8.4 Limitations

The small number of participants in this research could represent a limitation; though small sizes are suggested for an IPA study – "The issue is quality, not quantity," according to Smith et al (2009, p.51) – it could be argued that a greater number of participants may have brought richer and more diverse data to the analysis. The research also represents a snapshot of perspectives at a particular moment in time, and given that the issues of identity and transition are recognised as ongoing in this study, it could be said that to get a broader picture of the participants' experiences, now and in the future, a second or follow-up series of interviews would elicit a more longitudinal perspective.

8.5 Future study

There are many possible areas for future study arising from this thesis. As identified above, one of the limitations of this research is that it is a singular approach, and by revisiting participants at a future point, perhaps in five or 10 years' time, it would provide an updated view of the process of transition and, whether for all or some of the participants, it continues.

Secondly, in view of the tension identified in relation to journalism studies between academics drawn from the journalism profession and career academics, another area for research could focus on a comparative study between these two groups to determine and better understand their experiences and perceptions in order to address the gulf that appears to be prevalent in journalism departments, how it can be resolved and what a closer relationship would bring to pedagogy and research. Similarly, a comparative study between former journalists turned academics and academics drawn from other professions, such as the medical, legal and business fields, could identify similarities and differences in their experiences of the transition into Higher Education.

Finally, given that this study has identified the inextricable connections between the journalism industry, journalism academics and HE pedagogy, a longitudinal study of journalism professionals, journalism students and journalism academics could be a useful approach in evaluating the different perspectives of each group and the way in which they are connected, to determine how this three-pronged relationship may flourish in order to secure a more prosperous future for journalism as a whole.

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Appendices

Appendix A: The Participant Information Sheet

Bournemouth University

Participant Information Sheet

Study: Professional Identity and the Transition from Journalism Practitioner to Journalism Educator

Researcher: Catharine Russell, EdD student, Doctoral College, Bournemouth University

Invitation

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide to become involved, it is important to understand why this work is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below and feel free to discuss it with others if you wish, before making a decision about whether to take part. Contact details are included at the end of this information sheet – please get in touch with me if you have any questions.

What is the purpose of the project?

As part of my Doctor of Education programme at Bournemouth University, I am conducting a small-scale study from January to April 2018 among university academics in order to explore their experiences around the transition from journalism practitioner to journalism educator. The research will examine concepts of identity and changes in identity that may occur when making the transition from practice to academia, with the aim of gaining a better understanding of former journalists' roles, values and effectiveness as educators.

Why have I been chosen?

I am asking a small number of volunteers to be interviewed by me. I am specifically looking for those in higher education who have, in the past, been practising journalists but who now work as university educators on journalism undergraduate courses.

Do I have to take part?

No, you do not have to take part and your participation is entirely voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and will be asked to sign a participant agreement form. You have the right to withdraw from this study up to the point of anonymisation of the data ie where any information identifying individuals is removed. You do not have to give a reason.

What do I have to do?

If you decide to take part in the study, you will be asked to participate in a one-to-one interview with me. The interview will last no more than two hours and will be held at your place of work or any other location of your choice. The interview will be recorded so that I can concentrate on what you are saying and have a full record of your responses. You will also be asked to bring personal photographs that represent different stages of your professional life to stimulate discussion. Any thoughts and information you share with me will be treated confidentially. I have received training and guidance in both ethics and conducting qualitative research.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

It is not anticipated that there will be any disadvantages of taking part in the project. Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, by contributing to it your comments may help to form recommendations that will inform the development of a similar larger scale study.

How will the information I share be used?

The transcripts from the interviews will be anonymised so that those outside the research team will be able to attribute what was said to an identifiable person without revealing your identity. This data will be collated and analysed to look for commonalities and differences across interviews. Any comments you make may be used in academic journal publications or conferences; however, these will be anonymised and your name will not be included. Any photographs that you bring will be for discussion purposes only and will not be reproduced in the report of findings.

Will I be recorded, and how will recorded media be used?

The audio of your interviews made during this research will be used only for analysis and the transcription of the recording for illustration in conference presentations and lectures. No other use will be made of them without your written permission, and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings.

How will my information be kept?

All the information we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly in accordance with the current Data Protection Regulations. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications without your specific consent.

All personal data relating to this study will be held for one year after the award of the Doctor of Education degree. Bournemouth University will hold the information we collect about you in hard copy in a secure location and, where held electronically, this will be on a University of Portsmouth password protected secure network.

Except where it has been anonymised, we will restrict access to your personal data to those individuals who have a legitimate reason to access it for the purpose or purposes for which it is held by us. As well as Bournemouth University and the researcher, Catharine Russell, the personal data may be accessed by a transcriber in non-anonymised form.

The information collected about you may be used in an anonymous form to support other research projects in the future and access to it in this form will not be restricted. It will not be possible for you to be identified from this data. The results of the research are likely to be published between 2020-2022 and the participant will be able to obtain a copy.

Destruction of Data

The personal data will be kept for one year after the award of the Doctor of Education degree. When no longer required, it will be securely destroyed and University of Portsmouth IT services will be consulted regarding its secure destruction where it is held electronically on computer discs and on other media such as audio. Periodic checks will be made to protect personal data while it is in storage, to ensure that the data is safe.

Who has approved the project?

This project has been reviewed and approved in line with Bournemouth University Research Ethics Code of Practice.

What do I have to do?

If you wish to be involved, please speak to:

Catharine Russell

Thank you for considering taking part in this research study.

Appendix B: Semi-structured interview schedule

1. Using the photographs that you have selected to bring to this interview, can you tell me about your previous life as a journalist and your life now as an academic?

   Possible prompts: Who/what is in the photographs? What do they say about that particular moment in your life?

2. What do you recall about the point at which you decided to move from being a journalist to being an academic?

   Possible prompts: What prompted you to have a change in career? What attracted you to an academic post? How did you feel about this change?

3. What did you envisage the job of an educator/researcher would be like? What were your expectations?

   Possible prompts: How much did you know about the University and the course you were joining before you started? What preparations did you make for moving into academia?

4. What was the reality? Can you describe the experience and feelings of transitioning from journalism into academia? What were the easiest and most difficult aspects of the transition?

   Possible prompts: What demands were made on you and how did these differ from journalism practice? How did you respond to the new environment you were in? What were your emotions during this period?

5. How easy was it to move away from being a journalist into your new role as an academic?

   Possible prompts: Did you miss being a journalist? How long did it take you to feel settled and comfortable in your new role? How connected di you stay with your former role and former colleagues?

6. Do you regard yourself as an academic and what does it mean to you to be an academic?

   Possible prompts: Professionally, how do you see yourself now that you work in HE rather than as a journalist? Do you think of yourself as a journalist, or as an academic, or both – and why?

7. How would you describe your role in academia in relation to journalism practice, education and research?

   Possible prompts: What do you bring from journalism practice into your academic role? How do these three strands inform and influence the other?

8. What role do you think the academic has in shaping the future of journalism education and the journalism industry?

   Possible prompts: How important is it for journalism educators to have experience of the journalism industry? How important is it for journalism students to have academic as well as practical knowledge? What are your views on the future of journalism and journalism education in relation to the changing landcape of the industry and I HE?

9. Do you feel that you have made a complete shift from being a professional journalist to being an academic? If so, why/why not?

   Possible prompts: How much do you miss journalism? What are the markers of being an academic?

10. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix C: Excerpt of emergent themes process for data analysis

Key
Descriptive comments: normal text
Linguistic comments: italic
Conceptual comments: underlined

Emergent themes	Original Transcript	Exploratory comments
	EdD Interview 1 – Interviewee A CR Now I emailed you about getting some photographs, you may not have seen that. Interviewee A I haven't got photographs, just got a couple of little things, you know, when I was thinking about it just a couple of things. CR Yes, that's great. Interviewee A It was one for each, wasn't it really, it may sound a little bit bizarre but I was thinking of photos and nothing came to mind really. Interesting technique. CR Photo elicitation? Interviewee A Yeah, so all I could really think of was um there's a pencil and, and this book. CR Brilliant, ok, at the end can I take photos of those? Interviewee A Of course you can CR So can you talk about the significance of each	
Self-effacing? Self as writer Self as story-teller Creative self Internal writing skills versus outside forces of occupational ideology Excessive thinking, rumination Conformative self Self interest Self motivation Pleasure (of writing) Excessive thinking, rumination Self improvement	CR So can you talk about the significance of each one in relation to your previous career and your current academic career? Interviewee A Yeah, so, um, the pencil, really, I think for me just epitomised what it meant for me to be a journalist in that I very much equated with the ability to write, to explore my writing and to tell stories and it always was very much a sort of a creative enterprise. So by that I mean that, I suppose, I was aware when I, um, got into journalism, as you do with any job, that you come within the… you are subjected to the forces of an occupational ideology, if you like. So there was obviously, er, there's the norms of conformity in terms of the jobs to do, being objective, being impartial, being detached, all that was swirling around, and of course core to journalism is the pursuit of stories, you know, there's the, um, public service motivation in pursuing stories but there's always also a self interest motivation in journalism, for me, for me, while I was aware of the, you know, holding up a mirror to society and all the public, the public, um, ideology, if you like, um, for me also it was because I just genuinely loved writing and I wanted to get better at writing so my public service, um, motivation, was very much accompanied with a self interest motivation and that was writing, so the pencil for me symbolises the, um, the joy I get from writing and, um, my self motivation that I want to become a better writer.	Interesting use of pencil, a small and relatively old fashioned object today, to represent the enormity of being a journalist. Emphasis on writing – use of 'write' followed by 'writing' - as the meaning of journalism, and talks of journalism as a *"creative enterprise"*, but quickly moves on to a more conceptual understanding of occupational ideology. *Hesitant ('um', 'er')* Moves from writing as epitomising journalism to listing norms of journalism, *use of 'swirling around"*. Is there a tension between expectations of professional conformity and self interest? Returns to writing – *"pursuit of stories"* *Emphasis on self interest motivation by repetition of 'for me, for me'* *"Genuinely loved writing and wanted to get better at writing." "Joy from writing". "Holding up a mirror to society and all the public, the public, um, ideology"* Self motivation supersedes public service motivation? *Hesitant, 'um', reflecting* Refers to *'joy'* from writing
Private versus public persona Self as storyteller Self-effacing Sense of responsibility (for people's stories)	CR Right, ok, that's really interesting. Interviewee A So very much a personal interest, um, melded with what I perceive the occupation demanded of me. CR Ok, yes, that makes sense. And it's quite an interesting perspective because obviously everyone is going to go into journalism for different reasons. Interviewee A For different reasons, yes. CR and I have to say that that's not one I have come across before which is interesting. Interviewee A I used to like writing at school and just writing, and um, and history, I used to write history stories. And I just saw that it was, you know, when I was thinking of a job to go into - but I did stumble into journalism by mistake really. I just thought it was, you know, an opportunity to explore writing and explore expressing people's feelings, that's what I liked about it. Because I think it's just an incredibly powerful medium for doing that. And a very privileged position. And what took me through my career was just the pursuit of trying to write better or more, more faithfully record people's stories.	Two sides of the occupation – personal and professional *Repetition of 'writing' / 'write emphasises love of writing.* *"I did stumble into journalism by mistake"* – self-effacing? Journalism as story-telling *Repetition of 'explore' reinforces writing and story-telling aspects of journalism* *Introduces 'Powerful' and 'privilege'* Returns to writing stories and recording people's stories – introduces notion of *'better' and 'more faithfully' recording stories*