Being Heard

A Post-Structural Feminist Narrative Inquiry into how women

in education have used Twitter to find their leadership voice

by

Kerry Jordan-Daus

Canterbury Christ Church University

Thesis submitted

for the Degree of Doctor of Education

July 2024

Contents

Abstract

This thesis is a story of how gendered silencing in our education leadership world is a real thing. This is a study of how women leaders in education have used Twitter to find their leadership voice. It is the story of how women's voices are marginalised, hidden, and silenced through the panoptic of sexism and misogynism which infuses everything. As a woman leader in education, gendered silencing is part of who I am, what I have become. It is my world. This thesis is a post-structural feminist narrative inquiry. I have found my voice. I have found my researcher storyteller voice.

The narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2016, Bochner and Ellis, 2016) enabled women to tell their story of how they have sought to use social media, Twitter, to find their leadership voices. It was an unmasking process (Bruner, 2003) enabled through listening, detailed exploration of Twitter and discussion. Together, my research partners and I, through telling and retelling our stories, were able to hold up a lens to the constructs of power in the online world. I construct a narrative portrait for each of the women in my study. In telling their story, they challenge the normalised discourse that 'women have it all now' (Sieghart, 2021, p. 16). Despite claims purporting that social media enables the 'massification' of communication (Seymour, 2019, p. 24), in telling and retelling

their stories the women in my thesis relive their world of navigating a leadership world, a masculine world.

Post-structuralism is disruptive. It challenges how we see the world and how we research the world. Working within a feminist standpoint paradigm and a relational ontological worldview (Clandinin and Murphy, 2009), my thesis challenges constructs of what is valued in our leadership research worlds. My thesis may be considered risky in our world where letting the science speak is privileged. It is unapologetic in saying that individual's stories are important. This is how it really is for women navigating the education leadership world. It is volatile, it is uncertain, it is complex, it is contradictory, it is messy. But it is real. This is our truth.

Acknowledgements

Warning

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple

With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.

And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves

And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.

I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired

And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells

And run my stick along the public railings

And make up for the sobriety of my youth.

I shall go out in my slippers in the rain

And pick flowers in other people's gardens

And learn to spit.

Jenny Joseph 1992

Thank you to everyone who has helped me find my voice in my life. Thank you to
everyone who has helped me become a researcher storyteller.
You know who you are.
I may have grown older.
But now I will not be quiet.
When I am silenced, I will call it out.

Why this study?

I have been a leader in education for more than 30 years. I began my career as a Secondary (11-18) School Teacher of history. I am an historian. I love stories. After only one year as a newly qualified teacher, I took on a leadership role as a History Subject Lead. This was followed by several quick promotions. Within eight years I had a senior management role in a highly successful 11-18 school. At this point in my life, I expected to become a Head Teacher. Other events, namely the birth of a second child with disabilities, interrupted that planned career trajectory.

After a short career break, I took up a role in the local University to lead on the teaching of new history teachers on the Postgraduate Certificate in Education. I was quickly promoted into a series of senior leadership roles. I am now Assistant Head of School for Humanities and Education Studies at a University in the Southeast of England. I have been in this newly created role since September 2020, leading on the development of a new School in a newly merged Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Education. This role has presented a new leadership challenge.

My academic career has also taken several diversions. I completed my Master's in Education by part-time study at the beginning of my teaching career. I planned to follow this with a Doctorate. However, a series of work promotions, and two young children, one with a disability, meant that I could not juggle these multiple demands.

Many years later, I found myself asking why had I not finished that Doctorate? My children, now young adults, and theoretically, I had more time for myself. I began a Doctorate again. This was always going to be a thesis about leadership, about me, about stories, about being and becoming a narrative researcher. I am a researcher storyteller. This thesis was always going to be about finding myself, a working-class woman academic who has never quite got to grips with her own identity in Higher Education leadership. This was always going to be about gender.

During the Doctorate there have been many more diversions. In 2019 there was a restructure in the University Faculty where I worked. I found myself in a position without a leadership role. I struggled to make sense of this rejection, this loss of identity. It threatened to undermine me. It threatened to silence me. In September 2020 I was unexpectedly promoted to a new leadership role. October 2022, I achieved an Outstanding Leadership Award.

And of course, a pandemic, Covid:19, and all that this has required us to navigate since March 2020. Alongside this, life goes on, and life ends. Supporting a parent through life ending illness again raises questions about priorities. The death of a parent, bereavement, and grief are potentially overwhelming. And always the primary carer for my young adult daughter. The adult world is no less forgiving than the childhood world for someone with autism. But I have hung on. I have hung on to this thesis. I have hung on to this search for meaning; who am I?

In this thesis I explore women's voice and what it means to be heard. I explore what I have come to understand as the phenomenon of gendered silencing. Using a narrative inquiry methodology and method, I have explored how four women leaders in education have used social media Twitter. I am part of this study too. This is a study of how five women leaders have used Twitter to find their leadership voice.

I use my post-structuralist feminist lens to explore and examine leadership and voice. This is their story, my story and maybe also your story? Through the use of evocative storytelling (Bochner and Ellis, 2016) I invite you to this space. Through a review of literature, I have taken both a broad and deep dive into the how women's voices are presented. I examine the invidious process of silencing of women. I come to understand gendered silencing.

Twitter, love it or hate it, for the women in this study, they have used it to find their leadership voice. This study explores how that voice is challenged. This study tells stories of navigating a space where gendered silencing is normalised. This study hears and tells stories about how women navigate this space to get their voice heard. Through the story telling I begin to understand myself more. Through the story telling I begin to hear my voice more. Herein I seek to make sense of the learning, the new meanings, and my understanding of what being heard really means.

Asked, do I still like my thesis; as I write this introduction (as I see the end in sight), I reply yes; because this thesis helps me know who I am, a researcher storyteller, and where I can go next. This thesis has helped me make sense of why I fear speaking out and being outspoken. This thesis has given me a voice. I am not sure that it has given me hope. But it has given me power. 'Who knows what women can be when they are finally free to become themselves' (Friedan, 1963, p. 29).

Originality and New Knowledge

Throughout the thesis I make explicit claims to originality and new knowledge. In this section I provide an overview. These are explored in more depth in the body of the thesis. The purpose of this summary is to set out my claims.

The stories shared through this study have not been told before. The stories are new understandings for the storyteller and the story reader. The value of the stories is in the tale they tell. The value of the story is in the feelings they evoke. Do they speak to you?

Valuing story, valuing the narrative, is important. It is who I am. I am a researcher storyteller. Using narrative is not unique, although it might be considered risky in our worlds where individual voices are lost in research which is framed in a positivist paradigm. I believe that by silencing stories, we are silencing those who have no other way to be heard. Storying gives everyone a chance to be heard. Everyone has a story. Denying the value of story enables those who have power to be the only voices heard. My study is not original in its use of story. My stories are original.

Further, how I have unmasked (Bruner, 2003) these stories is original. The methodology and method used in this study is original. My study is a creative application of narrative inquiry working within the principles set out by Clandinin (2016). Staying true to the ontological and epistemological principles in narrative inquiry, I have used this to research our virtual world of Twitter. Our virtual worlds provide a new domain for researchers. Accessing data already in the public domain is a rich field for researchers to harvest. Staying true to the focus of my study; namely gendered silencing, I have intentionally crafted my methodology and method to ensure a congruence between my research question and my values. I have taken an original approach to my study of Twitter by listening to the voice behind the tweet. I have intentionally rejected features of a netnography (Kozinets, 2010). (See 2.7 for further discussion).

I am privileging and empowering the person who is tweeting. Claims that our virtual world enables the massification of voice (Seymour, 2019) might be misleading (See 2.2 for further discussion). However, the relational dimension of my work, gives power to the otherwise marginalised voices of women in education leadership to be heard.

My methodology and method could be used for other marginalised groups. The methodology and methods reminds us that research serves

relationships (Kara, 2021). The methodology and method disrupts constructs of power implicit in the research and research relationship by honouring the relational dimension at the core of my work. I have a story to tell because of the relationship that was developed when my storyteller felt safe and heard. These stories are powerful and empowering. These stories evoke a visceral response to the normalisation of gendered silencing. This is a real thing.

PART ONE

1. Searching for Meaning in the Literature

'It's no good – not a bit of good,' I said. 'Once she knows how to read there's

only one thing you can teach her to believe in – and that's herself.'

'Well, that would be a change,' said Castalia.

Virginia Woolf (1920) p. 566

1.1 Introducing the literature review

In this literature review I will tell the story of how I have come to see the phenomenon of gendered silencing. This is a story that had become lost, or hidden, or invisible for me. In telling the story of how women's voices are silenced I am finding my voice. In telling the story of four women I am giving them a voice. In telling this story I come to know who I am. I am finding my voice.

The literature review is structured into four parts. I begin with some auto-biographical musings; positioning myself in my literature and examining how my literature positions me.

The next part of this literature review is a broad overview exploring women's voices; using some of the classic feminist texts, studies, fiction, and poetry found on my bookshelf. This section does not claim to be exhaustive in its literature search. It is selective to the extent it is aiming to set the foundations of my arguments. I am looking through a window, seeing the ways in which women's voices have been represented and normalised as unnatural, weak, mistrustful, vengeful, or simply out of place. Speaking out is not the place for women's voices. The phenomenon of silencing of women's voices are complex.

Section 1.4 is a more in-depth analysis of key themes of power, identity, and agency with an explicit focus on how these impact on women's voices. I will examine the literature using a Foucauldian perspective, a genealogist approach systematically exploring and challenging constructs as truths (Foucault, 1972). I will specifically examine how these themes; power, identity, and agency, are operationalised. I will specifically look at how these impact on women as leaders. The synthesis, the knitting together interaction process through a series of questions, will seek to examine what Butler (2007) has called performative identity.

In Section 1.5, I have specifically focused on the literature pertaining to gender and education leadership. This is not an examination of the construct of leadership per se, but a review of the literature pertaining to women in the education leadership world. This is a world where women make up the majority of the workforce, but remain under-represented. The literature examines the intersection of leadership and gender.

The final section of the literature review will explicitly focus on the overlay of factors contributing to gendered silencing and its impact on women as leaders. I examine how different constructs of leadership may have unconsciously perpetuated a status quo, where women are conspicuous by their

absence, where women of colour are virtually invisible and where women who

have achieved a seat at the leadership table 'appear out of place, strangers in

the landscape' (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 60). Using Thompson's Personal, Cultural and

Social model (Thompson, 2018), I will introduce how this model, or tool, might

support analysis and dialectical reasoning. I will explore the inter-relationship of

power, identity, and agency and how they might be seen to normalise the

silencing of women.

> Everyone has a story, do not they? Mine is about bread and the
> sea
>
> Hood, 2008, p. 49

1.2 Auto-biographical musings

I begin this review of my literature with questions swirling around, or colliding, in my head. These are questions about identity, my identity, my right to speak up and speak out, speak about leadership, my leadership. These are questions about how women, we, I, you, make our voices heard in the education leadership world. These are questions about constructs of my power, my identity, and my agency. Throughout this literature review, I will position myself in relation to these constructs. This is my literature, and it is my sense making journey. This is me beginning to explore and then tell my story (Bochner and Ellis, 2016, Clandinin and Connelly, 2000).

> There were times when she wondered if she'd ever tell her
>
> story to anyone
>
> Hood, 2008, p. 14

This is not a search for literature, but a search for meaning in my literature. It is going back to the books, the plays, the poems that have been there in my life for the last thirty-five years. My A-Level Shakespeare study of Taming of the Shrew and King Lear, and Jane Austen's Emma, and those tentative discussions about gender and feminism in the early 1980's. The bar in

Manchester when as a first-year undergraduate student I listened to Liz Lochhead reading her poem, Men Talk (1985). Reading Germaine Greer, and Doris Lessing, and our University Women Group discussions, feelings of vulnerability and lack of political awareness. Not belonging. Beatrice Webb and the Fabians, a woman I researched as part of my Undergraduate BA History dissertation, and my subsequent political awakening. The Miners' Strike and the Thatcher years, and its impact on the community living in Manchester and Sheffield in the 1980's, my activism in the Labour Party. Musical theatre; Billy Elliot, 9-5 The Musical; Dolly Parton, Les Miserable; power, identity, agency. The Worker's Education Association courses I undertook in the late 1980's, a respite from the demands of being a newly qualified teacher, and my introduction to Sheila Rowbotham (1985). My subsequent focus in my school teaching always on those who are hidden from history. The Virago Classics I have collected since I was eighteen. Reading Radclyffe Hall's; The Well of Loneliness (2005). My own loneliness and disconnection from my family as I sought to take a different path. bell hooks (1994) Teaching to Transgress, a pivotal text as I tried to make meaning and connection with the pedagogy of Higher Education. This was a new identity as I transitioned from being a schoolteacher to something else, lecturer in Higher Education, at the beginning of the new millennium. Not quite fitting

in, again. There appears to be a bit of a gap in my academic reading during the 1990s, perhaps when I was especially busy, in a full-time leadership role as a Deputy Head in a large secondary school and then Head of Department in a University and mother of two young children. Juggling motherhood and career. Struggling with motherhood and career.

The collection of feminist literature continued and continues to grow. I discover and rediscover. Now I am sense making again, with grown up children, a mortgage paid off, having proved myself as a leader. Maybe? Not sure. What does it mean to prove myself? I come to this sense making with a new lens, a new way of seeing things, maybe? Or am I looking through a kaleidoscope? My kaleidoscope of a woman's life mapped over fifty-six years, and simply seeing a myriad of shapes. I am using this literature review to make sense of the literature that you find on my bookshelf. I am using my literature to make sense of who I am.

The literature on my bookshelf can be mapped against the chronology of my life. Now I am using it to try and understand that life. The purpose of this review of literature is therefore to seek to untangle threads that make up my life. A daughter, a wife, a mother, a woman leader in education. I need to untangle the threads that make up my life as part of the process of sense making

to understand why being heard is hard. I need to untangle the threads that make up other women's lives to understand why women are silenced.

I am now engaged in an act of knitting together lots of threads. The knitting metaphor seems appropriate. It is a pastime mostly of women. I like the image of the knitting circle; being heard around the click of the needles. This is a domain, a space, where women can gather, knit, and talk, yes talk. A safe space to tell a story. A space to be heard.

I want to pause and tell the story of my grandmother. I talked to her a lot when I was growing up. She was always knitting and sewing. She taught me to knit. She taught me to sew. My grandmother knitted and sewed and made things. She left school aged twelve and went into domestic service to work as a kitchen maid. Like many girls and women, her life was directed by the norms of her time. Could she question this life trajectory? Did she know she had choices, or no choice? These are questions of power, of identity and agency. What power did she have? We did not talk about these existential questions. We talked about knitting. She saw me go off to university, the first in my extended family. She was very old, tired, worn out by her hard life. I left her behind.

I left behind a rural, working-class life, never to return to live in the agricultural Fens of East Anglia. These are some of threads of my life, which will be knitted back together through this review of literature. The knitting together is important. It is an essential part of the process, as it is this knitting together which captures the complexity of the issues being explored, the complexity of my life, of women's lives, the unique trajectories of women's lives and women's leadership lives. This is my story, but other women's stories too.

Knitting works for me as a metaphor for putting together my/our story. In homage to my grandmother, a powerful woman in my life, I will keep my knitting metaphor to help me make sense of the story. It works as a reminder to me of a woman who did not have the choices that I have. Knitting is also a symbol of taking control, of making, of constructing. If second-wave feminists have been historicized as women who put away their knitting, third-wave feminists may be characterized as those who have picked it back up again (Pentney, 2008).

For most of my professional life I have been a leader in education. I am now standing back, looking in, and looking at my life as a leader in education. Who am I? The lived experience of women leaders in education has been described as a hidden gendered contract (Fitzgerald, 2014) in terms of roles,

responsibilities, behaviours, and cultures. It is complex topic to unpick. Being successful in this leadership world has been described as playing a game (Acker, 2012), a masculinist game. A game which for some women who have managed to get into a leadership role is only achieved through cultural compliance and minimal disruption to the 'systemically gendered cultural, social and structural arrangements' (Blackmore and Sachs, 2009, p. 13). Women are in the minority in education leadership roles and even if, and when, they do occupy this space, it seems to be at the expense of authenticity. Being true to who we are, knowing who we are, being able to discern who we are and not the social construct or what Ahmed refers to as 'being directed;' our 'life shaped by norms in ways we did not realize' (Ahmed, 2017, p. 43).

The literature review is part of the unmasking process (Bruner, 2003), a process by which I make some sense of the complexity of my story, the story of women, gender, and leadership. Unmasking through the literature is part of my exploration of my leadership praxis potential (Freire, 2017, hooks, 1994); from knowing, and then the potential to challenge, to disrupt. The process of acquiescing (consciously or unconsciously) to dominant ideologies becomes clearer. I now come to see the dominant patriarchal ideologies which are, I

believe, embedded in our lived lives. These are the phenomenon I need to explore.

The more, I reflect, the more I read, the more I realise that my questions are not unique. They are not new. They are not just about me. These questions go back to the beginning of the written record. As I explore my literature, I begin to understand more, that what I feel and experience is a truth that women have endured for a very long time, the normalisation of values, cultures, and behaviours. This is my awakening. This is very empowering. This is my reawakening

Using a critical feminist theorist lens (Butler, 2007, hooks, 1994, Ahmed, 2017, Lorde, 2020), I begin to see these gendered ideological constructs as a means of control. These constructs, I believe, serve to perpetuate leadership in education which does not give agency and voice to women; that perpetuates a leadership ideology which privileges masculine qualities and attributes, or hard skills. This literature review will therefore specifically explore models of leadership and how our conceptualisation of what constitutes strong leadership is predicated on gender constructs which marginalize women, or female attributes or champion leadership traits which consciously or unconsciously challenge our constructs of gendered behaviours.

1.3 Broad overview of literature

When Mary Wollstonecraft (1792/1992) made a plea for her sex, a vindication for the rights of woman, she sought to highlight inequity and inequality.

> to be excluded, without having a voice, from participation of the natural rights of mankind
>
> Wollstonecraft, 1992, p.5

She scripted a text, a feminist text, to question the 'deeply rooted prejudices' (p. 15) which legitimatized unequal gender roles as natural, founded on rational and reasoned logic, and thus acted out as a truth. To be a woman in the eighteenth century was not to have your own voice. Women were thus rendered powerless, or at the mercy, or at the tyranny of men. To question this state of nature, the naturalness of the social order, was further an act of sacrilege. In her vindication of the rights of woman, Wollstonecraft (1792/1992) shone her light on the fabric of society, which determined behaviours, cultures, and societal structures. Wollstonecraft (1792/1992), it could be argued, challenged the legitimacy of a system which implicitly endorsed patriarchal structures and misogynist acts. Unnaturalness, the unnaturalness of her claims, the unnaturalness of women who had before and since, attempted to disrupt

dominant discourses, is a reoccurring response to those women (and men) who have dared to present an alternative.

Her sister feminist writers have continued to pick up these threads, threads that seek to disrupt. These threads continue to shape who we are, how we come to see ourselves and the rights we continue to claim. The literature, the plays, the poetry, demonstrate the longevity and the deepness of the problems, or the ideologies being challenged. What Wollstonecraft (1792/1992) was seeking to expose in her treatise on the rights of women, published in 1792, is however, still being discussed in the twenty-first century. We still have an authority gap (Sieghart, 2021). Although there are today far more women involved in politics, public services and business, women are still less likely to speak or be heard from a public stage (Cooper, 2019, p. 1). This literature review is an examination of this phenomenon.

> The story of Eve in the Book of Genius is the underpinning for countless measures which have limited the actions, rights and status of women
>
> Blackie, 2016, p. 6

The dominant message is that women are not to be trusted, do not trust each other, and do not trust themselves. Such depictions of women are firmly

established in the earliest written records of the Greek myths. Everyone knows of Pandora, who could not even be trusted with a box (Haynes, 2020). Or at least that is how the myths have been recounted and have established a truth about women and what they can say, or not say. Cordelia would not speak the words commanded by her father, King Lear (Shakespeare, 2005). Cordelia was not allowed to choose her own words. Standing accused of the unnatural act, speaking her mind, and defying her father's instruction, Cordelia is expelled. The feisty Kate capitulates, seeing the folly of her ways, self-questioning her error in asserting independence; 'But now I see our lances are but straws' (Shakespeare, 2005, V: ii:186). The shew was tamed. Kate gave up any attempt to assert her power. Her voice silenced and her agency gone. She is accepted.

Kate, and my grandmother, like many other fictional and non-fictional women, ultimately lived the life that was directed or determined for them. And whilst Jane Austen might have challenged the norm, not marrying, and making her life as a writer, her female characters certainly did not disrupt social conventions, although they may have gently probed? George Eliot, to get her voice heard, adopted a male pseudonym, and is still known by that name today. Mary Anne Evans' name remains hidden even in the twenty-first century. Eliot's (1995) subtle irony in silencing Mrs Transmore. Her voice muted, her opinion

and her right to express a viewpoint to her son silenced. This is not lost on the critical feminist reader. Further one of Eliot's male characters propose that

> Half the sorrows of women would be averted if they could repress the speech, they know be useless; nay the speech they have resolved not to make.
>
> Eliot, 1995, p. 37

Women in the nineteenth century, simply, needed to keep quiet, to be safe and to be happy. Women in the twenty first century, simply, need to keep quiet, to be safe and happy. How much has really changed? Deeply embedded misogynist put downs are culturally normalised; seen again when the Secretary of State for Health, Matt Hancock on 5th May 2020 tells the opposition Member of Parliament, Dr Rosena Allin-Khan, to watch her tone. Dr Rosena Allin-Khan was a frontline National Health Service (NHS) Doctor, and shadow Secretary of State for Health, working to support the Covid:19 pandemic. The Right Honourable Member of Parliament, unconsciously, demonstrates his culturally normalised gender bias by putting down an expert colleague, who was experiencing first-hand the challenges faced by NHS staff. Whilst his behaviour has invited critique (Guardian, 2020) what it seemingly demonstrates is the normalisation of the silencing of women. This is not dissimilar to Mrs Transmore,

or countless other women throughout history? This is our cultural template (Beard, 2017).

When Anne Elliot, in Jane Austen's Persuasion says, 'Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story' (Austen, 2003, p. 240), we might infer a challenge at the absence of women's voices in owning and thus shaping our story. The women who have not been hidden in history, for too many, it is not their voice we hear, but their perceived story through the words of men. So, whilst we may know the infamous speech of Elizabeth I from our history lessons; whether she ever said, 'I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king (man), and of a king of England' (Cooper, 2019, p. 20), because these are Lionel Sharp's words in a letter to the Duke of Buckingham. Notwithstanding the propaganda value of this speech, the way in which it describes the Queen of England, facing the Spanish Armada and threatened invasion of England by the Spanish, is telling of the normalisation of women as not equal. My literature review shows the longevity of the unnaturalness of women speaking. My literature review shows that this is so deeply embedded in our personal, cultural, and structural norms it goes unnoticed. Such that, women who speak out in 2022 are still too often fodder for ridicule and abuse. We see this played out in very public arenas and not least

in our social media world. Both Diane Abbot and Mary Beard are very public ,
female figures, who have experienced the vitriol of those who cannot tolerate
women who speak out.

The right to an education was a significant factor in getting women's
voices heard. Literacy is without doubt important in the liberation process.
However, the representations of women, strong and weak, has for centuries
been filtered by male writers because of the privilege of education being not
seen necessary for the female sex. Education, privileged for boys and men, is a
critical instrument in power and agency. Without access to literacy, those stories
we are hearing are too often owned and curated by the men. Women who tried
to speak out were painfully aware of the multiple factors that made their voice
insignificant

> The voice of one crying in the wilderness! A woman's voice and
>
> she cries among the multitude in this vast wilderness of men
>
> Cooper, 2019, p.26

And these stories we hear create a reality, a normalisation, a truth. Slowly,
slowly, drip, drip; we do not even notice it. This is not a historical phenomenon;
Malala Yousafzai risked her life arguing for the rights of girls and women to have
an education and thus be able to reap all the benefits this affords. This was in

2015. The enduring influence of historical beliefs about what women should do still prevail. The frustration similarly expressed by Dolly Parton (1980)

> 9-5, Yeah, they got you where they want you,
>
> There's a better life,
>
> And you dream about it, don't you?

Beard (2017) has argued that our Western tradition has been built upon a cultural template that powerful people are male. She illustrates how one of the first written stories in Western literature, lays down the claim that speaking is not the business of women. This silencing phenomenon, as Telemachus instructs his mother, Penelope, to go back to her weaving (knitting) and leave the men to talk. Beard (2017) suggests this is not simply a phenomenon of the 5th Century BCE but continues to play itself out today in numerous arenas; perhaps part of the backlash against the Duchess of Sussex is that Meghan speaks out, speaks up, won't be silenced, refuses to play the game? Blackie (2016) further argues that

> The story which I was given to carry as a very young child, the
>
> story which both defined me and instructed me about the place

I occupied in this world, accorded no such significance to women

Blackie, 2016, p. 5

Simone de Beauvoir's infamous claim 'one is not born, but rather becomes a woman' (de Beauvoir, 2010, p. 293) can help us problematise the extent to which our gendered roles are part of the socialisation and identity forming process. The conforming or acquiescing to the rules and roles, the rules and roles which have a status of naturalness, the rules, and roles which if questioned opens ridicule or worse, accusations of absurd, being mad, being a witch, the unnatural woman. Throughout history we have examples of women who have not felt comfortable in the gendered role prescribed for them and have dared to not comply. Some have been successful, others have only been able to make their voices heard by assuming a male pseudonym, but many women faced social exclusion or worse, many remained and remain hidden (Rowbotham, 1985). Because it's men who talk.

Women rabbit, tattle and titter, prattle and waffle.

Men Talk. Men Talk.

Lochhead, 1985

1.4 Thematic Analysis

In the following section I will use a thematic analysis approach to examine the literature with an explicit intent to explore concepts of power, identity, and agency. These themes have been chosen as I believe that they are pivotal to developing my understanding of the phenomenon of silencing of women's voices.

1.4.1 Power

> Power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere
>
> Foucault, 1978, p. 93

Having no voice, no right to speak up, speak out, I argue, makes women powerless. Or rather, the dominant ideological construct of womanhood, which is consistently, overtly, and implicitly promoted, serves to embed itself in our collective consciousness what is normal. Normal for women is not to speak up and out.

Power can be seen as 'the invisible architecture of the social' (Westwood, 2002, p. XX) and without voice, I suggest, that women have been rendered powerless in the powerful arenas of life. One of these powerful arenas that I am

specifically focusing on is education leadership, but more broadly, in the powerful arenas of life women's voices are still hidden or at best muffled: business, politics, religion, media. In seeking to understand the longevity of a construct of identity, an identity of gender which I am arguing normalises the silencing of women, I am going to use a Foucauldian perspective to examine this phenomenon. Foucault gave us a methodology, a genealogist approach, to understand society.

In Archaeology of Knowledge (1972), Foucault invites us to examine how our constructs of a truth are of the time, using the archaeology analogy. Foucault provides a tool to recognise, begin to understand and ultimately challenge ideological and social constructs. From a Foucauldian perspective power constructs are multi layered. He gives us a tool question what is; 'to tear away from their virtual self-evidence' (Foucault, 1972, p. 29). A Foucauldian perspective is a rejection of a grand theory or narrative to explain the complexity of phenomenon. Whilst Foucault did not explicitly examine gendered constructs of power, his writing has been used by feminist scholars to explore power constructs (Mills, 2003). Foucault argued 'against systemizing, universalizing theories' (Martin, 1982, p. 3). He sought to help us understand how power works in deeper ways. Indeed, from a Foucauldian perspective, feminism, , might be

an oversimplification of a phenomenon, since it is possible to argue that 'woman' is a social construct. Judith Butler (2007) has suggested, that rather than look at power structures and emancipatory actions, the focus should be on the category or identity of gender roles and how these serve to shape how we live our lives.

This is a rejection of the 'feminist fairy tale' (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 17), or what unhelpfully becomes an over simplified, homogenous, and generalised narrative, to explain power and gendered silencing. The phenomenon of gendered silencing is complex. It is far more complex than a simple 'pipeline' (Pricewaterhouse Coopers, 2008) explanation. In fact, I would suggest that the 'pipeline' argument is another example of mansplaining the problem. The 'pipeline' argument, that we just need to get more women into the system, fails to take account of the deeply embedded and normalised cultural and systematic barriers that exist. Using a Foucauldian lens supports that process of seeing beneath the normalisation of constructs.

Are we trapped in this construct? Does it mean that 'we live in an iron cage with no possible escape?' (Biesta, 2008, p. 173). Where is our agency for emancipation?

1.4.2 Agency

Cooper suggests that 'Looking at lists of the greatest speeches of all time, you might think that powerful oratory is the preserve of men. But the truth is very different' (Cooper, 2019, p. 3). I would argue that the truth is not very different. Since the beginning of time, or at least the beginning of written time, women have struggled to be heard. This would appear still to be the case. Whilst indeed there are illustrious exceptions of women speaking out since the beginning of time, or at least the beginning of written time, these are the exception and not the rule. It has been argued that for many women their feeling of exclusion is hard to articulate.

> Just what was this problem that has no name? What were the words women used when they tried to express it? Sometimes a woman would say *I feel empty somehow .. incomplete*. Or she would say *I feel as if I do not exist*.
>
> Friedan, 1963, p. 28

Our sense of agency, or lack of agency, to speak out needs examination. I am using my Foucauldian lexicon to further my sense making of the phenomenon of silencing of women, the gendered normalisation of silencing and the seeming absence of agency in affecting change. Ahmed argues that 'we cannot "not" live

in relation to these norms' (Ahmed, 2017, p. 43), because it permeates everything. In fact, 'We are completely without memory of anything different' (Rowbotham, 2015, p. 34). Further, using the Althussian term, one way of deepening our understanding of this phenomenon has been to argue that we are all subject to interpellation (Althusser, 1971), that being the process by which ideology is embodied in all arenas of our lived and daily social experiences. The voices we hear, the powerful voices we hear, the leaders' voices we hear, are predominantly male and such that to hear a woman's voice is extraordinary, or not natural? We tacitly accept that it is normal to have five of the six panellists on a weekly political discussion television programme as male, or the three of the four keynote speakers at a conference as male, or the United Kingdom newly elected parliament to be made up of 34% women (2020). Ahmed (2017) suggests that our narratives, the discourses which shape our lives from the moment we are born, reinforces a way of being. To challenge that way of being part of life, risks alienation. The normalisation that woman '*will be* happiest when they get married' (Ahmed, 2017, p. 48), just like Jane Austen's eighteenth-century Emma, is a subtle act of oppression. Our agency to step outside the rules of gendered behaviour is complex.

The extent to which we are complicit in our subject roles, agree to perform to the rules, Foucault applied his docile body theory (Foucault, 1975). He argued that the exercise of power is so absolute, continuous, and all-embracing that we are rendered helpless in our acquiescing. It is possible to argue, that the act of acquiescing implies a conscious choice. However, from a Foucauldian perspective it is suggested that the act is performed without consciousness of acting, or choice. There is no choice because there is only a perceived truth. To act contrary is to act unnaturally, illegally, to alienate ourselves from the world. This perceived truth in turn becomes an instrument of control, self-control, self-limiting. This perceived truth denies agency. The problem is me. I am the problem.

> And ain't I a woman?
>
> I have ploughed and planted and gathered into barns and no man
> could head me!
>
> And ain't I a woman?
>
> Sojurne Truth, 1851, in Cooper, 2019, p. 24

To understand the concept of agency, self-power within a constellation of power structures, the concept of the panopticon has also proved useful in deepening my understanding. The panoptic, the illusion of always being

watched, is explored by Foucault (1980). In the process of examining why rules, those unwritten societal laws are followed, enables us perhaps to understand more and understand differently the phenomenon of gendered silencing. It can perhaps help us see the phenomenon as a manifestation of patriarchal hegemonic apparatus.

But is the cage illusionary or is it real? 'When you have five hundred a year of your own' (Woolf, 1945, p.38), a right to work, a right to equal pay, a right to a room of your own with your name, followed by the title of Vice Chancellor, one might argue that this phenomenon of being silenced is a myth. Women have achieved so much. This narrative would also use the legal frameworks, the Equality Act 2010, the Gender Pay Gap 2017. But this is more and different. It is about getting into positions of leadership, it about that place, that room feeling like you should be there, and being able to be who you are; or being able to navigate, survive or challenge the think-leader-think male construct (Collinson and Hearn, 1996, Kerfoot and Knight 1996, Sieghart, 2021).

From a panoptic perspective, then maybe yes, that which silences women, is not real. The phenomenon of gendered silencing is a social construct. Or is it *the chip on my shoulder*. I am recalling the appraisal feedback I was given by my line manager. I am the problem. This does not make it less painful,

frustrating, or debilitating, or in fact less real to me, to us. As women who occupy leadership roles testify in their stories of exclusion (Blackmore, 1999, Coleman, 2011) or the constant struggle of 'composing a life' (Bateson, 1989), sense making or juggling and adaptation 'to the prevailing masculine culture' (Fitzgerald, 2014, p18).

When women are not silenced, is it a joyful, celebratory, or affirming emancipatory experience? Narrative studies (Clift, Loughran, Mill and Craig, 2015, Coleman, 2011, Fitzgerald 2014) not surprisingly challenge homogenous discourses but rather expose the diversity and richness of women's life stories; the dissonance and conflicting self-talk about speaking up and speaking out, the games we play, consciously and unconsciously and the messy and emotional business of leadership in our volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous education contexts, or the 'divided self' (Craig and Orland-Barak, 2015, p. 182) or the living contradiction (Whitehead, 2018).

1.4.3 Identity

Butler (2007) has challenged the ontological givenness of woman as a noun, a subject, a truth. Whilst not a rejection of patriarchy, or any other forms of control and power, she argues that a primary focus on how gender identities

are constructed is required to recognise and understand that which is being challenged. Butler (2007) draws upon Foucault's writing to explore her identity theorising, her examination of the notion of womanhood, a rejection of the universalizability or homogeneity of gender. But further, she challenges us to see gender as a verb and not a noun. Gender is a performative, 'a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed' (Butler, 2007, p. 25). Butler (2007) argues that 'Juridical power inevitably produces what it claims merely to represent' (Butler, 2007, p. 3) and further we need to reflect, that if woman is a construct 'then gender is an effect, not a cause' (Salih, 2002, p. 49). Our roles, our acting, our being is therefore a performance, performing to the identity it purports to be, or the ideological construct of that role.

Butler's gender genealogies (2007) seek to expose that which might be thought of as neutral, natural, and permanent, a truth. In her explicit exploration of identity, Butler (2007) argues that

> genealogy investigates the political stakes in designating as an
>
> origin and cause those identity categories that are in fact effects
>
> of institutions, practices, discourses
>
> Butler, 2007, p. viii-ix

From the moment of our birth, we have norms dictated. I am born and thereafter I perform to a set of rules and roles consistent with that time. As a working-class woman, had I been born in the early 20th Century, like my grandmother, there were norms, or what Butler (2007) has referred to as performativity, the conscious and unconscious acting out of prescribed roles, or what has been referred to as 'gender fatalism' (Ahmed, 2017, p. 25). To further clarify, when we talk about gender, Butler (2007) has argued that we are conflating three contingent dimensions of identity, 'anatomical sex, gender identity and gender performance' (Butler, 2007, p. 187), or 'boys will be boys' (Ahmed, 2017, p. 25) or 'Throwing like a Girl' (Young, 1990). The performativity thesis can thus be applied to other roles; and specifically, for my area of focus leadership. Leadership, or the leader role, is a social construct, there are the rules of the game (Acker, 2012) gendered rules or what has been labelled 'the leadership myth which eulogizes what leadership ought to look like' (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 34).

My literature review has helped me see more clearly. I am more aware of these rules. I now see these rules, rules which were not seen or understood as rules or constructs previously. Now I see the rules, and I begin questioning. My questioning asks what keeps me playing to this set role? Why do I acquiesce to

this phenomenon? Equally why do I, or other women, not speak, speak up or speak out?

1.5 Gender and Education Leadership

Who knows what women can be when they are finally free to become themselves

Friedan, 1963, p. 29

This section of the literature review seeks to make sense of the question: why are there so few women who occupy leadership roles in education? Whilst the explicit misogyny expressed by Bennett (1920), 'Every man knows in his heart, and every woman knows in her heart, that the average man has more intellectual power than the average woman' (quoted in Seighart, 2022, p. 13), is regarded as nonsense today, there is a deeply embedded and culturally normalised implicit bias against women in leadership. This is a real thing, even in 2023. Why has the glass ceiling not been smashed? (Connell, 2006, Seighart, 2022).

Understanding the under-representation of women in education leadership is complex. I am particularly interested in highlighting herein the research which tells the lived experience of women leaders in education, to hear women leaders' voices in the research literature. Perhaps voices that were for too long missing, overlooked, or silenced? Or voices that were too challenging

to the dominant leadership orthodoxy anchored in patriarchal authority? The following review of literature explores the intersection of gender and identity, and leadership research. The aim is to further understand the complexity of the phenomenon of women's under-representation in education leadership.

Research into women and education leadership 'remains committed to surfacing women's opportunities and marginalisation in leadership across all educational phases' (Fuller et al, 2020, p. 115). Over the last thirty years, the research into gender and education leadership has focused on women's under-representation in education leadership. Women continue to be under-represented. But the focus has shifted. Increasingly that focus has been to tell the stories women leaders' lived experiences (Fitzgerald, 2014, Fuller, 2020, Pullen and Vachhani, 2021, Featherstone and Porritt, 2021).

In their work 'Reconsidering Feminist research in Education Leadership', the editors Skrla and Young (2003), acknowledge the challenge of the research task and embrace the need to the disrupt 'the educational leadership field that have been grounded almost exclusively in white, male, and heterosexist epistemologies' (2003, p. 4). Feminist researchers focus in the twenty-first century have additionally faced the challenge of claims that 'women have it all now' and that 'too much is made of the gender thing', or that the pendulum has

swung too far (Connell, 2006, Skrla and Young, 2003, Seighart, 2022). Despite seismic developments in gender and equality over the last century; women remain under-represented in education leadership. Women leaders in education leadership continue to face challenges and barriers, 'oppression is not monolithic or static' (Skrla and Young, 2003, p. 2).

In all United Kingdom (UK) education sectors (HE, FE, Secondary, Primary) there is an under-representation of women in leadership. In the UK school sector (4-18) women make up more than 60% of the workforce, yet they proportionally occupy less of the senior leadership roles (Department for Education, 2022). At best, where women make up 85% of the workforce in the UK Primary Sector, they occupy 74% of senior leader roles. However, men will progress faster into a leadership role in the UK primary education sector (Department for Education, 2022). In the UK 11-18 school sector, the picture is less positive in terms of women occupying leadership positions, and whilst there has been some modest improvement in the number of women in senior roles, those roles are still more likely to filled by men (Department for Education, 2022). This picture of under-representation is fairly typical in comparable geographical contexts (UNICEF, 2022). This is a global phenomenon (UNICEF, 2022).

In the higher education sector in the United Kingdom, there is similar picture of the under-representation of women in senior roles. Despite progress, the pipeline 'was still more of a trickle' (Williams, 2023). Again, a picture typical across the economically developed world (UNICEF, 2022).

This issue of female under-representation in leadership is not particular or peculiar to education, but a feature of leadership in both the business and public sector (Sieghart, 2022). Even in the education sector where women make up the majority of the workforce, women in leadership are conspicuous by their absence. But they are also conspicuous by their presence in the leadership space, or 'strangers in the landscape' (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 60). Why is this?

Leadership is a complex concept (Bottery, 2004) and there are countless references to attempts to deconstruct and make meaningful interpretations. For the purpose of this literature review, my focus has been on the issues pertaining to 'gender and education leadership' and how behaviour traits leadership research, or commonly called post heroic models of leadership, has impacted on the debate. This review is not an exhaustive exploration of leadership theory but rather how it has contributed to our collective understanding of why women continue to be under-represented education leadership. This section of my

literature review examines how women leadership has to flourish in a space where they experience the public glare due to the simple act of actually occupying that space (Bell and Sinclair, 2016).

It has been argued that behaviour traits leadership models are gender neutral (Fletcher, 2004). Critics counter that by positioning that leadership behaviour traits theory and their corresponding models, are constructed and viewed through a masculine lens (Appalbaum et al, 2003, Blackmore and Sachs, 2007, Coleman, 2011, Ford and Harding, 2018, Grace, 1995). 'Patriarchal and male power has shaped the construct of leadership, its culture and practice for centuries' (Grace, 1995, p. 187), and remains a significant barrier and challenge for women today. This is the world of leadership that women are seeking to inhabit. This is a world of leadership research which has not enabled women's voices to be heard or valued. Leadership is also enacted in a workplace where systemic gender constructs are at play.

The identification of a set of behaviours, collated under the umbrella of various leadership typologies: transactional, charismatic, transformative, distributed or more recently authentic, were informed and constructed by the functionalist assumption that leadership can be identified by a set of observable traits. This approach to the research and theorising about leadership, has had

significant impact on practice. As someone who has accessed a fair share of leadership and management training over the last twenty-years, I have born witness to the impact of these typologies on the lived experience of leading and managing in education.

Critical leadership theorists, with their alternative focus on leadership as a process, a lived experience of negotiation of context, reject much of the leadership traits research, or the homogenising sets of behaviours, challenge the dominance of behaviour traits models of theorising leadership (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012, Collinson, 2014, Ford, 2008, Ford and Harding, 2018). Further critical leadership research has sought to address 'gendered notions of leadership supporting and legitimizing male domination' (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012, p. 373).

Behaviour traits leadership research has influenced a strand of gender and education leadership discourse, with a focus on women's leadership traits and styles (Hall, 1996, Coleman, 2011). Fitzgerald (2014) has challenged the discourse within the field of women's leadership constructs that propose women lead in a more 'feminine' or 'softer' ways (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 6) as being sucked into the behaviour traits research discourse, and further requiring 'women' to play a game of fitting in, as opposed to a focus on structural change.

Again critical of this essentialising of gendered attributes and leadership traits, Blackmore (1999) argued that there has been a failure to surface the gendered nature of organisations, which has enabled and supported a discourse about women's leadership styles to flourish at the expense of the disruption of means of control and power within the leadership landscape. The need for structural change is the way forward (Burnford, 2022). Organisational structures, practices and cultures are why women are under-represented in education leadership

> The problem of the underrepresentation of women in education leadership is not about women's lack, whether ambition or capacities, but rather, it is the consequence of the … systemically gendered cultural, social and structural arrangements
>
> Blackmore and Sachs, 2007, p. 13

To segway into the lived experience of women leaders in education literature, I am trying to unravel the conclusions from the examination of literature on leadership and the paradoxes this presents for women. Leadership has been predominately constructed through a series of behaviour traits. The behaviour traits have been constructed through a masculinist lens, that have 'failed to engage in the examination of the 'gendered nature of organisations'

and did not disrupt 'managerialist or masculinist hegemony' (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007, p. 228). The close relationship between leadership and masculinity has thus been left intact. Leadership is a man's world, or there is a relief when the leader is a man (Mackinnon, 2018).

Women seeking to inhabit the education leadership world have to navigate a space which implicitly constructs leadership as a masculine domain in which they are imposters, or at best, challenges them to comply with a set of behaviour traits to prove their competence. Ford (2008) further acknowledges the contradictions women leaders face, having to demonstrate a set of contradictory masculine and feminine traits. Whilst critical leadership theorists have questioned the legitimacy of the behaviour traits leadership models, this is the lived experience of women leaders engagement with education leadership and presents a tension. A related tension is the normalisation of organisational cultures and the assimilation of leadership behaviours as objective truths (Alvesson and Spicer, 2012, Ford and Harding, 2018).The act of essentialising gender into a simple female/male binary is another significant tension, which fails to acknowledge intersectionality (Crenshaw, 2018, Fuller, 2013) and typecasts 'women as being simply the other to men' (Pullen and Vachhani, 2021).

Making sense of the leadership landscape situation through the complexity of multiple tensions, has been recognised in the research literature, and through research which seeks to explore leadership through multiple and different marginalised lenses (Pullen and Vachhani, 2021, Miller, 2019, Fuller, 2013). To make sense of this Fuller (2013) acknowledges her own struggle and the power of voice to act as a source of liberation through discourse (Fuller, 2013, p. 5). The commitment to hear women's stories to understand individual experiences of leadership is thus championed by both the leadership research world (Ford and Harding, 2018) and the feminist educational leadership research world (Fuller, 2020).

Mackillop (2018) argues that the leadership research methodological dominance of privileging universal theories has denied individual's stories (See also Section 2.5 for discussion and examination of Leadership and management: Disrupting research paradigms). It is the turn of the auto-biographical discourse to challenge and disrupt. There is no grand narrative. The trajectory of gender and education leadership research has increasingly focused on the rejection of homogenising andro-centric leadership constructs, in favour of privileging and validation of individual's stories through an intersectional lens (Skrla and Young, 2003, Coleman, 2011, Fitzgerald, 2014, Fuller, 2020, Griffiths, 2011).

Recognising and acknowledging this education leadership environment, researching women and education leadership have increasingly sought to examine how women leaders navigate, adapt, thrive, survive (Blackmore and Sachs, 2007, Coleman, 2002, 2011, Griffiths, 2012, Fitzgerald, 2014), or in short, live a chameleon existence? Research examining the tension of 'being a woman in a man's world' (Scott, 2003, p. 81, Fitgerald, 2014) is heard through the stories of women leaders. When we engage with these stories, we come to better understand why women are under-represented in the education leadership world. Or indeed, why this education leadership world might be rejected by women for multiple and complex reasons.

The stories of leadership told by women reveal the tensions, the lived realities and the impact on their lives. Disaggregating the challenge of leadership in our performativity cultures from the challenges of being a woman with the culturally normalised caring roles, is a reoccurring feature of women's stories of leadership. Their leadership is acted out in an environment where there is a constant need to prove. Layered on top of this is the expectation of having to do it all and be more (Sighart, 2021). When our research hears these stories we learn more about the complexity of the issues in the face of an environment which has traditionally denied the place of voice. These are not

comfortable stories to hear. They are stories about 'striking a balance' (Coleman, 2002) or a 'constant battle' (Smith, J., 2016), or the 'divided self' (Craig and Orland-Barak, 2015, p. 181); where women leaders having to prove themselves, making enormous personal, relationship and family sacrifices to be seen to be competent and deserving of their place at the top table, or simply unachievable and unattractive 'the hours, the pressure … and most of them look exhausted all the time' (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 44).

1.6 Personal, Cultural and Structural

In the final section of my literature review I am specifically focusing on the application of Thompson's (2018) personal, cultural, and structural model as a framework to examine the issues raised in the previous sections. Namely, I am examining how the personal, cultural, and structural model can help us understand the phenomenon of gendered silencing in our education leadership worlds. The model, and the theoretical underpinnings, help me to understand the complexity of gendered silencing.

Thompson's (2018) model of three concentric circles seeks to help us make sense of oppression. The phenomenon of gendered silencing is an act of oppression. The model helps us see how the personal is situated within the cultural. However, both the personal and the cultural are embedded in the structural. The simplicity of the model is not to be confused with the complexity of the whole. The model challenges atomistic explanations of gendered silencing, whilst acknowledging the personal dimension of our performing to a set of norms. No one is an island. No woman is an island. We do not operate in a vacuum. I am not the problem.

Figure 1: Concentric Circles illustrating the personal, cultural, and structural model

PERSONAL

CULTURAL
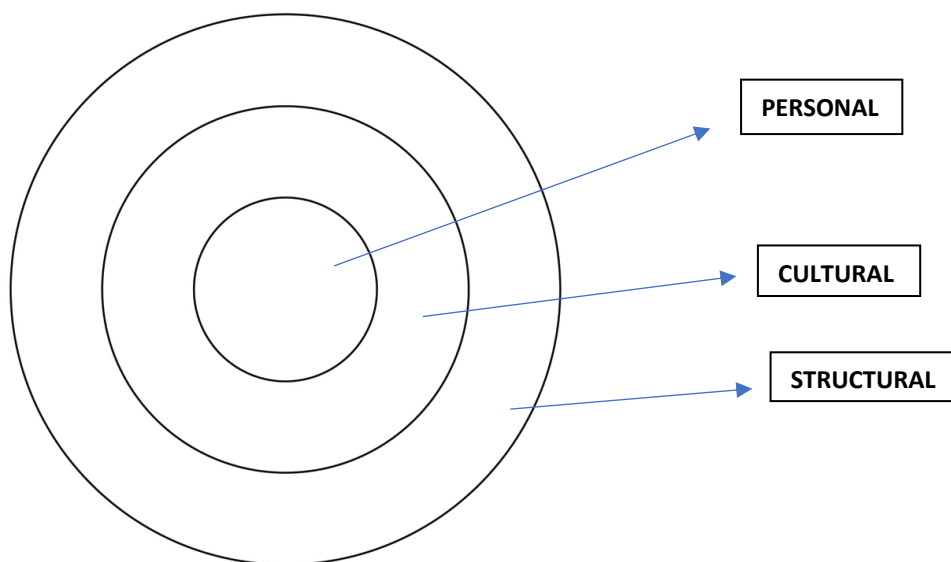
STRUCTURAL

We do have to construct our own meaning and sense making. The model whilst aiding an understanding of oppression as multi-layered, it must not be mistaken as an instrument to deny post-structural critique of a phenomenon. Personal behaviour needs to be understood in the context of the cultural and structural contexts within which we find ourselves. When a woman becomes a leader, she has successfully navigated cultural and structural barriers. This is not her natural home. To survive or thrive in this hostile environment, a woman

must adjust. Perhaps Teresa May's advice to future women politicians, 'behave like the men' (Sieghart, 2021, p. 119), captures the sentiment.

Leadership is a man's world, or rather, a masculine world. It is a world where women must acquiesce to a certain set of behaviours to be successful. To be successful we are complicit in normalising this set of behaviours. These behaviours are so deeply embedded in our person through the emersion of our self in our cultural norms. When we do not acquiesce, we are deemed the problem. Low self-efficacy (Martinez et al, 2021), self-disapproval, self-denial, self-deprecation, and imposter syndrome are all manifestations of the process of oppression. I feel that I am the problem. The cultural normalisation of roles and responsibilities are constant and continuous in their influence on how we see ourselves in this world.

Thompson's model (2018) seeks to illuminate the way oppression is multi-layered, but also bound up in the overlay of the structural. The biggest outer circle, the structures of society, have significant power of our individual sense making. The structural is everywhere. In terms of education leadership, despite being a feminised profession, leadership roles are across the world disproportionately distributed. In every education sector, men occupy a disproportionate percentage of leadership roles (OECD, 2016). To understand

this, Thompson's (2018) personal, cultural, and structural model, enables us to see the interplay of factors and of course the fusion of these factors. Separating out the three factors highlights the constraints and the complexity on the individual to affect change. Those women who throughout history have sought to affect change have been labelled as outliers or others. Whilst the language applied to label might have changed, the act of labelling remains. Those women who become leaders must navigate the cultural and structural oppressive practices and face down the barrage of challenge for daring to be different, or unwomanly. Women who dare to be different are vilified because they cross the Rubicon of what is acceptable. Sieghart (2021) writes about her experiences in the journalist world, her battle with the ongoing 'maelstrom of masculinity' (Sieghart, 2021, p. 91). And like many women before and after, the response to her speaking out was captured (labelled) in the satirical magazine *Private Eye,* with its regular feature 'Mary Anne Bighead;' 'They might as well have subtitled it 'Woman, Know Your Place' (Sieghart, 2021, p. 94).

It is much more complex than simply 'leaning in' (Sandberg, 2013). In fact, the advice to 'lean in' suggests that the problem is me, or the solution is within me. I am the problem. Thompson's (2018) model is powerful in that it shows how the personal is constrained by the cultural which in turn is constrained by

the structural. To be successful in the leadership world there are a set of norms that are required. Women who self-promote are less likeable (Rudman, 1998). But to be selected for a leadership role I must convey confidence, value, and achievement. These are not likeable features in a woman. I must speak out but not speak too much. When I do speak out, I must speak with the correct voice. Women who speak out 'shriek' (Hilary Clinton, 2020). It is not just my/women's voices, but it is the sound of my/our voice being objected to. I am the problem.

1.7 Chapter summary

In my literature review I have told the story of how women's voices are silenced. I have gone back to the books, the poems, and the plays on my bookshelf. In telling this story through the writing of this literature review I have reminded myself of this story. This story had been hidden. The story had become normalised in my life. By this I mean my story had become me. The telling of this story is a pausing moment. It is a moment to look at me. This is the story of my life. This story helps me make sense of who I am. Telling this story is part of retrieving power, agency, and identity. This who I am going forward.

Women are silenced in many ways. This is a complex phenomenon. Gendered silencing is normalised. Women's voices are subjected to a myriad of controls. The act of 'normalisation' means it is not noticed. I had stopped noticing it. I had stopped noticing how I was silenced. I had become the problem. It is very hard to challenge a phenomenon which is so embedded in our daily life that we do not notice it. (Foucault, 1972). That act of normalisation means that I am complicit in silencing my own voice in that I perform to a normalised set of behaviours (Butler, 2007).

An act of challenge can be seen as deviant act, being a difficult 'woman' because I speak out. Women who speak out face alienation (Ahmed, 2017). Women who speak out are troublesome because they do not follow the rules. This is not a comfortable place.

Despite holding a leadership role, I still questioned my right to speak out. Being in a leadership role, a place which is 'unnatural' for women, meant that I had to conform to the rules. My voice, my words were filtered. My literature review has enabled me to see how a construct had come to shape me, control me, silence me. I am an actor in this leadership world, following a script of what is allowed. I am following a script of what I am allowed to say. Or, I say nothing?

Storytelling can be seen as unmasking (Bruner, 2003). In telling this story in my literature review is empowering. I feel a greater sense of agency in knowing.

2. Methodology: A Post-Structural Feminist Narrative Inquiry

We live by stories. But that's a story, too. No one has the true story. But that's also a story. We choose the stories we believe. But that's another story again. It's stories all the way down.

McNiff, 2017, p. 4

2.1 Introducing the Methodology Chapter

This chapter begins and ends with me making my ethical positionality explicit. I am a researcher storyteller. Relationships are integral to my research methodology. Relationships are fundamental to my ethics as a researcher storyteller. In the process of making choices about methodology, as a researcher, I am affirming my commitment to a core principle of indigenous research (Wilson, 2001). 'Research serves relationships, not the other way round' (Kara, 2021, p. 55). This research is a post-structural feminist narrative inquiry. My research question is *How have women leaders in education used Twitter to find their leadership voices?* Ensuring fidelity to the ontological lens, values and ethics and congruence of epistemology is examined throughout this Chapter. My work is located within the broad field of 'biographical methods' (Merrill and West, 2009) and more specifically shaped by narrative inquiry methodology and method (Clandinin, 2016). Throughout this Chapter, I will seek to make explicit the fusion of different approaches and influences on the 'biographical method' (Merrill and West, 2009), recognising the multiple strands which have come together in a creative way. I acknowledge how auto/biography, the practice of using others' stories to sense make one's own stories, has influenced this work.

The Methodology Chapter is structured to explain and defend my methodology and method. My Methodology Chapter seeks to examine the choices I have made. In the following sections I will examine the alignment of methodological choice with my ontological lens. I begin in section 2.2 by providing a broad overview of methodological questions.

This is followed in Section 2.3 by a discussion of the importance of story, and specifically narrative inquiry (Bochner and Ellis, 2016, Clandinin, 2016, Clough, 2010) as methodology and method. Additionally, I explore the significance of story from my own academic discipline background as a historian. This is fundamental to my identity. I am an historian.

In this section I discuss how I use narrative inquiry methodology and method to embed fundamental principles of equality and equity. In the design of my research, I have intentionally sought to challenge some of the traditional power constructs in the research process. By this I mean, narrative inquiry does not set out to separate the researched and the researcher and thus significantly aligns with a key principle in a feminist research paradigm. I am conscious to avoid constructs of power in the relationship. The epistemological post-structural principles informing this methodology sets out the intention to observe and then disrupt power constructs in the research design a

deconstructive inquiry 'to interrupt hegemonic relations and received notions of what our work is to be and to do' (Lather, 1991, p. 154).

In Section 2.4 I examine my methodological choices within a discourse of constructs of power. I will specifically examine how my post-structural feminist methodology seeks to challenge normalised research paradigms which do not privilege individual voice. Section 2.4 begins with a discussion of power, specifically acknowledging power constructs in the research process. The following sub-sections, 2.4.1 and 2.4.2, examine the philosophical and ontological drivers informing and shaping my methodology, including the exploration of the so call paradigm wars (Pring, 2015), and the nature of truth within an enlightenment paradigmatic ontological lens. I examine how this shapes my post-structural feminist positionality as a disruptive methodology.

In Section 2.5 I focus on an examination of dominant patterns of leadership research and how my own work seeks to provide a focus on individual voices in a space which normalises quantitative studies. I critique leadership research. I question how the dominant ways of researching leadership within a largely male/masculine leadership world has been criticized for favouring,

championing, and privileging methodologies which do not hear minority voices.
I justify why it is important to use more creative methodologies to get beyond
this norm, a rethinking of how we might seek understanding of leadership
through a reconceptualization of how we research leadership (Druker, 1999,
Ford, 2005 and 2018, Uhl-Bien et. al., 2007).

This will be followed by Section 2.6 discussing the concept of self within
the methodological choices I have made. I challenge the construct of objectivism
as a fundamental epistemological driver, in place promote the relational
epistemology of narrative inquiry. Section 2.7 explores the dialogic dimensions
of my methodology and method. The penultimate section of the Methodology
Chapter is a discussion of ethics. I will then conclude this Chapter with a
summary, aiming to knit together these strands.

2.2 Broad Overview

Ensuring fidelity to my relational core value is paramount in the methodological choices I make. Recognising the normalisation of research practice which can undermine fidelity to individual voice and relationship is critically important to me (Kara, 2020). I bring to the methodology my post-structural Foucauldian lens which I use to question everything.

This study is aligned with a feminist research paradigm. I will explore the congruence of my feminist research paradigm with a narrative inquiry methodology. Whilst recognizing the problematic nature of definitions, 'feminism is a highly contested term' (Adams St Pierre, 2010, p. 477), I am positioning this research a feminist narrative inquiry.

I am positioning this research as a post-structural feminist study. Influenced by the work of Judith Butler, I am using the Foucauldian critical lens to challenge how the grand feminist narratives are unhelpful in the sense making process of storytelling. The post-structural positioning seeks to establish the agency of the individual in sense making. Notwithstanding the multiple and complex layers of the gendered silencing of voice, the study seeks to give agency to individual women's experience in navigating their space to be heard. I want

us to hear their story. Essentializing women and essentializing women's experiences denies my voice, our individual voice, to be heard. This study is thus a rejection of a feminist structuralist discourse or the feminist grand narrative.

I am part of this discourse. By this I mean, knowing who I am and understanding self is conditioned by the dominant discourses of my life. These dominant discourses I believe are so deeply embedded that they appear as facts or truths and not discourses. In that sense I am trying to unpick what appears natural and normalized, questioning everything.

This is a post-structural study of leadership in that meaning is understood in relation to individual experience and interpretation. This study privileges the individual story through, and by the deconstruction of woman and leader as a performance. This operates within a backdrop or framework of socially constructed identities. This study, and by implications and necessity, this methodology, privileges a singular, foundational subjectivity (Leavy and Harris, 2019). I see this research positioned in a transformative research framework (Mertens, 2007). My intention throughout is 'to make research more equitable and ethical' (Kara, 2020, p. 45). My intention throughout is to give a voice to the women in this study, and beyond.

There is no shortage of academic, fiction, essay or polemic drawing the reader's attention to the silencing of women as explored previously. My research attempts to explore such the phenomenon of gendered silencing. My research attempts to hear someone's story. Gendered silencing is a phenomenon that permeates my lived experience day in and day out, in our personal and familial relationships, wife, mother, daughter, sister, in our homes, in our places of work, in our media, in our politics. This is my lived experience. There are many who refute this phenomenon (Sieghart, 2021). This is part of the phenomenon. The appearance of gender equity and of agency of voice is normalised. Women have a voice 'now.' Women have it all.

The act of raising a challenge is an unnatural act, a 'wilful act' (Ahmed, 2017). The act of 'raising a challenge' challenges those who enjoy the privilege of voice (and power) to review on what basis they have that privilege. The act of challenge is a gendered act. The act of challenge is conscious and deliberate. It must be recognized that we are engaged in an act of disruption. This is not a comfortable place to be because in raising the problem, we become the problem (Ahmed, 2017) or just another bloody difficult woman.

My research is a study of how I and four other women leaders in education have used Twitter as medium to have their leadership voice heard.

Social media is a platform to reach out to the many regardless of gender, class, ethnicity, sexual identity, disability. Twitter, is a place where anyone can express a view; apparently? Researching the use of social media by women leaders in education, I am seeking to establish both a unique methodology for studying leadership, women's leadership voices being heard and new knowledge of a new phenomenon; the 'massification' (Seymour, 2019, p. 24) of communication tools available to all. By massification, I am meaning that ability to speak out to anyone who is there, or who listens, follow the hashtag, likes, or friends or follows. Simply I am exploring, to what extent does social media 'give them (us) a shot at being heard' (Seymour, 2019, p. 15)?

This study uses a narrative inquiry methodology (Bochner and Ellis, 2016, Clandinin, 2016, Clough, 2010). I am using Twitter as a source of data, an artefact, to support discussion, reflection, inquiry. Twitter, or rather our tweets, is the data that supports the narrative inquiry. This is our story; this research is our sense making of how we open our mouths and speak or use our 280 characters. The women in this study have all occupied senior leadership roles in schools, higher education, or national bodies and all have significant professional learning networks of more than 4,000 Twitter followers.

I am part of this story. I am intentionally committing to the relational dimension of narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2016). Being part of the story is both embedded in the narrative inquiry methodology but also an alignment with feminist research principles. Embedded in the design choices of how to explore my research question is a feminist research praxis which includes disrupting the power and binary of researcher and researched (Smith, 2004, Leavy and Harris, 2019).

As a feminist researcher, I am faced with a world where the voice of the individual is too often lost. This is a world which, has normalized the silencing of women (and other marginalized people) for too long. This is a world that has normalized the status quo of voices heard; male, pale and grey.

Ensuring that my positioning as a feminist researcher it is imperative to achieve a congruence between values and beliefs and research methodology. This study seeks to examine individual women's stories of being heard through challenging dominant constructs of leadership research and challenging research methodologies which have I believe have in themselves silenced the minority. The research seeks to disrupt the gendered epistemic privilege through appropriating core principles of feminist epistemology; feminist empiricism, standpoint feminism and post-structural feminism, not as

epistemological binaries but 'overlapping and cross-informing' (Levey and Harris, 2019, p. 46).

Additionally, this research is about challenging constructs of identity; identity as a performance, both in terms of gender (Butler, 2007) and identity constructs of leadership (Blackmore and Sachs, 2009, Fitzgerald, 2014, Ford and Harding, 2018). My research examines how voice and speech and being heard is important in our western cultural space.

Pausing (it's 6.34 am) I just check my Twitter feed, it #FFBWednesday, how many new followers will I get today? Pausing, I reflect, is this important to me, my identity?

My Twitter networks, #TheTeacher5O'clockclub,

#WomenEd, #CharteredCollegeofTeaching, #CollectivED, what do they mean to me, who I am? My own tweets, a deliberate avoidance of argument, confrontation, and rarely ever, never, saying I disagree. My allegiances I think are clear through the kind of activity I engage in, the causes I champion, inclusion, equality, and diversity. Rarely am I putting myself at the forefront of a

debate. Is this showing any kind of leadership? But this begs the

question what is leadership?

Kerry Jordan-Daus, 4th August 2020 Research Journal

In summary in this research, I seek to examine through narrative inquiry, a collaborative understanding process, how women use Twitter. I collaboratively explore the emergence of any patterns or themes in an individual's tweets, not to universalize, but to ask, does this make sense to you. My evocative story telling asks does this resonate with your experience?

The following chapter is organized to discuss, challenge, and explore my positioning and the methodological choices I have made in carrying out this research. This chapter is the story of my research methodology. In the writing and sharing this methodology story, the narrative, it is an important and integral part of my sense making of who am I. This necessarily includes revising the construction of self and the implicit or unconscious constructs of identity that had, have, and will continue to shape, interrupt, and disrupt what I am aspiring to achieve.

2.3 Why narrative inquiry?

I believe passionately in the value of storytelling. I question whether as a society, as a culture, as a research community, we truly value story? My research is valuing story. I am herein acknowledging the 'present popularity' of narrative research or, the 'biographical or subjective turn', and the significance of the 'resurgence' of the story, oral history, narrative, auto/biography (Merrill and West, 2009, p. 17) as a valued and valuable methodology. For feminist researchers intent on hearing the marginalised voice this 'subjective turn', or resurgence, aligns with my feminist ontological lens, my ethical framing, challenging power constructs, and also, importantly, the sense of discovering of self through the research and writing process.

Championing the story as methodology additionally prompts a discussion of composing the writing; specifically the writing model of telling the story. This might not sit comfortably with the 'How to write your PhD' chapter, or the writing models promoted with standardised chapters or sections. I have found myself grappling with these models, or feeling constrained by models, or others dictating what and how I can write. Daring to disregard those 'earworms' (Mitchell and Clarke, 2021), was a risk. 'Writing up the research validates a mechanistic model of writing', or the ' claims to a singular, correct style for doing

and presenting research' (Richardson, 1990, p. 11); denying implicitly or explicitly the space for researcher to express self, find self, explore self. Seeing the inquiry writing as a vehicle for telling and simultaneously discovering, and then finding meaning, enables us to see the writing as both an end and a means to an end. Writing is thus 'a method of inquiry', not separate to, but part of the methodology. Writing our story is not simply about 'telling', or imparting, writing is embedded in an act of 'knowing' (Richardson, 1994, Richardson and St Pierre, 2005). Seeing the writing as 'not just of research but as research' (Mitchell, and Clark, 2021, p.1).

This narrative turn thus challenges the normalised orthodoxy of research writing; an act of 'dissolving boundaries' (Merrill and West, 2009, p. 148) or an act of explicit transversing of rules of academia. Everyone has a story. The narrative turn has legitimised this story for research, for the story to be part of the research, to hear us in the story, to free us in our research, to be authentic and liberated. Positioning self in the writing, Merrill and West (2009) illustrate the weaving together of threads that make up their own narrative accounts. Understanding myself, through the narrative of story, telling my story

Everyone has a story. It is how we understand and make sense of our life. Not everyone gets a chance to tell their story. Not everyone gets their story

heard. The lives we live and the stories we tell are constructed on our 'storied landscapes' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 216). Narrative is someone's story. Narrative inquiry privileges someone's story. Narrative inquiry tells someone that they are being listened to and heard. Narrative inquiry is transformative. The someone has a voice.

'Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding and inquiring into experiences. It is nothing more and nothing less' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 13). Our stories are of our time. This I understand as an historian. This I understand through the application of a genealogy lens (Foucault, 1972). Whilst it is important to recognize the temporal nature of our stories, my methodology and method seeks to privilege the story. I am not denying that grand narratives shape who we are; but I argue that this must not be at the expense of the individual's experience. We are 'given' a story. This story can then become our 'story.' But by telling our story, we make sense of that given 'story.' We challenge that 'story.'

> The story which I was given to carry as a very young child, the
>
> story which both defined me and instructed me about the place
>
> I occupied in this world, accorded no significance to women
>
> Blackie, 2016, p. 5

But storying is more. It is in that process of living, telling, retelling, and reliving (Clandinin, 2016) we experience a collective awakening. Narrative inquiry has a moral purpose, to ensure that no one is hidden (Rowbotham, 1985). Narrative inquiry is inclusive because it focuses on the authenticity of voice, of voices not heard, of individual experiences being lost, of self being denied.

My narrative research is intentional in giving a space for each individual woman to tell their story. I am telling the researcher's story. I am providing the space for the story of my research partners. This research is intentional in seeking to validate the individual's story, to give a voice. Seeking to align with the principles informing Clandinin's articulation of narrative inquiry, my own enactment of this methodology will thus seek to honour experience 'that is relational, continuous and social' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 17). My methodology is both overlaid and overlapping with core epistemological principles of feminist research and post- structural leadership research (Smith, 2004). This includes blurring the 'self and other' research binary, to co-construct the inquiry process, to value the uniqueness of individual women's experiences as the starting point (Smith, 2004), valuing the place of subjectivity in leader's stories (Url-Bien et al, 2007).

In my research I seek to 'show characters embedded in the complexities of lived moments of struggle, resisting the intrusion of chaos, disconnection, fragmentation, marginalization, and incoherence' (Ellis and Bochner, 2008, p. 217). My research 'fractures the boundaries' (Ellis and Bochner, 2008, p. 217). My research is challenging the normalization and reification of the scientific paradigm which has become the gold standard (Kara, 2020). With that challenge comes the challenge of disrupting that which one is living (Lather, 1991). This is inherently difficult and calls for considerable self-scrutiny and self-awareness, avoiding being a living or researching contradiction, using discourses which have their origin in a world that one is seeking to disrupt. 'The positivist and post-positivist traditions linger like long shadows over the qualitative research project' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2017, p. 14). I am defending challenges to the methodology and method which have their origin in the dominant positivist disciplinary discourse. This is a discourse which has the status of an apparent a priori righteousness, legitimacy, and authority. This discourse comes from both outside and from within us. This is our lived experience (Lather, 1991, Adams St. Pierre, 2010). We therefore need to return to our Foucauldian lens. We therefore need to return to that positionality of questioning everything.

The act of adopting post-structural feminist positionality might be considered risky business in the world of the education researcher. 'Some people in positions of power, such as doctoral examiners still reify quantitative methods' (Kara, 2020, p. 11), or where the voices of experiences or practitioners is not valued. There is a still a need to seek legitimacy of narrative inquiry and creative methods work where in an education field the large-scale randomised control trials are given greater status than the research of practitioner researchers or action research projects (McNiff, 2017).

Those who set out to tell a story, can consciously or unconsciously, find themselves justifying the act of storytelling. Smith (2015) asks whether 'the reflections of mine have any relevance to other leaders' (Smith, 2015, p. 177)? Or we find ourselves providing explanations to justify the validity and reliability of the stories to answer questions of truth and generalizability which have in themselves origins from a positivist paradigm. Truth and generalizability are not ignored or disregarded by adopting a narrative inquiry methodology. They are seen and understood through a different lens. Truth and generalizability are not ignored by adopting a post-structural feminist lens

Narrative inquiry can be understood as a challenge to constructs of truth or a consensus theory of truth; or a claim that 'truths are contingent on the

describing activities of human beings' (Ellis and Bochner, 2008, p. 223). Generalizability is better understood in terms of the act of hearing that story and asking does this describe something that I can relate, does it speak a truth to me. Is this like my world?

For some the denial of absolute truths is considered at best philosophically troublesome or ridiculed as a mere flight into a fantasy. (Bridges, 1999). The post-structural rejection of truths rests upon essentialism, that process of ascribing characteristics to groups. The act of essentialism and generalisability risks hearing no one. No one truly fits that categorization. We all have our own story. We all have our own identity. As a post-structural researcher, I need to recognise that truth is 'multiple, partial, context dependent and contingent' (Kara, 2020, p. 23). Such a world view can be easily dismissed, or surmised as 'bafflement' (Bridges, 1999, p. 614). For researchers adopting an approach which simply claims to be 'opening up a space for questions about identity, humanity, agency' that 'have been smothered' (Bridges, 1999, p. 614) or silenced might still be regarded to be on the fringes of the academic research community. Are post-structural feminist researchers rebellious, or another example of bloody difficult women (Clarke, 2016), or by raising the problem, do we become the problem (Ahmed, 2017)?

Whilst the rich descriptions of narrative run counter to the pursuit of generalizing, they cannot, I believe, be rejected as getting in the way of truths (Denzin and Lincoln, 2017). Indeed, through story we hear a perspective and this 'unmasking' process (Bruner, 2003, p. 23) can be seen as an important part of the search for meaning. 'Stories serve many masters aside from Truth' (Bruner, 2003, p. 23). Exploring who or what those 'masters' might be is embedded in that unmasking process.

Narrative inquiry, it might be argued, works within a paradigm of 'relational ontology or ontology of experience' (Clandinin and Murphy, 2009, Clandinin, 2016, p.14).

> One way or another we are living stories planted in us early or along the way, or we are also living the stories we planted – knowingly or unknowingly – in ourselves
>
> Okri, 1997, p. 46

Our story might therefore be understood in terms of our relationship with the 'past, present and future' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 23) and in that action of speaking narratively we are making audible and visible our world view, our ontology, the way the world seems to be for me, now. Our stories are also contingent,

temporal, fluid and continuous. Narrative inquiry is underpinned by a commitment to 'living, telling, retelling and reliving' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 34).

Narrative inquiry seeks to address and redress power. I understand that power to both be in terms of the voices we hear, and the way in which conduct our inquiry. Narrative inquiry has a moral purpose in giving a voice to those who might not otherwise be heard. Making transparent who we are and what we believe about the nature of our lived reality ensures both a transparency and an alignment in our epistemological choices. The women's voices we hear in this research are telling their stories as they experience their story.

2.4 Power and Methodology

Power is a reoccurring theme of the study. 'Research into education is highly political' (Newby, 2010). Knowledge production is powerful. Who is heard has power? Whose research is read, published, disseminated, has power. Who is leading has power? The stories that are told in this study are powerful. The stories are empowering. They are powerful to the women telling their story. This might be the first time they have been told. They are powerful to those who hear them. The story might help us make sense. Making sense, understanding, is empowering.

> So here it is! Night before my interview for #PastoralLeader I read @KerryJordanDaus blog. I admit – I really don't recognise my skills. She basically convinced me – I could do this. Smashed the interview! Got the job! Grateful for the support out there @WomenEd
>
> Tweet 10/03/22

How we design our research is a deliberate choice about how we choose to use our power as researcher. Choice of methodology is a deliberate act in whose voices we decide to hear. How those voices are shared is a deliberate act of empowerment. Giving space to tell my story, listening to my story, and retelling my story is valuing my story as a truth. What is presented as a truth, is

an exercise in power. Speaking truth, my truth to power, is an act of liberation for those we do not hear.

> Power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere
>
> Foucault, 1978, p. 93

Through understanding we acquire a power. Our power to disrupt is unleashed because 'once these immediate forms of continuity are suspended, an entire field is set free' (Foucault, 1972, p. 29). Through understanding comes an opportunity 'to generate a new relation between a human being and her environment' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 14).

Significantly this research approach for me has involved navigating the constructs of power that are multifaceted and operate at all levels of our being (Foucault, 1972). I also 'see' the way in which power is embedded in the context of research methodology and data gathering design. In this processing of 'seeing' I am making explicit attempts to disrupt constructs of power in the research process. This methodological battle with power is a constant challenge. I have sought to stay true to a commitment of equality and equity as I seek to frame this narrative inquiry within a feminist post-structuralist research

paradigm. I am questioning the privileging of the epistemology of how we seek to know the world. My post-structural feminist methodology is a disruptive methodology. Finding my path, or navigating the biographical space, is an important, legitimate, and necessary act for the researcher working in this methodological field.

> Biographical research gets to parts often neglected in conventional research and help us begin to weave new empirical and theoretical connections
>
> Merrill and West, 2009, p. 95

What is the new knowledge being proposed in this doctoral research? It is the examination of a 21st century communication medium, social media, Twitter. It is questioning if Twitter gives women a different space to be heard. Specifically, this is an inquiry into how individual women have used Twitter to be heard. There are numerous examples of explicit misogynism, and implicit gender bias evidenced by the reported prevalence of hugely offensive and violent acts of silencing against women on Twitter. Mary Beard infamously called these out (Guardian, 2013). Twitter can be a dangerous place. Twitter can be a place where the normalisation of gendered silencing continues. Equally, social media has proven through the #MeToo hashtag to call out sexual abuse. It can be a space for the silenced to be heard. Within education, the #WomenEd

grassroots movement, begun six years ago by a small group of women leaders in England, has found a place to be heard. It now has more than 50K followers across the world. Social media networks might be a space to challenge hegemonic structures of who we hear. Twitter might be a space for women to have a leadership voice and be heard? These are the questions which will be explored in this research study.

The narrative methodology used in this study seeks to understand how women leaders in education have used Twitter, and whether has it has enabled them to get their voices heard in an education leadership world. I am one of the women in this story. I am one of these women in this research. This is an education leadership world which has been described as resolutely masculine, adversarial, competitive, controlling, and hierarchical (Fitzgerald, 2014). This is a leadership context where despite education employing more women than men, women continue to be disproportionally underrepresented in senior roles and disproportionally renumerated (Porritt and Featherstone, 2019). This is my story, their story, our story. This could be your story?

2.4.1 Searching for Truth

Ensuring philosophical, ontological, and ideological congruence significantly shapes the methodological choices made in research. The following section will examine the questions that have guided me to ensure that fidelity to my core values and beliefs. Initially conforming to what might be called a standard approach, my discussion focuses on the positioning of social *science* research within what might be seen as the dominant empiricist positivist, objectivist, or post-positivist academy. Or more broadly speaking, perhaps a western culture whereby finding an answer, or an approximation of an answer, is the holy grail. It feels that I must defend the value of narrative research, not least to my undergraduate students, who come with strongly held pre-conceptions. Whilst some might claim that the narrative turn has been taken (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008), the ways in which the vocabulary of positivism and the enduring challenge of what counts as worthwhile, valid, and reliable research still dominates discourses.

> One unfortunate result of this ongoing struggle is that qualitative researchers continue to be put on the defensive when it comes to their research practices
>
> Given, 2017, p. 1

I am positioning my own methodology within dominant research discourses where positivist ideological drivers are so deeply embedded within our theory and practice (Kara, 2020) that we may not even notice them. It is too easy to fall into the trap of using a positivist shaped research lexicon to discuss methodological choices.

My methodology is experimental. It is interpretative. It is creative. My methodology is intentionally seeking to challenge the traditional power construct of researcher and research 'subject.' I will be utilising my Foucauldian lens in this section to ensure my focus on exploration of power and how it is exercised through innumerable methodology points (Foucault, 1978). I will be using my Foucauldian lens to question everything.

My methodology is about creating a joint enterprise for exploring. I am explicitly recognizing the power/knowledge privileging that comes from an unequal relationship of researcher and researched. This is a relationship which has at its core inequity. In the design choices I am making, I am seeking to challenge this privileging of the researcher over the 'researched.' The methodological choice I make are thus embedded within an intentional commitment to partnership, collaboration, and relationship.

The paradigm war (Pring, 2015) is understood as the intellectual discourse about truth and the different theories of the nature of truth. This discourse has been played out in the social science research discussions. The term, paradigm war, originates from the latter part of twentieth century to capture the adversarial methodological debate between quantitative and qualitative research in the social sciences (Given, 2017). Proponents of a qualitative paradigm were forced to defend their work. In my education world as a narrative researcher, individual's stories have been devalued in the search for truths of what works. The valuing of randomised control tests and large-scale studies have served to undermine teachers' work and the stories of their classrooms. (McNiff, 2017). This search or research for a reality or a truth, is the methodological challenge that all researchers face. The ontological position that informs my narrative inquiry is that the stories represent a truth of the lived experience of the women in this study.

My research seeks to value story. The story being told in narrative research needs to be valued as a truth. Questioning the value of an individual's story is an act of silencing. Questioning the truth of the narrative qualitative researcher, questions the value of the narrative researcher's purpose.

is research concerned with in some sense with the truth in relation to the matter(s) which are the focus of enquiry, or is it not?

Bridges, 1999, p. 597

Typically, the researcher's methodology textbook has with an exploration of quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. This discussion is framed within a debate on ontological positioning, one's world view (Newby, 2010). In the process of research design, the starting point for the researcher is to acknowledge and defend their approach to get to the 'world as it really is' (Pring, 2015, p. 61). In the process of doing this, arguments might be made for a perspective of reality, the extent to which one's world view aligns with a realist perspective of reality, whether one believes that there is a truth out there which we can strive to find. Or conversely, at the opposite end of a continuum, a relativist construct, where truth is understood through an individual's lens, experience, understanding. Few deny the complexity of this debate. Few deny the danger of presenting this discussion as a simple binary. The discussion can both be overly simplified, or it can become a swamp that we struggle to move out or on from (Pring, 2015). The nature of truth and whose truth and is truth a constant, are questions that I will keep returning to throughout this study.

This act of getting to the 'world as it really is' (Pring, 2015, p. 61) is a philosophical driver, but also a cultural driver, for the methodological choices we make in the attempt to hear and see beyond the world as it is or appears to be. By cultural driver, I mean something that is embedded in our beliefs about knowledge and power.

Who can claim knowledge?

Who can claim that their construct of reality is worthy of hearing?

Whose voices do we get to hear?

Why do we hear some voices?

Whose voice do we really want to hear?

Who decides who gets to be heard?

The quest for reality or truth feels like the search for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Does it really exist? Or do we need to acknowledge and value different constructs of truth. Or are we arguing that there is no truth? Is this the conclusion of post-structuralism relativism? If so, what are the dangers of this positioning in what has been termed a post-truth era (Foroughi, Gabriel and Fotaki, 2019). Does anything go? In rejecting a version of a truth, is perhaps not to deny truth, but to acknowledge that truth is a powerful weapon. A claim

of truth can be an instrument of oppression and justification of elites. Truth is power. Speaking truth to power is herein foregrounded as part of the post-structuralist feminist paradigm.

This is not to reject the stories told through a positivist research paradigm quantitative lens; 'these methods may be no better or no worse than other methods; they just tell different kinds of stories' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, p. 15). For others it is a false dualism to discuss a paradigm war (Dewey, 1916) or indeed a distraction (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Perhaps this is what Pring sought to emphasize when he talks about the researcher's act of 'refining generalizations' (Pring, 2015, p. 140), or the defence of a positivist methodology using Randomized Controlled Tests.

Oakley (1999) argued that a positivist paradigm 'intrinsically violates the agency and autonomy of the research participant' (p. 249). Yet she saw no contradiction or incongruence in using a quantitative method to 'distinguish between personal experience and collective oppression' (Oakley, 1999, p. 251). I use this example to illustrate how we can get lost in the discussion. However, from a post-structuralist feminist lens, I will always ask the question as to the claims to truth of generalizations, whose reality are they purporting to capture? Is this anyone's real world really? On the one hand whilst a generalization might

claim to correspond to a truth, it might in fact not be anyone's actual truth, or anyone's reality, it is always an average or a generality or maybe a simplification.

I believe that it is important to recognize at the onset methodology and method design is not necessarily an either, or, and that at times, presenting the quantitative v's qualitative and choice as a binary, is in itself erroneous. In the design of my research for this specific project, I need to remain constant to an intention for my methodology to give a voice which would not otherwise be heard. In my research the voice is not filtered through an essentialist processing, which fundamentally silences the "I" and can thus distort the true existential question; what about me. In doing so 'terms such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability replace the usual positive criteria of internal and external validity, reliability and generalizability' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2017, p. 35). In the design of my methodology, I seek to champion the emic as opposed to the etic, to focus on the specifics not the general, to hear what you and I have to say. It is our story. It is a story that each of the women in my study will own. And I will ask, might this speak to you, for you, of you? What makes a good narrative inquiry? We need to

> go beyond reliability, validity and generalisability and identify apparency,
> verisimilitude and transferability

Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, pp. 7-8

We need to ask do you believe this story?

2.4.2 Post-structural Feminism and our constructs of truth

> Feminist researchers in education increasingly use post-structuralism to trouble both discursive and material structures that limit the ways we think about our work
>
> Adams St. Pierre, 2010, p. 477

Post-structural feminism forms the paradigm within which my research methodology is located. I will begin this section by examining my understanding of post-structuralism as a response to a normalised world view framed by the 'ubiquitous dominance' (Adams St. Pierre, 2010, p. 479) of the positivist paradigm. I will then use this section to show how I am using post-structural feminism as my ontological lens for my own narrative inquiry methodology. Post-structural feminism enables me to find out what is really going on by hearing individual women's voices.

Whilst both acknowledging that both positivism and post-structuralism are diffuse theories, within this chapter I am making explicit my understanding and positionality. By framing my work within post-structuralism, I seek to provide a space to challenge our positivist normalised way of thinking, or being, or seeing the world (Foucault, 1984). That normalised way of thinking is

underpinned by scientific rationality and positivist influences. One of the thorny issues to navigate is the pursuit of truth in narrative research (O'Dea, 1994).

Within our world, within my education research world, there is a normalisation of scientific rationality paradigm, utilising methods of observation, experimentation, and testing, as the underpinning framework. In a discussion of education research, it is argued that 'our data have to be representative of the issue we are investigating' (Newby, 2010, p. 17). The research discourse can seem to privilege objectivity and researcher neutrality in the search for a truth, or a generalised explanation of a phenomenon. The grand narratives, with their essentialising tendencies, deny individualism. Homogenising experience as a collective is an act of silencing. In a discussion of education research, it is further argued that that 'the real world requires researchers to deal with complexity... we have to deal with reality' (Newby, 2010, p.19).

Post-structuralism is not a grand narrative (Adams St. Pierre, 2010). In fact, it is a challenge to grand narratives which have attempted to provide a unifying or grouping explanation of phenomenon. Post-structuralist texts have been lambasted as a 'form of academic wordplay that functions as rhetoric rather than serious intellectual work' (Popkewitz, 1997, p. 18). Post-structuralism is

perhaps best understood as a rejection of attempts to provide a rational explanation to things which are complex, messy, contradictory, and irrational.

Post-structuralism seeks to disrupt homogenising discourse, whilst at the same time recognising the challenge of both living a humanist existence and deconstructing it, or 'doing it and troubling it' (Lather, 1991). Post-structuralism is a challenge to the orderliness of a positivist world view which looks to find a rational explanation for all phenomena.

Post-structural feminism is the challenge to oversimplification of the categorization process. Post-structural feminism affirms the complexity of the lived experience, the complexity and messiness of life, the intersectionality of identity (Crenshaw, 2018). The world view afforded through post-structural lenses is varifocal and multi-focal. The search for truths using a post-structural feminist methodology privileges individual voices as being important because this is real lived experience.

Post-structuralism feminism is a deconstructive methodological approach (Lather, 1991).Taking a post-structural feminist position is not to deny the reality of sexism and misogyny as an oppression experienced by women but it is a commitment to recognize the multiplicity of ways this is played out or not, and

to explore our understandings of phenomenon in our lived experience. It is a rejection of the homogenizing of experience based on a socially constructed categorization of identity, challenging the essentialism features of Social Identity Theory (Holck, Muhr and Villesèche, 2015).

Post-structuralism is empowering, enabling the expression of self and the examination of our own lives. A post-structural feminism methodology is an empowering process that seeks to disrupt the power relations fundamentally enshrined in mainstream research constructs which enshrine the humanist paradigm. My post-structural feminist methodology disrupts our conceptualization of the traditional research process is illustrative of what Foucault (1978a) referred to as disciplinary power or the panopticon normalization the scientific method of the enlightenment movement which has sacrificed complexity and the subjective in the quest for objectivity and rationality.

Through my post-structural feminist methodology, I have sought to challenge the grand narrative discourse of *feminism,* or the homogenizing women's experiences. I believe that the act of homogenizing experience becomes an act of silencing. The individual's lived experience and their story is not heard. Addressing this act of silencing is important in the context of

discussing my methodology. Giving a voice to individual women is to acknowledge that our stories are not singular. Our stories are influenced by a range of factors, not least the intersectionality of age, class, ethnicity, and sexuality (Crenshaw, 2018). Making sense of our lived experiences requires a methodology that captures the complex, contradictory, hidden, messiness of our lives.

2.5 Leadership and management: Disrupting research paradigms

In the following section of the chapter, I explore two themes: how are we studying leadership and whose voices do we hear. I consider that these two themes or questions are important in the context of my own research and the methodological choices that I have made in carrying out my research. It is my intent to disrupt dominant leadership research paradigms and challenge the power implicit in these. I argue that the dominance of positivist leadership research paradigm perpetuates a status quo that silences minority voices. I argue that a critical post-structural approach to researching leadership is necessary to challenge a discourse that normalises, justifies, and legitimises practices which are in fact exclusionary. Leadership research which privileges universal theories is complicit in denying the individual's story (Mackillop, 2018).

> This vast body of literature pays considerable attention to leadership styles, behaviours, competences and mind-sets, and to how leaders look, what they believe in, their identities and so on. This research is predominantly located in a positivist tradition in which quantitative research methods are preferred.
>
> Ford and Harding, 2018, p. 4

My research methodology is positioned within the field of critical leadership study (Collinson, 2014). Women are a minority voice in our leadership world. My research into women in leadership seeks to give them their voice.

Calls to broaden the base for leadership research (Bush, 2020, p. 207), or 'to think about something in a different way' (Veiga-Neto and Lopes, 2017, p. 734, Uhl-Bien, 2011, Ford and Harding, 2018, MacKillop, 2018) come from many different perspectives. This is not just the preserve of post-structural feminist narrative researchers. My intention in my own research of women and leadership is to 'broaden' or disrupt the dominant leadership research paradigms. Herein the deployment of a genealogist approach (Foucault, 1972), examining normalized assumptions, taking nothing for granted, seems appropriate. It is a rejection, or at least a challenge to 'systemizing and universalizing theories' (Martin, 1982, p.3) of leadership and leadership research. Or put another way, a commitment to immanent curiosity (How, 2003).

Within the field of leadership and management, surveying leadership research it is 'dominated by macro and micro explanatory models, which tend to exclude conflict, mess and power in favour of enumerating universalistic steps or …. leadership definitions and factors for successful change' (MacKillop, 2018,

p. 205). Additionally, leadership and management research tends towards promotion of behaviour traits that we might align with powerful men, being self-assured, charismatic, ambitious, driven, focused on success (Ford and Harding, 2018).

The dominant leadership research paradigm is situated in the managerial or new managerialism world, the dominant ideological driver for organization culture (Klikauer, 2015). Successful and effective leadership has traditionally been viewed through a lens tilted towards the positivist paradigm (Klikauer, 2015) and researched through a lens tilted towards the positivist paradigm (Collinson, 2014). The resulting leadership research paradigm has tended towards longitudinal studies identifying themes, trends, and patterns from which are extrapolated defining characteristics of and for leaders and leadership and the resulting development of leadership frameworks and typologies. (Ford and Harding, 2018).

The act of positioning leadership research within a dominant 20th and 21st century context of managerialism or new managerialism can perhaps help explain why leadership research has tended towards a positivist paradigm approach, or the favouring of 'enumerating universalistic steps' (MacKillop, 2018, p. 205). This is not a space where individual narratives, the messy or the

complex, or the different have been traditionally valued. Issues of power, conflict and messiness are thus often side-lined (or silenced) by the dominant leadership research literature (Kuipers et al., 2014).

Managerialism can be defined as an ideological driver of efficiency through the scientific application of data to inform both private and public business efficiency (Klikauer, 2015). Leaders and managers are working, living, leading, in a context where the principles of managerialism are embedded; in our behaviours, in our language and in our being of who we are and what we need to be as leaders or managers. Organizations are measured on their success through agreed performance targets, whether this be outputs of units in the manufacturing sector, waiting time in the health sector, or test and examination results in the education sector. We are all living a life where the language of managerialism is normalized as part of our day-to-day existence. This is our leadership world. The leader or manager of an organization thus is required to be an actor using data and quantitative analysis to maximize performance. Individuals are seen as a resource to extract maximum output (Ball, 2012). To present leadership research which privileges the relational dimension, individual sense making, subjectivity, and emotions can present as alien to this field.

In my own context of higher education, where once the language of managerialism might have been regarded 'heretical' (Deem, 1998, p. 47) it is now part and parcel of our day-to-day life, so much so that it is normalized in our daily discourse from line manager and performance review to research outputs and measures of teaching effectiveness judged on employability metrics. Indeed, all these practices are still subject to challenge, but from the fringes because the rules of the organization game are so deeply embedded. The leadership and management discourses are presented as rational, objective and value neutral (Klikauer, 2015) and thus challenges to this might appear irrational and irrelevant.

> Ontologically, they assume that leadership is something with an independent existence out there in the world and is located in a web of causal relationships. Epistemologically, they assume leadership can be known in a value-free way through what is claimed to be the rigorous application of the scientific method. Politically, they aim to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of current modes of leadership.

> Alvesson and Spicer, 2012, p. 371

Thus, to achieve alignment with new managerialism, leadership research discipline's intent has been to provide an objective and scientific and evidence-

based foundation to support understanding of leadership (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturn, Mckee, 2014).

From a post-structural feminist perspective, I am interested in the messy, the complex, the contradictory, which I have proposed are largely absent in the leadership research paradigm, or on the margins of what is the accepted disciplinary approach to studying leadership. Leadership research must empower those who are silenced, and leadership researchers need to recognise their own act of contributing to the ongoing silencing through the dominance of methodologies which do not privilege individual voices.

If the discourse and 'understandings of leadership tend to remain dominated by tales of heroic individuals endowed with the likes of charisma and transactional skills' (MacKillop, 2018, p. 206), researching leadership from a post-structuralist feminist paradigm must disrupt the discourse. If the practice and theory of leadership normalises great (male) leadership heroes, post-structuralist feminist narrative research provides alternative stories, or how it really is. Leadership research must empower those who are silenced, and leadership researchers need to recognise their own act of contributing to the ongoing silencing through the dominance of methodologies which do not privilege individual voices.

Women have found the leadership and management world difficult to navigate and hence their lack of presence in all contexts (Griffiths, 2012, Fitzgerald, 2014, Ford 2005, Sandberg, 2013). Understanding this phenomenon requires a critical approach to the dominant leadership research practices which fail to recognise the complexity of an individual's narrative. Challenging the story of women's absences from the leadership world is much more complex than the simple pipeline theory (Kanter, 1997), or supply model explanations (Arini, Conner, McPherson, and Wilson, 2011). Big numerical data sets might be used to identify the lack of women in middle leadership roles and hence argue that their continued absence is simply a lack of supply. However, the data does not tell women's stories. There is no single truth. Women's leadership stories cannot be captured using a methodology which is fundamentally anti individual, fundamentally wedded to an essentialist positionality (Blackmore and Sachs, 2009).

Further, because leadership is dominated by men, it has been argued that research has been dominated by men and as 'a result, a culture is created according to which leaders are evaluated by masculinist criteria' (Pace Vetter, 2010, p. 8). It could therefore be argued that leadership research both 'eulogizes what leadership ought to look like' (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 34) and is complicit in

reinforcing claims to truth through their own subjectivity, or lack of objectivity. These leadership traits, presented in research validated by large data sets take on the status of truths, but in fact are in themselves 'effects of institutions, practices, discourses' (Butler, 2007, p. viii). Adopting a Foucauldian lens and a post-structuralist feminist methodology, I argue, provides a tool to question everything.

Deploying a critical and disruptive perspective seems legitimate, timely and necessary. The methodological approach being taken in this research supports as a starting position that 'there is no grand narrative be told' (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 14) and that women's leadership stories provide a powerful and empowering lens into understanding our leadership world. It is from a post-structural feminist paradigm that my research seeks to disrupt these leadership research practices which have predominated in the leadership world, a world in which women are a minority and a research world which may have airbrushed them out of because of a research paradigm which seeks to provide generality at the expense of the individual lived experiences.

2.6 Who am I in the research?

From a scientific rationality paradigm, researcher neutrality or objectivism, is considered one of the golden rules. Objectivism 'is the epistemology underpinning the positivist stance' (Crotty, 2015, p. 6). Truth exists independently from the experience.

The narrative inquirer's epistemology values meanings that reside in experiences 'relational, continuous, and social' (Clandinin, 2016, p.17). The meanings that I give to a phenomenon reside with me, the person telling, and creating the story. 'Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. It is a collaboration between researcher and participants' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 17). That collaborative, or relational dimension, is integral to the research endeavour, a commitment to 'honouring lived experience as a source of important knowledge and understanding' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 17). As a narrative inquiry, I am intentionally part of the story. This is not a neutral position where I as the researcher stand back and look in or at to find the truth. Meanings or truths are created through the process of telling stories.

Acknowledging the self in the research is not diluting the rigour or value of the research. The narrative inquirer seeks to better understand themselves

through the process. The narrative inquirer intentionally holds the lens up to themselves, thus knowing more the position that one brings to the research. Research can never be a neutral enterprise. We all come with a frame of reference through which we understand or misunderstand or are confused by our world.

Consistency between self, identity, and beliefs is an imperative for the qualitative researcher (Denzin and Lincoln, 2017). Through adopting a post-structural feminist positioning, this research seeks to honour the individual's voice, the place of the personal, the value of knowing self and self-knowing, hearing what the women in this research study have to say and want to say. Once again, I am pushing at the idealized frameworks of the scientific methodologies (Kara, 2020); being both part of the study and equally refuting claims about the objectivity of the researcher. A key principle informing narrative inquiry is that 'We intentionally put our lives alongside another's life' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 23) and in doing so challenge 'the norm of objectivity that assumes that the subject and the object of research can be separated from each other' (Fonow and Cook, 2005, p. 2213).

Who am I? This is a fundamental question in the narrative inquiry methodology. I am both coming alongside the story telling and thinking

narratively about my own experiences. I am intentionally putting my story alongside that of the storyteller.

Being part of the study is an ongoing challenge for any researchers working in the post-structural field. I need to be alert to how my own construct of self is from that field I am seeking to disrupt (Lather, 1991). I need to be alert to how my own gendered leadership identity is explicitly being examined. I need to be alert to constructs of my own gendered leadership identity which have become normalised. That phenomenon of the not noticing the construct or the fluidity of our identities (Butler, 2007), is another act of silencing.

In my exploration of self, identity, and leadership I need to acknowledge that the

> discourses are understood as constituting that of which they speak …. suggests that by asking study participants to think or talk about themselves as followers (or leaders), researchers are actively positioning participants within an identity category or subject position that limits what they can do or say
>
> Ford and Harding, 2018, p. 7

I need to be ever mindful of the language that is internalized in my construct of both leadership and gender. The gendered leadership construct can be seen and

understood as a performance, or a fabrication of 'acts, gestures and enactment' (Butler, 2007, p. 185). That performance is normalised. Using a Foucauldian term to problematise: leadership is a "dispostif," a contingent and fluid performance against a dominant, idealized, and normalised phenomenon. The dominant leadership discourse which normalizes language of masculine traits is the subject of scrutiny in my narrative inquiry. Exploring gendered leadership constructs are themselves 'enacted fantasy or incorporation' (Butler, 2007, p. 183); that idealized image of leadership, what does he look like, sound like, dress, act, do? Applying Butler's discussion of parody as a further instrument to understand identity; I was initially drawn to two classic comedy representations of leadership, as performed in British situational comedy *Yes Minster* and *The Office*, which both interestingly have the male character parodying the leader role. The parody works because we have our fixed construction of leader and leadership identity. This includes what we see, or being seen, and what we hear, or being heard. This includes gender and voice. I need to examine my own bias in leadership and voice. Why is being heard so important to me?

2.7 Narrative inquiry as a dialogic and creative process

> And I, too said nothing, showed nothing; I didn't open my mouth.
>
> I didn't repaint my half of the world. I was ashamed. I was afraid,
>
> and I swallowed my shame and my fear. I said to myself: You are
>
> mad!
>
> Cixious, 1976, p. 876

I have watched Twitter grow over the last ten years and experienced first-hand a growth in my professional learning network. I have transitioned from lurker (there in name but not ever speaking) to posting, to being a person who daily scrolls her Twitter account. How has this phenomenon become part of my professional life? And, indeed, my personal life? Where are the boundaries if they exist at all? Is Twitter a vehicle for empowerment, or does it create a false consciousness of importance? Does it create a false consciousness of having a voice?

Ahmed (2019) writes that social media spaces such as Twitter are relatively under researched. In their extensive literature search of social media research, Ngai, Tao, and Moon (2015) identified a propensity towards positivist methodologies and quantitative studies. Studies tended to deploy computer technology to sort, code, organize, categorize social media activity working with

readily available large data sets in the public domain. Their literature review further argued that constructs of power is an area that has not been extensively studied.

However, purporting to adopt a more qualitative approach, the development of netnography (Kozinets, 2010), a methodology to study online communities, appropriates some of the paradigms of ethnography. Whilst netnography has developed for the study of virtual internet networks tends towards analysis of tweets/comments rather than, as proposed in my own study, the dialogic dimension. There is a tendency in the netnographers methodology towards 'passive non-participatory approaches' (Costello et al, 2017, p. 1) 'while minimizing their own engagement with the members of the online communities they are studying' (Costello et al, 2017, p. 4). I am critical of this approach to studying the online communities. I am critical of the methodology that legitimizes the power of the researcher to give a voice to those being researched. The researched are silent. Who is the person behind the tweet? The absence of the voice of the person behind the tweet is an act of disempowerment. The intention of the tweeter is not heard. Power resides with the researcher in constructing narrative explanations.

This is illustrated in Bernardi's (2016) research paper on patients' use of Twitter. The netnography method supported detailed analysis of individuals' voices without an individual's voice being heard. We never hear the individual behind the tweet. The power in the assertions resides with the researcher, or indeed the computer analytical tool.

'How do we write the social?' asks Richardson (1990). This question has been ever present, lurking, hidden, or implicit throughout this project. Herein I am making the implicit explicit. Recognising the power I have has been troublesome, a knot to untangle in my knitting of this thesis. I am thus constantly reminded that I have power in how I hear the story, how I tell the story, and indeed why I chose this story.

My methodology is intentional in giving agency to the individual. Post-structural qualitative research requires that individual meaning is privileged in the enactment of the methodology. Post-structural feminist research requires that we challenge the power/truth construct both in how we conduct our research and whose voices we hear.

2.8 Ethics

Ethics is not the conclusion of the Methodology Chapter; rather ethics is imbued within this whole study. Where to include this section within my Methodology Chapter, beginning or end, was a source of reflection. It is here, at the end. But it is throughout every section of this Chapter. It is the beating heart of this study, the veins, and capillaries. Reading this Chapter; the ethical dilemmas faced, considered, and navigated are apparent in every section. Ethics is not an add on, a process, ethics is how we live the feminist research paradigm.

Relational ethics which 'Recognizes and values mutual respect, dignity, and connectedness between researcher and researched' (Ellis and Bochner, 2008, p. 4) has guided me throughout.

> Relational accountability means that a researcher is accountable to everyone and everything who is in the relationship with them in the research
>
> Kara, 2020, p. 55

I am both part of this study and have significant investments; not least satisfying the assessment criteria for the Doctoral Study. Recognising the multiple roles that I am playing and my personal interests, give rise to many

questions which have an ethical dimension. Using entries from my research diary, which include numerous bits of conversation, half remark, utterances, necessitates choice. Comments made in public spaces by women and men, become data, they have meaning for me in this study.

In the early stage of my study, I initiated three conversations with potential research partners. Two chose not to be involved. I was struck by a discussion with one of these women who I had connected with on Twitter. She had reached out to me through an interest in my research. Her initial email comments had been positive. I wanted her to pause, to be fully aware of what she was agreeing to, informed consent, in the sense of being informed about the research. I sent her a long and detailed email, which both set out the study in more detail and served as an introduction to me, the researcher. Our first face to face (telephone) discussion was about whether she might be interested in working with me on the research. It quite quickly became evident that she had many doubts, and she was beginning to have concerns about her involvement in the study. Whilst her words were rich in terms of expressing her desire to speak yet not offend, to manage what she said; I felt that her fear, her anxiety about being potentially misunderstood and the potential to be seen by others as duplicitous was causing her difficulties. In terms of my study, this seemed

perfect. Yet for her, it was unsettling. I did not continue with the conversation. I gracefully gave her space not to step further into the research study. Even including reference to that initial discussion in my research diary notes, was an ethical decision. As a researcher, listening, looking, selecting snippets of conversations, collecting tweets, are all acts requiring an ethical review. I am constantly mining for data, as my research becomes more part of my day to day lived experience. I see and I hear 'stuff,' it becomes a note in my research diary, it becomes data. Do I have consent to mine, to gather, to take your words and use in my work? The complexity of marrying and balancing the multiple roles; methodologist, co-participant, facilitator, activist, student, interpretivist, disseminator; all raise innumerable ethical challenges (Whitmore, 2014). Where does ethics begin and end?

Ethics is part and parcel of trust and rapport, emotional attachment and when, if ever, emotional detachment. Ethical decision making is ongoing, from the inception of the project to dissemination, to project end. The relational nature of this project requires attention to how we begin but also how we end. Closure of the relationship is as important as beginning that relationship.

I have been minded of the five protocols of indigenous research (Wilson, 2001); gift, control, freedom, space, inclusiveness, and gender specificity, and

how this transformative research framework has paradigms which are 'fundamentally different to western understandings' of research (Wilson, 2001, p. 176). Yarning, the Aboriginal practice of enabling talk, through its safe and respectful cultural practice, has further shaped my methodological thinking and the methods used within my study of women's voices.

The proposal for this study was granted ethical approval by the Faculty of Education Canterbury Christ Church University Ethics Committee. Seeking and receiving such ethical approval fulfils an important requirement. In considering my study and methodology, in line with the standardized approach to ethics, I have ensured that the women in this study have given their informed consent, and the option to withdraw at any point from the study. I have assured anonymity and received consent to include my research partners' words in this study. I have ensured that all notes are agreed by my research partners and that these are securely stored in encrypted files.

However, working within a feminist research paradigm, has challenged me to see ethics in everything I do. I return to my research diary; dates are recorded, but for the purpose of inclusion in this study, there is complete anonymity of any conversation, discussion, presentation notes that I might include. In deciding how I use this data is an act of power.

The exercise of power normalized in our research process, discourse, and lexicon, and how we see and choose to exercise this power is as an ethical issue. Seeking to embed an equal relational praxis has necessitated the questioning of every action. Whilst no researcher sets out to be unethical in their work; however, considering and reflecting on the multiple dimensions of what we understand to be ethical, has led me to challenge the construct of much research. Is it ethical to talk about what a researched group think, without giving voice to an individual in the group? Whilst the research design and intention to use quantitative data to explore a group's views may not cause harm; what is the consequence of denying an individual's voice? The act of homogenizing or generalizing I regard as an act of disempowering and thus unethical. The power relationship in the traditional lexicon and discourse of research and researched, raises ethical issues for me. The women in this, or rather, our study, as my research partners and I have sought at every opportunity to co-construct the steps and stages, the process of journeying through this study. To create a balance of power in a process which privileges the researcher has required me to check my language, my learned behaviours, the rules which are normalized within the academy for how you do research.

2.9 Chapter Summary

This study seeks to hear how five women leaders in education, make sense for ourselves, to seek to be heard and indeed why being heard is seen (or not) as important, or not. I am positioning this research within a post-structuralist feminist research praxis. Acknowledging the broad field of biographical methods (Merrill and West, 2009), it is through a narrative inquiry methodology and the methods that I seek to understand (Clandinin, 2016).

I adopt a post-structural feminist narrative inquiry methodology which embraces discourse and the validation of individual women's voices. This has included challenging any attempts at homogenous constructs of gender identity and leadership identity. I am working outside the dominant positivist paradigms of researching leadership (Ford and Harding, 2018). I am thus positioning this research as a way of speaking truth to the power of the positivist paradigm and of dominant narratives which idealize our constructs of leadership identity in an education leadership world. In choosing to write this narrative, I am challenging a paradigm which might have us believe that theirs is more objective construction. 'But we should not be fooled' (Richardson, 1990, p. 15).

The women were invited to participate are users of Twitter, each having large professional learning networks. Initial 1:1 discussion explore our perceptions of how we use Twitter, our experiences and how we might describe our activity. Suggestions as to the nature of our tweets, or the themes or topics we tweet about will be explored. Following this initial conversation, I immerse myself in the tweets, using free software to download the most recent 3,200 tweets. Through the process of immersion, I read the tweets, aligning to the categories or topic areas that my partners have identified. The data is not a tool to prove or disprove, but to support new understandings and to construct the narrative portrait. The narrative portrait forms an artefact to support further reflection in a second 1:1 discussion. This process is an opportunity to create and 'produce a contextualized, contiguous interpretation and storied account of the particular situation' (Butler-Kisber, 2018, p. 73).

PART TWO

3. My Story and becoming a researcher storyteller

3.1 Becoming a researcher storyteller

The stories I share with you have been told by the women who agreed to be part of this study. I want again to recognise and give huge thanks to being able to hear their stories. We are privileged to have these stories. In hearing these stories empowered me to tell my story. I found myself. Again, I remind myself and those reading and listening to the stories that in indigenous research 'research serves relationships, not the other way round' (Kara, 2021, p. 55). The relationships I have with my research partners is different because of this study.

In a traditional thesis you might see research presented as the data; then a subsequent chapter with its focus on the analysis of the data. This is where the researcher seeks to arrive at themes, shared experiences or develop theory arising from the detailed scrutiny of the data (Charmaz, 2000). My work rejects this way of researching, hearing, and telling stories. I am explicitly rejecting this approach which has been referred to as narrative-under-analysis (Bochner and Ellis, 2016) as opposed to narrative analysis.

In narrative analysis, we see ourselves as storytellers connecting and communicating with readers; in narrative-under-analysis, we see ourselves as scientists representing reality in order to develop theory and research generalisations

Bochner and Ellis, 2016, p. 185

It is important to revisit and make explicit my positionality as a narrative inquirer researcher storyteller. I want the words and stories to be understood and privileged as someone's truth. The distinction herein to be understood is that the story is not data as in the traditional realist sense, as narrative to be analysed and used for the purpose, and by the researcher, to develop theory and reach generalisations. Rather, my purpose is to think with and not about the story, to see the story as an 'evocative' narrative that draws you in, connects with you as my reader (Bochner and Ellis, 2016, p. 166).

The writing of a 'narrative portrait' is explored in more detail in section 4.3 below. The writing of a narrative portrait became a significant part of the narrative inquiry storytelling journey. The narrative portrait is not a truth deduced from any analytical coding process. The narrative portrait grows out of the immersion in the tweets and the discussions. Through my narrative portraits

I 'take the standpoint of the storyteller who wants the listener to 'get into' the story' (Bochner and Ellis, 2016, p. 185).

The purpose and aim of this chapter is to explicitly explain the decisions I made about how to share the narrative inquiries. In doing this, I will also explain why these approaches were decided, or rather, the creative and co-structured process that took us to this place. I invite you into my reflective and reflexive thinking space as I am making explicit who I am, the researcher storyteller. I am also part of this story, as I retell these stories, I come in and out as part of the process of thinking with the story (Bochner and Ellis, 2016).

I begin in this section 3.1 explaining the overall organisation of the four chapters that will follow, Chapter 4, 5, 6, 7. Sections 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 below, further examine some of the phases of the storytelling and storyteller's journey in more depth. The final section, 3.5,   will set out the aim of Chapter 8, which will conclude this part of the thesis.

Each of the subsequent chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7, tells a woman's story. My narrative inquiry focuses on women in education and their leadership voice. My narrative inquiry retells each woman's story. It does not seek to reach generalisations. My narrative inquiry invites you to hear, to value, to connect, to

critique, to be present, but not interrupt (Kline, 2020). I want you to hear these stories. My organization and structure of Chapter 4-7 privileges the story because the story is what is most important.

In the final part of the thesis, Chapter 8, I will conclude with my response to the Sisterhood. This response draws together my reflections, and learnings from this study. It seeks to knit together the threads of the study. The final chapter is organised as a series to tweets, tweets that I would have liked to post. It will conclude with a self-portrait.

Below I expand on some of the ideas discussed above. I have organized this discussion by using a framework advocated by Clandinin (2016), with a focus on stages in the journey of a narrative inquiry process, namely the start, during, and after. This framework has been used in each of the Chapters 4-7, with a slight adjustment. I took the decision to begin each chapter with the narrative portrait. The 'narrative portrait' was not the 'beginning' but was created in the 'during' phase of the inquiry process. It was a deliberate decision to begin with the narrative portrait. I believe that the 'narrative portrait' fulfils a powerful evocative function. The 'narrative portrait' serves to elicit your interest to hear the story.

3.2 The Start

I want to begin by stating that going from a research plan to a lived experience as a researcher storyteller was a collaborative project. My research plan involved a creative process, and something that I wanted to share and co-construct with my research partners. I was comfortable with this. The iterative process of developing my narrative inquiry storytelling is explicit in my research methodology. From a plan submitted to a research ethics committee to the lived experience of doing the research, I was committed to working in a research partnership with the women who joined me in this study. This relationship was especially important and explored critically in Chapter 4.

My initial plan emphasized the importance of the relational dimension of the research methodology. I carefully attended to this in setting up the initial discussions and forming the relationship with my research partner. I reflect on this in each Chapter 4-7. I quickly became aware of the emotional engagement needed with each of the research partners and decided to engage with each of my partners sequentially.

The research plan submitted for ethical approval in April 2019 outlined a form that my narrative inquiry would take. This drew heavily on my reading of

Clandinin (2016) and a narrative inquiry process. Broadly this plan had outlined as i) initial discussion, ii) the exploration of tweets, and iii) a further discussion. My methodology was carefully shaped by a model of narrative inquiry developed by Clandinin (2016): the start, during and after. When I began to write, I initially adopted a linear chronological story telling. However, the power of the narrative portrait as an evocative stimulus, resulted in me choosing to use this as a chapter starter for each of the women, even though this was written after the initial discussion and the exploration of the tweets. The narrative portrait became a stimulus for discussion in final discussion phase of the narrative inquiry process.

In the next section I will explain my use of the narrative portrait.

3.3 During (and the development of the narrative portrait)

I set about an initial study with my first research partner in May 2020. The exploratory nature of this initial inquiry is examined in Chapter 4 and my decision to include it in my final submission.

My research diary, August 2020, records a moment of panic or puzzlement or creativity. I recall the discussion with my Doctoral Peer Study Group. What would I do with the words I heard; how would I share these stories? How would I retell these stories to you? My intention was not to analyse the narrative but find a way to tell a story. This is a new story, not hitherto told.

The decision to write a narrative portrait was an iterative creative journey. I did not know at the beginning of the journey with Jo, that this was where I was going to go. It is where I went. My first study, Jo's story, tells the story of how I found the narrative portrait as a means of telling the story as an evocative piece of ethnography, to evoke not only a sympathetic response and a reflexive questioning of the connections to one's own life to the story, but also a desire to critique the injustice(s) depicted (Berry and Patti, 2015).

Each narrative portrait was a searching process, going back to the stories that unfolded in our initial discussion and that which followed on from

immersing myself in the tweets. Each Chapter thus begins with the narrative portrait, serving as an invitation to pull you in, to evoke your response. The chapter will then recount and reflect on the stages of developing the story, the start, during and after.

Turning these words in a narrative portrait, which you will find at the beginning of each of the next four chapters, was my story retelling. This act of creating a narrative portrait was an interpretive process. In each of my narrative portraits, I spent many hours looking for the person. This involved telling and retelling what I had heard, 'moving in and moving out' (Bochner and Ellis, 2016, p. 168) of the stories. Sharing these with my research partners is discussed in each Chapter.

Clough (2010) writes of searching process as part of his struggle to find the person. I experienced this struggle, this conflict, this pain; this was a quest to tell the truth as I saw it. Much of my writing of these narrative portraits took place during the period of the pandemic, when our lives were significantly restricted. However, it was during my weekly 'long walk,' usually on a Sunday afternoon, that I shared my struggles with my walking partner. Yvonne is one of the women I acknowledge at the beginning of the thesis. She listened as I spoke out loud the struggles I faced with each narrative portrait. Just as the artist seeks

to capture the true likeness, I struggled to find the words which captured that

likeness.

3.4 After

My methodology created a space for a story to be told and revealed, lived out loud, perhaps for the first time. The space for these stories to be told was a unique space. These stories were being crafted, constructed, made explicit, for the first time. I had a duty of care, an ethical duty to take care and be careful with the stories which were being shared, lived, and relived. The relationship with my research partners does not end. There is a new connection.

Each of our stories tells of pain. These are real pains. Our discussions were at times very personal, like removing a sticking plaster that had covered a wound, our story telling was an unmasking process (Bruner, 2003). Together a safe space was created which enabled our own construct of our own truthfulness to be explored. Woven into each of the Chapters 4-7 is how 'I' was revealed in the process of the narrative inquiry. This is what Clandinin talks about as that act of 'continually inquiring into our own experiences' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 55). This occurred as part of hearing a story. Writing myself into the story and stories is a continual process.

3.5 Finding my researcher storyteller voice

This dimension of the researcher storyteller is examined in Chapter 8 and will form the final chapter in this section of the thesis. This is my own reflection on the process of narrative inquiry and why being a researcher storyteller is important. My defence will include a specific exploration and focus on the uses and usefulness of story. Making this clarity of goal and purpose explicit is important, it is about privileging the person whose story we are hearing, rather than privileging the researcher's analysis of that story. This final chapter is a fusion of a methodological and philosophical discourse which will venture into a space where we can engage with how it is determined that individual voice and an individual's story is useful. I argue that our lack of regard for stories has threatened to silence our individual voice by homogenizing voice, to silence voices, silence those marginalized in our society. The homogenized voice is white, it is male, it is able bodied, it is cis gendered, it is middle class.

I argue that my experience of a western research paradigm is imbued with the ideology of scientific positivism. I argue that even in the qualitative realm we find ourselves sucked into language, thinking and behaviour of positivism and constructs of truth. This can be at odds with the ontological and epistemological standpoint of narrative research which is seeking to privilege

individual's voices. In my study, I am giving voice to women and their use of

Twitter. The stories have not been told before. The stories I want to share are

women leaders in education, whose voices are not heard. This is their story of

Twitter. This is their story of how they have used social media. This is their story

of using their voice.

4. Jo's Story

The Narrative Portrait

Being true to our core values is a process of reflection. A struggle to make sense. As I transition from teacher to researcher, I depart from schools and the love and joy of children's learning with a huge space in my heart which will always overflow when a child learns. This is a heavy heart. But this heart is ready for the next part of my journey.

I am a facilitator of learning. I am a researcher. I am deliberately and intentionally avoiding identifying myself as an academic. I am here to help and support with your learning in this new role, but it is an extension of my life as a teacher, not an end of my life as a teacher. Now I am a teacher, a coach, and a mentor for research.

New spaces, new learning. Sharing what I love and have learnt about researching. I am finding new and creative ways to research and express this learning. Open yourself to my challenge, which is always from a place of kindness. Spiritually, I am in a place of kindness. Anger and despair are there when we are not heard, our voices silenced, blamed, and shamed. I do hear this and I do challenge this. But it is kindness which enables growth. I challenge with

kindness, warmth but with conviction. I will not let this struggle beat me or grind me down, struggle is a form of growth.

My challenge is kind, coming from a place of love for learning and growth. The space I have in my heart to give, to share, to make sense, is immense. But I know the importance for self to say no. In my dark moments, I will avoid the self-sabotaging thoughts but use the unknown and the fear as a platform for growth. This is a place of growth and movement, to struggle. But to struggle to grow, to struggle as we grapple with a new piece of knowledge. Not a struggle to be, but struggle as being. Struggle as joy and kindness.

Where I put down my physical anchor in my liminal space is a struggle as being. Water will feature in this new space. The sea, a lake, a river; providing me with calmness and rough. The quiet ripple of a wave on the beach, the crashing waves as the storm reaches its peak. The natural rhythm of the water. I will take my peace and my struggle to my new familiar yet unfamiliar place. I will support you and you and you. I will wish you well on your journey of growth and embrace that struggle as force and source of growth.

Come with me, the door is open. My friends and my networks, my new friends, and my new networks; the door is open.

4.1 The Start

Staying true to the relational ethic principles and the feminist research paradigm underpinning this project, the initial study carried out between May 2020 and July 2020, was intentionally tentative and exploratory. The intention was to be playful or if you prefer, creative, with my research partner, seeking a high degree of collaboration, reciprocity, and relationship-building throughout the research process (Guta et al, 2012, p.17).

She engaged fully in the discussion and evaluation of the research design, making suggestions and recommendations over the process. I was intentional in inviting this critique or more, co-construction. This first study therefore is significant in my developing understandings of not only the research design but also the findings.

The study included the distinct stages, making connection and embedding the relationship, an initial 1:1 discussion, an exploration of my research partner's tweets and a second 1:1 follow up discussion using the Twitter narrative portrait as the artefact to support that discussion. The intention was to go through the narrative inquiry process, before, during and after; I sought to experience doing

narrative inquiry and in so both learn and refine the process for the three subsequent studies.

My first two attempts to establish a research partner to begin my study were unsuccessful. This did cause me some concern; had I misjudged this research? I had in mind someone from the onset, someone whose profile I had watched grow through Twitter over the last 9 months and with a recent book publication, was generating many Twitter followers. Additionally, this person, who I will call Jane, had in December 2019, sent me a Direct Message (DM) through Twitter saying that she was interested in my research. I had responded positively, again through DM on Twitter. I had not met her in person. The initial contact through short *Twitter likes* and DM were all extremely positive. Again, as a deliberate stage in building a relationship with this potential partner, I joined a Webinar in April 2020, where Jane was presenting. I liked her energy; I liked her honesty. I felt that there was a connection. Although, in retrospect, I had connected with her, not her with me. Thereafter, I sent a longer invitation email and there was silence. This email included a personal biography and the documents outlining the research approved by the University Ethics Committee (2020). I tentatively, after eight days, sent a follow up. We arranged a Saturday morning telephone call. I quickly discovered that Jane was very apprehensive

about the research. Despite her title of Research Lead, it transpired that she was not engaged in any research, and in fact had little or no research practice knowledge or experiences. Rather than build any relationship, my initial email had not built trust and understanding, but had frightened Jane. She explained how she had run it past a university academic friend, who had reassured her that it all seemed in order. Through her questions, I felt her anxiety and whilst the telephone conversation was longer than planned, it ended with me leaving the decision with her as to whether she decided she wanted to be my research partner. I thought it highly unlikely that she would get back in touch. She has not. However, what was discussed in that 30 minutes telephone conversation was interesting. A sense of fear, of being misunderstood, was communicated. Jane did not feel safe exploring and exposing her Twitter self. Despite my explanations as to how she would be anonymized in the research, her reservations were about how she might be seen. I have had no further contact with Jane, although have continued to follow her on Twitter. Jane talked about feeling watched and was concerned that because of the research could not be true to her true self. Jane talked about her different selves. The brief telephone call was rich in Jane's story. But this was not a project Jane wanted to commit to. However, Jane did talk about her extensive use of the Direct Messaging (DM)

feature of Twitter, something which I rarely use. This is where Jane builds her relationships. This is the hidden space and possibly a safer space; the space that only those invited in can see.

With the second person, again someone I know both through Twitter and through TeachMeets (informal gatherings of teachers to share short presentations), I met with lukewarm interest. I did not pursue this; considering my experience with Jane, I was looking for a greater sense of initial interest.

These experiences were a reminder of the deeply embedded positivist frameworks within which we operate (Guta et al., 2012), and perhaps highlighted the normalized 'power differential that exists between "researcher" and "subject"' (McCracken, 2020, p. 4). Whilst I had sought to build a mutually respectful and collaborative partnership, this felt too much like cold calling. Being acutely aware of the power and privilege of being the researcher, the construct of researcher and the challenge of disrupting this; was evidenced in these two encounters.

My third attempt was a very different experience. Jo was extremely keen. We had met once in June 2019 at a conference, and she remembered me talking about my research. There was a mutual connection established in a real and not

virtual space. I had been very interested in Jo's PhD study and her use of art collage methods. I had followed Jo on Twitter and had engaged with some of the discussions about her recently published PhD. I followed the same process of relationship building as I had done with Jane. Exchanging initial DMs on Twitter and sending her a detailed email (21st May 2020). The outcomes were significantly different. Initial enthusiasm was followed through. Perhaps because Jo had so recently completed her own PhD, she better understood what I was doing, or perhaps I had found a soul mate?

The email both explained the research but also talked more about me. I set the research in the context of my own professional life. I sought to make explicit who I was in the research. This autobiographical scene setting, according to Clandinin (2016) are important developing the understanding of the 'research puzzles' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 55); why am I interested in women's leadership voices and why am I interested in Twitter.

> I waited for Jo to respond to my email. I wondered if I had said too much. Had the detail of that initial email to Jane been overwhelming. How would Jo respond. A quick short email. The email from Jo arrived the following day. (Kerry's thoughts and reflections/research diary/21.4.2020)

Thank you for your message and attachment. I want to give myself time to respond with the detail this deserves, and so will get back to you in the coming days. I thank you for reaching out and am delighted to be involved. More from me soon, I promise. Until then, wishing you well.

Jo Email 22.4.2020

This first exchange of email was powerful. 'I want to give myself time to respond with the detail this deserves' was a beautiful response in that it communicated a connection, a desire to build a relationship. The 2nd email arrived on Monday morning. It was so much more than I could have ever had hoped for. Jo and I were forming a relationship.

When Jo and I had our first schedule 1:1 conversation for 3rd June, we had already exchanged several emails. Quite serendipitously, we had also been panellists at the same Webinar the day before. We were comfortable talking to each other. These actions of relationship forming are important to recognize in the process of establishing that relational dimension of my study.

Of course, this conversation was taking place in what had become a new normal virtual space, TEAMS. I was very anxious about the technology. I had practiced recording, but not using the inbuilt TEAMS recording option, but a

separate audio recording tool. This was my major concern. Checking before that this was working, I nonetheless took field notes. I shared this with Jo. She shared with me some of the recording challenges she had experienced in her own research. The honesty and openness between us felt strong. At the end of the 1 hour and 37 minutes, I was beside myself with joy. This had gone so well. The quality of our discussion felt that I was seeing inside Jo's Twitter profile, the person. I talked about stuff that I had not said out loud, or even in my head before. We both felt comfortable to talk about some very private matters. And, wow, I listened to the first few minutes of the interview, it had recorded. I thanked Jo, through an exchange of emails, and shared with her my absolute delight. Only, to discover, that whilst the recording had recorded my voice loud and clear, Jo's voice had not recorded sufficiently loud enough. In places it was so quiet to be impossible to hear. Of course, this was the beginning of my research, and I was learning; this was part of the learning. I felt very deflated. I wrote a note in my research journal, have a backup plan for recording, and a backup plan for the backup plan. Now I know how to use TEAMS recording option. But as I am learning; sharing a TEAMS recording outside my organization takes a higher level of technical know-how and I did not know how to do this. I do know how now.

4.2 During

In the following section I have summarized the first 1:1 discussion I had with Jo. This is a broadly chronological narrative of the discussion, from which I have selected key topics which have resonated with me. I subsequently explored these with Jo.

Jo was very supportive in helping me develop my use of narrative inquiry and was open to sharing her own researcher experiences. The first study was planned to turn a lens on the methodology and method, to be a learning experience to help shape and inform my ongoing work. Jo willingly agreed to participate in what I described as a playful enterprise to try things out and see what worked. Throughout the 1:1 discussion, we talked about the research process alongside the focus of the research.

Perhaps in a traditional research model, the status of this work as pilot, or exploratory study, would occupy limited space in the final thesis. This study, however, has become more powerful than I had originally envisaged. It gave me courage to be adventurous and it feels wrong not to give it the detailed reflection it deserves. Jo gave generously of her time; we made a connection,

and a relationship has been formed. This cannot be reduced to a couple of sentences.

One of the things discussed with Jo was whether to produce a transcript of the interview was a useful exercise. Jo recalled that doing her transcripts for her own PhD was very labour intensive but that she had not used them extensively in writing up her thesis. Discussing this with my Education Doctorate Peer Support Group thereafter, I concluded that I would do a transcript to help me get closer to the data. Clearly, now with the poor recording this was not going to be possible.

Listening to the partial recording, my questions and using my field notes, I am struck by the way Jo and I talked. Twitter is the artefact to support the conversation about our voice, using our voice, speaking out. During our conversation, I felt this was going well, really well, lots of interesting dimensions of women's voices were explored. It also felt comfortable, we were both open and generous with our disclosure. Jo talked about her experiences of using Twitter initially in her role as a Head of Department (Modern Foreign Languages: MFL) and making connections with other MFL colleagues. Building networks to support, share and collaborate. Jo talked about a Masters Twitter Chat Group that she had led on. Jo talked about who she followed, and who she did not

follow, what she was tweeting about. Jo suggested that her tweets might be categorized into those about Buddhism, Women, Refugees, Struggling Teachers and the light stuff, dogs, baking etc. These categories or themes were used to subsequently explore the tweets and as the impetus for the second 1:1 discussion.

I am struck by a particular point, Jo questioned whether she was a leader in education: this is something I did not explore in the first 1:1 discussion. This feels like a missed opportunity and was picked up in the second 1:1 discussion.

The conversation had a focus, Twitter gave us a context for talk, but meandered, exploring self and identity. I had broad themes I sought to explore, a) Voice, b) Agency, c) Power, and d) Identity, but I let the conversation flow naturally. Time went by very quickly. It felt fun, it felt serious, it felt personal, it felt *'thrilling, not threatening'* (Jo, field notes).

We talked about connections we had made, conversations we had joined in, how Twitter had enhanced and enriched our professional lives, supported us in our learning, in our work. We talked about professional isolation and the importance of networks, such as WomenEd, BELMAS Chat and other hashtag groups we joined.

It felt like there were no barriers, we roamed 'past, present and future' (Clandinin, 2016, p. 58) as we explored dimensions of our existential worlds. We were both describing and sense making during the discussion. At times it was uncomfortable, both speaking and listening. We touched on our working-class backgrounds, growing up, relationships with partners, with our children. It was honest and truthful, and it has stayed in my head and my heart.

Jo, responded to my request about challenges, or any bad experiences on Twitter. She talked about a male education tweeter with whom there had been a bad experience. I knew of him; he was someone I had avoided. Jo explained how she had got entangled in an acrimonious exchange. Jo talked about how her faith and her Buddhist teachings, supported her in challenges. She had not shied away from the exchange. She had not initiated this, but one of her tweets had been picked up and used by him. This led to a series of exchanges. I shared how I avoided any conflicts on Twitter. We talked about other women on Twitter who were more frequently adopting what we might call a challenging, or disruptive disposition.

We talked about Twitter being a space where some tiny voices, minority voices, or women's voices could be drowned out. In this context of talking about fear of speaking out, I talked about growing up in a household where I was often

afraid to speak out. I talked about avoiding conflict and this is true of my Twitter activity. I talked about how I felt very uncomfortable about even talking about this now. My father was very ill, he had terminal cancer. He will not read this finished thesis. This was not something I had previously said out loud. Does my interest in women's voices stem from this early experience?

I have a daughter whose neurological disability. Again, I find myself having to be very careful about how we speak, what we say. Her autism impacts on how we talk, what we can talk about. We live with her anxieties every day. Her exclusion from our talk. Her anger about exclusion. Not being listened to. Jo talked about her daughter. It was not something I explored. I sensed it was not right, yet. Or was I afraid to ask, to intrude? That is a story about a young girl's voice not being heard. What I took away from that part of our conversation, was that her daughter had not been listened to. Jo recommended a book, Jess Taylor (2020), Why Women Are Blamed For Everything. I sensed this was a very painful episode. I did not explore it here, but it stayed with me. I did explore this in our follow-up 1:1.

4.3 After

Following the 1:1 discussion, I set about exploring Jo's Tweets. I used a free software tool, https://www.vicinitas.io/free-tools/download-user-tweets which enables a download of the most recent 3,198 tweets. For Jo, this was January 23rd to June 10th. This was my first experience of playing with this tool. It provided a word cloud of the original tweets. I shared this with Jo by email, and her immediate response was surprise, where is 'struggling;' this word she expected to be there at the centre of her word cloud.

Word Cloud

morning · talking · health · development
amazing · wellbeing · pm · thinking · follow · phd · experience · enjoyed
excellent · lots · conference · june · sharingchat · talk · leadership
tomorrow · agree · event · check · learn · don · mental · stay love · hope · coming · times · hearwriting · word
staff · support · link · teacher · info · blog · education · children
care · beautiful · week · learning school · wishing · bit · read · free · day · issue · practice · challenge
mentoring fabulous · online · real · moment · life · students · conversations
absolutely · opportunity · schools · lovely · team · connect · join · teachers · people · share · colleagues
start · happy · leaders · idea · coaching · book · oooh · professional · exciting thread discussion
career · change · teaching · student · feeling · feel · conversation · question · kindness

Figure 2: Word Cloud generated based on Tweets

I then proceeded to use a CAQDAS (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) to code the Tweets. Using a specific qualitative data analysis tool NVivo, whilst not replacing the manual process of identification of code and the actual coding, it does purport to support a level of sophistication and managing of multiple coding themes, that might be more problematic using a spreadsheet and coloured pens!

However, I found using a spreadsheet and coloured pens brought me closer to my data. Whilst using CAQDAS had been my intention; my inexperience and learning to use a software analysis tool NVivo, seemed to be taking me away from the task, not enhancing the process. I thus decided not to proceed with the use of the tool.

Using the areas or themes that Jo provided, I set about going through the tweets, initially colour coding against the five themes suggested by Jo. The process of coding identified twelve substantive and sub themes. Through hours of reading tweets, I began to see a picture emerge, the portrait of Jo, her voice, who she was, or who I saw in these tweets. This process of physically going through the tweets took me further inside the Twitter person.

I wrote a narrative portrait. It felt tentative. It felt a privilege. It was not a truth. It was an 'emergent analysis' (Butler-Kisber, 2018) resulting from a close relationship with Jo. It was with some nervous trepidation I shared this narrative-portrait with Jo.

4.3.1 Initial Reflections and Discussion

The following section begins with the portrait I shared with Jo. I then take forward and reflect on some of the ideas that emerged in our second 1:1 discussion as we talked about the portrait. The portrait provided the stimulus to frame our discussion. Once again, it was a free flowing, honest, and natural discussion. Pauses were deliberate as we both made sense of the space, reflected, and went into the 'retelling, reliving' phase of narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2016, p.34).

Writing, or constructing the portrait was the output of immersion in the tweet data, framed by the first 1:1 discussion. It is interpretative, my interpretations informed from my immersion in the tweets. Written in first person, Jo's voice, was deliberate and whilst not explicitly a focus of the second 1:1 discussion, there was an interesting exchange about who owned this portrait. In keeping with the principles and values of feminist research praxis,

challenging the constructs of power, I wanted Jo to see this as belonging to her. Whilst she largely liked the portrait, not a like-for-like representation, but as a rich reflexive tool to see herself, she saw it as mine.

We discussed how I would contend with a research partner not liking the portrait, or rather, this was raised as something I would need to give more thought. Taking the learning forward into my research, I want to be both explicit in the intention of writing a narrative the portrait, and how this will then become the artefact for the second 1:1 discussion. At the beginning of this first study, I did not know that I was going to produce a narrative portrait. But this felt the right way to present my interpretation of the data; it is creative.

4.3.2 Struggling

A significant part of the second 1:1 discussion was around the use of the word struggle and struggling in the portrait. Jo's own doctoral work is centred on this concept, and it was thus not surprising that we spent some time examining how this word had been used and interpreted by me in the narrative portrait. There were some tender moments in this part of the discussion. We were able to be honest about struggles, struggling, because we had a

relationship. Talking about struggles and struggling, we talked about support; how we reach out to support but who supports us?

4.3.3 Leadership

Who was Jo, the leader, and how was her leadership voice, expressed in the tweets, had been an omission from the first 1:1 discussion? The key learning that I need to take forward from this is to ensure that this is explicitly discussed in the first 1:1, making space to explore leadership. The portrait sought to capture Jo's research mentoring leadership role, her voice in supporting others. The discussion of the portrait in the second 1:1 examined constructs of leadership, leader as a role, and leadership as a disposition. This discussion was enabled through the portrait; exploration of how Jo sees herself as a leader, how I saw her as a leader in the tweets, and how this gave her a voice.

4.4 Reflections

Doing narrative inquiry, translating my ideas and theory into a practical application, has been a transformative experience (Mezirow, 2000). Research planned and implemented within a positivist -paradigmatic framework identifies a pilot study stage; typically to test out the research steps as articulated in the research approval submission process. I went into my first study with a commitment to the co-construction of methodology and method, to work with my research partner (not participant or subject) in a creative developmental way. Whilst seeking to stay true to the principles of narrative inquiry (Clandinin, 2016), I have sought to translate this methodology and method for my own study and overlay it with the principles of feminist research praxis. The work with Jo has thus become a significant part of my learning. It has specifically brought to the fore something raw and real about the relational dimension of the research.

The study took place over a 3-month period, a period when we were all still trying to make sense of living in the isolation of the pandemic world, in our own bubbles and social distancing existential worlds. Notwithstanding this, I will undertake each of the next three studies sequentially. Taking time to invest in

the relationship, immerse myself in the data and produce the portrait, one woman at a time.

I could not end this part of the exploratory study story without reflecting on a very difficult and painful topic that was touched upon during the first 1:1. It was very personal to Jo, it stayed with me. It will live with her forever. It is about women's voices being heard in the context of abuse. I heard this pain in the first 1:1.

It might have been easier (but not honest to self) not to return to this part of the initial discussion ever again. However, I could not leave something unsaid. What Jo had touched upon had stayed with me. I followed up on a reading she had recommended. I needed her to hear that I had heard. The silencing of her daughter's voice, the impact that this has had and will continue to have, has been heard.

Equally important in the context of relational ethics and relational methodology and method, is how you end the relationship; or if you do?

5. Susan's Story

The Narrative Portrait

> Problems do not go away when you stop talking about them

> Ahmed, 2017

Speaking up and speaking out; it is who I am. To defend, to question, to advocate, to share experiences, to share knowledge, this is all about learning. It is who I am. I cannot be quiet because this is about making things better. I am deliberately and intentionally provocative in this space. I will challenge and disrupt. This is about professional learning; this is who I am. I want to make us all think more, question more, be more curious about what is and what could be.

Collaboration and learning through research and investigation and learning together is embodied in the professional learning community I have created. This is a source of pride in my professional identity. Being part of that process of ongoing professional learning, bringing to it research AND my own lived experience, is important to me. I use this space to share alternatives, to see and believe in our capacity to create alternatives because there are alternatives.

I use the space to make a noise; actually, it would be amiss of me not to use this space and not to make a noise. This is not a performance. Children and young people's lives are too important to me, this is about using my leadership voice to create a more socially just, a more caring and kinder world.

My professional profile invites challenge from others. The intersection of a white middle-class woman, a mother of three adopted children who have complex and challenging stories and a professor, a professor of teacher education; collectively through and because of this identity I experience an intentional and deliberate effort of silencing my voice. The space I now occupy has evolved. It was not planned. But because of where I am, who I am and because of the time that I now have (especially during the ongoing Covid:19 lockdowns), I will fill that space. You will hear me, lots!

Denying my legitimacy to speak up in this space makes me very angry. I do take a break. I do walk away and temporarily retreat. But I will not be muted or silenced. This is not to deny the anger, the hurt, the grief, and sadness I feel. It is exhausting. The tensions I feel in some areas of exchange are deeply personal. This is me.

It is sometimes my family, my children's story, our ongoing story. These stories continue to be complex and chaotic. I cannot explicitly say this. It is our truth. This is what we live with every day. You may not detect this vulnerability but then you would be forgetting or choosing to ignore that I am a person behind these tweets. That is unkind. This can be an unkind space if you choose to challenge. But I will speak out and I will continue to challenge.

The strengths developed through my lived experiences means that I am strong. I do feel pain, for self and for others. These are lives and struggles that are being lived every day. I can make a difference by disrupting discourses that seek to deny alternatives. Issues of injustice demand that I speak up and speak out. You will not silence me.

5.1 The Start

I remember first meeting Susan at the inaugural WomenEd conference in London, just over six years ago. We sat on the steps to eat our lunch and got chatting. During this period, I have kept in touch with Susan. She has progressed in her career and now occupies a professorship in Higher Education. During that initial discussion, we talked about our career trajectories. We talked about the commitments outside our professional lives and how these had impacted on us. We shared our personal stories, two women talking over lunch.

I have gone on to be involved in some of the work that Susan has led on in the field of coaching and mentoring. We might be described as professionally networked; not friends but close enough to call on each other if we needed something. Susan's Twitter profile has grown to more than 20K followers. I follow her and notice her voice on my Twitter profile.

In sending the invitation to be part of the study, I again felt a sense of trepidation. Her reply, the adjectives; 'honoured, excited, and nervous.'

I think I was surprised.

Wow. I am honoured, excited and a little nervous. But it's great to be involved.

Susan's Email 3rd August 2020

Of course, the next few months were like nothing ever experienced; more chaos and disruption because of the COVID:19 Pandemic. We finally got to meet (virtually) on 28th October 2020.

Again, the initial 1:1 discussion conducted over Microsoft TEAMS, our new normal, took longer than I had originally planned. Although our new normal, there is still the novelty and awkwardness factor, and of course, the dependency on technology to do what we want. Our conversation began by talking about our lives, Susan mostly spent in a state of shielding, mostly physically isolated from both work colleagues and family, now living in her own flat and not the family home. The practicalities of food delivery and managing the spaces we now have or do not have were explored. We talked about families and shared some of the challenges we both faced. This was our lived lives, two women talking in the virtual space.

Susan explained that her introduction to Twitter came via her partner who used it initially to engage with a social group (cyclists). As she began to explore, she saw opportunities to connect, initially with her students, but she has gone on to embrace Twitter in a big way. This was not strategic, there has not been a grand plan, Susan explained.

In her new role, she talked about a more formal discussion with colleagues, about how Twitter could be used to build networks and connections. But individuals can choose; and whilst there are several colleagues who are using Twitter a lot, there is not a strategy, no big plan.

Susan talked about the tension she feels when there is a fusion of personal and professional on Twitter, something she tries to avoid. Susan does have a purpose in what and how she uses Twitter. This included, as a conscious decision, challenging others to see alternatives, to disrupt dominant discourses and let it be heard, or at least challenge and say, it does not have to be like this. At times she feels so angry about the misinformation being promoted that she must speak out, involve herself, a kind of moral duty.

We talked about how in her new leadership role she felt more of a responsibility to do this; but there was not a switch. Susan did not believe that now she had this very senior role that she needed to be more present; no, perhaps Susan had always been someone who challenged and did not walk away when she knew she could enhance the discussion with her knowledge and her understanding. Her Twitter profile was not a performance. This was her.

Susan acknowledged that whilst she had been in some discussions about the use of social media with colleagues, the opportunity afforded by the research discussion to stand back and look at her use of Twitter was new and interesting for her.

I invited Susan to share what she thought she tweeted about, to set the themes for my initial exploration of her tweets. The five areas that were highlighted were around 1) coaching and mentoring, 2) adopted/foster/looked after children, 3) special education and inclusion, 4) presenting alternatives to look at things/challenging norms and 5) women.

5.2 During

Following the 1:1 discussion, I set about exploring Susan's Tweets. I downloaded the most recent 3,194 tweets. For Susan, this was 21st August to 13th November 2020, covering a period 13 weeks.

.

Figure 3: Word Cloud generated based on Tweets

Using the areas or themes that Susan provided, I set about going through the tweets, initially colour coding against the five themes suggested. In the process of coding I identified a total of twelve themes. So, in addition to 1) coaching and mentoring, 2) adopted/foster/looked after children, 3) special education and inclusion, 4) presenting alternatives to look at things/challenging norms and 5) women; I identified 6) Pedagogy, 7) COVID:19 8) Diversity 9)

Teacher Learning 10) Big Issues/In the news/Controversy 11) Early Years and 12) Fun stuff.

Through hours of reading tweets, I began to see a picture emerge, the portrait of Susan, her voice, who she was, or who I saw in these tweets. This process of physically going through the tweets took me further inside the Twitter person. It was a difficult process and I struggled because it felt a deeply personal space; a space that Susan had sought to protect. This was not the Twitter profile she chose to share. Going back to the initial discussion, Susan had said that I would not see the personal, this was not a space for the personal.

5.3 After

As I wrote my second narrative portrait, I felt similar tensions and anxieties to those I had experienced when I wrote Jo's narrative portrait. I was struggling with the focus which was very personal. I had to do this, but it nonetheless felt risky. It was an 'emergent analysis' (Butler-Kisber, 2018) resulting from a close relationship with Susan's tweets. It was with no less nervous trepidation that I shared this narrative-portrait with Susan.

5.3.1 The personal and the professional

One of the areas that I struggled with, was how I was going to write about the personal and how this is the professional. I had felt this very strongly in the tweets. Whilst rarely were the tweets explicitly about Susan; there was a very personal thread that began on October 16th. This came within several conversations about the National Adoption Day. The Tweet began, '*Let me tell you about me*.' This felt very important but also very personal. However, it was written quite factually, absent of emotive language. Whilst the tweet showed that Susan has familiar experience of the topics, she nonetheless maintained what I will describe as a 'distanced' voice.

The portrait was difficult to write; I felt I was intruding into a very personal space. I was not sure if I had permission to go into this space. The discussion of the portrait began immediately with a focus on this dimension of the narrative portrait. Susan used words such as 'interesting' to describe the portrait. Asked directly if she recognized this person, she replied yes, but also conceded that it was a novel experience of seeing yourself portrayed in this way. Examining and reflecting on self, Susan, described herself as a private person, not over sharing even with members of close family. I explored how I struggled with going into that space in the portrait.

Susan went on to explore how her use of Twitter was not for people to know her. That was not the purpose of Twitter. The portrait however is very personal.

Further explanation of this sense of oversharing, Susan talked about her desire not to overburden others. This was who she was in the real world. She talked about being more private than her siblings. She then talked about self - protection. In this moment, Susan acknowledged that twenty years of her life had been devoted to trying to make a change, a change that had not been successful. This was a very difficult moment. This was not the time or the space to explore these feelings of having been unsuccessful. In writing this portrait, I had felt the pain, Susan's struggle, her knowing that children with complex and traumatized lives, need more and then more might not be enough. Being denied by some the authority to speak about this made Susan very angry. It did not silence her.

5.3.2 Silencing or being heard?

As I immersed myself in the tweets, I became aware that this activity was daily and began when Susan got up, tweeting would start at 6.43am and continue every day until well into the evening, 10pm. There was only one day in

the period, when Susan did not engage in any tweeting. And on this occasion, she tweeted that she was stepping away. Because she was tired and angry. Susan asks difficult questions, she raises issues, she does not hide. But on this occasion, it had become too much. I felt the real pain and hurt. 'To some people, a woman with power and a voice is always a monster' (Haynes, 2020, p. 105).

Looking at the top five tweets, they cover a diverse range of topics. Susan comments, challenges, questions, presents alternatives on a daily, hourly basis. Susan felt that the period under scrutiny was probably not typical. Her context, mostly on her own, shielding, Twitter had become a more go to place. Additionally, there was a lot of activity that she had to challenge. This period of tweets came at a time when our national education agendas included topics such as the cessation of free school meals and the campaign led by Manchester United footballer Marcus Rushford, through sharing his own personal story of food poverty. Susan tweeted on this topic.

5.3.3 Leadership

In Susan's professional life she is a leading academic in Higher Education. Her title, it might be argued, bestows upon her some privilege, some authority, some responsibility, or some role, to speak on national education issues. It is an

ongoing source of frustration, voiced in the Tweets, that Susan feels her voice is not heard. This is not specifically aimed at her, but part of a culture of current disregard of the academic voice in the government education arena. Significant events, such as the Social Care Review, caused Susan great concern. She is concerned about the narrowness of voices heard, those being invited to contribute to a review which, in her opinion, is too narrow and failing to include the many more experts and experienced practitioners. Susan talked of being worn down and worn out by the constant battle of exclusion from the top tables. Twitter has given her a platform to speak out and be heard. But it is also a space where she is shut out by others in the Twitter space; it is simply a mirror of the world not a different reality.

She is very conscious of the need to protect herself, but does being quiet protect us?

My silences had not protected me. Your silence will not protect you

Lorde, 2020, p. 10

5.4 Reflections

I am left in no doubt that Susan is deliberate and intentional in her use of Twitter to be heard. Whilst she did not start off with a plan, Twitter has enabled her to have a public profile, fitting with the professorial role she occupies (maybe)? She uses the medium to challenge, provoke and raise awareness of many difficult topics. She uses the medium to build a community. Susan does not hide and at times it felt to me that she was going into a battle. She would not be silenced. But this was a difficult position to occupy. It wore her out.

6. Liz's Story

The Narrative Portrait

When you admire something about another woman, tell her.

Get into the habit of lifting each other up. (Unknown)

My Twitter is a kind space, a place to rejoice in the success of others, to amplify voices that might not otherwise be heard. It is a kind space to make a loud noise about what is wrong and what can be put right. It is a hopeful space.

I choose to amplify topics; the gender pay-gap, flexible working, women in leadership, maternity leave, menopause, and cancer. You will hear and see the warrior in me. Persistent and consistent I call this out. It is a space for challenge, support, hope and change. I will be heard. Enough. It is my strong space.

Careful communication: facts and evidence of inequality are shared. Actions to support impact: creating opportunities for others to be heard and to grow. Writing projects, leadership courses, webinars, coaching; all part of the support offer to make a difference. Professional growth, learning, improvement: these are all embedded in my Twitter leadership voice. A woman's place is in leadership, and I lead by example. I will make a difference; I will have an impact.

There is no challenge to my voice on Twitter now; I have created a space that is both safe, kind, and respectful. I show that this can be achieved through determined communication. I do not let those who seek to silence women silence me or silence you. This is my space, our space, and I use this for all women.

My empathy for the silenced topics comes from a place of authenticity. Twitter saved my life. It came to my rescue when I was struggling. Illness; struggling to be heard threatened to silence me. This was not who I was. I was and am a successful woman leader. The Twitter space became my vehicle to be heard, to speak about what seemed to be unspeakable topics and be even stronger. It was painful. I tell my cancer story to empower other women. I tell my story of facing discrimination to empower others; to lead differently. It does not have to be like this. For too long, women's lived experiences have been imagined away by others. I am using my power to make a loud and determined noise for change.

WomenEd has become an international vehicle for the mobilization of women who experience a myriad of ways of silencing. It is the coming together of the many to support each other, to tell and hear each other's story. To be there for each other. Silencing about pay gaps, silencing about the menopause,

silencing about the inflexibility of our professional lives; I deliberately use this space to speak up and speak out. Through this platform, I have shown that when women unite, we can have an impact.

Wellbeing is part of the important message I use this space to speak about; for too long women have felt a need to prove themselves. In different times you would see other dimensions of my fun side; my love of travel, partying, enjoying our physical spaces over afternoon champagne teas! But for now; it is the online sharing of pictures of the newly mowed lawn or the purple garden chairs, and of course, looking back to holiday pictures from the last few years. Soon we will be together again; but technology keeps us connected.

The messages are clear. I am here to right wrongs and through this space I will give a message; that it does not have to be like this. I am strong woman who chooses to use her voice to build up and support other women. Together we are stronger. I am the champion of the many who might otherwise believe that they had no voice. I give them a voice and you give them a message of hope. I use my connections to give women ways to be heard.

6.1 The Start

I had discussed with Liz some involvement in the research more than eighteen months ago, when we were both at an event in London. She had immediately volunteered to be a partner in my research. Eighteen months later, I sent her an invitation email; she may have forgotten, she may have changed her mind. We were in the middle of a pandemic, and we were all juggling new demands on our lives.

Liz quickly came back to me, with a big yes, I would love to be involved. Our initial discussion took place on 16th February. Liz shared her story of becoming active on Twitter. Initially Liz used Twitter as part of her Higher Education leadership role, but she did not 'totally get it' (field notes, Liz). A male colleague set up her account and she mostly used it to communicate events to partners and established networks.

Becoming active on Twitter was a very empowering experience for her; Twitter had been used to take (back) control of her professional life at a personally very difficult time in her life, as she was battling breast cancer and at a time when her former employer was not supporting her. As Liz was telling her story, I was very aware of the space that we shared of truth sharing, of sense

making and I was very conscious of my responsibility to enable this story to be told 'seen and fully attended to, recognized, appreciated, respected' (Lawrence-Lightfoot et al, 1997, p. 5).

It was during a period of significant illness, cancer, that Liz embraced Twitter. At times, when Liz was so poorly, a couple of Tweets, but it kept her in touch. Some days it was all she could manage to *like a tweet*. On her slow and painful road to recovery, Liz was contacted by a colleague on Twitter and invited to a national conference to partner in a symposium. This was her first public event after her illness. She was both nervous but exhilarated. Liz attributes the Twitter connections to giving her a voice; she spoke about leadership, illness and really being me. She got amazing feedback and she felt good about herself, and what she had to say was important. That this should ever have been in doubt, is an interesting aside. Liz's professional life included School Headteacher and Higher Education Leadership. But both Liz's recent illness and the way she had been treated by her previous employer, had significantly impacted on her confidence. Twitter saved Liz. Liz said, *'Twitter saved my life'* (Liz, field notes).

From attending the conference, through Twitter, Liz started to make new connections, which have grown and grown. Through these initial connections, online discussions continued, and Liz has gone to set up and lead on an

international grassroots women's group. Social Media and Twitter has been very important in building this international women's group. It now has more than forty thousand Twitter followers across the world, connecting women and giving women a voice. It was through this organization that I first connected with Liz.

Clearly Liz was sharing with me the good, but I was interested to explore with her the bad and the ugly of Twitter. It was a very interesting position that Liz took; a position about being in control of her life, her professional profile, to be heard. Her challenge to the bad and the ugly, which she had several examples of, was proactively and purposefully managed. Liz talked about how through her Women's organization they had discussed how marginalized voices are silenced and that Twitter was in fact no different to society at large. But through a careful set of protocols, they refused to be sucked into these hugely damaging incidents. The protocol is to clarify with facts and then withdraw. The refusal to engage, Liz argued, protects women. To quote Michelle Obama (2020) 'when they go low, we go higher'. This is about self-protection, but it is also about refusing to let our voice get ambushed. This was about being in control.

Asking Liz to identify the areas that she tweeted on was used to frame my initial exploration of the tweets. She identified the following areas: 1) Women/Feminism, 2) Professional Learning and Impact, 3) Inclusion and

Diversity Issues, 4) Politics and the 5) Chartered College of Teaching. I then set

about immersing myself in Liz's Twitter world.

6.2 During

Following the 1:1 discussion, I set about exploring Liz's Tweets. I downloaded the most recent 3,198 tweets. For Liz, this was 23rd January to 7th April 2021, covering a period 10 weeks. The following word cloud was generated by the software.

Figure 4: World Cloud Based on Tweets

In addition to the five areas identified by Liz; 1) Women/Feminism, 2) Professional Learning and Impact, 3) Inclusion and Diversity Issues, 4) Politics and the 5) Chartered College of Teaching, I identified areas of 6) Cancer, 7) Leadership 8) Wellbeing and 9) Support and Advocacy and 10) Fun.

As I began to immerse myself in Liz's Twitter world, I did not immediately see what she was doing; or what I came to see her doing. I believe that Liz amplifies voice through her sharing, forwarding, liking. A significant strand of Twitter activity was devoted to giving others a platform. Liz uses her considerable following, to empower others by quoting them, commenting on their Tweets. It was so subtle I failed to see it for the empowering activity it really is; and it makes people (women) feel good, feel stronger, feel listened to.

Significantly, there was nothing bad or ugly in Liz's Tweets. She has command of the space, to be heard.

6.3 After

6.3.1 The Warrior

Our discussion of the portrait began with Liz examining the use of the word *warrior*; she was intrigued or troubled or rather, 'not sure' of this word, although not unhappy to be seen in that way. I immediately went to a quotation that I had been looking at earlier in the day, from Oscar Wilde (quoted in Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman Davis, 1997, p. 85), 'the artist is not portraying the subject, but portraying self'. Warrior was not a word Liz had used. It was my word. Where did I get this from?

During our hour-long discussion, we talked about the visual image conjured up by this word, a fighter. The language we use is important. Our discussion took us to a place where we pondered about the use of words to describe powerful women in derogatory terms. The same attributes in a man were seen or expressed in a positive language, assertive, for a woman outspoken. So, a warrior may conjure up negative images. When in fact, what Liz is doing is no different to a male colleague, but he would not be described using fighting language. We talked about the trap of language to normalize gendered embedded ways of being, behaving, acting. Calling this out, was part of how Liz chose to use Twitter. We revisited the term warrior again, in the context of the gender pay gap. Liz will not be silent on this; and again, I use the words fighting talk as I describe Liz's determination not to be silenced on this inequity. But as we discuss this, I am very conscious of Liz's demeanour, she is measured, speaks with clarity, authority. I am compelled to listen.

6.3.2 Personal and Professional

For Liz, Twitter, is so linked to the personal. In our first discussion, she was quite explicit. Twitter saved her life. At a time, when so poorly, she could hardly lift her head of the pillow, she found some strength to look at some tweets. Whilst, that slow process of getting back on her feet, she was able to connect

with people through a virtual space. Those Twitter connections were incredibly powerful and important in her finding her voice or finding a space for her voice; a voice that had been silenced both by illness, but also how an institution had chosen to treat her at a time of incredible personal vulnerability. Twitter was a saviour; it gave her a voice, a space for her voice. At a time when due to illness Liz could not engage in face-to-face contacts, the virtual world has been a powerful force. Liz reminded me of a colleague who is currently going through cancer treatment and using Twitter to blog about this. Liz thought that this was a real strength of Twitter; to give others an outlet to speak. She sought to use her position to share tweets, to enable others to hear.

We talked about women's lives, maternity leave, and the menopause. The former experienced by some women, the later experienced by all women. Liz talked about her conscious decision to share her cancer story. This she feels illustrates our cultural tendency to keep stuff hidden. She likened this to the menopause. Its impact on women's lives is hidden, hushed up, not talked about because the spaces are dominated by men and masculine behaviours. Liz will use her voice to talk about these topics because they are real and by not taking about them doesn't make them go away (Ahmed, 2017).

6.3.3 Leadership

Liz is confident and self-assured. When she engages in debates, she presents the facts, the evidence, she is rarely challenged. During the period I was immersing myself in Liz's tweets, there were no challenges. This was a very different space to that experienced by Susan. Perhaps Liz was less provocative? But Liz was not less challenging of inequity? So, why did she not face the same level of argument or animosity?

She has had a very successful career in education leadership, in both the school and higher education sector. Her role today, in the leadership of an international grassroots women's organization, she draws upon those previous learned experiences. How she engages with Twitter, draws upon that strength, confidence, and her sense of agency. This is very clearly communicated.

One of the areas we explored is the way in which women can be apologetic in their language. Building up, seeing our true worth and value, are all embedded in the tweets. In discussion of this, Liz felt very assured of herself as a leader; she brings this vast experience. But she has also an experience of almost being robbed of this; she is aware of how various experiences of women can be like a robbing, taking away and denying of that experience. Additionally, or perhaps more so, we deny ourselves. Liz talked about how she saw women

not celebrate their achievements. Her Twitter activity challenges women to be proud of what they have achieved. During her time as a school leader, Liz felt that this is how she used that leadership position to promote others. Liz was critical of the tendency for self-promotion; wondering out loud, she asked was this because she was older and did not need to engage in such activity. Reflecting on this, listening back to our discussion, I wonder out loud if it is culturally normalized to self-promote; and it is done better (and more acceptable) by men?

6.4 Reflections

From a very difficult space, Liz has used Twitter to get her voice heard. She has experienced being silenced and Twitter helped her get back to a place where she could be heard.

She has experienced attempts to silence her on Twitter. But has not allowed this to happen. She has used her networks to work with other women, to agree a way in which these attempts to silence will be managed, a protocol to avoid being sucked into these very difficult spaces. Because of her refusal to be drawn, Liz feels that this has given her some protection. Those who might seek to silence her, leave her alone. Liz advises others (women) to adopt a similar approach.

7. Belinda's Story

The Narrative Portrait

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

I want kindness to greet you when joining my Twitter Space. But behind that joy, welcome, openness and warmth, is a very powerful message. Your voice, everyone's voice, counts. Through my teaching career, I have listened to tiny voices. I have ensured thousands of small children's voices are heard. My classroom, my school, my world, is a space where all will be made to feel included, but more, everyone will have their space to talk. I will listen. As a leader in education, this was and is my mantra. This is my world, and this is now my Twitter world and the world for all my followers. These core values and beliefs are lived out in my professional life and now in my virtual life.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and the wee donkey, can we just move this along: is my new saying (apparently). Well, I have moved it (Twitter) along. I have made this happen. I have made a space for tiny voices to be heard.

I have shone a light, and I will continue to shine a light in a space that can be brutal, unkind and an echo chamber for the few drowning out the many. I also know the danger of getting sucked into this way of being. Determined to be

a positive disruptive influence, to show that we can have a different world, I embarked on a mission to make the Twitter space inclusive, where tiny voices on Twitter can be heard. And to quote a big voice on Twitter; I have come so far with this idea. No secrets, no special strategies, just being kind, opening that space for all to be heard. That is my strategy. Simple. I've done it again, I wrote in one of my blogs. Yes, but this is me (family, friends and colleagues will not be surprised). A woman on a mission. From the Tuesday #, the blogs, the webinars, the radio interviews and now the book, I am on a mission. I am a person who lives their beliefs and values in everything they do. The anger, frustration, and feelings of unfairness, drove me to make a stand for all those tiny voices; equality, diversity, and inclusion are my core values. I know how to lead for change. I have built powerful connections to achieve the vision, not for me, but for all those tiny voices that need to be heard. I have used the space to build that community for all by reaching out to the bigger voices to do their bit, to share, to promote, to advocate for all. It is a gentle place and with one purpose in mind, to let people be heard and to support learning.

Now every Tuesday, more than 300 people each week, connect, and know their voice will be heard. Questions, call outs for support, or simply, I am here, all are heard, answered, and acknowledged. This is a huge personal

commitment, but I do it, because each person needs to be heard. New connections are made; that kindness has created a wave, a tsunami of positivity. My Twitter space is a place where everyone is an important someone. No one will feel lonely. We have built a community where any questions can be asked, where ideas can be explored, books and reading can be discussed. No big arguments, no provocation, learning without posturing, without one-upmanship, no hierarchy, nurturing, and kind. But learning with and from each other. We all have so much to learn.

So, a rising star, am I? My shiny nails, my Monday morning positivity callouts, the pictures of my classroom; everywhere you look, you can see the twinkle. To find light in darkness, warmth in the cold, friendship in a lonely world, takes strength. Where does this strength, this determination, this drive come from? My faith, it is there in my heart, it speaks to me. The star that shines my way, it is the light of and in our life and I share it with you.

Yes, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and the wee donkey, can we just move this along, together.

7.1 The Start

My relationship with Belinda has been through social media. I was intrigued and interested in how this woman who had recently come onto my radar. I had heard her speak at a couple of online events and noted her growing Twitter presence. Although an earlier attempt at a cold calling approach had not been successful, Belinda responded positively to my request to take part in the research. We exchanged a couple of emails, I set out the context of my research and told her part of my story. Belinda shared little about herself in the email exchange, other than an eagerness to talk, to be part of the research project. We met in our virtual TEAMS space on 16th April. The discussion was easy, Belinda likes to talk. I enjoyed hearing her story of Twitter. I felt a real connection despite this being our first (virtual) face to face meeting.

Belinda told her story that grew out of frustration or anger after 10 years on Twitter with numerous experiences of asking a question but getting no replies. With no real strategy or plan, Belinda set about trying to get voices heard. There was a growing discontent, how do you get noticed or rather heard in this space. Despite following some big names and some large groups, she was not getting any replies to her tweets, 'this tapped into feelings of inadequacy' (discussion 16.4.05). A new year's resolution, January 2020, a project, to find her

Twitter space was born. Starting with a # to promote all those voices not heard, Belinda began to tweet her weekly call out to the many on Twitter who has mostly hidden, or marginalized or silenced, through both unconscious and conscious actions.

Twitter is not by design an inclusive space. Twitter feeds on building up communities of followers and to get that community took a set of actions. Belinda has been asked what her strategy behind this success has been; and although she claimed there was not a strategy, she has had immense traction and impact. Her Twitter profile has grown to 26K followers, her blogs, webinars, and radio interviews alongside; with the intent of getting all voices heard. Her recent award of Rising Star supports that others too believe that she has been successful in her project.

Through our discussion, Belinda reflected on her growing realization or appreciation of how for some, their voices are not heard, anywhere. This is their normalized lived experience. Belinda's personal commitment to equality, inclusion and diversity was explored; this who she is in life.

Belinda shared her own professional career journey, one that has included an extended and successful period in leadership in the primary

education school sector, which had consumed her every living moment. Illness (a hidden but totally debilitating condition) and needing to retain her work life balance as a mother, wife, and daughter, she stepped away from school leadership and all the influence/power/presence that they endowed. Belinda eventually returned to the classroom on a maternity cover and has gone on to a permanent classroom teaching role, where she is at her happiest. However, it is evident that this was not sufficient. Her work on social media, might demonstrate this need, capacity, or mission for something more. Belinda might not be a leader in the narrow sense, but her leadership is demonstrated in what she has achieved in a relatively short period on Twitter.

We discussed leadership and the metaphor of a ladder; Belinda's preference was a climbing wall. She is taking her own route, maybe not to the top, but the metaphor of a climbing wall embraces challenges and finding the route that works for you.

There isn't one path, and it doesn't have to be straight up

Belinda in discussion 16th April 2021

Twitter is a place for good, to share, to support, to answer questions, to promote, to reassure. Asked about the bad and or the ugly, Belinda referenced

an occasion when she fell short of her own high standards or her authentic self. A tweet, which she deleted within 30 minutes, was met with a torrent of replies from the friends of the person to whom the message had been directed. Belinda reflected on her actions, her follow-up to what she described as a ghastly situation. She acknowledged her own culpability, or indeed unkindness (my words), and her learning from this. She did reach out and sought to repair the damage and apologized. But the incident has left its mark.

Her work on Twitter is not to provoke, to challenge individuals, she respects different viewpoints, but she is aware that it can be an unforgiving place, not dissimilar to the real world. But that does not mean it cannot be changed or at least her Twitter space be a place for kindness. Although I have not been in Belinda's classroom, I got a real sense of that room of 30 young children where everyone had a voice.

I asked Belinda how she would categorise here tweets, and she identified the following six areas or themes, which were the focus of my initial analysis: 1) promoting others' work 2) Supporting others 3) Equality and Diversity 4) Kindness and Wellbeing 5) Education questions and 6) Books and Reading.

7.2 During

Following the 1:1 discussion, I set about exploring Belinda's Tweets. I downloaded the most recent 3,200 tweets. For Belinda, this was 22nd April to 25th June 2021, covering a period of 10 weeks. The following word cloud was generated by the software covering this period of her Twitter activity.

Figure 5: Word Cloud Based on Tweets

In addition to the themes identified by Belinda; 1) promoting others' work 2) Supporting others 3) Equality and Diversity 4) Kindness and Wellbeing 5) Education questions and 6) Books and Reading, I identified themes of 7) Mental Health, 8) Tuesday #, 9) Covid Pandemic 10) Belinda ….

What became very clear on immersing myself in Belinda's Tweets, is how her #Tuesday space does exactly what it says on the tin. Looking at Belinda's

engagement with Twitter, from Monday evening with the first post to the end of day on Tuesday, Belinda replies individually to each person. Her replies support, promote, answer, assure and reassure; but she also calls on others to share their expertise. Despite the size of the Twitter followers, it rather feels like Belinda knows her followers as individuals (hardly possible) but there is a real sense of using her large following to support everyone, some of the big education voices and many of the small voices too.
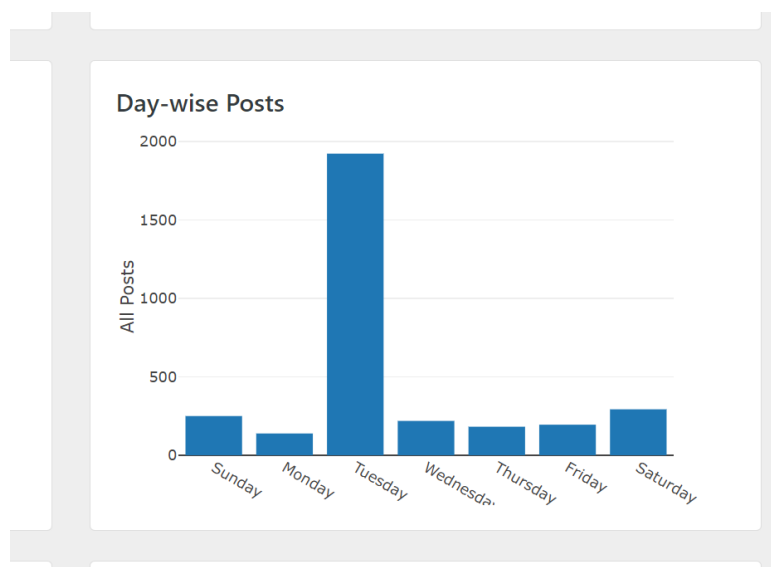
Figure 6: Tweeting Activity

As I wrote the final narrative portrait for my research, I knew now to expect the feelings of apprehension as I put to the paper my emergent picture.

One strand of the portrait was particularly difficult to write. Whilst faith or religious belief had not been something that I had explicitly discussed with Belinda, this is what spoke to me as I began that period of emersion in the tweets. Belinda's professional life had been spent in a faith school setting and I began to create a narrative of the importance of faith in her life work. The light metaphor, strong in religious faith, had started to speak to me. Once again, I wondered if this was straying into a too personal space, would the fledging relationship that I had with Belinda withstand if I got this wrong. I wrestled with these thoughts but nonetheless stayed true to what I felt. I loved the quote 'Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and the wee donkey, can we just move this along' taken from a very popular television drama, Line of Duty. Its religious links are obvious but underneath, it speaks to and of Belinda's work: her wee donkey are the tiny voices that are not heard, and she has moved it along, her mission to create a space that gets those small voices heard. This success is recognized by big voices 'You have come so far with this project,' one male twitter commented.

I sent the portrait, with the now familiar bated breath, and waited. The almost immediate reply: this made me cry. Happy or sad tears, I asked myself?

7.3 After

The discussion began with Belinda affirming that she liked the portrait. There was a but, and this was a difficult but. The next hour and seventeen minutes were not a comfortable space for me. Belinda became very emotional. I was very conscious at the time that I needed to be present, and I drew upon all my listening skills. Perhaps because of the new relationship I have with Belinda, I was very cautious. I am again very minded that the relationship is more important than the research (Kara, 2020, p. 55).

7.3.1 Authentic Self

Belinda moved into concerns about me using a specific hashtag at beginning of the portrait. I have subsequently taken this out. She explained that this was not her hashtag and she explored how the owner of the # had worked hard to establish this. Belinda used the word bizarre to describe the concern she was talking about.

She did not want to be seen as taking someone else's #. Belinda, then continued to explain how she had decided to legally patent her own hashtag; so, her voice was not taken by others. She had been advised to do this by her sister

who works in this field. We talked about the legal need to protect our work, our voice because of a lack of trust in others to respect what is ours?

As Belinda talked, I got a sense or feeling of her being troubled. I noted and wrote about her eagerness to talk in section 7.1 above. This was different. The discussion about the specific hashtag moved into a discussion about an incident that had happened shortly after our first conversation on 16th April. This incident had, as became evident, been very upsetting. Belinda became visibly emotional as she talked or unpicked this incident. She later referenced how the discussion had been important to for her to unpick, and I thought of knitting and unpicking. As she talked, she used words such as wounded and scarred.

It made Belinda very wary of me. She questioned whether I was judging her. She questioned whether she could she trust me. I was challenged, felt uncomfortable, by her using these words to describe our relationship. But I did not interrupt. I would come back to explore this later. I let her talk. Coming back to this discussion at the end of our session, Belinda thanked me for giving her this space. It reminded me again of Bruner's words, storytelling being an unmasking process.

Belinda explained that she had very recently been in a conflicted space with someone she regarded as a Twitter friend. They had questioned her values. She was very upset by the incident. She referred to herself as naïve, too honest, too trusting in people. Now she was wary. Now she felt she had to protect herself and be careful of what she said. This included how she talked to me. Going back to the portrait, it came at a time when who she tried to be had been challenged.

The portrait made her cry, she explained, because I had captured what she aspired to be; I had seen this in her tweets. But her true authentic self had been questioned by someone she believed she had a relationship with and who she thought knew her. This incident had made her think about whether Twitter was a space she wanted to be present; I had thought about leaving Twitter Belinda reflected.

My relationship with Belinda was new. This made for uncomfortable listening, but minded of the relational dimension of the research, it was important that I gave time and space for this to be explored. This was complex. I let Belinda talk and use the space for her own sense making. I listened. I was careful in how I moved the conversation forward, out of this dark place.

I asked her about her latest project, an edited book. This was intentional and deliberate. The book is one example of how I saw Belinda using her voice to give others a voice.

7.3.2 Being inclusive of all voices

The commitment to listen, support and promote all voices was core to Belinda's Twitter learning network. But it was core to who she is in her life. Belinda quoted back the line in the narrative portrait that had made her cry, or put another way, brought her joy.

'My classroom, my school, my world, is a space where all will be made to feel included, but more, everyone will have their space to talk. I will listen.'

She was joyful that this is who I had seen and what I had chosen to convey in the narrative portrait. This felt important at this moment in time when Belinda's sense of self had been attacked.

We talked about how this position of wanting to include all voices was not without challenges. More recently she had been approached by someone who is known for expressing controversial viewpoints. They sought to be interviewed for one of Belinda's podcasts. Belinda talked about the dilemma she faced; should she gives this person a space to talk? Ultimately, Belinda felt that the

podcast interview should be heard, she did not see her role to suppress voice. Equally, in a book that she is editing, Belinda had invited others to submit pieces. She now has sixty-three submissions. I asked if all would be included? Again, Belinda acknowledges that including everybody's submission this was not without challenge. We talked about the curation role that Belinda now has, this presents a challenge. Belinda is working this one out. Where is her voice?

I did not hear Belinda's voice in her tweets. I did not hear her views. I heard her support for giving others a voice. Again, the conversation returned to the unforgiving nature of Twitter, or indeed the world. Belinda said that since the 16th April she had been more cautious about her Twitter activity. She did not enter debates to "become clickbait."

There was a rawness in Belinda's account of the recent incidents of being silenced, and not being given a voice. These were the words Belinda used, without prompting from me. Again, Belinda said that she had not been allowed to speak, to defend herself. The accusations that were made behind the public space of Twitter, left their scars. Belinda talked about another incident of being included on a new fake Twitter account, with a group of others who were known provocateurs. Belinda found this to be really upsetting. She did not deserve to be on this list and found it a bewildering experience. It was a painful experience.

I was not aware of either of these Twitter experiences when we began the discussion. But this was the Twitter world that Belinda was experiencing.

Belinda was struggling to make sense of this world, a place where she faced accusations and associations which she felt were so far from who she was; she was asking herself why? Is it simply because she is a woman who has a powerful voice? And I reflect, 'To some people, a woman with power and a voice is always a monster' (Haynes, P. 105, 2020).

7.3.3 Leadership

One of the areas of the narrative portrait that I had struggled with was around the exploration of faith. This felt important to me, so important I chose to include it in the narrative portrait. Seeking to weave together some of the threads in the conversation, I asked Belinda about the inclusion of a reference to her faith. I told her I found difficult, conscious of my new relationship with her.

Belinda, returned to the themes of honesty, trust and authenticity. She spoke of her strong Christian faith but her lack of trust in organized religion. She did not wear her faith as a badge. I was struck in the moment of the kind of

leadership Belinda seemed to be referencing, servant leadership (Dierendonck, 2011). I put this to Belinda, and it immediately resonated with her. She was able to recount her own previous leadership life and her current situation to the core principles of servant leadership and Christianity.

This took us back to the place of kindness and selflessness. Belinda's experiences on Twitter (recently) and in life more generally, have surfaced the difficulty in others accepting that there is no personal gain. She told me of a question asked of her, how had she made financial gain from her work. Belinda explained that when she had told the questioner that that there was no financial gain, she met disbelief. She again returned to the theme of service, of duty, of doing the right thing because it is the right thing.

This took us back to our discussion of servant leadership and an exploration of the dominant cultural norms of self-promotion, self-gain, selfishness as opposed to selflessness. It also took us to a space where we reflected on whether there was trust, that we truly did not do things for self-promotion or self-gain. Is our cultural template such that we are always looking for benefits for our self?

7.4 Reflections

During a relatively short period, Belinda's Twitter experience went toxic. At that moment in time of our second discussion in July, she was experiencing huge doubts about continuing to use the space for her work. She is still on Twitter. But I am left questioning whether her sparkle, the brightness of her light is now a little dimmed. Has she been silenced, or at least, told to watch her tone?

Twitter has not given us freedoms. Twitter has not given us a better shot at being heard. Twitter demands of its users, the rules of engagement, behaviours that are mirrored in our non- virtual worlds.

PART THREE

8. On Behalf of the Sisterhood

Woman unthinks the unifying, regulating history that homogenizes and channels forces, herding contradictions into a single battlefield. In woman, personal history blends together with the history of all women…. As a militant, she is an integral part of all liberations… She foresees that her liberation will do more than modify power relations or toss the ball over to the other camp; she will bring about a mutation in human relations, in thought, in all praxis.

Cixious, 1976, p. 882

8.1 Knitting it all together

I can make a difference by disrupting discourses that seek to deny alternatives. Issues of injustice demand that I speak up and speak out. You will not silence me.

Susan, Narrative Portrait

In the concluding section of my thesis, I am seeking to make sense, to understand where I have been, and where I am now. The narrative portraits created through this study have been part of the story telling and unmasking process (Bruner, 2003). Through being part of the story telling process I have come to better understand my own story. I will conclude the last section of the Thesis with my own narrative portrait. This study has enabled me to know who I am.

Through a creative research methodology, my narrative inquiry used Twitter to examine how leadership voices were heard. The study has explored women's place to speak. The study has explored, or exposed, the masculine construct of the leadership world.

Education Twitter can be a space for friendship, support, reassurance, and critique. It can build movements and galvanise change. It can challenge power.

It can be a place to be heard. But it can also replicate norms of control, silencing marginalized voices. My study has highlighted how my research partners needed a degree of courage and resilience to speak up, to speak out, to get their voice heard on Twitter.

Lorde argued that 'it can be different if we choose to challenge. It is within this mythical norm that the trappings of power reside' (Lorde, 2020, p. 175). Susan explicitly chooses to challenge. She seeks to make a difference. As a woman leader in education, she challenges the 'mythical norm,' the leadership world, and where 'trappings of power reside,' and women's voices are silenced.

The leadership world is a masculine construct. This is a 'mythical' norm. This is a social construct. It is a powerful norm that continues to pervade our lives. The women are challenging by using their voice, speaking out in world where it is still normalised that women do not speak.

The women in this study challenge. Choosing to challenge is a choice that my research partners were making. Some were more conscious of that choice they were making. Some became more conscious of that choice as the study progressed.

> Twitter is my space for challenge, support, hope and change. I will be heard. Enough. It is my strong space.

I have reached a destination. I am at the end of the study, but not the end of the struggle. This is my time for sense making. And again, I am reminded, or remind myself, that silence does not protect me (Lorde, 2020) and by not talking about the problem does not make the problem go away (Ahmed, 2017).

In this final act of sense making, I am returning to my knitting metaphor that I introduced at the beginning of this study. I am untangling some of the wool, the different threads which combine to create the colour mix and pattern of the phenomenon that I have focused on for this study, silencing of women's voices. This is a complex pattern to follow. Knitting it all together is challenging. But knitting is what women do (Harrison and Ogden, 2020) and through knitting I can make something new. I can construct my new understandings.

The stories I have explored, co-constructed and share as part of this study are new and hitherto untold narratives. These stories and the narrative portraits have been created and curated through immersing myself in the tweets of my research partners. The narrative portraits are used in this act of knitting it all together.

This is about giving a voice to women. I am turning on the volume. I am turning up the volume. The women in this study are telling their Twitter stories for the first time. Maybe we are even telling these stories for the first time to ourselves.

The relational dimension of this work cannot be overstated. Despite the constraints of the Covid pandemic rules, I look at the space created where we could talk with honesty. The conversations about how we used twitter became conversations about living, and coping, and thriving, and finding our voice. These conversations included illness, mental health and wellbeing, death, our children, struggling and failing, happiness and friendship. As leaders in education, we can choose to recognise that all of this is part of the reality for the people will lead. As leaders in education, we can choose to be honest, and bring greater authenticity to the leadership field. Finding our voice in twitter is also about finding our voice in our three-dimensional world. The virtual world, the social media world, is not a space to hide, but in that ultimate act of 'radical candor' (Scott, 2019), speak a new truth.

The areas I have chosen to focus on below I have selected as part of the sense making process. It is a sense making of leadership, of voice, of gendered identity, of being accepted, of the enduring cultural templates which normalise

behaviours, of daring to be different to the performance norm, and finally, can we be something different?

I will use a tweet, or hashtag to introduce each of these themes. Sometime this is a real tweet. Sometimes it is the tweet (labelled imaginary tweet) I would like to have posted. This is the tweet I would have posted had I been braver.

8.2 Where is the kindness?

Today's #KindnessRipple is for all my sisters, to call you out for your amazing work, courage, and support. It's not boasting. It may not be 'the way we do it' but it should, could, can. Let us be that change. I am telling you and the world #YouAreAmazing

Imaginary Tweet

The stories I heard were painful. Each of my research partners had a painful story to share. And again, I am reminded, that equality work is hard and emotional work (Ahmed, 2017). It wears us out. Being silenced or being silent can be about fear, contempt, judgement, challenge, or annihilation (Lorde, 2020). It is complex and difficult work.

I challenge with kindness, warmth but with conviction. I will not let this struggle beat me or grind me down, struggle is a form of growth.

Jo, Narrative Portrait

Or is it about #KnowingOurPlace (Sieghart, 2021). As my focus sharpened, I saw more, how the normalisation of marginalisation of women's voices is not new. In our virtual world of twitter, it might take on a different turn, but it nonetheless wears us out. Ethel Carnie Holdsworth, the first woman working

class author to have a novel published, said to her daughter, she had stopped writing because she was 'worn out' (Guardian, 2021). Her working-class women's voice was not accepted.

How many of us still stop, and do not tweet, because we are 'worn-out' or in fear, because visibility makes us vulnerable (Lorde, 2020). Susan was worn out by the twitter pile-on. I really felt her hurt. This felt incredulous, how could others be so unkind and so aggressive in their unkindness. Susan was an expert, yet she was being silenced.

Kindness was how Belinda saw herself as a leader. But Twitter was not a kind place for her. Belinda was hurt and she lost her trust. She lost her trust in me. Twitter hurt her, or rather others used the virtual space to hurt her. They questioned who she was, they scared her. Twitter can be a very cruel place. Twitter's 'trolls' who 'ruthlessly exploit and show up weakness' (Seymour, 2019, p. 107) were all part of my women's lived experience on twitter. But is trolling on twitter simply an extension of behaviour that legitimises making jokes at someone else's expense? What is the joke here; that Susan, a woman, can challenge, can post a viewpoint, can argue her case? That a woman believes that she should be able to speak out?

All the women partners in my study talked and reflected on the dimension of twitter of experiencing this dark side. We could all name individuals, mostly men on twitter, who we sought to avoid. We talked about the power of twitter to be unkind. Liz explicitly talked about how she had established a set of protocols to 'protect' women from being sucked into these dangerous spaces. Susan was angry. Belinda was frightened. Jo used her faith to give her strength to disarm those that threatened. Kerry does not speak out. Or is it about #KnowingOurPlace (Sieghart, 2021).

8.3 On being silenced

How silly of me to think you would listen, let me speak. I dared to challenge and now face the wrath of the Twitter folk who see their power and privilege extending to shutting me down. I am today's pile-on victim. But, as you say, I brought it on myself. #KnowingYourPlace

Imaginary Tweet

Through this study I have come to understand gendered silencing. Making sense of the phenomenon of silencing has been a liberating experience. I am freed from the 'belief' that I was the 'problem.' I have come to understand that it is so embedded in our cultural template that had I stopped noticing it. The cultural template is that women do not speak. The feelings I have of not being worthy, or the sense of its about me not having anything of value to say, or simply 'rabbiting' on, are features of a cultural template that silences women, questions women's authority, habitually undermines women's self-esteem. But It is not about me or my imposter syndrome, but a cultural template that continues to pervade every facet of our society. It is a cultural template that marginalises women's voices by questioning our authority to speak. Speaking is the business of men. Implicit that cultural template is women seeing themselves as the problem.

I saw this played out in a series of tweets. Susan's twitter in the early morning of Friday 17th October 2020, resulted in negative responses; or rather a pile-on, triggered by the tweet below. In Susan's original tweet she invited others to show humility on a topic that she has personal extensive experience. This was met with some very personal attacks. One below caught my attention as it seemed to be a trigger for a series of #KnowingYourPlace replies to Susan's thread? The author of the tweet (male) could not claim any authority on the topic. He felt able to comment Susan's behaviour. He felt able to challenge her behaviour.

> Whilst I largely agree with you, I can't but help notice that you often sneer at the differing opinions of others. It's not nice from any side.

> Tweet: 17/10/22

By the end of Friday evening, Susan withdrew from the conversation. She withdrew from twitter. On Saturday 18th she was silent. Or she was silenced.

In examining the Authority Gap, Mary Ann Sieghart (2021) has highlighted how women are silenced. Some of her very closest (male) colleagues initially did not recognise this issue. When she began her investigation into women's authority, some 'men' believed that gender equality was a problem that had

been solved (Sieghart, 2021). The response to her investigation is part of the problem. We do not see the problem. It is normalised. Or it is too 'mansplained' away (Sieghart, 2021, p. 17).

A solution to the problem (if indeed it does exist) is that women need to be more vocal, to be more assertive, to 'lean-in' (Sandberg, 2103), firmly puts the onus on women to be the agents of change.

I am a strong woman who chooses to use her voice to build up and support other women'

Liz, Narrative Portrait

Liz tells how she has curated her twitter space. Her twitter feed does not reveal that same level of challenge experienced by Susan. But to achieve that end, where her voice is not challenged, has been a deliberate act. Liz will not engage. She pulls away from the challenge, not an act of conceding, but an act of defiance, of strength, by refusing to engage she holds her position.

The need to curate our space, to create a safe space, or to work harder to occupy a space that others (men, white cis gendered males) occupy without fear, is something that each of the women in my study talked about and talked about the pain of not achieving that goal. For Belinda, this was very painful, the

toxic virtual environment, where who she was, the self was attacked, was an ongoing battle for her at the time of our discussions in August. She asked, 'am I naïve'? Jessica Taylor (2021) asked ''why women are blamed for everything', indeed why do we blame ourselves? Why do I see myself as the problem?

8.4 On Whose Authority, or the Authority Gap

I disagree with the claims you make. I write my tweet. Then I press delete. I will not challenge. Your male voice carries authority. Who am I to question you?

Imaginary Tweet

Women who occupy leadership roles and positions of seniority are exposed to a myriad of challenges. It is claimed that they must work harder to achieve and occupy their positions. They must navigate personal, cultural, and structural norms which undermine them. Normalising their (lack of) 'authority' to be in these positions is an ongoing battle. The manners in which the 'authority' is undermined, or what Sieghart (2021) has termed the 'authority gap' is shared in my storytelling. My storytelling takes me back to the Foucauldian (1980) Docile Bodies paradigm, and specifically the shift from overt structural oppression to 'more insidious forms of control' (Deveaux, 1994, p. 225). Whilst women are now able to become professors in education university faculties, or Head of the World Bank, or President of the USA, the constant undermining of their 'authority' is a manifestation of control and oppression.

Each of the women who shared their twitter stories with me brought to the education world vast expertise. They brought a justifiable claim to being an

authority in the field of education leadership. Jo was making sense of her new identity, transitioning into a new academic context. She saw her leadership work supporting others. She did not question that she had a place to do this work, although questioned the use of the word leadership. Belinda had significant leadership expertise validated by an Ofsted 'outstanding.' Both were conscious that they might be considered nobodies. In fact, that being a nobody, or a tiny voice, had made Belinda angry and was the catalyst for her Twitter work. Why should she be silenced?

In the discussion with both Jo and Belinda, they were challenging traditional constructs of leadership. Belinda had 'stepped away' from her leadership role because of illness. But she was nonetheless an influencer, and this was leadership.

> Determined to be a positive disruptive influence, to show that we can have a different world, I embarked on a mission to make the Twitter space inclusive, where tiny voices on Twitter can be heard
>
> Belinda, Narrative Portrait

Jo, through the story making and storytelling journey, began to reflect more on who she was now, her new identity and what this might mean for her as a leader. Sometime after our discussions, she tweeted.

> I often think of our conversations about our twitter presence & identity. I am certainly more outspoken these days . I wonder if our chats emboldened me on some level. 🤔

> Tweet 06/11/21

Pondering on this tweet, the use of the word 'outspoken' is interesting. When we use our voices, are we speaking out or being 'outspoken.' The use of the later implies an unnatural act. Is it being outspoken or speaking out? It is being aggressive or assertive? Is it about being pushy or ambitious? The language used to describe gendered behaviours reveals and reinforces the stereotypes of what women should be or how they should be heard. When women speak out, they need to follow a set of rules about how we perform. That set of rules includes how we speak. Butler, in her description of a performative act, acknowledges the 'highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being' (Butler, 2007, p. 25). Everyone, 'including the actors themselves, come to believe and to perform in

the mode of belief' (Butler, 2007, p. 520). Susan is different. She is intentionally provocative. She does not #CladItWithWarmth (Sieghart, 2021). This # was shared by Mary Ann Sieghart in a twitter exchange. Sieghart argued that if women speak in a certain way, a 'feminised way,' they will be accepted. Those women who refuse or do not comply face challenges. Susan is not complying with the 'mythical norm' (Lorde, 2020), or the normalised expectations of being a women in a leadership role. She does not #CladItWithWarmth.

It is impossible to dispute Susan's leadership position in the traditional construct of academic hierarchy. Or rather, I find it difficult to understand how others could question her expertise in such a disrespectful way. She is, however, very accustomed to being challenged in such a manner. The nature of the challenge is personal. The nature of the challenge is unpleasant. Susan reflected on how male professors faced less challenge on Twitter. Or, put another way, why it was felt to be okay to belittle her authority to speak on topics which she has demonstrable expertise and thus authority. Her male peers did not experience this.

Such a practice of challenging women, Sieghart (2021) would argue, is routinely normalised. Women, in positions of authority, report having to go the extra mile to prove themselves. Dame Sara Thornton, UK Independent Anti-

Slavery Commissioner and formally Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police, talked about having to be extra diligent and extra prepared, 'pedalling really hard to get my voice heard, to speak and to influence' (Sieghart, 2021, p. 130). Questioning Susan's authority to speak is constant. It wears her out.

8.5 The Patriarchy, Sexism or is it Misogyny?

> Misogyny is primarily a property of social systems or environments as a
> whole, in which women will tend to face hostility of various kinds
> because they are women in a man's world (i.e., a patriarchy)
>
> Manne, 2018, p. 33

This study has enabled me to see and understand behaviours. Through talking about experiences, through the narratives of the women in my study, I have come to see gendered silencing in action. Women are not meant to speak. Acts of silencing of women is patriarchal normalised behaviour. Through our stories we could all recount tales of this on our twitter fields. The hostility can be subtle. What gives another, a male colleague, partner, friend, or Twitter follower, the 'authority' to challenge, undermine, silence me? That act of silencing is an act of aggression. The act of silencing is the privileging of power to suppress the rights of another group.

The hostility can be explicitly violent. Women reporting that through Twitter they have been openly threatened cannot be simply explained by patriarchal normalisation. Tweets which invite the recipient to 'kill themselves' or 'gang rape' are rarely prosecuted (Seymour, 2019). Mary Beard took it upon

herself to confront the person making heinous threats (Guardian, 2013). The absence of the rule of law to sanction such behaviour can perhaps be understood in the context of understanding how misogyny is ignored, tolerated, or overlooked.

Through this study I have come to see more clearly how leadership is a man's world. Through this study I have come to see how women speaking out is framed as an unnatural act in a man's world. Does Susan experience more vitriol on Twitter because she is a woman speaking out in a world where she has no authority. Whilst an expert in her field, she is challenged. Do males who occupy a similar position of expertise face the same degree of challenge? Susan does not follow the rules. She is a disruptive influence. Whilst she is not the only female professor of education with a significant Twitter follower, her approach, to be intentionally provocative, is notably different. She does not hold back, she does not #CladItWithWarmth.

> all it takes to garner these kinds of moral reactions, seemingly, is being a woman who is perceived as take up male-dominated space without pandering to patriarchal interests and vanities
>
> Manne, 2018, p. 289

Whilst Liz and Belinda face less vitriol, they have deliberately curated their twitter accounts to manage the space. They have found ways to avoid (mostly) the wrath of twitter. They have found ways (mostly) to protect themselves. They have thus learnt how to #CladItWithWarmth. Their voices are perhaps muffled? In discussing this with Liz she argued that she was in control and not being controlled. She is persistent and consistent. She refused to be drawn in. But she did not dilute her message. Her voice was not muffled. She learnt how to navigate the virtual space to be heard. She is safe.

In an egalitarian environment, finding a way to navigate the virtual space would not be necessary. If all voices were equal, then women (and other marginalised groups) would not have to resort to strategies to ensure that we are heard. Calling it out requires women to step outside of 'their designated of being moral listeners' (Manne, 2018, p. 290), or heteronormative norms, women know your role. By raising a problem, we risk becoming the problem (Ahmed, 2017). By raising a problem, we risk our own wellbeing. By raising a problem, we risk becoming victims of misogyny.

8.6 A new construct of leadership

> When you told me to be quiet in the meeting because I had said too much, I said nothing. I was angry. I did not call this out. Unconsciously I accepted your authority to silence me. Unconsciously, I legitimatised your power to silence. #LearntBehaviour #LearntGenderedBehaviour.
>
> Imaginary Tweet

Most recently, a female leader shared that a male colleague dismissed her 'authority' (for which she has a directed leadership responsibility). He explicitly told her he did not take instruction from her but the Head of the Section. Her response was to be silent on this point. In sharing with me, she went further, 'I have had much worse things said to me by men.' How do we challenge this behaviour? Or why do we allow this behaviour? Or why do some men behave in this way?

The enduring implicit association test that identifies leadership with a male, with white, middle class, middle aged, cis gender, is challenged by this thesis. This is an outcome of this thesis. This is how I now see my world. This is who I am.

But that act of challenge is difficult work (Ahmed, 2017, Fitzgerald, 2014, Sieghart, 2021). Challenging those that hold power, challenging powerful men, is difficult work. We are challenging male bastions of privilege. We are challenging thousands of years of patriarchal ideology. We are saying your success is not simply down to merit, but it is because you are male.

Any talk of challenging meritocracy is uncomfortable for those of us who have been successful. My success is partly due to the privilege of my whiteness. Acceptance and acknowledgement of sources of advantage and disadvantage, equality, and inequality, necessarily require redistribution of power.

Women hold a minority of leadership roles in education despite being an overwhelming majority of the workforce. Those who hold education leadership roles speak of occasions their authority is questioned. Women who hold education leadership roles question their own authority. The act of questioning our right to be leaders, our right to have a voice, is deeply embedded in our world, in our leadership world. But we can be the source of change. Each of the women's stories told in this study demonstrate how we can be a source of change. This will not be easy work. But we are not the problem.

8.7 I am a researcher storyteller

The Narrative Self Portrait

This is my self-portrait. This is who I think I am. This is who I think I have become through this study. This portrait is about the many dimensions of myself. I am perhaps looking through Johari's window. What do I see? What do other's see? What is a performance, not the real and the authentic me? What has been unmasked?

Who am I? Who am I on Twitter?

My Twitter networks have been empowering. It has been a space where I have learnt. It is a place where I have made new connections. It is a place which has opened new opportunities for me in my professional life. But I have chosen my spaces with care. I am very aware of the dangers lurking not too far beneath the surface.

I see some education tweeters say things which I strongly disagree with, but I do not speak out. I see some education tweeters behave in what I regard as unnecessarily provocative or argumentative behaviour, but I do not speak out. There are some big voices, loud voices expressing views that I do not support. But I do not speak out.

I have tentatively embraced the Twitter world. I have tentatively used the space to share my thoughts, my ideas, my opinions. But I am not bold. I am not brave. When I do raise my head, I am hesitant. This is not always my happy place. Or, rather, I am careful. I take care to protect myself.

Who am I? Who am I; a women leader in education?

Is my Twitter world so different from my leadership world? I am an expert woman leader in education. I am highly successful. But I am tentative. But I do speak out. I do have strong opinions. But I have learnt how to speak, or how to say it. I have learnt how to perform as a woman in a leadership world. I have learnt how to #CladItWithWarmth.

I began my Doctoral thesis asking who am I? I was searching for my voice. The voice I was looking for was that of a woman leader in education. My literature search led me to see how women's voices are silenced. This was normalised in my leadership life. In the writing of the literature review I was reminded of this phenomenon. This phenomenon had been hidden to me. It had become a normalised part of my leadership life.

This is a normalised part of women's lives. Through listening to the stories told by other women, I have come to understand how they challenge gendered

silencing. I have come to understand how women navigate a world where to speak out is an unnatural act. I have come to understand my own story 'better.' I have come to understand the struggles I face with speaking out. I have come to understand that 'I am not the problem.' This has made me stronger. This has made me braver.

Who am I? Who am I; the researcher storyteller?

As part of my doctorate journey, I have found another voice, my voice as a researcher storyteller. Story telling has been silenced within our research methodology world. Implicitly I knew that stories were powerful and important. In this thesis I have taken a risk in telling stories. I have taken a risk being a women leader in education. I have taken a risk to speak out. But this is who I am. This is who I have become.

8.8 Conclusion

This project began tentatively. It began with an intention to explore women in education leadership, a world that I have lived and navigated throughout my professional life. It was professional and it was personal. It has become, at times, intensely personal. Life's journey over the course of a Doctorate study has had many twists, and turns, destinations, or stopping off points. And we continue. Writing has become for me a way of knowing, rejoicefully or painfully (Bruner, 2003, Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005, Clandinin, 2016). At times, the writing has been my life coach.

The writing, the thesis, was not the end point after the research, but embedded in the research process. The listening, the talking, the walking, all contributed to this piece of storytelling. The writing, has been, and is, part of the inquiry (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005), and my awakening.

What I have learnt by this research is that education leadership for women is not a place of equity and equality, in fact it's not a great place for women! For too long I felt that difficulties I faced, despite the success,

were my problem. I was the problem. I needed address my imposter syndrome, deal with my self-deprecating talk, and just get on with it.

This narrative inquiry has shone a light on any claim to the education leadership world for women being any different to the world outside of education. This is a world where women have to constantly fight to be heard, to have their voice recognised, where the silencing is a deeply embedded social construct of gendered roles and identities played out in different arenas of public, professional and personal life. In short we are not meant to be there, and not meant to be heard. And the education leadership world simply mirrors the wider world. The inquiry has contributed to my understanding of the myriad of factors which contribute to women's lived reality in education leadership, my lived experience. The enduring cultural template of being a woman, and a woman in leadership in education, is complex, messy, contradictory, and irrational. But it is real. We have to navigate this complexity. It is tiring. Not surprising we are exhausted. Not surprising, it's not a particularly attractive space. Not surprising, this contributes to women not choosing to enter into this space. No surprise, there are fewer women who choose this world.

Reflecting now, and laying claim to the contribution this narrative inquiry makes to feminist research in leadership in education, I am taken back to the places of despair on discovering the deep rootedness of the issues. Angry and sad that we, women, still have to navigate a world where our presence, our voices are subject to a myriad of silencing conventions. Being more aware of this, is not always a good place to sit. Being more aware of this, and because of the place I do sit, however, enables me to shine a light on this phenomenon. Being in a significant leadership role, now as a Chief Executive Officer for a Multi Academy Trust, gives me an opportunity to be a disruptor. Silence does not protect me. I now know and understand what is going on here. Through this study, a phenomenon that had been hidden to me, normalised in my leadership life, is now more deeply understood. Ignorance was not bliss, but knowing is not always a comfortable place to be. Merrill and West (2005) posed a challenge to the narrative researcher, the neglect of the researcher reflexity in the inquiry process. This, neglect, has been addressed throughout my inquiry. I know myself better. Through this study I have shared that unmasking (Bruner, 2003), knowing self, with the reader. I am a researcher storyteller.

When we begin a doctorate study, we might perceive that we are selecting from a menu of research methodology and method. Through this study I made increasing sense of the choices I had on how to research the field of women's leadership, or rather how narrative inquiry was the obvious choice. Congruence between methodology and ontology is a labyrinth that I struggled to make sense of, struggled to find order in the complexity of binaries which are not binaries at all. I have not foregone claims of validity and reliability and generalisability. I invite you, the reader, to reflect, to ask, does this speak to me? I recognise that each life lived is an individual life lived. The inquiry hears that life and how that life has been lived. The inquiry methodology invites you to identify verisimilitude (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, pp. 7-8)

Disrupting dominate leadership research paradigms, which in themselves are a consequence of the distribution of power, became increasingly visible and necessary as the inquiry progressed. What began as a 'creative' research methodology choice (risky), felt by the end of this inquiry, a necessity. This inquiry disrupts leadership research which has privileged universal theories that deny individual voice (Mackillop, 2018).

Reflecting on our research praxis as we embark on a doctoral study researching the phenomenon of women's leadership in education, this inquiry is part of a paradigm shift of how we study leadership. Listening to Professor Jackie Ford in a key note at a Leadership Research Conference at Lancaster University 2018, she sounded a rallying call to her peers, to challenge the paradigms for researching leadership. Beginning this inquiry I did not appreciate that my inquiry was part of her rallying call. What I did know was that narrative inquiry was part of a broader challenge to social science research, where the I, the self, the story, the voice; had become marginalised or lost or silenced (Merrill and West, 2005). Congruence between my focus and the narrative inquiry methodology is strong and powerful and an essential and important feature of this study. Narrative inquiry was a given. I did not feel it was a choice. To give a voice to understand, to those who are silenced and marginalised, the narrative inquiry methodology has liberated. Knowing who we are is not a fixed, but an emerging and constant self-discovery. This was a truism for me, and my four research partners. It has not been comfortable. It has revealed parts of selves that were hidden or we chose

not to see or hear. The narrative portrait became a powerful vehicle to support self-discovery or rediscovery.

In the act of drawing out the contribution to the praxis of researching women leadership in education, all researchers need to be braver and challenge the domains that dominate the field. Going back to that Leadership Conference in Lancaster in 2018, our unpublished paper on using art to support our analysis of learning typologies was met with, well only two people turned up to our presentation!

From this thesis I am now emboldened and determined to expose the bias of the leadership research paradigms which perpetuate grand narratives, further contributing to silencing voices.

References

Acker, S. (2012) Gendered games in academic leadership, *International Studies in Sociology of Education*. 20(2). Pp. 129-152

Adams St. Pierre, E. (2010) 'Poststructural feminism in education: An overview', *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 13(5), pp. 477-515*

Ahmed, S. (2017) *Living Life as a Feminist*. North Carolina: Duke University Press.

Ahmed, W. (2019)

https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2019/06/18/using-twitter-as-a-data-source-an-overview-of-social-media-research-tools-2019/

Althuser, L. (1971)

https://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=ft3n39n8x3&chunk.id=d0e3259&toc.depth=100&brand=ucpress (Accessed 20/4/2018)

Alvesson, M. and Spicer, A. (2012) Critical leadership studies: The case for critical performativity. *Human Relations*. Volume 65(3). Pp. 367–390.

Antoniou, P. and Mohan, L. (2018) 'Evaluating the measuring of the principal instructional management rating scale in the Chinese educational system: Implications for measuring school leadership'. *Educational Management and Leadership*. 46 (4). Pp. 624-641.

Arini, S. C., Conner, L., McPherson, K. and Wilson, C. (2011) Learning to be leaders in Higher Education: What Helps or Hinders Women's Advancement as Leaders in Universities. *Educational Management, Administration and Leadership*. 39(1). Pp. 44-62.

Austen, J. (2003) *Persuasion.* London: Penguin Classics.

Ball, S. (2012) Performativity, Commodification and Commitment: An I-Spy Guide to the Neoliberal University. *British Journal of Educational Studies.* Vol. 60, No. 1 .Pp. 17–28*.*

Bateson, M. (1989) *Composing a Life*, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.

Beard, M. (2017) *Women and Power: A Manifesto*. London: Profile Books.

Beauvoir, S. D. (2010). *The second sex*. New York: Vintage Books.

Bernardi, R. (2016) How Do Online Communities of Patients Aggregate on Twitter? An Affordance Perspective. *Thirty Seventh International Conference on Information Systems, Dublin*.

https://pure.royalholloway.ac.uk/portal/files/27256754/ICIS_Paper_revisions_v2.0.pdf (Accessed 14/4/20)

Berry, K. and Patti, C. J. (2015) Lost in Narration: Applying Autoethnography, *Journal of Applied Communication Research*. Vol 43:2. Pp. 263-268.

Biesta, G. (2008) Towards a new logic of emancipation: Foucault and Ranciere, *Philosophy of Education*, 2008. Pp. 169-177.

https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/bitstream/1893/2714/1/Toward%20a%20New%20Logic%20of%20Emancipation%20Foucault%20and%20Ranciere.pdf (Accessed 20/9/2019)

Blackie, S. (2016) *If Women Rose Rooted: The Journey to Authenticity and Belonging*. Stirlingshire: September Publishing.

Blackmore, J. (1999) *Women: Feminism, Leadership and Educational Change*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Blackmore, J. (2010) The other within: Race/gender disruption to the professional learning of white educational leaders, *International Journal of Leadership*. 3 (1). Pp. 1-16.

Blackmore, J. and Sachs, J. (2009) *Performing and Reforming Leaders*. USA: State University of New York Press.

Bochner, A. P. and Ellis, C. (2016) *Evocative Autoethnography.* New York: Routledge.

Bridges, D. (1999) Educational Research: pursuit of truth or flight into fancy. *British Educational Research Journal.* Vol 25, No 5. Pp. 597-615.

Bruner, J. (2003) *Making Stories Law, Literature, Life.* United States of America: Harvard University Press.

Burke, R. J. (2005) Women's Advancement in Management: What is known and future areas to address, in Burke, R. J. and Mattis, M. C. (eds) *Supporting Women's Career Advancement: Challenges and Opportunities*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Press.

Burnford, J. (2022) *Don't Fix Women: The practical path to gender equality at work.* London: Practical Inspiration Publishing.

Butler, J. (2007) *Gender Trouble*. London: Routledge.

Butler-Kisber, L. (2018) *Qualitative Inquiry*. New York: Routledge

Bush, T. (2020) Knowledge production in educational leadership and management: Broadening the base. *Educational Management and Leadership*. Vol 48 (2). Pp. 207-208.

Bussolini, J. (2010) What is a dispostif? *Foucault Studies*. No. 10. Pp. 85-107.

http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/iccm/files/iccm/Bussolini%20-%202010%20-%20What%20is%20a%20dispositive.pdf (Accessed 12/4/20)

Charmaz, K (2000) Grounded Theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods in N. K. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (Ed) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.

Cixious, H., (1976) *The Laugh of the Medusa*. Cohen, K. and Cohen, P. (Ed) Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Clandinin, D. J. (2016) *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*. London: Routledge.

Clandinin, D. J. and Connelly, F. M. (2000) *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story Telling in Qualitative Research*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Clandinin, D. J. and Murphy, S. (2009) Relational ontological commitments in narrative research. *Educational Researcher*, 38 (8). Pp. 598-602.

Clarke, K. (2016) https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jul/05/ken-clarke-caught-camera-ridiculing-tory-leadership-candidates-theresa-may-michael-gove (Accessed 15/04/20)

Clinton, H. (2020) *Hillary Clinton Talks 2020 & Looks Back On 2016 Election | The View.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X60R4IhUito (Accessed 02/06/22)

Clough, P. (2010) *Narratives and Fictions in Educational Research.* Berkshire: Open University Press.

Coleman, M. (2011) *Women at the Top*, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Collinson, D. and Hearn, J. (1996) *Managers as Men: Critical Perspectives on Men, Masculinities and Management*. London: Sage.

Collinson, D. (2014) Dichotomies, dialectics and dilemmas: New directions for critical leadership studies? *Leadership*. Vol. 10(1). Pp. 36–55.

Connell, R. (2006) Glass Ceilings or Gendered Institutions? Mapping Gender Regimes of Public Sector Worksites. *Public Administration Review.* Vol. 66 No. 6 pp. 837-849

Cooper, Y. (2019) *She Speaks: The Power of Women's Voices*. Atlanta.

Costello, L., McDermott, M. and Wallace, R. (2017) Netnography: Range of Practices, Misperceptions, and Missed Opportunities. *International Journal of Qualitative Research*. Vol 16. Pp 1-12.

Craig, C., J., and Orland-Barak J. (2015) *Inside the Role of the Dean* Clift, R, T, Loughran, J, Mill G, E and Craig, C, J (Ed). Oxen: Routledge.

Crenshaw, K. (2018) *What is Intersectionality?*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViDtnfQ9FHc (Accessed 17/06/22)

Crotty, M. (2015) *The Foundations of Social Research.* London: Sage.

Day, D. V., Fleenor, J. W., Atwater, L. E., Sturm, R. E. and McKee, R. (2014) Advances in leader and leadership development: A review of 25 years of research and theory. *The Leadership Quarterly 25.* Pp.63-85.

Deauveux, M. (1994) Feminism and Empowerment: A Critical Reading of Faucault, *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2. Pp. 223-247.

Deem, R. (1998) New Managerialism and higher education: The management of performances and cultures in universities in the United Kingdom. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*. Volume 8:1. Pp. 47-70.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (Ed) (2017) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (Editors) (2008) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials.* London: Sage Publications.

Department for Education (2022) *School leadership in England 2010 to 2020: characteristics and trends*

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1071794/School_leadership_in_England_2010_to_2020_characteristics_and_trends_-_report.pdf (Accessed 9/4/23)

Dewey, J. (1916/2002) *Democracy and Education*. New York: The Free Press.

Dierendonck, D. (2011) Servant Leadership: A Review and Synthesis. Journal of Management. Vol. 37 No. 4. Pp. 1228-1261.

Drucker, P. (2011) *The Practice of Management.* New York: Routledge.

Eliot, G. (1995) *Felix Holt*. London: Penguin Books.

Ellis, C. and Bochner, A. (2008) Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexity: Researcher as subject in Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (Editors) (2008) 3rd *Edition Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials.* London: Sage.

Featherstone, K. and Porritt, V. (2021) *Being 10% Braver.* London: Sage.

Fitzgerald, T. (2014) *Women Leaders in Higher Education*. London: Routledge.

Friedan, B. (1963) *Feminine Mystique.* San Francisco: Orion Books.

Fonow, M. M., and Cook, J. A., (2005) Feminist Methodology: New Applications in Academy and Public Policy. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society.* Vol 30, No. 4. Pp. 2211-2236.

Ford, J. (2005) Examining leadership through critical feminist readings. *Journal of Health Organisation and Management*: 19.3. Pp. 236-250.

Ford J, Harding N and Learmonth M (2008) Leadership as Identity: Constructions and Deconstructions. London: Palgrave.

Ford, J. and Harding, N. (2018) Followers in leadership theory: Fiction, fantasy and illusion. *Leadership* Vol. 14 (1). Pp. 3–24.

Foroughi, H., Gabriel, Y., Fotaki, M. (2019) Leadership in a post-truth era: a narrative disorder. *Leadership*. Vol 15 (2). Pp. 135-151.

Foucault, M. (1972) *Archaeology of Knowledge*. New York: Vintage Books.

Foucault, M. (1978a) *The history of sexuality, Vol 1, An Introduction.* (Translated Robert Hurley) Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (1978b) What is Critique Lecture

http://antropos-lab.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Foucault-Critique.pdf (Accessed 31/12/17)

Foucault, M. (1979) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of Prison.* New York: Vintage Books.

Foucault, M. (1980) *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*. New York: Pantheon Books

Foucault, M. (1984) What is enlightenment? In P. Rainbow (Ed), *The Foucault Reader*. New York: Pantheon Books

Friedan, B. (1963) *Feminine Mystique.* Orion Books.

Freire, P. (2017) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, United Kingdom: Penguin.

Fuller, K. (2013) *Gender, Identity and Educational Leadership*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Fuller, K. and Hardford, J. (2016) *Gender and Leadership in Education: Women Achieving Against the Odds*. Bern: Peter Lang Publishers.

Fuller, K. Moorosi, P. Shah, S. and Showunmi, V. (2020) Coming Full Circle: The Gender and Leadership Research Interest Group. *Management in Education*. Vol 34, Nos 3.

Grace, G. (1995) *School Leadership: Beyond Education Management.* London: Routledge.

Given, L. (2017) It's a New Year…So Let's Stop the Paradigm Wars. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods.* Volume 16. Pp591-595.

Griffiths, V. (2012) Women Leaders in higher education: Organisational cultures and personal resilience. *Multidisciplinary Journal of Gender Studies*. 1(1). Pp. 70-94.

Guba, E. G. and Lincoln, Y. (1989) *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Guardian (2013) https://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/jul/29/mary-beard-silences-twitter-troll (Accessed 17/4/20)

Guardian (2017)

https://www.theguardian.com/politics/video/2020/may/05/hancock-tells-labour-mp-to-watch-her-tone-over-covid-19-testing-questions-video (Accessed 17/4/20)

Guardian (2021)

https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/jul/30/ethel-carnie-holdsworth-campaigners-push-to-revive-fame-of-working-class-novelist (Accessed 30/7/2021)

Guta, A., Nixon, S., Gahagan, J., and Fielden, S. (2012) Walking along beside the researcher: How Canadian REBs/IRBs are responding to the needs of community-based participatory research. *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Ethics,* 7 (1). Pp. 17-27

Harrison, K. and Ogden, C. A. (2020) Knit "n" natter': a feminist Methodological asse assessment of using creative 'women's work' in focus groups. *Qualitative Research.* Pp. 1-17.

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1468794120945133 (Accessed 7/11/21)

Haynes, N. (2020) *Pandora's Jar*. London: Picador.

Hood, A. (2008) *The Knitting Circle.* New York: HarperCollins.

Holck, L., Muhr, S.L. and Villesèche, F. (2015) Identity, diversity and diversity management On theoretical connections, assumptions and implications for practice. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal. Vol. 35 No. 1, 2016. Pp. 48-64.

hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to Transgress*. Oxon: Routledge.

How, A (2003) *Critical Theory*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Johnson, R. B. and Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004) Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time has come. *Educational Researcher*. Vol 33, No7. Pp. 14-26.

Joseph, J. (1992) *Selected Poems*. Bloodaxe Books Ltd.

Kara, H. (2021) *Creative Research Methods: A Practical Guide*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Kerfoot, D. and Knights, D. (1996) in Collinson, D. and Hearn, J (ed) *Men as Managers, Managers as Men: Critical Perspectives on Men, Masculinities and Managements*. London: Sage.

Klikauer, T. (2015) What is managerialism? *Critical Sociology*. 41(7-8). Pp. 1103-111.

Kline, N. (2020) The Promise That Changes Everything. United Kingdom: Penguin.

Kozinets, R. V. (2010) Netnography: The Marketer's Secret Weapon.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57c5f156ff7c504bc28f9f66/t/57c900a5c534a5c7c8982a93/1472790696417/NetBase+Netnography+Paper_March+2010+%281%29.pdf (Accessed 31/05/22)

Kuipers, B. Higgs, M., Kickert, W. (2014) The Management of Change in Public Organisations: A Literature Review. *Public Administration*. Vol. 92(1). Pp. 1–20.

Lather, P. (1991) Deconstructing/Deconstructive Inquiry: The Politics of Knowing and Being Known. *Educational Theory*. Vol. 14, No2. Pp. 153-170.

Lorde, A. (2020) *The Selected Works of Audre Lorde*. New York: Norton.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. and Hoffman Davis, J. (1997) *The Art and Science of Portraiture.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Leavy, P. and Harris, A. (2019) *Contemporary Feminist Research from Theory to Practice*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Lochhead, L. (1985) https://www.johnbyrneaward.org.uk/entries/why-should-a-mans-voice-be-taken-more-seriously-than-a-womans/ (Accessed 15/1/2020)

Lorde, A. (2020) *The Selected Works of Audre Lorde*. New York: Norton.

MacKinnon, K. H. (2018) *Thank goodness you are a man!": Troubling Gender and Principal Leadership in Elementary Schools*. Thesis Doctor of Education. https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/89714/3/MacKinnon_Kenneth_H_201806_EdD_thesis.pdf (Accessed 13/08/23)

McCracken, J. (2020) Ethics as Obligation: Reconciling Diverging Research Practices With Marginalized Communities. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. Volume 19: Pp. 1-11.

McNiff, J. (2017) *Action Research: All You Need to Know*. London: Sage.

Manne, K. (2018) *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny.* Great Britain: Penguin Books.

Martin, B. (1982) Feminism, Criticism, and Foucault. *New German Critique, No 27, Women Writers and Critic.* pp. 3-30. New York: Duke University Press.

MacKillop, E. (2018) Leadership in organisational change: A post-structuralist research agenda. *Organization*. Vol 25 (2). Pp. 205-222.

Martinez M. M., Molina-Lopez M. M. and Mateos de Cabo, R. (2021) Explaining the gender gap in school principalship: A tale of two sides. *Education Administration and Leadership.* Volume 49 (6). Pp. 863-882.

Mertens, D. M. (2007) Transformative Paradigm. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. Volume 1 (3). Pp. 212-225.

Mezirow, J. (2000) Learning as Transformations. *Contemporary Theories of Learning: Learning Theorists in their own words.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mills, S. (2003) *Michel Foucault*. London: Routledge.

Ngai, E. W. T., Tao, S. T., Moon, K. (2015) Social media research: Theories, constructs and conceptual frameworks. *International Journal of Information Management*. Volume 35. Pp. 33-44.

Newby, P. (2010) Research Methods for Education. England: Pearson Education Ltd.

Obama, M. (2020) https://www.cnbc.com/2020/02/12/michelle-obama-on-famous-catchphrase-when-they-go-low-we-go-high.html

OECD (2016) *Education at a Glance 2016.*

https://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/education-at-a-glance-2016-indicators.htm (Accessed 24/03/21)

Pricewaterhousecoopers (2008) *Closing the gender gap: Challenges, opportunities and the future*.

https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/women-at-pwc/assets/closing_the_gender_gap_full_film_transcript.pdf
(Accessed 2/06/22)

Oakley, A (1999) Paradigm wars: Some thoughts on a personal and public trajectory. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. Vol 2:3. Pp. 247-254.

Okri, B. (1997) *Ways of being free*. London: Phoenix House.

Pace Vetter, L. (2010) in Karen O'Connor (Ed*) Gender and Women's Leadership: A Reference Handbook.* Los Angeles: Sage.

Pentney, B. (2008) *Feminism, Activism, and Knitting: Are the Fibre Arts a Viable Mode for Feminist Political Action?*

https://journals.lib.sfu.ca/index.php/thirdspace/article/view/pentney/3236

(Accessed 1/06/22)

Parton, D. (2008) *9-5: The Musical*. Lyrics and Music by D. Parton

Popkewitz, T. S. (1997) A changing terrain of knowledge and power: A social epistemology of educational research. *Educational Researcher*. 26 (9), pp. 18-29

Porritt, V. and Featherstone, K. (2019) *10% Braver: Inspiring Women to Lead Education.* London: Sage.

Pring, R. (2015) *Philosophy of Education Research.* London: Continuum.

Pullen, A. and Vachhani, S. (2021) Feminist Ethics and Women Leaders: From Difference to Intercorporeality. *Journal of Business Ethics.* 173(2): pp. 233-243.

Richardson, L. (1990) *Writing Strategies Reaching Diverse Audiences.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Richardson, L., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2005). Writing: A Method of Inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 959–978). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Rowbotham, S. (1985) *Hidden from History*. London: Pluto Press.

Rowbotham, S. (2015) *Woman's Consciousness, Man's World.* London & New York: Verso.

Rudman, L. A. (1998). Self-promotion as a risk factor for women: The costs and benefits of counterstereotypical impression management. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74*(3). Pp. 629–645.

Sandberg, S. (2013) *Lean In: women, work, and the will to lead.* New York: Pan Macmillan

Schein, V. E. (2001) A Global Look at Psychological Barriers to Women's Progress in Management, in *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol. 67, pp. 675-688.

Schein, V. E. (2007) Women in Management: Reflections and Projections, in Women in Management Review, Vol. 22, No. 1, pp. 6-18.

Scott, K. (2019) *Radical Candor.* London: Pan Macmillan.

Sieghart, M. A. (2021) *The Authority Gap.* London: Penguin Publishing House.

Seymour, R. (2019) *The Twittering Machine*. London: The Indigo Press.

Shakespeare, W. (2005) Wells, S. and Taylor, G. (Ed) *The Complete Works.* Oxfored: Clarendon Press.

Smith, D. (2004) Women's Perspectives as a Radical Critique of Sociology, in Harding, S. (Ed) *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader*. New York and London: Routledge.

Smith, J. (2016) Motherhood and Women Teachers' Career Decisions: A Constant Battle, in Fuller, K. and Hardford, J. (Ed) *Gender and Leadership in Education: Women Achieving Against the Odds*. Bern: Peter Lang Publishers.

Smith, K. (2015) 'The Art of Diplomacy: Looking back at the position of Head of Teacher Education' in Clift, R T, Loughran, J, Mills, G E and Craig, C J (Ed) *Inside the Role of Dean: International Perspective on leading in Higher Education*. Oxon: Routledge.

Williams, T. (2023) *Rise of female leaders 'opens up a sense of what's achievable'*

https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/rise-female-leaders-opens-sense-whats-achievable (Accessed 17/5/23)

Thompson, N. (2018) *Promoting Equality: Working with Diversity and Difference.* London: PALGRAVE.

Uhl-Bien, M., Marion, R. and McKelvey, B. (2007) *Complexity Leadership Theory: Shifting leadership from the industrial age to the knowledge era.* Leadership Institute Faculty Publications: University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Uhl-Bien, M. and Marion, R. (2011). *Complexity leadership theory*. A. Bryman, D. Collinson, K. Grint, B. Jackson, & Uhl-Bien, M. (Eds*.) The Sage Handbook of Leadership*. London: Sage.

UNICEF Office of Research (2022) *Increasing Women's Representation in School Leadership: a promising path towards improving learning.*

https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/Increasing-Womens-Representation-in-School-Leadership-a-promising-path-towards-improving-learning.pdf (Accessed 17/5/23)

Veiga-Neto, A. and Lopes, M. C. (2017) Education and Pedagogy: A Foucauldian Perspective. *Education Philosophy and Theory*. 49:7. Pp. 734-741.

Westwood, S. (2002) *Power and the social*. London and New York: Routledge.

Williams, T. (2023) *Rise of female leaders 'opens up a sense of what's achievable'*

https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/rise-female-leaders-opens-sense-whats-achievable (Accessed 17/5/23)

Wilson, S. (2001) What is an indigenous research methodology. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*; 2001, 25:2

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Shawn-Wilson-3/publication/234754037_What_Is_an_Indigenous_Research_Methodology/links/0a85e5320f48b8d0a3000000/What-Is-an-Indigenous-Research-Methodology.pdf

(Accessed 17/04/20)

Whitehead, J. (2018)

http://insight.cumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/3893/1/Whitehead_LivingTheoryResearch.pdf (Accessed 29/3/22)

Whitmore, E. (2014) in Leavy, P. and Harris. A. (2019) *Contemporary Feminist Research from Theory to Practice*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Wilson, S. (2001) What is Indigenous Research? *Canadian Journal of Native Education*. Vol 25, No 3 Pp. 175-179

Woolf, V. (1920) A Society.

http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/radio4/transcripts/20130913-ob-woolf-a-society.pdf (Accessed 19/4/22)

Woolf, V. (1945) *A Room of One's Own*. London: Penguin.

Young, M. (1990) *Throwing like a Girl and Other Essays*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.