Coping with Precariousness in the Cultural and Creative Industries: A Study of Independent Musicians

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

A number of recent studies have responded to neoliberal understandings of entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation in the cultural and creative industries, and beyond. This study contributes to this body of work by developing an approach, which examines anxiety, narcissism, recognition and self-esteem from a sociological perspective, considering them through the lens of social class and gender. By drawing on the concept of ontological security and on the capability approach of Sen and Nussbaum, this study considers how experiences of precariousness and insecurity under conditions of neoliberalism threatens the well-being and self-realisation of aspiring musicians. Each chapter explores a different aspect of the difficulties faced by musicians: housing and working conditions; interpersonal relationships; and the distribution of recognition in the music industries. Methodologically, the study is drawn from interviews and participant observation of independent musicians aged 25-37 and based in Paris, Brooklyn, San Francisco, Portland and Stockholm. The study finds that, rather than being transformed into subjects who willingly embrace neoliberal incentives, individuals develop a complex set of coping strategies and defence mechanisms, which do not ultimately serve their well-being. It suggests that a psycho-social account may enrich understandings of working lives in the cultural and creative industries and beyond.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

This study aims to contribute to debates within cultural studies, sociology and the political economy of communication about working lives in the cultural and creative industries.[1] Theoretically, this thesis develops a sociological conception of terms classically found in psychoanalysis and moral philosophy, such as anxiety, narcissism, double bind, recognition and self-esteem. More specifically, by drawing on an extensive body of literature on the cultural and media industries, this study looks at musicians aged 25-37 and based in Paris, Brooklyn, San Francisco, Portland, and Stockholm. The study finds that neoliberalism – by increasing precariousness[2] – affects cultural workers' experience of life. Alongside precarious working and living conditions, it exacerbates anxiety and narcissistic behaviours, threatening self-esteem and recognition. Rather than being transformed into subjects who willingly embrace neoliberal incentives but nevertheless feel compelled to take responsibility for themselves, participants develop (albeit differently depending on their gender and social class background) a complex set of coping strategies and defence mechanisms, which ultimately prevents them from flourishing. Moreover, the study also finds that contrary to the romantic image of the bohemian artist leading an experimental life, participants find refuge (and fantasy) in traditional lifestyles.

In the past decades, many public policies have developed a glamourised description of work, e.g. in the UK creative industries discourses (Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005; Banks and O'Connor, 2009; Banks and Hesmondhalgh, 2009). Expanding to other countries, these kind of neoliberal policies advocated the development of the

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[1] For the purpose of this thesis, the plural form will be used to refer to the cultural and creative industries and the music industries. Indeed, as for the cultural industries (Huet et al., 1978), the music industries encompass a wide range of sectors, e.g, the recording industry, live music as industry, artist management and music publishing. Moreover, the use of the term music industry is misleading as it seems to assume that the industry is homogenous whereas there are large and small companies with different goals and interests (Hesmondhalgh and Negus, 2002; Williamson and Cloonan, 2007).

[2] Precariousness in the context of this thesis encompasses all aspects of life, such as work, housing and relationships with others.

creative industries and the creative economy, considering cultural work as a model that could expand to other sectors of the economy, participating in a process of 'economisation of culture' and 'culturisation of the economy' (Bouquillion and Le Corf, 2010; O'Connor, 2015). For some authors, these discourses provide a justification for new forms of labour exploitation outside the cultural and creative industries by praising the artistic mode of production - project-based, highly skilled, innovative, flexible and prone to self-exploitation – as an ideal form of work (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999; Ross, 2000, p.2; Lash and Urry, 2000; Menger, 2003)

As recent critiques have pointed out, these neoliberal discourses on creative work and entrepreneurialism promote a new politics of work which advocate flexibility and the development of so-called human capital (Galloway and Dunlop, 2007; Oakley, 2009b; Banks and O'Connor, 2009; Banks and Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Cunningham, 2002). In recent years, these discourses have spread beyond the creative industries (and economy) towards, for instance, the platform and collaborative economy. These industries have common features – scattered work, blurred frontiers between work and fun and professional and non-professional (Hall and Krueger, 2015; Codagnone et al., 2016, p.5; Fuchs, 2017). However, while workers see a chance for self-exploration, potential flourishing and autonomous work, neoliberal public policies seek to create a turn to 'entrepreneurship', where individuals are reliant, flexible and able to take care of themselves (Ouellette, 1995; Taylor, 2015).

Nevertheless, a rich body of literature on cultural labour has critiqued discourses praising cultural labour as an ideal type by outlining how work in the cultural industries is insecure, often temporary and short-term, precarious and not so autonomous. In a spirit of self-exploitation in the name of self-exploration and to keep up with a competitive labour market, work is often subject to intensive and anti-social working patterns in informal contexts where working and personal identities become blurred (Ursell, 2000a; McRobbie, 2002; Banks, 2007; Gill, 2010; Stahl, 2012).

Although in recent years, the features of working life in this sector have been well-documented (Oakley, 2009a; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011; Banks, 2017), little research seems to have looked at the psychosocial impact on the working lives of individuals. Exceptions within the field of cultural studies and feminists' studies are discussed below (e.g. McRobbie, 2007; Taylor and Littleton, 2008; Taylor, 2011; Taylor and Littleton, 2012; Allen et al., 2013; Allen, 2016, Scharff, 2016). However, the lack of

interest in the psychosocial is, however, not unique to the study of cultural labour (Wilkinson, 2001, p.16; Chancer and Andrews, 2014).

Taking into account existing scholarship, the problem this thesis explores is: what is the psychosocial impact of precariousness and other problematic features of work in the cultural industries? I seek to explore participants' response to structural pressures by asking the following research questions:

- What is the psychosocial impact of precariousness on participants working in the independent music industries?
- What are the coping strategies used to bear the struggle between an organised self-realisation (with fantasies about the good life) and the uncertainty of daily life under neoliberalism?
- Are there different ways of coping depending on gender and social class background?

The key finding of this thesis is that precariousness deeply affects people by making their future highly uncertain and their present a constant emergency. The health hazards resulting from precariousness in the cultural industries are related to the process of self-construction where self-exploration and self-exploitation often meet (Hesmondhalgh, 2010; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011). Although often invisible, inner wounds should not be underestimated: hidden injuries resulting from cultural work include many different kinds of mental and emotional disorders such as unbearable anxiety, exhaustion and burn-out, which ultimately lead to physical troubles and even sometimes early death (Musgrave, 2017). Consequently, I will argue that people develop coping strategies and defence mechanisms that allow them to adjust to self-imposed conditions of increasing pressures to follow a manufactured self-realisation under precariousness. These can be seen as 'shields' (Potamianou, 1997) or 'skills for adjusting to newly proliferating pressures' (Berlant, 2011, p.8). For Berlant, these strategies are 'impasses' or delays enabling them 'to develop gestures of composure, of mannerly transaction, of being-with in the world as well as of rejection, refusal, detachment, psychosis, and all kinds of radical negation' (Berlant, 2011, p.199). Methodologically, this study considered the working lives of musicians in the independent music sector as a case study for working lives under neoliberalism. Data was collected from participant observation and semi-structured qualitative interviews

with 32 participants (22 men and 10 women) aged 25 to 37. Following the snowball sampling method, the data collection did not seek to claim for representativeness but mirrored unequal gender, racial and ethnic representations in the CCIs. Ultimately, this mode of data collection limited the assessment of social variables such as race and ethnicity – only two participants were non-white, which reflects general patterns of underrepresentation of non-white people in the cultural and creative industries (Yoshihara, 2007; UK Music, 2017; Banks, 2017, p.152). The fieldwork was conducted in the United States (Brooklyn, San Francisco, Oakland and Portland), Sweden (Stockholm) and France (Paris), between October 2015 and April 2016.

As a musician myself, the research is also informed by first-hand experience of the field of independent music: participant observation, informal or un-structured interviews and ethnographies, led between 2008 and 2014 among musicians in the United States, Sweden, France and Iceland in concert venues, recording studios and accommodations.[3]

Theoretically, this study draws on a wide body of literature: cultural studies, sociology, psychology, political economy of the media and moral economy in order to grasp the diverse forces at stake when looking at the psychosocial impact of precariousness under neoliberalism. Indeed, as Sayer (1999, pp.3–4) argues, the use of a transdisciplinary approach can be particularly fruitful when accounting for the role played by culture on individuals' sense of being.

Moreover, this thesis aims to tackle the sociological fear of psychologisation, a fear which places limits on sociological explanation (Sayer, 1999, p.5). Inspired by the field of the psychosocial, this study answers this fear by developing a sociological examination of concepts generally used in psychological theories, such as anxiety, narcissism, self-esteem and moral philosophy, such as recognition. As developed in section 1.6, the use of a sociological lens to look at psychological subjects of inquiry can complement the understanding of the relationships between mental health and structural pressures (see also Bourdieu, 1999).

However, a dialogue between different fields, such as psychoanalysis and sociology, risks being made at the expense of the rigour and epistemology of each field (Bourdieu, 1999, pp.512-513). This is generally observed in pop-sociology and literature on self-development which too often manipulate concepts emptied of their

[3] See Chapter 3 on method for more information.

substance. Section 1.6 introduces the field of the psychosocial that informed this thesis. Moreover, section 3.6 explains in detail how these comments have informed the shaping of the methods used during the different phases of work. When possible, the analysis started by returning to original definitions of the terms, for example anxiety in Chapter 4, to broaden the understanding to other fields.

1.1 Neoliberalism

There has been a wide range of scholarship on neoliberalism, often focused on framing the contours of the concept and its multiple political origins over the 20th century (Mirowski and Plehwe, 2009; Peck, 2010; Burgin, 2015). One of the origins of the term 'neoliberalism' is attributed to the *Colloque Walter Lippmann* held in Paris in 1938, at which liberal theorists – including Hayek – stood against the idea of a *laissez-faire* economic liberalism. Conversely, neoliberal ideas advocate for state intervention and 'the priority of the price mechanism, free enterprise, the system of competition, and a strong and impartial state' (Mirowski and Plehwe, 2009, pp.13–14). But for decades, and more specifically after the Second World War, when Keynesian public policy was more in fashion (at least in liberal democracies), the term and the economic philosophy of neoliberalism of the *Mont Pelerin Society* economists such as Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman remained relatively marginal. Its reappearance in the 1970s is associated with Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan's policies and Augusto Pinochet's economic reforms – inspired by the 'Chicago Boys', Friedman's former students – following the military coup in Chile in 1973. This understanding of neoliberalism refers to the Chicago School of economics, rejecting Keynesian Economics and welfare state policy.

Although multiple in the forms it takes, neoliberalism equates with sets of ideas and ideologies accompanied by discourses associated with a radically free market where competition is exacerbated and the market deregulated (Gilbert, 2013, p.8). It effects are multiple and include a wide range of monetary and social policies deregulating labour markets, contracting democratic institutions (Gilbert, 2013, p.12), in favour of businesses, and 'indifferent toward poverty, social deracination, cultural decimation, long-term resource depletion, and environmental destruction' (Brown, 2003, pp.37–38).

The understanding of neoliberalism depends on the socio-economic and geographical context in which it emerges. As Ong (2006) remarked, although neoliberalism is a doctrine with a coherent ideology, it is also malleable, capable of

adaptation depending on cultural, geographical, economic and social specificities to implement its core values.

Neoliberalism distances itself from 'classical liberalism' by advocating that state institutions play a crucial role in shaping individuals (Gilbert, 2013, pp.8–9). According to its critics, under neoliberalism, social institutions tend to compel people and things to change according to its doctrine, which differs from the *laissez-faire* in classical liberalism. Therefore, neoliberalism should not be understood as the decline of welfare capitalism but by its development through an array of political, social and economic regulations since it expands and extends regulations (Levi-Faur and Jordana, 2005, p.7). For some , such as Rose (1989; 1999), neoliberalism does not necessarily represent a fracture with 'classical liberalism' but rather an intensification of it, hence his use of the term 'advanced liberalism' rather than neoliberalism.

Although authors often use different terms to describe the socio-economic era in which we live – neoliberalism (Foucault, 2008), capitalism in late modernity (Giddens, 1990; Giddens, 1991a), the new spirit of capitalism (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999), new capitalism (Sennett, 1998), advanced liberalism (Rose, 1989; Rose, 1996) – the majority of the works presented above and throughout this thesis aim at analysing and criticising a similar socio-economic era. Moreover, although their political and theoretical positions are different, they tend to share three common points. We can understand these adapting a categorisation developed by Lemke (2012) to analyse neoliberalism. First, this period is treated by such authors a creating manipulative and inaccurate ways of understanding the world (Lemke, 2012, p.80), which need to be replaced by a scientific emancipatory knowledge. Second, the period is conceived as on in which the world saw the 'extension of economics into the domain of politics, the triumph of capitalism over the state, and a globalization that escapes the political regulations of the nation-state' (Lemke, 2012, p.80). Third, neoliberalism is understood as having destructive effects on individuals and on society by promoting a process of 'individualisation endangering collective bonds, and the imperative of flexibility, mobility, and risk-taking that threaten family values and emotional bonds (Lemke, 2012, p.80). It is this latter issue that is the main focus of this thesis. The following section deals with neoliberal's political goal to change the soul of subjects and the section 2.2 presents its effects on subjects through the process of individualisation. The sections named above serve as theoretical basis aiming at understanding neoliberalism and its psycho-social impact on selves.

1.1.1 'To change the soul': the political goal of neoliberalism

Neoliberalism should not be reduced to economic policies that have no political and social implications. Neoliberal rationality, while being grounded in the market, extends its values to all institutions and social actions (Brown, 2003, p.39). Neoliberalism is a programme aimed at shaping, through discourses and power, areas of social life formerly excluded from it, for instance, universities, hospitals, and subjectivity (Harvey, 2007, p.2). Neoliberalism should not be considered a process of dismantling of the state *stricto sensus* but rather, among other aspects, as an intensification of the process of governing the individual – which almost paradoxically consists of freeing subjects from existing ties and transforming individuals into autonomous, entrepreneurial and self-caring agents, creating new forms of subjectivity (Rose, 1989; Brown, 2003; Gilbert, 2013). Under neoliberalism, the subject becomes an ideal object of political transformation (Gilbert, 2013, p.10) and governmental intervention promotes entrepreneurial, competitive and commercial behaviour (Davies, 2015). Such an approach toward the subject is very different from classical liberalism, which assumes that individuals, as naturally driven by such values, will be better off untouched by government intervention (Gilbert, 2013, p.9). But neoliberalism's project to change the self should come as no surprise, since as Margaret Thatcher (1981) once famously said: 'economics are the method: the object is to change the soul'. In other words, neoliberalism is 'a mode of governance encompassing but not limited to the state, and one that produces subjects, forms of citizenship and behaviour, and a new organization of the social' (Brown, 2003, p.37).

Under neoliberalism, individuals are conceived as entrepreneurial actors – rational, calculating beings whose value is determined according to their capacity to take care of themselves. The neoliberal conception of the self is individualistic; self-interest is conceived as the only motivation for action, and competition is exacerbated (for praise of such neoliberal definitions of the self, see Becker, 1992). Positioning 'human and institutional action as rational entrepreneurial action' (Brown, 2003, p.40) aims at imposing economic rationality on every sphere of existence and transforming human beings into *homo economicus*. By introducing rationality and 'self-care' as moral responsibilities, behaviours are driven by the rational calculation of costs and benefits. In return, the self bears the responsibility of her own actions, even when they are

seriously constrained by external pressures such as social inequalities, high unemployment rates and lack of access to welfare benefits.

Such an understanding of the political goals of neoliberalism, going beyond economic factors, addressing how neoliberalism aims at transforming moral subjects into autonomous and entrepreneurial agents, provides the theoretical basis for this thesis. The theoretical framework developed in section 1.1 provides a basis for understanding the influence of an economic system not only on society but ultimately on the psyches of individuals.

1.2 Precariousness, neoliberalism and the lack of political mobilization

1.2.1 What does precariousness mean?

Discussions of neoliberalism often encompass the concept of precariousness. Broadly speaking, being 'precarious' refers to working conditions under post-Fordism characterised by insecurity and flexibility (Brophy and de Peuter, 2007, p.180; Butler, 2004). By extension, Brophy and de Peuter consider that:

> Being precarious means that 'one's relationship to time is marked by uncertainty, from the part-time on-call retail clerk whose non-work time is haunted by the prospect of being called in to do a shift, to the self-employed copywriter perpetually juggling contracts, rarely declining a contract for fear of a future lull in the flow of income (Brophy, de Peuter, 2007, p.182).

'Being precarious' is related to the term 'precarity', an English neologism formulated after the French term '*precarité*', a concept with both theoretical and political connotations (Brophy and de Peuter, 2007; Butler, 2004; Papadopoulos et al., 2008; de Peuter, 2014; Neilson and Rossiter, 2005, p.52). For many authors, precarity draws on precariousness and immaterial labour, two concepts developed by, amongst others, autonomist Marxists – or post-operaists – such as Michael Hardt, Maurizio Lazzarato, Antonio Negri and Paolo Virno (Lazzarato, 1996; Hardt and Negri, 2000; Hardt and Negri, 2004). Immaterial labour is defined as 'the labour that produces the information and cultural content of the commodity' (Lazzarato, 1996, p.133).

The concept of precarity also draws on feminist accounts of exploitation (McRobbie, 2010; Hochschild and Machung, 2012; Hochschild, 2012; Hochschild, 2013). The overall objective of the concept of precarity is to counter celebration of

post-Fordist forms of work, which lack the *relative* security of work in the 'Fordist' era (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011, p.161).

However, the English definition of the term 'precarity' inherits the lack of clear definition from its French origin. As Barbier (2005, p.358) writes, the meaning of the term *precarité* in French sociology and among activists is already too broad to translate directly to other countries with different socio-economic contexts. Moreover, as a synonym for insecurity and exploitation, the term precarity does not seem to bring any specific value as a conceptual tool, though it may encourage activism (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008, p.100).

In line with other works on the subject, the meaning of the term 'precariousness' developed in this thesis is not limited to labour conditions under post-Fordist economies but extends to all aspects of life (Butler, 2004; Armano and Murgia, 2015). Indeed, precariousness describes a much larger uncertain relation to the world than the term precarity, which is often solely tied to work, describing flexible, part-time and uncertain forms of unemployment. The term precariousness has an ontological nature, and beyond work, precariousness invades all aspects of life.

Consequently, this understanding of the term precariousness is close to Bourdieu's understanding of *précarité*, defined as a condition affecting individuals' experience of life, regardless of social background (Bourdieu, 1999). For Bourdieu, '*précarité* is everywhere'[4], it 'haunts the conscious and the unconscious' and it can be an indicator of the transformation of social relations under constant uncertainty (1998). By extending this definition, precariousness echoes existing works looking at the social consequences of precarious forms of employment (Sennett, 1998) and transformation of social relations and processes of individualisation characterised by uncertainty (Giddens, 1990; Giddens, 1991a; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1996; Ehrenberg, 1996; Honneth, 2004). This understanding of precariousness is vitally important in the context of this thesis because as Armano and Murgia (2015, p.3) claim, *precarisation* beyond work has become an essential element of contemporary forms of subjectivisation.

One of the most discussed recent treatments of precarity and precariousness is Guy Standing's *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (2014). In his book, Standing describes the extension and pervasiveness of a class of (generally young) precarious

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[4] '*La précarité est partout*', translation by the author.

workers.[5] Although Standing's analysis is rich, his definition of precariat is hard to delimit. First, he defines the precariat against other groups, such as the traditional working class (Standing, 2014, p.28). Second, although he defines a category of workers, Standing's answer to the question 'who enters the precariat?' is 'everybody, actually' (Standing, 2014, p.59), which seems to contradict his previous definitions. Third, Standing's distinction between 'grinners' – 'those who welcome precariat jobs' – and groaners – 'obliged to take them in absence of alternative' – seems rather dichotomist and insubstantial (Standing, 2014, p.59).

Moreover, Standing's depiction of 'the precariat' has relatively little common ground with the participants of the present study since, according to him, 'precariousness also implies a lack of a secure work-based identity' (p.9) and the precariat lacks 'occupational identity' (Standing, 2014, p.12). Even when not earning their living through music - juggling one temporary job and another-, independent musicians have over the years developed their identity through music making and they believe in self-realisation through activity. Ultimately, the participants described in this study are not individuals with limited access to cultural capital, contrary to Standing's precariat. While there are similar patterns to Standing's precariat workers who 'have to grab what they can', including 'jobs which are not consistent with their qualifications and aspirations' (Standing, 2014, p.74), participants also work on their music which, often result in a 'double shift', i.e. they work to earn money and work to develop their own artistic project in the hope of being able to live on and self-realise from the latter. Consequently, beyond blurry contours of Standing's definition of precariat workers, participants in this study do not appear to belong to this category.

Ultimately, the permanence of precariousness serves a political role: the maintenance of control over people by governments (Gilbert, 2013, p.14). Similarly, by interlinking neoliberalism and individualisation, James (2015) shows that precariousness legitimises self-entrepreneurship and self-reliance, the cornerstones of the neoliberal subject. As she states, under neoliberalism, precarisation is a biopolitical strategy compelling individuals to be self-reliant and self-resilient. Neoliberal discourse

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[5] For an account of precarity and precariousness in relation to transition toward adulthood as developed in youth studies, see sections 2.2 and 5.2.2.

promotes itself as the only solution, henceforth precariousness needs to be endured and attempted to be overcome by individual effort. As Gilbert (2013, p.15) puts it,

> the point of neoliberal ideology is not to convince us that Hayek was right; it is to console us that the sense of insecurity, of perpetual competition and individual isolation produced by neoliberal government is natural, because 'that's what life is really like'.

Or, as Margaret Thatcher (1981) once famously said: 'there is no alternative'.

1.2.2 Precariousness and political mobilisation

Before proceeding, however, it needs to be recognised that precariousness has a complex relationship to political action. Surprisingly, semi-directed interviews and participant observation led for this thesis have shown no sign of collective mobilisation as understood in its classical form – unions or collectives gathered around shared working lives and struggles. Research suggests that the reasons for the absence of collective mobilisation include: (1) an absence of collective identity, workplace culture and overwhelming precariousness preventing individuals from engaging around shared struggles; (2) a pervasiveness of the neoliberal culture putting the burden of responsibility on the worker, sidestepping and hiding social and economic issues (see for instance McRobbie, 2002; Sinigaglia, 2007; Armano and Murgia, 2015; Scharff, 2016). In spite of this, although political mobilisation is weak, subjects are not atomised and rely on social democratic values and the solidarity of their peers.

As Conor et al. (2015, p.13) have noted, the cultural and creative industries increasingly lack collective workers' organisations. Hesmondhalgh and Baker also observed through a sample of creative workers (2011, pp.119–121) that unions and collective mobilization were not a point of focus for the participants of their study, while they may have greatly benefited from union support, probably even more so than workers with a permanent contract. This absence results from and exacerbates precariousness as well as informal forms of employment in a context where professional organisations have generally helped to develop employment standards and occupational identities. Indeed, the existence of a collective identity and politics of the workplace has generally created the conditions for engagement. Similarly, McRobbie argues that the decline of radical democratic politics is induced by the absence of a fixed workplace, exacerbated by the features of cultural work: temporary, flexible and project-based, resulting in the substitution of a politics of the workplace (McRobbie,

2002) with a 'network sociality' (Wittel, 2001) i.e. a form of sociality that is fast, transient, fleeting, ephemeral and created on a project-by-project basis as opposed to community. Although not new, Wittel observes a rise of 'network sociality' very much linked to late capitalism and process of individualisation (2001, p.52). McRobbie's observations are in line with what Boltanski and Chiapello (1999) have noted in other fields: the flexibilization of work from the 1970s onwards has led to an erosion of professional and collective identities, leading to less participation in unions.

Moreover, precariousness can seriously affect the possibility of engagement in political mobilization. Through an analysis of the Intermittent Workers' movement in France between 2003 and 2006, Sinigaglia (2007, p.9) shows how engagement in political mobilisation was prevalent among the *intermittents du spectacle*[6] who were not in 'extreme positions', that is workers who had secured their status and hence were not threatened by extreme precariousness. On the contrary, those who are in more extreme situations tend to withdraw from political mobilization. Precariousness here becomes a vital risk and, similar to unemployment in other fields, individuals are more subject to social withdrawal (Schnapper, 1994; Castel, 1995), resignation and coping strategies. Put differently, when the lack of income and social insecurity becomes too much of a burden, people tend to withdraw themselves from collective action and engagement (Fillieule, 1993). Similarly, Armano and Murgia (2015, pp.15–17) consider that precariousness, by affecting subjectivity, triggers individualism and corrosion of collective identification. For them, although individuals may identify with shared experiences of precariousness, this does not lead to collective mobilization. However, as Bourdieu rightly argues (1998b), we should not blame individuals for lack of political mobilization. Precariousness affects individuals so deeply that rational expectation and hope in the future appears impossible. People lose faith in revolt, including in its collective forms, against the present, even if it is intolerable.

Literature related to neoliberalism, subjectivity and precariousness often explains the lack of political mobilization and political discourses advocating for social change as the result of neoliberal governmentality. As Scharff notes, the drive for socio-political change is turned inwards and as a result social critique is remodelled into self-critique, which triggers self-doubt and anxiety (Scharff, 2016, p.108). Similarly, Kennedy suggested that self-blaming (as one form of self-regulation) was a form of

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[6] see footnote on p.141 for a definition of the 'intemittents du spectacle'.

social critique in a context of absence of professional body and code of ethics (Kennedy, 2010). Narratives inspired by psychological discourses and self-management strategies produce forms of subjectivity that displace social and economic issues toward the subject, who takes upon themselves the burden of exploitation and poor working conditions (Walkerdine and Bansel, 2010, p.500). In this way, the absence of social critique and depoliticization of citizens serves the interest of neoliberalism (McRobbie, 2002). More radically, Brown suggests that these neoliberal practices transform subjects into *homo economicus*: competitive and driven by individual survival, at the expense of politics, threatening democracy to its core (Brown, 2017). Following Brown (2003, p.43), the neoliberal subject favours their own self over others.

Under neoliberalism, precariousness and the displacement of socio-economic issues onto the subject are ways of creating consent among subjects (Gilbert, 2013, p.15). Although they sometimes explicitly reject it, subjects' compliance with neoliberalism is due to the fear of being punished by being denied access to consumer goods, while it seems unlikely that rejection would make any change in daily life (Gilbert, 2013, p.13). Drawing on the Gramscian concept of hegemony, Gilbert considers subjects' compliance with neoliberal incentives and politics to be a 'disaffected consent'. Neoliberal hegemony presents itself as the only social, cultural and political model, rejecting any alternative (Gilbert, 2013, pp.17–18).

This context of uncertainty (lack of political mobilization, highly individualised work, fragile teamwork, unequal wages and power) creates a working culture where complaints are kept quiet for 'fear of being blacklisted' (Sinigaglia, 2007, p.10). It also echoes the invasive culture of positive thinking – an unavoidable aspect of entrepreneurial subjectivity – which induces depoliticization, self-blaming and inwardness (Ehrenreich, 2009, pp.97–122). Ultimately, the unwillingness to criticise labour market decisions of fellow workers may also diminish the constitution of collective demand among workers (Umney, 2015, p.727).

Workers are not, however, atomised (Umney, 2015, pp.726–727). As shown in Chapter 7, they work in networks and they do not completely embrace the neoliberal entrepreneurial ethos. They develop resistance against the latter; the sharing of information through networks of acquaintances can prove to be useful for 'making ends meet'. These arrangements may take various forms: from hosting someone on a couch in difficult times; sub-letting a room in a flat for a short period; sharing information about a flat with cheap rent; giving tips on what to say to representatives

of the unemployment agency; facilitating access to precarious humdrum jobs (such as in cafés or warehouses). However, this is small-scale solidarity within a network of peers, and such advices can be fiercely guarded. Consequently, cultural workers seem to maintain 'egalitarian and (loosely) social democratic principles', at least more so than neoliberal public policy would imply (McRobbie, 2013, p.1004).

1.2.3 Current understanding of the interplay between subjectivity, neoliberalism and precariousness in the cultural and creative industries

Although the interplay between subjectivity, neoliberalism and precariousness in the cultural and creative industries is sketched out in the sections above on political mobilization, neoliberalism and precariousness, I outline below the recent growing interest in such questions through four different approaches to the subject (Kennedy, 2010; Rowlands and Handy, 2012; Morgan et al., 2013; Armano and Murgia, 2015).

In their rather optimistic article, Morgan et al. (2013) suggest that 'subjective employment insecurity may be more contradictory than discourses of 'fragmentation' and 'flexploitation' suggest (p.397). They argue that young people with creative vocational aspirations welcome intermittent forms of employment as their ambition is not to become full-time employees in Fordist model of work (p.411). While recognising that vocational restlessness echoes the discourses of 'new capitalism', they oppose this vocational ethos to 'the repetitive drudgery and alienated labour' of their parents (p.398). However, two main critiques can be made concerning this view. First, Morgan et al. (2013) underestimate the degree to which young people's ability to accept precariousness is associated with certain features of youth, including the associations with certain models of youth with hedonistically 'living for the present'. Young workers participating in their study may have internalized the desirability of flexibility and portfolio careers but Morgan et al. do not question whether this is contextual to their age. It may be that these young workers bear precariousness because of their hopes of a better future (Potamianou, 1997; Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013, see also section 6.6). Second, Morgan et al offer a simplistic contrast between the supposedly alienating Fordist and office jobs available to an older generation and those of the younger generation. By merely recounting their interviewee Roger's experiences, they may be complicit in his denial or simplistic depiction of a world of work that opposes Fordist work – sitting behind a computer, one of the '9 to 5ers' with autonomous work that would 'suit his trademark individuality, style and personal

autonomy', i.e. 'his artistic and rebellious self' (p.406). Indeed, that very contrast informs what Boltanski and Chiapello (1999) call 'the new spirit of capitalism', i.e. how critique of Fordist pattern of work organisation legitimated new forms of management.

Although they recognise the pervasiveness of precariousness for an increasing part of the population, their invocation of *agency* in opposition to existing theoretical conceptualisations, which they consider to be 'too overarching' (Morgan et al, 2013, p.406), is simplistic. The optimism of their participants might be understood via the lens of Berlant (2011), for whom 'cruel optimism' tends to obscure the fact that there is often no other alternative possible.

Moreover, Morgan et al's affirmation of agency and related coping strategies miss how these can be interlinked with neoliberal discourses about resilient and flexible subjects. For example, another of Morgan et al's participants Tanja (Morgan et al, 2013, p.408), identifies her life as a series of serendipitous events, as if she had no grip on her life, similar to Pugh's 'tumbleweed society' (2015). The authors compare her position on life favourably over participants who are 'strategic career building subjects' (Morgan et al, 2013, p.408) treating the latter as archetypes of the neoliberal worker. It is not clear though whether resilience is any less 'neoliberal' than the entrepreneurial ethos embodied in networking and self-promotion.

Rowlands and Handy (2012) provide a much more sober assessment of precariousness and subjectivity, when they consider the relationship between precarious employment conditions, subjective experiences and entrepreneurialism. They explore an under-researched aspect of cultural labour, namely workers' experiences of recurrent unemployment and use the concept of addiction as a theoretical framework to assess the subjective experiences of cultural workers in the film industry. Here addiction is considered to be a way of engaging with the world and they carefully avoid pathologisation. While the working patterns of work they identify first offer internal rewards and a potential path toward self-realisation – a period during which workers neglect the negative aspects of cultural work – they become increasingly addicted over time as workers are isolated from key social relationships outside the CCIs, become precarious, and lose a sense of their identity outside their work (2012, p.665). Without denying the agency of individuals, Rowlands and Handy draw on social models that consider addiction to be affected by 'global free-market economies'. Subjects invest in the addictive object or activity as a way of coping with

social isolation and alienation. Therefore, while agency is recognised, it occurs within social, cultural and economic contexts, influencing behaviours (2012, p.661). While many working contexts may prove to be addictive, they argue that in the CCIs, such addiction is particularly intense (2012, p.662), outlining how the creative rewards of cultural work deeply affect participants' physical and mental health as well as key relationships unrelated to their work. Their identity is so linked to their work that in a context of unemployment their self-esteem shrinks, and this proved most salient among female workers (2012, pp.669–670). Ultimately, cultural workers cannot find a way out from their addiction since leaving the CCIs proves to be an impossible goal for the majority of the authors' participants.

Drawing more specifically on Foucauldian governmentality (Foucault, 2008) and the concept of individualisation (Sennett, 1998), Kennedy (2010) considers that in a context of the absence of norms, web workers develop strategies to self-regulate, such as self-blaming. Self-regulation according to Kennedy should not be read only as individual but as also a social phenomenon, taking the shape of an 'etho-politics' (Kennedy, 2010, p.376). Following the governmentality approach, self-blame is used critically to understand a situation whereby individuals take on responsibilities that were once at least potentially taken care of by the state. In the absence of social regulations, subjects develop self-monitoring behaviours. However, Kennedy also showed that workers do not merely accommodate competitive individualism. She discusses how they build upon the original ethical foundation of web designers promoting an open, interoperable and accessible medium. Beyond incentives to develop as an entrepreneurial subject, individuals are guided by values and ethics in their behaviours even in precarious contexts. Although she makes no mention of precariousness, Kennedy's article is particularly insightful for understanding that even in work strongly guided by neoliberal entrepreneurialism, ethically-driven forms of subjectivity can remain present.

In an article from 2015, Armano and Murgia (2015) consider that the process of precarisation is an essential feature of ongoing forms of subjectivation under neoliberal logics. Drawing on theories of individualisation (Bauman, 2000; Beck, 2000a) and Foucauldian governmentality (Foucault, 2008), they consider that individuals are compelled to become entrepreneurs of their selves. According to Armano and Murgia, precariousness is so pervasive that it invades all aspects of life, especially in a context where the majority of workers are self-employed. While

compelled to self-develop as self-reliant, subjects develop an uncoupling between their desires and aspirations and their everyday lives (2015, p.10). Work-based identity, compulsory networking, lack of recognition and precariousness together erode the self and enhance the dismantling of collective identification. For Armano and Murgia, the future becomes remote in this 'precariousness trap' in the context of individualisation and atomization. Ultimately, precariousness in a context of individualisation, drive toward self-realisation and entrepreneurship extends beyond work and affects subjectivity.

To summarise my perspective on precarity and precariousness, although this thesis is concerned about the negative psychosocial impacts of music work in the independent music industries, it is neither cynical nor pessimistic. On the contrary, it aspires towards an analysis of working lives in the music industries that carries the hope for improvement of working lives and well-being in the cultural and creative industries. However, I argue that this can be done only by undertaking an assessment of the psycho-social impact of working lives in the independent music industries (as a case study for the cultural and creative industries and beyond), using a perspective that is critical of prevailing discourses about the neoliberal entrepreneurial subject.

In line with previous work on the subject (for instance, Umney and Krestos, 2015), this thesis aims to consider how participants cope with precariousness – in a neoliberal context where participants are compelled to be self-reliant and autonomous. The goals of section 1.2 is multiple: to begin with, sub-section 1.2.1 aims at defining precariousness. Although this thesis recognises the important theoretical advancement of the term precarity among autonomist Marxists, the term 'precariousness' is preferred as it extends more straightforwardly to all aspects of life. Sub-section 1.2.2 outlines the link between precariousness and political mobilisation. Drawing on work claiming that social critique does not disappear but rather takes different forms to those associated with more traditional forms of political mobilisation and organisation, sub-section 1.2.2 provides context explaining the lack of political mobilisation observed among participants. Sub-section 1.2.3 outlines the literature that considers the interplay between subjectivity, neoliberalism and precariousness in the CCI to conceptualise the complex relation between the individual choice to engage into cultural work and the cost of problematic working features that erode the self. Ranging from more positive accounts promoting individual drive to more pessimistic ones considering how deeply subjectivity is impacted by precariousness and neoliberalism,

these works problematise different takes on the subjective experience of precariousness – as a direct consequence of neoliberalism in the CCI. Overall, by drawing on relevant literature this section aims to conceptualise the complex interconnectedness between precariousness and subjectivity under neoliberalism.

1.3 Class and gender inequalities in cultural work

Despite discourses promoting the cultural and creative industries as diverse, open and egalitarian, they remain fiercely unequal. A wide range of literature has considered the patterns of disadvantages and exclusion in the cultural and creative industries through the lens of gender and social class as well as race and ethnicity, age and disability. This critical research was slow to emerge for two reasons. First, the attraction of the CCIs at a public policy level – and perhaps more generally among the general public – undermined critique (Banks, 2007; Ross, 2009a). Building on the myth of cultural work as a bohemian, cool and fulfilling activity (which no doubt it is for at least some of the time) cultural work has been the subject of attention by public policy makers (DCMS) and experts (Leadbeater, 2004; Florida, 2014) for being supposedly an ideal type of good work. Secondly, because of various problems surrounding labour market classifications, there has been a serious lack of data about the CCIs, which has perhaps contributed to preserving inequalities (Conor et al., 2015, p.6) and the myth of meritocracy (Banks, 2017, pp.89–120).

The field of cultural and creative industries has invisible barriers of entry (Menger, 2009, p.559) - there are no specific training, qualification or diploma required. It is marked by existing patterns of social domination (Allen, 2016) including the 'class ceiling' (Friedman and Laurison, 2019), i.e. the difficulty to access and maintain to a position compared to people originating from more privileged social class backgrounds. This 'class ceiling' is not only visible in terms of a pay gap, but also illustrates the unequal distribution of cultural, social and economic capital. As for the example of British acting (Friedman et al., 2016, p.16), the CCIs tend to reward middle-class participants, and more particularly those who are white and male. Unsurprisingly, patterns of discrimination are intrinsically reinforced by working features in the CCIs, such as network sociality (Wittel, 2001), precariousness and flexibility. Overall, it disadvantages those who are not white, middle-class men.

In this thesis, I draw upon literature on inequalities in the CCIs, and more specifically those relating to social class and gender. I do not consider race and

ethnicity, age and disability, but acknowledge the importance of these dimensions of inequality. As expressed in the introduction, in sections 3.2.2 and 9.3, although many of the works outlined in this section develop an intersectional approach, taking into consideration the fact that multiple forms of oppression produce specific experiences and subjectivities (Conor, Gill, et al., 2015, p.8), because of limitations in my fieldwork and my personal resources, I will present them mainly around two variables of inequality: gender and class.

1.3.1 Social class inequalities

In spite of meritocratic discourses appearing in official reports, e.g. in DCMS reports – alongside with economic contribution, recent research suggests that the CCIs are unevenly accessible for the less privileged. Drawing on data from the Office of National Statistics' quarterly Labour Force Survey and defining class into four groups based on the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) classes, (O'Brien et al., 2016), show that working-class backgrounds are underrepresented and when they access to the CCIs, a "class origin pay gap" (p.117) exists. Ultimately, they remark that certain occupational subculture resist aggregation into the DCMS category of the CCIs. However, it is important to note that the data O'Brien et al. draw on - the LFS - does not collect data from self-employed (the majority of the sample of this study). Likewise, similar research has indicated patterns of domination selecting those with the most privileged background start even before entering the CCIs, hence the difficulty of entering the industries for the less privileged (Friedman and Laurison, 2019, pp.29–44). Education, training and later extended periods of internship are now required to enter the CCIs, thereby reinforcing social reproduction (Oakley, 2009b; Kim Allen et al., 2013; Frenette, 2013; Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Banks, 2017, pp.67–88).

Adapting Bourdieusian concepts to cultural work, Randle et al. (2015) show that the most socially accepted forms of habitus advantages workers with high economic, social and cultural capital, which ultimately makes them complicit in exclusionary practices, for example by reinforcing norms at the expense of those less privileged with these forms of capital. Moreover, recent research (Friedman et al., 2016; Friedman and Laurison, 2019, pp.57–70) has shown that a pay gap exists between individuals with different social backgrounds even after entering the CCIs. Drawing on the Great British Class Survey outlined elsewhere, Randle et al.'s (2015, p.602) results show how 'educational background, accent and attitudes, parental

occupation and domestic circumstances, economic position and access to networks of similarly socially positioned individuals' shape patterns of social distinction. Therefore, in spite of meritocratic discourses about the CCIs, the unequal distribution of economic, social and cultural capital prevents less privileged individuals from transforming these into meaningful job opportunities.

When workers manage to go beyond the class ceiling (Friedman and Laurison, 2019) and enter the CCIs, class inequalities remain. In a flexible, uncertain and precarious environment, social class background remains a source of distinction between workers. Succeeding in the CCIs often requires a safety net offered by parental help (Allen, 2016; Friedman and Laurison, 2019, pp.87–108). This safety net takes various forms, from direct economic help from families (as explored in section 5.2) to the development of an ethos of resilience helping to reduce the stress of structural uncertainty in the CCIs (as explored in section 4.5). As Allen (2016) remarks, individuals with a middle-class background[7] cope better with the systemic social and economic contingency of the cultural and creative industries. Workers with a middle-class background and beyond may even take advantage of these transitory moments to 'work' on themselves and develop soft skills crucial for future employment. Conversely, individuals with a working-class background have difficulties bouncing back. They may start to question themselves and freeze into panic during transitory moments (Allen, 2016). Therefore, patterns of discrimination extend beyond economic or social capital. They also encompass subtler ways of being, such as the embodiment of a specific relation towards life made of resilience and a disposition towards precariousness.

1.3.2 Cultural work and gender inequalities

While most of the patterns of social background inequalities outlined above also exclude women from meaningful job opportunities and good work, there are also forms of dominations specific to gender. As with social class, literature on gender inequalities has informed this thesis (see for instance sections 4.3 and 7.4.1). The following paragraphs, however, present current discussions on gender inequality in cultural work in order to explain how my research draws upon, and contributes to such scholarship.

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[7] For definition and uses of class, see section 3.6.3

Recent works have shown that patterns of gender exclusion go beyond the features of work in the CCIs by extending to social representations of the artist. A particular kind of subjectivity, typically attributed to the middle-class-heterosexual-white-male – a flexible, networked, resilient and entrepreneurial self – appears to be more rewarded in the CCIs, leading, for instance, to job opportunities and recognition. The cliché of an inherently selfish 'masculinist creation' is difficult to reconcile with values supposedly attributed to women, such as caring and being devoted to others (Taylor, 2011, pp.367–368). Moreover, while working features make it hard to combine working obligations and maternity, women are also subject to discrimination because of these challenges, indirectly reinforcing childcare as a woman's responsibility (Wing-Fai et al., 2015). When women manage to get into these industries, they remain often disproportionately concentrated on the roles traditionally considered as feminine, far removed from creativity and marketing (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2015). Together, working features and expectations in the field of the CCIs seem to make contradictory and impossible demands on women. For instance, while women have to sell themselves (Scharff, 2015), they also have to avoid looking like troublemakers (Wreyford, 2015) – they must stay quiet to avoid being considered as a threat. Altogether, high levels of freelancing, a culture of self-promotion and informal recruitment – advantage men (Wreyford, 2015; Scharff, 2015).

Ultimately, while some gender inequalities remain untouched, others reinforce precariousness for female workers. Indeed, while the gender pay gap remains prevalent in the CCIs (Conor et al., 2015; O'Brien et al., 2016), women are also more subject to uncertain forms of employment. In the TV industry for instance, women have lost 'their jobs at a rate of six times that of men' (Wing-Fai et al., 2015, p.53).

This section provides the basis for understanding the importance of looking at working lives in the CCI through the lens of class and gender. Despite the meritocratic discourse, the CCI remains an unequal field for those who do not belong to the white-middle-class-male-heterosexual group. The previous research discussed above helps to grasp how increasingly difficult it is for the less privileged to access and remain in the CCI. Consequently, this thesis draws on a body of research that considers how patterns of exclusion rely on different forms of capital (economic, cultural and social) and representation that are culturally gendered. Analysis of patterns of social discrimination – gender and class – presented above provide a framework for analysis

throughout the thesis of how working lives are experienced in very different ways, depending on social class and gender.

1.4 Music work, individualisation and precariousness in the CCIs

Taking music work as a case study, this research investigates how the neoliberal incentives to develop as an entrepreneurial self, entangled with tales of self-realisation through activity, trigger anxiety and pressures to self-develop, as well as how subjects cope with these pressures. In line with previous works that depict cultural workers as representing the ethos of the perfect worker passionately engaged in their activity (Ross, 2000; Menger, 2003; Menger, 2009), music work is used as a case study to look at how subjects, compelled to take care of themselves (Ouellette, 1995), develop strategies to mentally and physically bear precarious working lives. Consequently, this thesis is not focused on the evolution and pervasiveness of neoliberalism within the CCIs or the music industries, nor on how music can be a coping strategy in itself, but rather how neoliberalism, as a political project to change subjects, impacts musicians in their drive to self-realise. The focus on subjects, however, does not discard a political economy analysis, since the CCIs play a crucial role in providing an opportunity for musicians to be workers, to self-develop and be recognised as musicians (see sections 8.2 and 8.3).

But to what extent is precariousness among musical workers distinctive? And how has neoliberalism changed the precariousness inherent to the CCI and therefore music? Are there recent shifts requiring inquiry? There are many factors here. I will outline some of these below and indicate the sections of the thesis where these themes are developed. Stahl's juxtaposition of cultural and political economic analysis provides a useful account of relationships between capitalism, autonomy, authenticity, neoliberal subjectivities, self-realisation and cultural labour, with regard to the music industries (Stahl, 2012). In line with Stahl, this thesis is informed by cultural analysis and political economy (as well as social theory). First, I discuss how the project of self-cultivation in art work has resonances with the theme of individualisation addressed in section 2.2. Second, I outline how precariousness in the music industries and in the CCIs is informed by the romantic bohemian myth. Third, after briefly presenting the logics of the CCIs, I outline digitalisation, a recent shift in the music industries under

capitalist organisation. The fourth point aims to interlink recent changes in the CCIs with neoliberal incentives made to subjects to develop as entrepreneurial selves.

First, music making finds resonance with self-making and belonging. Cultural production is part of the *bildung,* i.e. cultural self-realisation. The *bildung* is a form of self-formation emphasizing responsibility to self-develop aiming at aligning the self with their own selfhood and identity and with the society (Ryle and Soper, 2002, p.27). This process should not always be thought as a matter of competitive individualism (Ryle and Soper, 2002, p.15). In cultural production, *texts*[8] become proxies of the self: people are projecting themselves in the results of their work. This aspect is crucial to modern personhood since, in a context of individualisation (Giddens, 1990; Giddens, 1991) and 'organized self-realisation' (Honneth, 2004), individuals' drive for cultural production is an element of the project of self-formation (Honneth, 2013, pp.61–63).

More specifically related to music, inner and social rewards are not just a matter of social distinction since music 'is a cultural form that has strong connections to emotions, feelings and moods' (Hesmondhalgh, 2013, p.12). But when music becomes an instrument of social distinction, it can also help to delimit the boundaries of a subculture shaping collective and individual identities (Thornton, 1996). While music production is increasingly individual – current forms of production are laptop-based (Prior, 2008) –, this should not overshadow the remaining importance of music making as a collective act. Indeed, while music can be recorded by a single person – a multi-instrumentist who also produces the music (see section 6.2) – it remains a form of collective practice in spite of social representations of the lonely genius (Uzzi and Spiro, 2005) (see section 7.2.1). People, for instance, play together, share tips on sound and music production and inspire each other. Moreover, as developed in section 7.2 and 8.2, the symbolic and economic value of music is developed through exchange with others (Becker, 1982).

More than in any other industries – music carries the potential of gathering people and developing a feeling of belonging, for instance when music is performed during concerts, in clubs and during jam sessions. In doing so, music can contribute to forms of flourishing *with others* that are not solely based on individual benefits

[8] As cultural artefacts, texts are 'heavy on signification and tend to be light on functionality and they are created with communicative goals in mind' (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, p.12).

(Hesmondhalgh, 2013, p.84). During performances, human solidarity appears as the result of positive individualities (as opposed to individualism) gathered around a shared experience. The capacity for solidarity and publicness of music performance are common goods that counter neoliberal forms of competitive individualism. As Hesmondhalgh (2013, p.85) notes:

> 'that sense of openness to others is one that I believe we should value, and should defend against conservatism's tendency to privilege the freedoms of individuals and businesses over solidarity, community, and equality (rather than balance them in a way that maximizes flourishing)'

Therefore, music carries deep affective meanings that are part of individual and collective identities. Moreover, music provides patterns of self-realisation that are not solely based on individualism.

But because making music is pleasurable and allow unique forms of self-exploration and belonging, it tends to overshadow uncertainty and precariousness. While musicians could practise their music as a hobby, many hope to make a living out of their music, probably more than any other forms of work in the cultural and creative industries (Guibert, 2006). Even if people know that they are likely to fail, they often engage in risky careers. The anxiety triggered by the risk of engaging in such career is channelled through a range of coping strategies, such as denial (see section 8.3).

Second, precariousness in the CCIs is not a new phenomenon. Tales of the passionate but broken artist draw on bohemian mythology (see section 5.4.1 for a development of the historical background and current version of the bohemian life). Following this idea, passion for music (and art more generally) is thought to conceal precarious lives. Because popular reference[9] is often made to passionate musicians ready to sacrifice all that they have for their art, it provides self-destructive patterns of life far from notions of the good life. Derived from the original bohemian ethos, its contemporary version emphasising authenticity and authorship – often connected to a refusal of bureaucracy – has created a situation in which musicians are not often understood as workers. This situation is compounded by the fact that many critiques of commerce derive from romantic notions of authenticity and individuality that are

[9] see for instance, Stalh's (Stahl, 2012) depiction of rockumentary.

self-contradictory and naïve, and risk being co-opted by neoliberalism (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, p.249).

Third, subject to a capitalistic organisation (Huet et al., 1978), cultural industries aim to sell and manage *texts*, the result of a creative work (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, pp.27–31). Moreover, cultural industries are a 'risky business'. Texts are distinct from the products of other industries. For example, they are semi-public goods, which means that they are not destroyed by their consumption (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, p.27). Moreover, the use value of a *text* is never assured in advance (Miège, 2017).[10] Cultural industries' response to these problems includes the following: construction of a repertoire; concentration, integration and co-opting of publicity; artificial scarcity; formatting of stars, genre and series; loss of control by symbol creators; and tight control of distribution and marketing (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, p.26). Cultural industries deploy strategies to lessen uncertainty by concentrating people's attention on a few and new cultural products. These strategies take the form of a constant show-casing of a selection of the *vivier* or reservoir of new talents – generally young non-professionals (Miège, 1989). By co-opting the fringes of the cultural industries into their core, they maintain innovation and new cultural products. In the meantime, and because of an oversupply of workers, many remain outside the economically viable spheres of cultural production, leaving the vast majority of workers in precarious conditions. In doing so, the cultural industries reduce the uncertainty of cultural products' use value by guaranteeing an ongoing consumption of new *texts*.

However, the music industries differ from other CCIs. Music is cheap to make and broadcast, generally cheaper than texts in other CCIs (Hesmondhalgh and Meier, 2015, p.94). One of the crucial ways in which digitalisation has challenged the music industries is in the erosion of the artificial scarcity that previously underpinned their business models, in the form of copyright law and practice. The development of increasingly portable and powerful personal computers, compressed digital files such as the MP3, and high bandwidth connections, supported by the telecommunications and computer software sectors, has drastically changed the music industries within a few decades by allowing file-sharing and digital distribution, undermining systems of intellectual property (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, pp.341–348). Altogether, this makes music even more ubiquitous. As Hesmondhalgh (2010) has shown, these changes have

[10] Miège uses the term cultural commodity (*marchandises culturelles* in French).

produced discourses describing a shift of power relations between the CCIs and cultural producers, supposedly advantaging the latter. In recent research, critique of 'prosumption' between producers and consumers, pairing 'free labour' with the concept of self-exploitation appear rather 'unconvincing and rather incoherent' (Hesmondhalgh, 2010). Moreover, there is often a lack of consideration of the increasing power of newcomers such as platforms acting as intermediaries (Miège, 2007).

This shift has led to unique opportunities for accessing content, helping musicians to produce music (via software, sampling banks and software instruments, YouTube tutorials and sound technique blogs) and the chance to distribute their music on platforms with tools to develop an online community of listeners. There are important distinctions to make between these platforms: from Soundcloud and Bandcamp aiming to provide a forum for sharing music, others such as Spotify and Deezer more closely linked to majors, to platforms such as Facebook and Youtube aiming at selling content generated by users to advertisers. Nevertheless, the apparent democratisation of production and diffusion has led to problems regarding the tracking of personal data, the concentration of power in a few platforms and a lack of remuneration for the circulation of music. Moreover, the increasing access to content makes it difficult to be heard among the plethora of music on offer, and beyond tales of being randomly discovered on the internet, cultural intermediaries such as PR companies still play a crucial role. Paradoxically, tales of success via platforms such as Myspace and SoundCloud help to hide the fact that cultural intermediaries keep playing a major role in maintaining artificial scarcity (Haynes and Marshall, 2018 see also section 7.2). In this way, the Web has not drastically changed the way the cultural industries work, especially the logics of fringes and its aspiration towards the centre described by Miège (Huet et al., 1978; Miège, 1989). The web help to gather a (though much bigger) pool of new entrants and aspirant professional musicians in the music industries. What has changed, however, is the way that talents are developed and broadcast to audiences. Although content can be produced and broadcast easily, it often involves free labour (Hesmondhalgh, 2010), and musicians experience precariousness for the vast majority.

Fourth, one of the major consequences of digitalisation for cultural producers involves neoliberal incentives aimed at transforming subjects into entrepreneurial selves. As argued elsewhere (Matthews et al., 2014), the increasing demand made upon

subjects to 'do it themselves' compels them to adopt a neoliberal entrepreneurial approach (this idea is further developed in section 6.2). Consequently, heralding the 'future of work' (Stahl, 2012, p.5), musicians embody the individualisation promised and required by neoliberalism. Beyond the specificities of music work, musicians also illustrate the major shifts in working lives. In music – as well as in other cultural and creative industries – the promise of autonomous work and self-realisation through activity legitimises low wages and uncertain working conditions.

Consequently, while cultural production has been a precarious activity that has taken new forms in recent times, it remains a highly attractive activity, especially in a context of individualisation, forced individualisation and incentives to develop as an entrepreneurial self. Cultural production is entangled between bohemian representation of the 'broken' artist, passionate about self-discovery and experimentation, and the resort to *vivier* and reservoirs of new talents, keeping most cultural workers in a state of precariousness. More specifically regarding music in recent times, digitalization has changed modes of production and diffusion – lowering the barriers of access to music production and diffusion drastically but increasing precariousness and incentives toward entrepreneurialism. While taking into account the specificity of music work in current times, such as computer-based music production and diffusion (section 6.2); touring and attempts to maintain in the field (section 8.2.2); bohemian lifestyles associated with independent music making (Chapter 5); and concert-based sociality (sections 7.2 and 7.3), this thesis considers music work as a case study, in order to observe broader shifts in the working lives of individuals in the CCI and beyond. Consequently, by examining independent musicians, this thesis provides a case study of the psycho-social impact of neoliberalism on individuals – where cultural industries strategies and the project of self-formation are interwoven.

1.5 Theoretical framework for well-being and flourishing

In the following section, I define the theoretical framework used in this study to assess well-being and flourishing. Ontological security can be considered as a key basis for well-being and flourishing. For the Scottish psychiatrist R. D. Laing, an individual attains basic ontological security when they develop a sense of presence in the world, and about those who surround them, as 'real, alive and whole' (R. D. Laing, 2010/1960, p.39). An ontologically-secure person has a good enough sense of

themselves and therefore their autonomy and identity is not threatened by the hazards of everyday life (R. D. Laing, 2010/1960, p.39). Inversely, a self who does not maintain ontological security struggles with their everyday relation to the world. There may be hazy boundaries between their selves and the outside world, or they may feel that their body is external from their selves, implying that their autonomy, identity, cohesiveness and consistency are under constant threat (R. D. Laing, 2010/1960, p.42). The everyday life of a person may even be experienced as an illusion, as if individuals were 'more dead than alive' (R. D. Laing, 2010/1960, p.42). Furthermore, their relation to time might be such that their self lacks consciousness of the continuum of time. Eventually, the self is so deeply affected that they cannot share their feelings with other people, reinforcing the feeling of being ostracised from the world (R. D. Laing, 2010/1960, p.42).

In *The divided self* (2010, pp.39–64), R.D. Laing's account of ontological security is mostly concerned with the study of schizophrenia and psychosis. But contrary to the approach generally taken at this time, R.D. Laing's political approach to mental illness considers that mental disorders may also find their roots in the social. Moreover, although a psychiatrist, R.D. Laing was influenced by existential philosophy – the subjectivity of the self is taken into account. R.D. Laing's development on ontological security focuses mostly on the ability of selves to develop and conserve some cohesiveness when confronted by others against the fear of getting lost in the other. When failing to do so, R.D. Laing identifies behaviours that ultimately threaten the relationship with others but maintain a (precarious) sense of wholeness.

While R.D. Laing focuses on the self and interpersonal relationships, the British sociologist Anthony Giddens extends the concept of ontological security with a sociological approach, although the concept conserves its original meaning of a sense of safeness, being in and part of the world (Giddens, 1990, pp.92–111; Giddens, 1991, pp.35–69). For Giddens, ontological security means a feeling of continuity and trust in the world we live in (Giddens, 1990, p.97). Beyond R.D. Laing, Giddens' account of ontological security draws on various bodies of literature: from phenomenology and Wittgensteinian philosophy; Eriksonian psychology's concept of 'basic trust'; Winnicottian object theory; Freud's crowd psychology; and sociology and ethnomethodology with Garfinkel's stratification model (1991, p.35, 1990, pp.92-8). More specifically, Giddens draws on ego psychology, such as Erikson, especially his eight stages of psycho-social development. Giddens draws more particularly on the

first two stages of Erikson's theory – similar to Winnicott – in which basic trust is developed thanks to the reliability of caretakers and routine. Giddens stresses the fact that routine is a way to deal with inner tensions and attain ontological security. Giddens then links Erikson's second stage – a way to develop autonomy or shame – with Goffman's performance in daily life (Craib, 1992, p.39).

For Giddens (1991a, pp.35–69), ontological security is a psychological need that can only be achieved through the reassuring persistence of routine in everyday life. Yet, for Giddens, ontological security is under constant assault in late modernity, where social institutions are changing. Giddens considers that the lack of ontological security leads to disorders such as existential anxiety.

However, Giddens' use of the concept of ontological security, alongside anxiety and routine, has various flaws. Firstly, as Craib claims, Giddens considers routine to be a way of attaining ontological security, but he underplays its negative aspects, such as when someone develops the routine of washing their hands sixty-five times a day (Craib, 1992, p.175). For Craib, contrary to Giddens, early psychoanalytical definitions of the term considered that our relation to routine is twofold: on one hand it is needed, while on the other it potentially provides a sense of claustrophobia (Craib, 1992, p.176). Therefore, he considers that the notions of ontological security and routine are too weak for the theoretical weight he places upon them (Craib, 1992, p.175).

Secondly, late modernity is an era of uncertainty, constant change and risk (Giddens, 1991; Giddens, 1990). Therefore, ontological security is more ambivalent and fluent in time than a state of being grounded on the self, thanks to early developments. As expressed in section 2.2, this point is fairly classic in sociology – it recalls for instance Simmel's (1950/1903) point that metropolis is characterised by a *blasé attitude*, indifference and individualism. These observations lead to a suggestion that there has been no point of fracture but rather constant – and potentially increasing – processes of individualisation and reshaping of social institutions in late modernity and under neoliberalism. Moreover, Giddens' account of ontological security avoids time and changes in life. For instance, someone can feel ontologically secure and lose their job, which will seriously threaten the feeling of ontological security. Drawing on classical writing about ontological security (such as Laing), Craib recalls that ontological security is not the same as feeling safe. In psychoanalysis, ontological security involves the ability to adapt to constant change and develop

routines accordingly, with the knowledge that they are ephemeral. In this context, anxiety is therefore not discarded but the subject learns to live with it (Craib, 1992, pp.176–177). Yet, Giddens stresses that it is the daily routine that helps a person to cope with anxiety. Giddens says little about this contradiction, leaving individuals at an impasse, doomed to live in anxiety, somehow aware and unable to attain ontological security. Moreover, while Giddens considers existential anxiety to be a feature of modernity, he does not take into account anxiety as a more general feature of individual's existence in society as described, for instance, in existentialists' writings, such as Heidegger (Craib, 1992, p.140).

Thirdly, as Craib argues, by drawing on the works of Freud, Erikson and Winnicott, Giddens loses 'the depth of the individual and agency' (Craib, 1992, p.142). Within this drawback lies an important issue informing this thesis: the complexity of using a multi-disciplinary framework, especially when it concerns sociology and psychology together. For Craib, Giddens tends to discard the notion of the unconscious, which would suggest a self who acts in irrational and un-routine ways. Although Giddens' use of Freud, Erikson and Winnicott may have required some adaptations to fit a sociological work, Craib's critique (1992, p.142) misses, however, an important point argued in this thesis: people have agency over their lives and act irrationally in often contradictory – and even sometimes destructive – ways. But Craib's critique may also express his doubts about using what he calls a 'unitary, non-dualistic theory' (p.142). Craib continues his critique of Giddens' use of psychological concepts with greater depth. He sees in Giddens' understanding of Erikson and Winnicott's development about the role of caretakers a role of removing anxiety, which is, according to him not only reductive but wrong (p.143). Fourthly, Giddens has little to say in concrete terms about how to achieve ontological security, keeping its prerequisite to the realm of abstract notions.

More generally, the concept of ontological security has been criticised for: (1) promoting behaviours which are violent and othering, whereby subjectivity is developed through exclusion; and (2) denying the fact that creative development of subjectivity and ethical reflection may come from opacity, contradiction, non-autonomy and failure (Rossdale, 2015). Here, Rossdale turns to Butler's Foucauldian regime of truth that governs subjectivisation (Butler, 2005). This account of the subject acknowledges the fractured, incoherent and incomplete nature of people not as a problem but rather as something to explore (Rossdale, 2015, p. 376).

Taking into account these critiques, ontological security – understood as when people develop a sense of 'presence in the world as real, alive and whole' (R. D. Laing, 2010/1960, p.39) – is considered in this thesis to be a prerequisite state for a 'good life'. As mentioned above, this concept finds its roots in ego psychology as developed by the psychiatrist R.D. Laing, therefore the assessment of ontological security is made clinically (see R. D. Laing, 2010, pp.39–65). This thesis uses ontological security as a concept to describe a stable sense of being in the world and does not intend to develop a clinical assessment of ontological security among the participants. As with previous writings that have used ontological security (mostly in relation to housing, as described in Chapter 5) ontological security is used in this thesis to describe the possibility of developing a relatively stable sense of self, others and the world, in spite of continuing changes.

Although useful, ontological security is rather undefined and evasive if used alone. Moreover, the concept carries little information about the systematic basic conditions to achieve it. I hope that by completing an understanding of ontological security as a state of being with a capability approach as a normative framework possibly leading to well-being, it could help to construct variables preventing the development of ontological security – and as Sen (2001) and Nussbaum (2011) put it, well-being.

To complete the presentation of key concepts to well-being and flourishing in this chapter, I turn now to Nussbaum's capability approach in order to outline some basic elements of human flourishing (Nussbaum, 2003, 2007). While ontological security is defined as a state and a relation to the world, the capability approach is a normative framework enabling discussions about the basic features necessary to well-being and flourishing.

The capability approach, or Human Development Approach, is a comprehensive tool that seeks to define the essential capabilities to flourish. The basic capability, as defined by Sen (1995, p.45), is the 'the ability to satisfy certain elementary and crucially important functioning up to certain levels'. Capabilities are 'substantial freedoms', 'a set of opportunities to choose and to act' (Sen, 1995, p.45). The capabilities defined are not to be understood only as the abilities someone has internally through their body or intelligence. These capabilities also involve the opportunities someone has to flourish under external constraints, such as social and environmental, and internal constraints (Sen, 1995). The capability approach tells us

what we might look at when considering one's well-being and flourishing. They are not simply options available to people, but the actual possibilities to achieve functioning, i.e. the realisation of capabilities (Nussbaum, 2011, p.25). Nussbaum considers 'central capabilities' as the 'innate equipment of individuals that is the necessary basis for developing the more advanced capabilities, and a ground for moral concern' (Nussbaum, 2000, p.84). Contrary to Sen (Nussbaum, 2011, p.20), Nussbaum (2011, p. 20) developed a list of ten central capabilities: life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses; imagination and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation and other species; play; and control over one's environment politically and materially (Nussbaum, 2000, pp.32–4). By defining the most important capabilities to secure in order to flourish, the capability approach provides a normative framework for social justice and a quality-of-life assessment (Nussbaum, 2003; Nussbaum, 2011, p.18).

Capabilities are pluralist rather than relativist since there might be various ways in which individuals secure well-being and have access to flourishing (Hesmondhalgh, 2013, p.18). From the philosophical point of view, this approach is liberal and voluntarily anti-paternalist. However, this does not mean that any life is good (Sayer, 2011, pp.134–7). Indeed, there are lifestyles that may lead to suffering - although they are led with the hope of flourishing. Music, for instance, can provide unique opportunities for self-exploration and making friend with people. Yet, excessive music practice can also be harmful to individuals, leading to tendinitis or tinnitus and social isolation.

In this thesis, the capability approach can be used as a normative framework to discuss the recurrent question of freedom and agency in social theory in relation to well-being and flourishing. Without necessarily developing a paternalist view, this study identifies some behaviours preventing flourishing. This question is complex but, as Nussbaum suggests, there are examples in individuals' lives, such as the consumption of hard drugs or the practice of risky sports that may prevent or destroy capabilities (Nussbaum, 2011, pp.26–7).

The approach presented by Nussbaum has been sporadically used in social sciences (see for instance, Sayer, 2011) but it has been used recently in major works related to cultural work, social justice and flourishing (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011; Hesmondhalgh, 2013; Banks, 2017). Accordingly, this thesis aims at contributing to this body of literature by referring to Nussbaum's central capability approach as a normative framework.

The capability approach is used in this thesis to differentiate patterns of self-exploration and self-destruction. For example, I question the drawbacks associated with an overinvestment in work in the hope of achieving self-realisation. While meaningful activity is necessary to flourish, an absence of balance with other essential needs affects other capabilities. Indeed, as the capability approach shows, capabilities should not be considered separately but together. In other words, individuals may not favour music over meaningful relationships, healthcare or decent housing.

1.6 The field of the psychosocial: Literature, key terms, criticism and the approach taken in this thesis

Psychosocial studies consider the relation between what is generally thought of as external – the social – and the internal – the psyche of individuals (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008). By providing a definition of a subject mutually shaped and shaping society, the psychosocial helps to understand how important it is to consider the subjectivity of individuals and the impact of external factors on them, e.g. social structures. By reducing the split between sociology and psychology, this field acknowledges how individuals, social relations and society mutually shape each other. The recognition of the power of external factors on individuals as a potential source of suffering may also help to lessen the psychopathologising of behaviours.

For Frosh and Baraitser (2008), this definition of the psychosocial is trans- (as opposed to inter-) disciplinary. As they state, 'psychosocial studies lie in psychoanalysis, sociology, applied social studies and social work, critical social psychology, poststructuralist theory, social constructionism, queer theory and feminist social research' (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008, p.348). To avoid being appropriated by one of the fields it draws on, the psychosocial needs to be reflexive about its own object of inquiry and practice. Indeed, the risk is to make psychoanalysis the central field of the psychosocial, which would potentially empty the field of its substance (Frosh and Baraitser, 2008, p.347).

Psychosocial studies have nevertheless resulted in a turn to psychoanalysis, where psychoanalysis is re-inserted into the social sciences (Frosh, 2003; Frosh and Baraitser, 2008, p.348). Drawing on the tradition of Kleinian 'Object Relations' (Jones et al., 2009, p.2) and Lacanian psychoanalytical concepts such as fantasy, psychosocial studies help to understand how irrationality infuses the social sphere (Butler, 2005; Žižek, 2009). In their edited volume, Jones, Day-Sclater and Price (2009) collected

writing from contributors who adopt a psychosocial approach in which: (1) the subject is inherently social; and (2) society is created and maintained by idiosyncratic subjects. Therefore, the originality of this approach lies in the fact that 'the subject is considered altogether as social and psychological, i.e. shaped through the social and able to develop agency, ethical values, affect and subjectivity (see Hollway, 2006; Frosh and Baraitser, 2008, pp.348–349).

1.6.1 Subjectivity: A key term in the psychosocial

When accounting for an individual's agency, one of the key terms is subjectivity[11]. According to Henriques et al., subjectivity refers to:

> individuality and self-awareness – the condition of being a subject – but understand in this usage that subjects are dynamic and multiple, always positioned in relation to particular discourses and practices and produced by these – the condition of being subject (1998, p.3).

According to these authors, the term derives from sociologically inspired assumptions about the shaping of the self by structure, and not the other way around. Similarly, Frosh (2003, p.17) states that subjectivity is made through social context. This critical repudiation of an individualistic conception of the subject illustrates a general rejection of psychology (Henriques et al., 1998, p.10).

However, for Henriques et al. (1998), the set of theories that introduced the term, mostly developed in France, suffers from translation into English. Indeed, the reference to the name *sujet* – and the verb *asujettir* – create problems because of their multiple meanings – that of 'producing subjectivity' and 'making subject'. As the authors claim, instead of using the terms subjectivity and subjectification (*assujetissement*) it is generally acceptable to use subjectivity only. Furthermore, the term '*assujetissement*' carries another meaning in French generally missed by authors: submission to external force, e.g. to the law.

Another powerful concept used to depict the meeting point between subjectivity and the social is fantasy – in its Kleinian understanding. As developed throughout this thesis, fantasy is not something that just happens in the minds of

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[11] Although not used in this thesis, two other terms generally used in these kinds of approaches are emotion and affect. According to Jones et al. (p.1), 'emotion' implies a conscious experience while 'affect' refers to a basic drive that can be bodily based.

individuals: it has direct consequences and helps to produce meaning (Frosh, 2003, p.10). Fantasy is a defence mechanism that helps subjects make sense of the world in which they live, as well as a psychological reaction that helps them to cope with their lives.

1.6.2 Criticisms and risks related to the influence of psychoanalysis in psychosocial studies

The trans-disciplinary approach developed in the field of the psychosocial suffers from serious drawbacks that differ from the traditional 'fear of psychologisation' described by Sayer (1999, p.5) or in the tensions inherited from a time when both psychology and sociology sought to be recognised as academic fields (Chancer and Andrews, 2014). The pervasive resort to psychoanalysis in the field of the psychosocial risks developing a determinist view of the self. Indeed, psychoanalysis fundamentally bases its interpretations of human behaviours on early childhood development. Therefore, patterns of interpretation are rather deterministic, often making behaviours predictable and static (Wetherell, 2003). Moreover, the founding psychoanalytical writings, such as Freud's, have often been dismissed for being too culturally specific, bourgeois and anti-feminist (Henriques et al., 1998), although more complex links between psychoanalysis and feminism have been discussed since then (Kofman, 1985; Mitchell, 2000). More generally, Elliott implies that the therapeutic culture deployed by psychoanalysis may develop narcissism and self-indulgence (Elliott, 1994, p.85), which would isolate individuals from meaningful relationships.

There are, however, even more problematic criticisms to be made about psychoanalysis – and more generally about psychotherapy: the field may provide normative ways of life centred on the self, discarding endogenous explanation, ultimately serving the interests of neoliberalism. The approach taken by psychoanalysis may systematically interpret individual struggle as personal pathologies, at the expense of exogenous explanations such as social problems (Elliott, 1994, p.85). According to Parker, psychoanalytic subjectivity is complicit with economic exploitation in capitalist societies by making the victims blame themselves (Parker, 2005, p.105). For Walkerdine (2003, p.241),

> equally important are the discourses through which that success and failure is understood and therefore the techniques of self-regulation and management which both inscribe the subject and allow him or her to

> attempt to refashion themselves as a successful subject: the subject of neo-liberal choice.

This does not mean that all forms of psychoanalysis have such deficiencies, or that practitioners are necessarily complicit in them, but rather that there has been a co-opting of psychoanalysis towards this tendency. Therefore, while the subject looks for help in resorting to psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, they are compelled to look for an individual's solution to impossible demands and struggles resulting from socio-economic pressures. Thus, psychotherapeutic culture becomes complicit in neoliberalism by propagating a model of subjectivity solely based on self-determination (Walkerdine, 2003, p.247).

Another serious criticism addressed to psychoanalysis – and beyond, psychology and psychiatry – asks whether it may be used as an instrument of social control, normalizing behaviours[12] (Elliott, 1994, p.87). This is a key point, especially in a context where previous work has highlighted the use of psychoanalysis for control, such as in the governmentality approach (Foucault, 1989, Rose, 1989) and beyond (Lasch, 1991). Indeed, Foucault (1989) outlines how psychoanalysis and psychiatry produce discourses in favour of normalisation and power. Ultimately, this criticism can be extended to psychosocial studies. Jones et al. (2009, p.3) ask: 'in what way psychosocial studies is a product of 'therapeutic culture' (Richards and Brown, 2002; Furedi, 2003), and whether it – and such a culture – is potentially emancipatory, or constraining and regulating'. Such critique needs to be carefully taken into account when drawing on psychoanalysis – as well as psychology and psychiatry. Indeed, a multiple theoretical framework looking at self-realisation and well-being should account for the plurality of ways in which a good life can be represented (Sayer, 2011). The resort to a normative framework on the good life (Sen, 2001; Nussbaum, 2011) aims at identifying the basic needs necessary to flourish, not imposing normative lifestyles.

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[12] Without discarding these critiques of psychoanalysis, it is important to note that both psychology and sociology have been entrenched in these debates since their foundation. Sociology and psychology can both be considered as theories promoting individual emancipation – that can be translated into emancipatory politics – as well as an instrument of control by quantifying, normalizing behaviours and producing discourses, e.g. in behaviourism 'in the name of control, efficiency and the economy of human practices' (Henriques and al., 1998, p.10). This tension should not be simply discarded at the risk of essentialising fields in human science.

1.6.3 Difference between 'traditional' psychosocial studies and the approach taken in this thesis

As Scharff has noted, although the body of research looking at the transformation of the self under neoliberalism is well-developed (see for instance, Rose, 1989; Brown, 2003; Foucault, 2008), too often it focuses on historical or theoretical ground (Davies, 2005; Ehrenberg, 2010; Hall and O'Shea, 2009), the analysis of cultural texts (Berlant, 2011) and informal sources (Sennett, 1998). Aside from clinical work inspired by psychoanalytic literature (such as Layton, 2014), there has been little research looking empirically at 'the psychic life of entrepreneurial subjects' (Scharff, 2016, p.108). Therefore, in line with Scharff (2016, p.108), this thesis intends to contribute to understanding how 'neoliberalism is lived out on a subjective level' by using first hand data.

The analysis of the psychosocial impact of neoliberalism developed in this thesis shares common ground with Layton's views on the psychosocial, outlined in the journal Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society (Layton, 2014). As she presents it, the field of inquiry on the psychosocial studies asks three questions similar to those developed in this thesis: '(1) how neoliberalism is lived among different populations; (2) what kind of fantasies and psychic damage neoliberal policies promote; and (3) what conscious and unconscious forms of collusion and resistance accompany its emergence' (Layton, 2014). While remaining a work settled in the field of sociology and cultural studies, I aim to bring into discussion insights from psychosocial studies, including concepts such as coping strategies and defence mechanisms as creative resources.

However, the approach taken in this thesis differs in various ways. Although the study of the psychosocial effect on neoliberalism presented by Layton shares similar concerns with this thesis, it differs from these Psychology-Based Psychosocial Studies (Frosh, 2003, p.7). Notwithstanding the attempts to develop a trans-disciplinary approach, this field remains too psychoanalytically-oriented, omits an assessment of sociological variables (e.g. class and gender) and tends to undermine the importance of the social. To the contrary, the shaping of this thesis illustrates a sociologically-oriented view of the psychosocial, stepping back from Psychology-Based Psychosocial Studies. Beyond the reasons above, this thesis also differs from the field of the psychosocial by drawing on a different body of literature (sociology, cultural studies and moral philosophy's capabilities approach) and different methods (not

clinical as in psychoanalysis but sociological semi-directed interviews and observations). I hope this different take could make a positive contribution to the field of the psychosocial, and beyond.

1.7 Outline of the work

This section presents the general structure and arguments of this thesis. The first three chapters provide the necessary context for further analysis. Chapter 1 introduces the general scope of the study; Chapters 2 and 3 present the theoretical framework and the method of data collection and analysis, respectively. Chapter 4 to 8 are the empirical parts. Chapter 4 claims that the anxiety observed among the participants is triggered by precariousness. Chapters 5 to 8 derive from the worrying observations made in Chapter 4: musicians are particularly prone to anxiety triggered by their working lives. Chapter 5 focuses on the participants' precarious living conditions, exemplified by the housing situation. Subsequent chapters (6 to 8) discuss the working conditions for musicians observed among the participants. The structure of these chapters follow a similar pattern: they outline different features of the musicians' working lives, their psychosocial impact on workers and the coping strategies and defence mechanisms developed. Finally, the concluding chapter includes the main points observed in this thesis: firstly, the features of the music industries have a psychosocial impact on individuals. Secondly, to cope with precariousness, participants have developed coping strategies and defence mechanisms. Thirdly, these last two points can be assessed through social variables of gender and social class background. Moreover, Chapter 9 presents the limitations and the implications of the findings for future research. The purpose of this paragraph was to present the general structure of the study. In the following paragraphs, I will outline the content of each chapter more thoroughly.

Chapter 1-3: Setting the scene	**Introduction**	**Literature review**	**Method chapter**
Chapter 4-5: First accounts of the mental health and precarious living of participants	Pervasive anxiety and its social distribution of coolness and confidence and ways of coping	Living the bohemian lifestyle: precariousness, housing situation and social inequalities	
Chapter 6-8: Core empirical chapters: features of the music industries, their effects on participants and ways of coping	Multiplication of the sources of income to 'make ends meet': contingent work, (forced) entrepreneurialism within and outside the music industries	Interpersonal relationships in the music industries: negotiations, individualisation under precariousness	Organised distribution and recognition in the music industries and its impacts on participants
Chapter 9: Conclusion	Psychosocial impact on selves	Limitations of the research	Implications and recommendations

Table 1: Chapter Structure

Chapter 2 provides the theoretical background of this study by defining the main concepts used. The chapter defines the concept of individualisation, from its early to current use in sociology, especially in relation to social structure and modernity. While individualisation may be considered at first as an opportunity for self-exploration outside of the traditional social structures, many authors warn against precarious freedom and increasingly standardised life paths (Giddens, 1990; Giddens, 1991; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1996; Sennett, 1998). Following this view, individualisation is rather forced, co-opted by capitalism as productive force (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999; Honneth, 2004) and harmful to selves and to collectives (Lasch, 1991/1979; Taylor, 2002; Ehrenberg, 2011). Moreover, in late capitalism, self-realisation is commodified and marketed into consumer lifestyles, such as bohemianism (Featherstone, 1990; Giddens, 1991; Frank, 1998; Brooks, 2001; Honneth, 2004; Eikhof and Haunschild, 2006), which reinforces the white male middle-class norm (Skeggs, 2005). The chapter continues by outlining the importance of work (and activity) in the project of self-formation in modernity and in late

capitalism. While cultural labour was originally defined as 'good work' (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011, pp.30–35) against the alienation and exploitation of workers from the first industrial revolution onwards (Marx, 2011/1932; Mills, 1951), the chapter presents how the work of the artist and craftsmanship have been co-opted by late capitalism, which may prevent individuals from flourishing (Taylor, 2002; Menger, 2003; de Gaulejac, 2015). Finally, sociological conceptions of anxiety, narcissism and recognition are developed in this chapter with the claim that those are 'pathologies of individualisation'.

Chapter 3 outlines data collection, i.e., semi-directed interviews, participant observation and qualitative longitudinal research using unstructured interviews, and data analysis inspired by grounded theory. Furthermore, the rationale for the composition of the sample is provided. Moreover, I present how the study was informed by a preliminary phase of fieldwork prior to the fieldwork undertaken during the PhD programme. Another section of the chapter explains in further details the assessment of anxiety, precariousness, social class background, coping strategies and defence mechanisms based on the assessment tools adapted from the existing ones and the literature on the subject. For example, the assessment of precariousness draws on the approach proposed by Nussbaum and the Swedish level of living survey[13] (Sten et al., n.d.) by considering four variables: precariousness in housing, work, relationships with others and physical and mental health. Finally, the last section explains how the data collected was coded using the qualitative software analysis NVivo 11.

Chapter 4 – the first empirical chapter of the thesis – evaluates anxiety among musicians. It argues that anxiety, when considered as the result of structural conditions, such as precariousness, is a good indicator of the quality of working lives in the music industries. Drawing on the concept of ontological security and individualisation, this chapter seeks to develop further these concepts by considering

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[13] The Swedish level of living survey is a survey which has been looking since 1968 onwards at the quality of life of individuals. Components of the survey include: 'Health and access to care; Employment and working conditions; Economic resources; Educational resources; Family and social integration; Housing and neighbourhood facilities; Security of life and property; Recreation and culture; Political resources'. See more at: https://snd.gu.se/en/catalogue/study/ext0007 [Accessed 20 August 2018].

social variables, such as the gender and social class background and by using feminist studies (Skeggs, 2005; McRobbie, 2007b). Moreover, although experienced individually, this chapter considers anxiety as socially distributed.

Chapter 5 looks at participants' accommodation in a context where they eke out a living in expensive cities. While housing is crucial to secure ontological security, the chapter observes participants' struggle to secure decent accommodation. It considers housing as a focal point to understand living standard and social class background inequalities. It shows how, among participants with a middle-class background (but genuinely poor), the association with a bohemian lifestyle marks a social distinction from individuals with a working-class background (Bourdieu, 1984; Skeggs, 2004). Moreover, the chapter emphasises the importance of 'familisation', help from relatives in access to accommodation (Shildrick et al., 2015), economic support from relatives, considering the precariousness of working lives in the cultural industries and beyond. Finally, the chapter depicts the refuge into bohemianism as a coping strategy to bear with increasing precariousness and to legitimate genuine poor living conditions. Consequently, by referring to the contemporary versions of the bohemian myth, participants legitimated genuine poor living conditions, which turned uncertainty into a voluntary choice.

Heading toward the part of the study which looks at psychosocial impact of features of the music industries, chapter 6 examines participants' means of making a living in the music industries. Drawing on the existing literature, the findings of the present study confirm that work is generally short-term, project based, precarious, and insecure (Gill, 2011, Gill and Pratt, 2009; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011; Neff, Wissinger and Zukin, 2005; Terranova, 2000). As a result of digitalisation, convergence culture and casualization of the field, the participants are multiskilled: they compose, record and mix they own music using digital audio workstations. Moreover, they have developed the skills that allow them to be their own web designers, booking agent, publisher and press relation professional. Beyond celebratory discourses extoling this phenomenon as emancipatory, enabling an entrepreneurial mind set, this chapter questions the burden associated with the multiplication of tasks. Moreover, this chapter considers the diversity of participants' sources of income since none of them live out of their music. While some participants consider their skills as transferable within and outside the field of music, many others are, yet, more familiar with humdrum jobs. This chapter also looks at participants working in the platform

economy in order to multiply their sources of income. Findings suggested, however, that work in the platform economy is uncertain, poorly paid and reinforces social background inequalities. Finally, the chapter examines ways of coping with a work that is pervasive and precarious. It considers hope as a powerful tool for enduring precariousness and self-exploitation.

Chapter 7 discusses the interpersonal implications of work in the music industries and their effects on self-realisation. It claims that working features in the music industries, such as forced hedonism and mandatory networking, plus anti-social and long hours, privilege instrumental relationships at the expense of non-instrumental relationships. Moreover, this chapter shows how these features of work reinforce gender and social class background inequalities. The chapter starts by looking at the importance of physical networks and peer-to-peer relationships in the music industries in gaining meaningful job opportunities. Drawing on existing literature, it affirms that the maintenance of these networks is concentrated on narrow geographical clusters. The chapter also shows that participants rely on gatekeepers as a way to reduce the structural uncertainty of the use value of the production of texts, and that this reliance overemphasises instrumental relationships. The chapter explores further the negative impact of the working features in the music industries on participants by looking at homophily between workers which, my research shows, tend to prevent the participants from having romantic relationships and incites fast and fleeting relationships. The chapter asks whether traditional lifestyles associated with work in the music industries can enhance self-exploration. Findings suggested that the promises of individualisation and negotiation of gender norms and roles translate into more (rather than less) traditional patterns, which is in line with the claim made by Adkins (Adkins, 1999; Adkins, 2000; Adkins, 2005). Therefore, the participants developed coping strategies such as fantasy, denial and refusal of engagement in personal relationships, especially among female participants who seclude themselves from meaningful romantic relationships and sexual opportunities, and these coping strategies are explored in the chapter

Chapter 8 continues the analysis of the psychosocial impact of work in the music industries by examining the manufacturing of recognition and distribution. Drawing on previous work that looks at recognition, distribution and well-being (Fraser and Honneth, 2003; Sayer, 2009; Honneth and Rusch, 2013), as well as primary data, the chapter begins by showing the great disparities in terms of distribution of

wages and recognition in the music industries. The chapter demonstrates that participants struggled to appreciate their contribution to the field, which ultimately led to suffering. In a context where income and wages are scarce, the chapter outlines how the participants might overinvest in recognition as a way of compensation. However, although recognition should not be trivialised, the forms of recognition granted to participants may appear as tokenistic and consequently harmful. Therefore, two forms of recognition are defined: legitimate recognition, which enhances a sense of legitimacy, and fleeting recognition, which can further erode participants' self-esteem. On the whole, it is observed that the manufacturing of recognition and distribution in the music industries makes participants' self-esteem oscillate between a sense of grandiosity and worthlessness. Finally, the chapter examines the coping strategies and defences mechanisms developed by the participants in relation to recognition and distribution: delusion of grandeur, fantasy, feelings of omnipotence, hope, rationalisation, intellectualisation, displacement, denial, cynical detachment and blasé attitudes. Overall, this chapter provides evidence that recognition is an essential need, which when denied, deeply affects individuals' sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

Chapter 9 summarises the main points and findings of the study. It highlights the contribution of the study to the field, the limitations of the study, potential future research and practice and policy implications of the results. The chapter starts by restating one of the main findings of the study, that is, precariousness under neoliberalism (work in the music industries is taken here as a case study) has a psychosocial impact on the participants: it affects their ontological security and triggers anxiety. Moreover, the chapter reminds that the personal responses to the psychosocial impact are dependent upon social variables of gender and working-class backgrounds. Following these observations, the chapter prompts the reader to another key finding of this study: the participants have developed coping strategies and defence mechanisms against the precariousness of the present. These responses include hope and cognitive dissonance, fantasy, avoidance, denial, cynical detachment, inflated view of the self, avoidance and attention's displacement towards another object. In the final part of the chapter I outline the limitations of the work as well as possible further investigations and practical implications of the findings for practice and policy.

Chapter 2
Consequences of Individualisation: Pathologies of Freedom

2.1 Outline of the chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature on the self with a focus on questions of individualisation and flourishing in late modernity. The introductory section provides a brief overview of the concept of individualisation. It then goes on to highlight the importance of work in self-realisation. This literature is necessary for the development of the key argument of this thesis, which is that in late modernity, the process of individualisation induces 'pathologies of individualisation', e.g. unhealthy narcissism, overdependence on recognition, unbearable anxiety, refuge into work and bohemianism. These concepts are presented in the later sections.

As in a double bind message, the self aims at individualisation and flourishing, while being constrained by social institutions and social constructions, such as gender and social class background. A double bind is '(a)n inescapable dilemma involving conflicting demands that allow no right or satisfactory response' (Oxford Reference, 2017). The concept of a 'double bind' was originally developed by Bateson et al. (1956) from the Palo-Alto school to illustrate how failures in parental communication induce schizophrenia in children. My use of the term in this thesis does not depend on any assumptions concerning schizophrenia but recognises the usefulness of the concept for assessing the disturbing nature of some forms of communication. A classic double bind is 'be natural, be yourself'. Through explicit or implicit order, the subject feels the impossibility to satisfy one of those two demands without disregarding the other, leading to discomfort (Wittezaele, 2008, p.46; Picard and Marc, 2015, p.37).

While I argue that the process of individualisation and its pathologies increased under neoliberalism and late capitalism, each section also presents them as part of the project of modernity. To make such arguments, I draw on moral philosophy, psychoanalysis and sociology. In other words, the main argument is that while individualisation offers unique opportunities for experimentation of the self, relationships and lifestyles, taking distance from normative, oppressive and misogynistic models of life, individualisation also burdens the self, inducing 'pathologies of individualisation'.

In investigating self-identity, one finds oneself confronted by various theorisations, particularly in sociology and psychoanalysis. Theoretically, as Elliott puts it, 'no idea is more unstable, flexible or pliable in contemporary social theory than that of the self' (Elliott, 2014, p.15). Conceptualisation of self-identity either emphasises social structures, agency or childhood experiences (du Gay et al., 2000; Elliott, 2014). Concepts defining human subjects includes the following: individual, agent, people, self, self-identity, subject, identity. Moreover, those concepts often encompass various meanings according to the theory used.

2.2 The concept of individualisation: From origins to current understandings

Since the 19th Century, thinkers have looked at the consequences of modernity for the self. Contrary to the positive (and sometimes lyrical) accounts of self-exploration in the Enlightenment, intellectuals looking at modernity have generally considered it as an era of disturbance. The term modernity was coined by Baudelaire in his essay "The Painter of the Modern Life" (Baudelaire, 2010/1863). For Baudelaire, 'modernity is the transient, the fleeting, the contingent', which presents a possibility to break with the *status quo,* generating both opportunities and anxieties (Baudelaire, 2010, p.420).

In Marx and Engel's words, capitalism means that 'all that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his kind' (Frank, 1998; Brooks, 2001; Honneth, 2004; Lloyd, 2010). However, drawing on Hegelianism, Marx also considers that modernity causes self-estrangement, i.e. 'the alienation of man's essence, man's loss of objectivity and his loss of realness as self-discovery, manifestation of his nature, objectification and realisation' (Marx, 1999/1932, p.72).

Likewise, some of the founders of sociology such as Durkheim, Weber or Simmel looked at the impact of modernity on social structures and the self (Simmel, 1978/1903; Durkheim, 2006/1897; Weber, 2012/1905). In his study 'On Suicide', Durkheim correlated a higher risk of suicide with anomie, a mismatch of norms inducing an absence of integration of these norms and values (Durkheim, 2010/1895). For Durkheim, individualisation results from the lack of visible and rigid traditional social structures that could restrain individuals from their limitless desires. In return, individuals are rendered responsible for their own life, which appears to be unbearable. Weber sees in modernity the development of rationalisation and the disenchantment

of the world (Weber, 2012/1905). This process is leading to bureaucratisation, hence the concept of the 'iron cage' in which the individual finds herself trapped, losing individualisation and autonomy. Moreover, the modern society carries rationalisation into the private spheres, changing interpersonal relationships into goal-oriented rationality. For Simmel, the modern urban individual develops a 'blasé attitude' as a form of 'psychological resistance against psychological exhaustion' (Simmel, 1950/1903, pp.409–24). Simmel also believes that the pluralisation of lifestyles, while strengthening individual autonomy, is also leading to the dissolution of group affiliation.

I shall now turn to current understanding of the concept of individualisation which considers the complex relationship individuals develop with it. Indeed, individuals are trapped in an institutionalised 'double bind' relationship: exhorted to be themselves, following standardised life paths, while trying to develop as autonomous beings engaged in a meaningful relationship with themselves, others and the world. This seems as comfortable for the selves as the exhortation 'be spontaneous!' In other words, it is a life where 'nothing is really prohibited, but nothing is really achievable'[21] (Ehrenberg, 2000, p.14). While this situation creates great frustrations in the individuals' lives, I also present their different attempts to construct meaning.

First, I shall briefly define how social institutions shape the lives of individuals. To summarise, social structures are instances of socialisation providing norms, values and ways of being in the world to individuals, e.g. social institutions are family, waged-work, school and unions. Per se, social institutions structure and give shape to social interactions and participate in the reproduction of the social order. Social institutions are symbolic social structures in charge of forming (social) subjects through, for instance, self-discipline, body posture and accent (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Bourdieu, 2010; Dubet, 2010). However, while the role given to social structures is in constant change, it appears to be particularly disrupted under the influence of neoliberalism (Foucault et al., 2004). On the one hand, social institutions provide social integration, norms, values and somehow a road map of 'how to behave'. On the other side, as with any framework, social institutions can be oppressive and rigid, preventing the individuals from developing agency and autonomy (Giddens, 1986, pp.16–28).

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[21] *'Rien n'est vraiment interdit, rien n'est vraiment possible'*, translation by the author.

In the last decades, the contemporary field of social sciences renewed its interest in the concept of individualisation. Its focus has developed around the idea that social structures such as family, the state, waged work and 'big categories' such as class or gender roles were more flexible, leaving to the individuals the role of giving a structure and a meaning of the everyday life. Known as late, advanced or post-, this second phase of modernity presents new challenges and opportunities to the self.

For many authors, individualisation and the multiplication of instances of socialisation have positive consequences for the self. Giddens, while acknowledging the burden of self-identity today, also sees in these challenges new opportunities to experience new forms of identities (Giddens, 1991). Although 'pure' and 'free-floating', Giddens does not see interpersonal relationships as fragmented and short-termist (Giddens, 1991, p. 88). On the contrary, Giddens sees in the blank space left by the corrosion of social institutions such as marriage, a renewal and a possibility for the self to experience new forms of selfhood, emotional growth, intimacies and engagement with others (Giddens, 1990, pp. 112–151). Through individualisation, the self becomes more reflexive and an actor of their own life. However, for Elliott, Giddens's view on the self is too close to current liberal ideology of individualism i.e. the idea that sovereign individuals constitute the centre of society (Elliott, 2014, p.48). Such a view undermines the idea that self-reflexivity has transformed into a form of social control (Elliott, 2014, p.49).

Feminist studies also gave enlightening accounts of the positive consequences of the loosening and multiplication of social institutions. They showed that instances of socialisation, e.g. family, waged work, or school, were oppressive, holding the status quo between gender roles and class (Pringle, 1992; Skeggs, 1997; Gill, 2007; Evans et al., 2014; Disch and Hawkesworth, 2016). Family, for example, is a space where the self 'traditionally' develops but it is also a space of oppression for the vast majority of women. Sections 4.3 and 7.4 further develop this feminist critique of post-traditional forms of oppression by using primary data.

However, individualisation is also often considered in terms of its negative effects on the self. For some authors, individualisation results in 'precarious freedom', leaving individuals with the questions 'who am I?' and 'what do I want?' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1996; Sennett, 1998; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001; Pugh, 2015). This 'reflexive modernisation' means that the self is responsible for its own fate and has to endure new risks coming from the economy and the environment in a global

world (Lash and Lury, 2007). For all these authors, even if oppressive, social institutions used to provide a shield against the market - a protective and reassuring cocoon on which individuals could either rely on to provide a 'road-map' of their life or inversely, as a model against which they could rebel. Inversely, the current imposed autonomy burdens the self with suffering and triggers new anxieties about life (Sennett, 1998; Wilkinson, 2001). Moreover, such an absence of limitation on the aspiration of individuals also translates into narcissism (Lasch, 1991/1979). Therefore, individuals are 'set free' (Lash and Urry, 2000, p.4), 'cut adrift from the social structures' (Giddens, 1991; Giddens, 1990; Giddens and Sutton, 2017), 'obliged to be free' (Rose, 1996), 'corroded' (Sennett, 1998), 'exhorted to be themselves' (Ehrenberg, 2000) and 'forced to self-realise' (Honneth, 2004). Boltanski and Chiapello (1999, p.516-522) coined the term 'imposed self-realisation' and Honneth (Honneth, 2004, p.469) the term 'organized self-realisation' to describe a context where individuals are forced to put themselves at the centre of their life-plan, while obliged to follow standardised life paths, hence the contradiction leading to suffering. Torn between the institutional demands fed by a deregulated economic system and their own self-reflexivity, the lives of individuals become a fiction where they seem to suffer more than they flourish (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999; Honneth, 2004, p.474). For Ehrenberg, the unbearable daily life finds a way-out into depression, competitive behaviour, engagement in risky activities and consumption of drugs (Ehrenberg, 1996; Ehrenberg, 2000; Ehrenberg, 2010; Ehrenberg, 2011).

Moreover, some authors state that existing critics of capitalism and social organisation, e.g. artistic critique or feminism, tend to be co-opted by capitalism in order to exploit new resources on individuals. For these authors, the ideal of self-realisation (especially through work), meritocracy and gender equality, have been trivialised and turned into a productive force (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999; Honneth, 2004; Fraser, 2017). The critiques of capitalism, originally favouring solidarity, have been turned into a neoliberal individualism promoting careerism and justifying new forms of inequality and exploitation. Women, for instance, are now forced to adopt an entrepreneurial state of mind, favouring individual achievement over inter-dependence with others (Scharff, 2016).

The burdensome aspects of individualisation are also harmful to collective association and solidarity, which in return preclude individuals from flourishing. As Beck notes, although individualisation frees people from certain ties, it also leads to

competitiveness and isolation (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011, p.225). Boltanski and Chiapello calls it the project city ('*la cite par projet*') where personal and professional relationships are blurred, leading to unsettling uncertainties about the quality of relationships (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999, p.552). In this context, individuals struggle to know if a relationship is friendly or part of a 'hidden agenda'. Likewise, for Sennett, this is a world of detachment, superficial cooperativeness, weak ties and interchangeable relationships where the self is corroded (Elliott, 2014, pp.139–140). For Lasch, individualisation produces a cynical detachment triggered by the fear of being affectively dependent, making relationships colourless, superficial and unsatisfactory (Lasch, 1991/1979, p.72). Also for Bauman (1997, p.89 quoted in Elliot, 2014, p.154):

> To keep the game short means to beware long-term commitments. To refuse to be 'fixed' one way or the other. Not to get tied to one place, however pleasurable the present stop-over may feel. Not to wed one's life to one vocation only. Not to swear consistency and loyalty to anything or anybody.

McRobbie (2002, p.528), drawing on Augé (1995), claims that it is a world where:

> Social interaction is fast and fleeting, friendships need to be put on hold, or suspended on trust and when such a non-category of multi-skilled persons is extended across a whole sector of young working people, there is a sharp sense of transience, impermanence and even solitude.

For Taylor, the romantic ideal inherited from the Enlightenment and its emphasis on 'authenticity' also lost its purpose, turning it into an egocentric quest for the self (Honneth, 2004, p.310). Such behaviours, including narcissism, may be understood as ways to cope with the fear of abandonment (Lasch, 1991/1979). Individualisation means that the self is, at the same time, retrenched in what is left of itself, constantly looking towards the outside, with little possibility of having meaningful relationships.

In other words, what I mean by individualisation is a process in which individuals in Western societies may be less anchored to traditional non-market social institutions, e.g. the nuclear family, waged labour and religion, than during the Fordist era. Yet, individualisation does not mean the disappearance of social institutions but the multiplication of them (Ehrenberg, 2010, p.14). However, the emphasis here on the process of individualisation should not overshadow the remaining importance of 'big categories', such as class, gender and ethnicity. These are crucial variables in the

understanding of individualisation, self-development, flourishing, or inversely, suffering and ill-being.[22] I shall develop this point further in the next section.

In the current advanced capitalist era, with softer social institutions, the shaping of the self is also said to be actively done through the consumption of goods and services, especially through niche lifestyle markets (Featherstone, 1990; du Gay, 1996, Honneth, 2004). This point is not a celebration of consumerism. On the contrary, the relationship between consumerism and modern personhood has taken on much greater importance after WWII, often at the expense of other sensible experiences based on interpersonal relationships or non-market driven experiences of life (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997; Frank, 1998; Hesmondhalgh, 2005, p.25; Turner, 2008). Moreover, I would rather argue that this lifestyle consumption does not provide meaningful experiences, albeit I agree that 'meaningful experiences' remains complex to define. For Hesmondhalgh, rather than being a critique of existing economic structures, the tendency for leisure to be seen as a key mean of self-definition does not radically conflict with the needs of the capitalist economy (Hesmondhalgh, 2008, p.8; Hesmondhalgh and Meier, 2015, p.8). It is not just 'lifestyles' which are standardised, but self-actualisation is itself packaged and distributed according to market criteria (Honneth, 2004, p.198). Contrary to the conformism of the Fordist era, the contemporary social experience offers a myriad of choices, where the self ought to make a voluntary self-defining action as an individual – for instance the colour and the model of their sneakers or a genre of music. Moreover, these choices are shaped by an increasing array of cultural intermediaries who design the trends and tastes to be disseminated amongst all consumers (Honneth, 2004, p.197). Such individualisation through consumption blurs the frontiers between consumers' choice and agency. While modernity has opened up the project of the self, it is now strongly influenced by the standardising effect of commodity capitalism (Honneth, 2004, p.196). Since the self is also shaped by the consumption of services and goods from niche lifestyle markets, I argue that we should not discard social class analysis at the expense of undermining how the means to self-realisation are socially distributed.

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[22] See Alford for an account of multivariate relations in an argument. Alford uses Durkheim's work on suicide as an example of multivariate relations. As well as Foreground interpretive argument (see section 3.1), this thesis draws on what Alford calls a Foreground Multivariate Argument (Alford, 1998, pp.54-71). Following Alford (1998, pp.70-71), the Foreground Multivariate Argument 'attempts to discover and separate the relative effect of different independent variables', such as class, gender and well-being.

2.3 Theories of individualisation and social class

Theories of individualisation tend to undermine the importance of social class. However, class is much more than just a sociological concept – it is an embodied instrument of distinction shaping our sense of being and our experience of the world (Skeggs, 2003; Sayer, 2009, p.22; Bourdieu, 2010). I propose here to turn to Bourdieusian class analysis to fill this gap. Indeed, Bourdieu warns against simplistic explanations of the self that would bluntly oppose class collectivism and individualised identities (Savage, 2000, p.108 in Sayer, 2009, p.80). Those two dimensions are mingled and should be considered altogether at the risk of simplifying the social reality.

As one of the biggest defenders of the concept of individualisation, Giddens, with his 'reflexive project of the self', has been particularly criticised for not considering the importance of class. Atkinson asks if the reflexivity celebrated by Giddens is not a middle-class disposition, and therefore an instrument of domination. Moreover, for Atkinson, Giddens' lack of consideration of class makes him 'an adversary and antagonist of class analysis' (Atkinson, 2007, p.546). While I agree that Giddens' account of individualisation tends to understate social class, such a strong assessment is unfair. Indeed, Giddens considered individualisation, self-realisation and class as various aspects of self-identity in late capitalism. In Giddens' own words: 'access to means of self-actualisation becomes itself one of the dominant focuses of class division and the distribution of inequalities generally' (Giddens, 1991, p.228). Giddens' claim is in line with other authors who consider that the means of self-realisation depends on the distribution of economic, social, symbolic and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2010; Skeggs, 2003; Allen, 2016; Allen et al., 2013).

For Featherstone, the young, highly educated sectors of the middle-class develop a disposition towards 'stylization and aestheticization of life' (Featherstone, 1990, p.97). This 'bohemian ethos' is illustrated by the modern self from the second half of the 20th Century onwards with their 'aestheticization of everyday life' and the thirst for individual experience, forming a set of ideologies and discourses among the middle-class (Featherstone, 1990, p.66). The autonomy, authenticity and personal experience outlined above echoes this new 'subculture' aiming to 'maximize the freedom and self-realisation of the individual' (Frank, 1998, p.15). Nowadays, the word 'bohemian' is widely known and used to qualify a certain category of individuals associated with a liberal lifestyle. When linked to consumer culture, the term bohemian

is often replaced by other terms such as 'bobo' (Brooks, 2001), 'neo-bohemian' (Lloyd, 2010), 'arty', 'hipster', or 'creative' (Florida, 2014). Ultimately, those are the 'monikers' of a group of fairly young, middle-class individuals seeking self-exploration through lifestyle consumption. Furthermore, as Eikhof and Haunschild also noted, 'it is today more difficult to identify bohemians in the classical sense', and 'the contemporary understanding of 'bohemian'' is broader' (Eikhof and Haunschild, 2006, p.237).

Contemporary bohemianism is neither classless nor the sole domain of the white middle-class. In the classical understanding of bohemianism, the social distinction was illustrated by the distinction between the bohemians and the dandys (Seigel, 1999, p.104). On one side was the bohemian - the poor, working-class individual living a hand to mouth life – and on the other side was the dandy - an individual of 'independent means' who could rely on a safety net if necessary. This distinction was already made clear in early works on bohemianism (de Balzac, 2014/1844; Murger, 2007/1851; Baudelaire, 2010). As for the other 'monikers' presented above that appeal to our social imaginaries, the term 'bobo' lacks a strong sociological definition to be used as such (Clerval, 2005). Yet, the classical distinction between the bohemian and the dandy made by Baudelaire, Murger and Balzac could be a useful starting point, highlighting the economic disparities between individuals. While in appearance, those who live in bohemianism share the same lifestyle, their social, cultural and economic capital differ greatly. Oakley noted a distinction between those who are genuinely poor and those who adopt voluntarily the material scarcity of the bohemian life (Oakley, 2009b, p.290). This 'avant-garde bohemia' (in Bourdieu's sense) shuns symbolic and economic capital (Hesmondhalgh, 2006, p.215). Following Bourdieu's variant of the 'petit-bourgeois taste', this voluntary frugality seems to be more a sign of social distinction than a political renunciation of market values (Bourdieu, 2010, p.339). However, such dedication to art for art's sake and a frugal lifestyle may also hide complex family trajectories, ranging from ambition and hope for social upgrading to a desperate attempt to avoid the shame of social downgrading (Bourdieu, 1975).

However, class location is complex and escapes simple dichotomies of working-class versus middle-class or upper-class. When assessing individuals' class location, the economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital of individuals need to be taken as variables in the social space (Bourdieu, 1986). Moreover, their social background and current social trajectories are crucial to understanding where to locate

individuals, as class boundaries become subtler when emerging capital is taken into account (Savage et al., 2015, p.110). Yet, such an understanding of the role played by social class location is crucial since in the theories of the new middle-class formation, culture is said to be fundamental in the making of selves who are supposedly 'aesthetic, prosthetic, reflexive, rational, enterprising, omnivorousness and mobile' (Skeggs, 2005, p.973).

In spite of meritocratic discourses, only a few individuals with a working-class or lower middle-class background manage to blend into the crowd of the most privileged in cultural and social capital (O'Brien et al., 2016). While the field of cultural and creative industries has invisible barriers of entry (Menger, 2009, p.559), individuals tend to be violently reminded of the existing patterns of social domination (Allen, 2016).

This discrimination is not (only) the result of the selection between pairs but also the embodiment of a specific relation towards a life made of resilience. Indeed, Allen remarks that individuals with a middle-class background cope better with the social and economic contingency systemic in cultural and creative industries. Middle-class workers may even take advantage of these transitory moments to 'work' on themselves and develop soft-skills crucial for future employment. Conversely, individuals with a working-class background have difficulties at bouncing back. They may start to question themselves and freeze into panic during transitory moments (Allen, 2016).

In relation to self-making and class, there has been an extended body of research on youth, precariousness and delayed or remodelled transition to adulthood (Allen, 2016; Allen et al., 2013; Allen and Hollingworth, 2013; Mendick et al., 2015; Côté, 2014; MacDonald, 2011; Shildrick et al., 2015; Webster et al., 2004). Recent reports on youth focused their attention on the concept of 'precarity' supposedly ever-present among young adults (Office for National Statistics, 2013; European Youth Forum, 2014; Internation Labour Organization, 2015).

2.4 Self-realisation through (creative) work

This section looks at the role played by work and activity in self-construction, both historically and in recent times. The section presents how the craftsman and artist ethos, mingled with neoliberal entrepreneurialism, is invested as an ideal form of work, supposedly preventing alienation and exploitation. However, as is the case in previous

sections, I emphasise the blurring between individuals' drive for individualisation and flourishing and its recent co-opting by capitalism. This section offers the theoretical basis for chapter 5 that looks at the psychosocial consequences of defining oneself too much through work. Indeed, in a context of individualisation and social and economic contingency, the selves seek to invest their time and energy in meaningful activities. Work appears for some as a unique source of self-realisation.

Work is a key feature in the life of individuals. As a Janus-like figure with two heads, work provides a means of achieving subsistence, socialisation, social recognition and self-realisation. However, work may also lead to servitude, suffering, exploitation and alienation, leading to self-estrangement (Marx, 2011/1932; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011; Mills, 1951; de Gaulejac, 2015, p.44; Grint and Nixon, 2015; Veltman, 2016). Paradoxically, the importance of work for well-being and flourishing is often revealed when individuals are deprived of it (Jahoda et al., 2002). For Linhart, losing employment equates to 'losing the self' (Linhart, 2009). Fromm considers that work ensures we remain connected to the social system in a productive way (Thomson, 2009, p.44).

The concepts of work, labour and activity need definition. Work is an '(a)ctivity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a purpose or result' (English Oxford Living Dictionnaries, 2018). The verb to 'do work' means to 'be engaged in physical or mental activity in order to achieve a result' (English Oxford Living Dictionnaries, 2018). In the *Human Condition*, the philosopher Arendt makes a strong distinction between work and labour (Arendt, 1999; de Gaulejac, 2015, p.30). Arendt defines labour (arbeit) as the activity of the *Animal Laborans,* commanded by natural or biological necessity. Labour is only a way to sustain life, such as the production of food, shelter and physical reproduction. On the contrary, work is the result of a human activity - from the *Homo Faber* - that belongs to the artificial creation of things, e.g. the work of an artist. Work is not endless and, as a result of a production, leaves an artefact (a work of art for instance). Work is different from activity. To put it bluntly, work is done in exchange for an economic reward whereas activity is often done without such an exchange. Yet, an economic reward (or its absence) does not make it more or less exploitative (Hesmondhalgh, 2010). Indeed, there are many areas in life which should be kept away from the invading economic reason. Recent debates surrounding the platform/gig/sharing economy illustrate such tension (Taylor, 2017). Contrary to current trends pushing towards self-realisation

through a paid activity, Gorz (Banks, 2007, p.169) suggests that 'the breaking of the sociological and psychological bond between paid work and meaningful self-identity can re-establish moral legitimacy and social value as autonomous activities'.

The relationship between activity and flourishing is complex. For numerous authors, flourishing is found through activity (Mills, 1951, p.252). According to Hegel's poetic expression, by means of activity, the subject is involved in 'translating itself from the night of possibility into the day of actuality' (Fromm, 1961). For Hegel, self-construction begins with the instrumental experience the self is making of themselves (Honneth, 2013, p.62). The subject learns how to know themselves in the accomplishment of work (Honneth, 2013, p.64). Freud also considers work as a means of attaining good mental health (cited in Wilkinson, 2001, p.39). However, Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2011), drawing on Ezzy, Weil and Ricoeur, recognise that the notion of self-realisation through activity is controversial and needs to be tied to understandings of, and debates about, the 'good life'.

When considering the relationship between work and self-realisation, the work of artists and craftsmen has often been considered as exemplary, at the risk of being idealised. This idealisation was particularly prominent in the Arts and Crafts movement, inspired by the architect William Morris and the theorist and critic John Ruskin, which arose at the end of the 19th century in England and Northern America. Their critique of utilitarian production and industrial society led to considering the work of artists and craftsmen as the most precious form of human production (Mills, 1951).

The presentation of the work of craftsmen and artists as 'good work' continued in later sociological examinations of working lives (Mills, 1951). In *White Collar*, Mills presents the work of an artist or craftsman as 'good work' as opposed to white collar work (1966, 254-7). Drawing on Morris, Marx, Mead, de Man, and Gentile, Mills considers six points that make craftsmanship 'good work'. Firstly, the hope to do good work is the main motivation. Secondly, neither money nor reputation is a goal. Thirdly, 'the tie between the product and the producer is psychologically possible' (Mills, 1951). Fourthly, by being the master of his activity, the craftsman is his own master. Fifth, the worker produces himself when he produces goods as '(h)is work is a poem in action' (Mills, 1951). Lastly, Mills' sixth point is at the same time the most interesting and disturbing affirmation in light of recent critique on creative and immaterial labour. For Mills, craft work is incorporated into life in such a way that

work and play or consumption and production are blended and indistinguishable, hence free work is welcomed. In Mills' own words:

> In order to give his work freshness of creativity, the craftsman [sic] must, at times, open himself up to those influences that only affect us when our attentions are relaxed (Mills, 1951, p.223).

However, it is important to put Mills' brilliant critique of the social consequences of the Fordist division of labour into the context of the post-WWII period. For Mills, Fordism was reorganising the society, diminishing any possibility of individualisation especially amongst the middle-class.

Marx considered work to be the path through which humans realise their humanity (Mills, 1951, p.252). Contrary to waged labour, he considered artistic activity as a model of non-alienation. Marx (Marx, 2011/1932) argues that human flourishing is achieved through meaningful, non-repetitive and creative work. He considers the 'complete or accomplished man', as opposed to the alienated man, to be the one who reclaims mastery of his own means of production and the use value of his production, as well as a man who organises his life between intellectual and manual forms of work. For Marx, work has to be a means of deploying the entirety of one's capacities (Marx, 2011/1932, p.256). For him, every individual would be omniscient and versatile rather than the consumer of the expressive work of others in a communist society (Menger, 2003, p.16).

However, for Weeks, Marx and Mills' distinction between alienated versus unalienated labour are nostalgic ideals, relying on essentialist notions of the self (2007 in Hesmondhalgh, 2008, p.116). Yet, the activity of the craftsmen and artists are still conceived as 'good work', including in work written by academic writers (Sennett, 1998; Crawford, 2010). Although these recent works contain interesting views on how to accommodate the current pressures of post-Fordist forms of work and well-being, they also run the risk of being co-opted by the recent neoliberal discourses in the cultural and creative industries and creative economy, as stated in the introduction.

Overall, the growing literature on cultural work written since the early 2000's has been challenging the assumption that cultural work was good work. McRobbie argued that:

> There is a utopian thread embedded in this wholehearted attempt to make-over the world of work into something closer to a life of enthusiasm and enjoyment (2002, p.523).

For others, such as Hesmondhalgh, self-realisation in creative practices and the relative autonomy individuals may enjoy in their work makes creative jobs highly desirable. This specific appeal for creative jobs results in an oversupply of workers, which might serve as a mechanism of control – the selection is tight and wages are kept low (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, p.8). More generally, as Taylor suggests, the artists are not only becoming an archetype of the workers but also of the individuals, i.e. passionately (if not desperately) immersed in their work in the search of their selves (Taylor, 1992; Stahl, 2012, p.25). By extension, the 'artist becomes in some way the paradigm of the human being as agent of original self-definition' (Taylor, 1992, p.62). Contrary to work under Fordism, cultural workers' personal identity is fully engaged in their work, and the rewards associated with cultural labour are seriously spoiled by the anxiety triggered by the perpetual research for new projects, the uncertainty of earnings and the need for keeping up with trends, learning and techniques (Gill and Pratt, 2009).

In the context of individualisation and post-Fordism, work may be overstated as a means of self-construction. Yet, work is rightly considered as a chance to 'work' on oneself, to become more self-reflexive, to develop the self and to find meaning (Heelas, 2002, p.83). However, motivation to work with the hope of self-realisation resembles the incentive made to individuals to 'be themselves'. The psychosocial impact arising from this tension between the hope for self-realisation and institutional incentives is to be handled individually by the self. Moreover, in addition to the instrumental dimension of work and the social recognition, work contains a narcissistic dimension. Aubert and de Gaulejac talk about a 'narcissistic contract' added to the working contract (de Gaulejac, 2015, p.38). Finding its roots in the libidinal energy, this 'imaginary contract' is much more than the sum of objectives, rights and duties. This contract echoes the values of individual performance and excellency existing under neoliberalism with the feeling of omnipotence and ideals of perfection. Desperately seeking meaning, the individual is looking to satisfy and appease their unconscious desires, as well as focusing their drive and anguish into work (ibid, p.39).

In times where individualisation appears at the same time empowering and burdening, work may be a refuge for individuals searching for themselves. While providing rewards, involvement into work is done at the expense of other essential elements for well-being and flourishing, such as meaningful relationships. For Taylor, individuals believing in self-realisation through activity tend to consider it only with respect to their professional livelihoods (Taylor, 2002, p.17). This means that in

contemporary society people are ready to sacrifice their affective lives for their careers because they are 'called to do this' and their life would be somehow wasted and unfulfilled otherwise. However crucial, work is only one aspect of flourishing. I shall explore further this question using first hand data in chapter 5.

2.5 'Freedom from not freedom *to*': Pathologies of individualisation as consequences of individualisation

This section presents the psychosocial concepts of recognition, narcissism and anxiety as pathologies of individualisation.[23] Drawing on philosophy and psychoanalysis, this section develops an understanding of these concepts through a sociological lens by arguing that recognition, narcissism and anxiety are challenged by external conditions. Unbalanced anxiety, unhealthy narcissism and a struggle for recognition are not solely the result of early traumas or problematic relationships during early childhood (Lasch, 1991/1979; Sennett, 1998), they also originate from culture (Smail, 1984, p.98; Smail, 1996; Smail, 2015). Although personal, these struggles are also common reactions to the world. It is the mind and the body of individuals warning them that there is something wrong about the world they live in (May, 1996, pp.174–177). It is the cognitive dissonance that results from the fact that selves are evaluative beings who experience and perform in their everyday lives things, which are perceived as ethically and morally wrong, unhealthy and harmful. Similarly, Mark Fisher's work considers anxiety as a personal response to wider politics and living conditions in precariousness (Fisher, 2009; Fisher, 2010; Fisher, 2014). In other words, although harmful for themselves and others, overwhelming anxiety, unhealthy narcissism or the struggle for recognition seem to be understandable responses to daily life (Wilkinson, 2001, p.39; see also Hall and O'Shea, 2015, pp.52–68).

Two bodies of literature may be distinguished here: the first focuses on the ontological consequences of the Enlightenment and modernity, while the second looks

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[23] The term 'pathologies' may sound dramatic. In psychology, it would be appropriate to refer to it as a disorder or problem, as the recent downgrading of 'identity disorder' to 'identity problem' suggests (Côté and Levine, 2014, p.155) . However, I believe that the term 'pathology' illustrates the dramatic consequences of these disorders or problems on selves and how they prevent well-being and flourishing. Moreover, it is in line with other similar uses, such as Honneth's 'pathologies of individualism' (2004, p.474).

at the personal consequences of late modernity and late capitalism. Despite being written at different times, the theories outlined below all describe an ambivalent relationship with freedom. The process of individualisation described in the first section of this chapter creates opportunities for self-exploration, self-realisation and self-reflexivity. However, individualisation also triggers anxieties, as the subject has to find a meaning to their inner life, their relationship with others and the world. In that sense, I argue that overwhelming anxiety, unhealthy narcissism and the struggle for recognition are pathologies of individualisation. I now deal with each in turn.

2.5.1 Recognition

Recognition is an essential psychological need for the well-being of individuals (Sayer, 2009, p.54). It is a fundamental aspect for self-development throughout life as it contributes to identity (Nussbaum, 2001 in Sayer, 2009, p.54, p.57). Inversely, the denial of recognition - particularly in childhood - can have dreadful consequences on the self as it can cause distress, shame and self-contempt (p.54). For Taylor, since identity is constructed by recognition, its absence is a form of oppression confining individuals in a diminishing image of themselves, inflicting real harm, damaging selves at their core and triggering low self-esteem (Taylor, 1994, p.25, p.52)

Recognition cannot be achieved independently but depends on non-instrumental relationships, which shows our vulnerability to others' approval and trust to maintain a sense of self-respect and self-esteem (Taylor, 1994, p.56; Sayer, 2009, p. 55). For Sayer, there is unconditional and conditional recognition. Unconditional recognition means a recognition of our own existence as human beings while conditional is contingent to achievements (Sayer, 2009). However, both forms of recognition should be anchored in concrete aspects of life to be fulfilling. To gain conditional recognition without particular achievements may cause greed and anger among others, and ultimately individuals may feel like a 'fraud'. For Sayer, this is part of a 'neoliberal culture' in which people are supposedly self-constructed and where their self-esteem is distinct from anything worthy of esteem (Sayer, 2009, p.65). However, as in Meadian social psychology and Hegelian master/slave dialectic, it is only through social interaction that there is self-identification and especially in the case of conflict (Honneth, 2013).

Since the 1980's, there has been a shift of interest from politics of distribution to politics of recognition, often at the expense of class politics (Sayer, 2011, p.52).

However, as Fraser note, distribution and recognition have to be taken into account together (Fraser and Honneth, 2003). Indeed, the dynamics of recognition operate at different levels: individual (psychological), micro-social (within social groups) and macro-social (between social groups). Consequently, it seems wise to use the conceptual tools of sociology and psychology altogether when looking at recognition (Sayer, 2009, p.57). Also, recognition is socially distributed in such a way that there are entire sections of the population who are misrecognised, damaging their well-being and ability to operate (Taylor, 1994, p.52). For instance, in 'L'impasse Royale', Emmanuel Bourdieu and Denis Podalydès interviewed Martine, a 36 years old stage actress, whose prestigious but conventional training was being denied recognition both in their own field because she was not 'good enough' and in other fields because she was too 'classical' (Bourdieu, 2007/1993, pp.1195–1220). She found herself trapped in a void of misrecognition - coming from her family, her field and the entire society - leaving her with great suffering. Bourdieu's edited book of interviews, unleashing individuals' personal experiences of life, shows how recognition matters to individuals. As for Bourdieu, this thesis considers that recognition (or the lack of) operates at every level, from abstract 'big categories' such as class, to interpersonal relationships.

2.5.2 Narcissism

While the absence of recognition does not seem to create, *per se*, unhealthy narcissism, it can push towards it as it triggers a negative self-esteem. However, the opposite is also true, as excessive recognition may also lead to unhealthy narcissism. The relation between narcissism and recognition is one of interdependency: adequate recognition, by enhancing positive self-esteem, helps maintain a healthy relation to the self as in healthy narcissism.

The use of the term narcissism goes beyond a lay understanding as it is considered to be a necessary need for the self to secure its wholeness. In psychoanalytic terms, narcissism is a continuum, going from healthy (as true self-esteem, self-love and healthy relations to others) to unhealthy (as low self-esteem and unhealthy relations to others). On one side, healthy narcissism equals positive self-love, a condition necessary to develop meaningful relationships with others. It also helps to gain adequate recognition, well-being and develop flourishing. On the other side, unhealthy narcissism resembles the lay use of the term narcissism. The narcissistic

self has a poor self-esteem which makes their more dependent on recognition and ostracises them from meaningful relationships.

It was the German psychiatrist Paul Näcke, in 1899, who first developed the concept of narcissism to characterise a perversion (Freud, 2014/1914, p.1). Freud developed the concept further in an essay called 'On Narcissism: an introduction', first published in 1914. For Freud, '(n)arcissism in this sense would not be a perversion, but the libidinal complement to the egoism of the instinct of self-preservation, a measure of which may justifiably be attributed to every living creature' (Freud, 2014/1914, p.2). For Manzano et al., as for Freud, the core elements of narcissism lie in the relation to the object, i.e. what is not the self (Manzano et al., 1999, p.469). In the narcissistic relationship, the self loves themselves in the other, whereas, in a 'genuine object relationship', the self loves the other as different from themselves. As the narcissistic self has their integrity threatened and cannot differentiate between the self and the not-self, and the inner and the outside, they hates the relationship, as in psychotic anguish and borderline conditions (Kapsambelis, 2017, p.49). While this feature of the self is a condition of the development of the self, it can continue in adult life to different degrees.

The 1970's saw a turn in the study on narcissism, mainly after Heinz Kohut or Otto Kernberg's work on the subject (Kernberg, 1995; Kohut, 2009). Drawing on Freud's seminal definition of narcissism, they extend the relation to self-esteem as well as the distinction between unhealthy and healthy narcissism. In doing so, they argue that some narcissism is essential to the integrity of the self and highly beneficial to genuine moral and cultural aspirations (Elliott, 1994, p.80). The sudden popular interest for narcissism eventually led to an increase in diagnoses of pathological narcissism (Ronningstam, 2011). 'Narcissistic personality disorders' were introduced in 1980 in the DSM III, confirming that pathological narcissism was somewhat the zeitgeist of its time.

In the subsequent years, while not operating this drift alone (Kilminster, 2008), Christopher Lasch, in his book *The Culture of Narcissism*, largely contributed, at least in cultural theory, to using the concept of narcissism solely in its unhealthy understanding (Lasch, 1991/1979). From this time, the understanding of narcissism in social sciences has tended to be associated with Lasch's work. In *The Fall of Public Man*, Richard Sennett also looked at the consequences of narcissism for the public realm (Sennett, 2003/1977). There are many similarities here between Sennett and Lasch's

conclusions. Lasch's main idea is that the self has become more and more fragile to the increasing unpredictability of late capitalism and globalisation. The self is rendered fragile with the dislocation of social institutions.

Lasch depicts how, historically, the subject slowly drifts from a neurotic subject toward a narcissistic subject. He pictures the portrait of the 'psychological man' of the 20th century, somehow free from institutional bonds and caught up in impossible existential tensions. The self is incapable of developing a strong inner life and is constantly seeking to be admired by others. While the self wants to be nothing but grandiose, its little faith in others diminishes what others see in themselves. It is consumed by anxiety, depression, vague discontent and a feeling of inner emptiness. Individuals describe an 'inner drought' as the inner life does not represent a refuge (Lasch, 1991/1979, p.44). The identity of the narcissist self is shallow and cannot bear the mundanity of its life.

For Lasch, in fact, narcissism seems to be 'the best way of coping with the tensions and anxieties of modern life (Lasch, 1991/1979, p.83). The subject decides to manipulate others' feelings while protecting themselves from every form of affective suffering. As a protection, the subject plays a cynical detachment - that is not necessarily true but became effective through repetition - making relations bitter (Lasch, 1991/1979, p.243). But paradoxically, relations are expected to be richer and more intense. Narcissism is the incorporation of grandiose object images as a defence against anxiety and guilt (Lasch, 1991/1979, p.79).

In current research, Lasch's account of narcissism remains a starting point for further inquiry, despite the use of the popular meaning of the term, i.e. unhealthy narcissism, and the lack of evidence about the rise of narcissism in society (Kilminster, 2008). Kilminster argues about Lasch's work on narcissism that 'on its own, his experience is insufficient to prove the widespread empirical domination of the contemporary psyche by extreme narcissistic tendencies, in the technical sense of the term' (Kilminster, 2008, p.132). While it is true that Lasch's argument is neither based on first-hand data nor on existing studies about a potential rise of narcissism in society, his observations and case studies remain convincing.

However, Lasch's theory echoes more recent accounts of individualisation stated above, lamenting the personal consequences of individualisation as the result of the reassembling of social structures such as waged-work, family and religion in Western societies. Yet, as for theories of individualisation, Lasch's account of

narcissism may be taken as a 'provocative exercise in social criticism' (Craib, 1989, p.105), and for the purpose of this research, a good starting point.

2.5.3 Anxiety

Anxiety is a basic human feeling associated with every stage of life. Its nature is twofold: some of its forms are essential to secure and develop the self while others are unnecessary, distracting and paralysing. The word anxiety comes from the Latin word *anxietas, ātis* which means to tighten, to compress. Distinctions between several forms of anxiety (such as normal and neurotic) are not necessarily clear (Kierkegaard, 1989/1849, p.52; Giddens, 1991, p.45; May, 1996, p.38; Wilkinson, 2001) although they have been made more distinct over the years through the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders and its previous version, the DSM-V (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Phobia is localised on one object, often unrealistic or irrational (May, 1996, p.204). Stress and fear also have a definite relation to the object, which can be identifiable and therefore contended, whereas anxiety is a persistent inner conflict which has an ambivalent relation to the object. In other words, it is in the relation to the object where the distinction lies between anxiety, phobia, stress and fear. As May notes, anxiety is the 'fear of fear' (1996, p.206), a blurred feeling of restlessness, with no definite object (we cannot necessarily say why we are anxious) (1996, p.38). Anxiety is often associated with anguish which tends to focus on the physical changes occurring under this state. The word anguish comes from the Latin *angustia*, meaning a narrow passage.

It was the Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard who first developed the idea that anxiety and the consciousness of freedom were tied together (Kierkegaard, 1981/1844; Kierkegaard, 1989/1849). For Kierkegaard, individualisation is made possible after being exposed to the anxiety of choice and freedom, what he names 'the alarming possibility of being able' (May, 1996, p.55). Kierkegaard's notion of anxiety is directly linked to the choices one has to make and one's ability to deal with these choices. It is the subjective fear of the possible. Therefore, in a rather positive account of anxiety, Kierkegaard does not consider anxiety as an illness or an anomaly but as a normal and even necessary feature of the self. Anxiety becomes a proof of true human depth, maturity and a reaction to change. The process of self-realisation triggers anxiety, as it involves the destruction of old patterns of behaviour and the creation of new patterns within oneself (May, 1996, p.39).

For Heidegger, anguish is linked to the particular experience of being in the world which implies questions such as personhood and mortality but also the tension between living with others and living with oneself (Heidegger, 1978/1927). For him, it is the conscience of the *Dasein*, as being-there or being-in-the-world that matters. The individual must find themselves and discover the world. As for Giddens, '*Dasein* is a being who not only lives and dies, but is aware of its own mortality' (Giddens, 1991, p.49), and this creates an array of feelings among which we find anxiety.

We find a similar concern, much later, with another existentialist, Jean Paul Sartre. For him, anguish is the consciousness of being present to the world and responsible for our own future. Anguish is also the result of the instability that comes from the constant need to make the self (Sartre, 2003/1943, p.35).

Likewise, Fromm, drawing on Kierkegaard, considers that the more the individual is free, the more anxiety will rise (Fromm, 2001/1941). Fromm makes a distinction between freedom from, which carries a negative aspect, and freedom to, as in empowerment[24] (Wilkinson, 2001, p.31). Fromm's nature of freedom is therefore twofold: on one side, freedom allows empowerment and self-choice, and on the other side it leads to isolation and anxiety (Fromm, 2001/1941, p. 227). For Fromm, the emergence of individuality was 'bound to create a deep feeling of insecurity, powerlessness, doubt, aloneness and anxiety' (May, 1996, p.171).

Drawing the accounts presented above, anxiety is considered in this thesis as a basic human feeling, a response to our experience of being in the world. While keeping this important fact in mind, this thesis investigates the unbearable forms of anxiety experienced by participants and questions what is triggering them.

2.6 A wide range of literature with a common ground

In this literature review, I allude to a wide range of theories and literature that nevertheless shares common ground in that they address the complex relationship between the self and structure in modern-day Western countries. Although great wealth has been accumulated in Western countries during the post-WWII era, the version of modernity developed in recent decades, according to these theorists, has not led to well-being and self-realisation. In referring to this wide body of literature, I aimed to outline how these works, often starting from different views, share similar conclusions

[24] For a similar discussion on a closely related concept – liberty – see Berlin (2002/1958 pp-166-217).

– observation and critique of how social structures often prevent individuals from developing a safe and grounded sense of themselves that could potentially lead to self-realisation, while at the same time they are increasingly compelled to become autonomous reflexive subjects.

These theories outline recent changes in capitalism that have an impact not only on society but also on selves. While some authors see in this change a potential for individuals to experience new forms of individualisation (Giddens, 1990; Giddens, 1991a; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001), the majority of authors outlined in this thesis are more critical about this process. For instance, Foucault (2008) describes the rise of governmentality, where discourses create a new sense of responsibility for subjects while remaining under the spell of power; Sennett (1998) outlined a corrosion of 'character' deriving from 'flexible' capitalism; Boltanski and Chiapello (1999) analyse the development of a 'connexionist world' and 'projective city' triggering individualism; and Honneth (2004) describes an organised self-realisation leading to emptiness, feelings of being superfluous and lacking purpose.

2.7 The use of a normative and critical approach

Although not always expressed straightforwardly, the goal of the theories outlined in the introduction and the literature review is to develop a theory of emancipation through an understanding of what it is to be oneself in current times. Some of these theories are more critical (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999; Honneth, 2004) than others (Giddens, 1990; Giddens, 1991a; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001) and some even include a normative framework for well-being (Sen, 2001; Nussbaum, 2003; Nussbaum, 2011), which, for many, would appear to be restrictive and potentially controlling. In line with Sayer (2011), I do not think that this is the case. I believe that an adequate theory of emancipation critical of alienation resulting from socio-economic structures can be powerfully enhanced by a normative framework. Such a normative framework can help in countering neoliberal (and its closely associated term late capitalism) attempts to co-opt its critiques, such as the artist critique or hope for self-realization through a meaningful activity (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999). Since neoliberalism has the tendency to transform needs in tastes and life choices (Sayer, 2011), an adequate normative framework can further enhance the critique made by some of the authors named above. This is in line with Sayer, who considers that an emancipatory social science should engage discussion between 'positive (explanatory/descriptive) social

science and normative discourses such as those of moral and political philosophy' (Sayer, 1997, p.476).

However, a question remains concerning the use of a pluralistic theoretical framework, as to whether and how it is possible to combine a 'normative' framework with more 'critical ones'. At the core of critical social science lies the idea that the explanation of the social must be critical to enhance its emancipatory character. As Sayer (1997, p.473) argues, there is no consensus among social scientists about the sources of the problem and how to overcome it. For him, this 'quest for emancipation' inherently involves normative questions. Indeed, critical social sciences often develop a need-based explanatory critique that starts from the identification of suffering, or frustrated needs (Sayer, 1997, p.475). Therefore, a good critical social science interlinks positive social science using an explanatory or descriptive framework and normative discourses similar to those developed in moral or political philosophy (Sayer, 1997, p.476). Critical social science cannot by-pass normative issues such as the one developed in moral and political philosophy: an adequate definition of the good life. Consequently, by drawing on moral philosophy, critical social science can develop more precisely abstract notions of the good, such as a good life, and good work.

This position is often discarded by Marxist-influenced critical social science (Sayer, 1997, p.473). However, in his defence for a critical realism version of the critical social sciences, Sayer argues that the risks of using normative judgment is kept at bay by explanations allowing subjects to judge for themselves (Sayer, 1997, p.484).

By the same token, I think it would be misleading to consider that an approach inspired by Foucauldian governmentality cannot be combined with the capability approach. Foucault's theoretical framework was essentially liberal (in the philosophical sense of the term): during his career he focused on revealing how political reason, exerted through practices of power – through the state and social institutions – constrain the possibility of developing individual freedom. Consequently, he was against institutional normativity, which has tried to shape what is normal and pathological in human behaviours, for example psychiatry with homosexuality. Therefore, the identification of an institutional normativity aiming at reducing freedom is not the same as a normativity that identifies the basic capabilities potentially leading to a good life. In his attempt to interlink Foucauldian approach and capabilities, Tobias (2005) noted that the Foucauldian denial of institutional normativity does not mean that we should be exempted from obligations toward those who cannot – for

psychological or material reasons – exercise their freedom, hence suggesting an underlying normativity concerning what is good and what is not. It is this very same observation that has influenced Sen (2001) and later Nussbaum (2011) in their programme – although critical of specific forms of liberalism – developing a normative framework of the good life. Consequently, while Foucault has identified discourses and power leading to institutional normativity preventing individual freedom (such as neoliberalism), Sen (2001) and Nussbaum (2011) focused on setting up a normative framework of the good life preventing a (neo)liberal approach that would turn basic human needs into wishes. Since both approaches aim to understand the forces at stake in alienating the subject, I believe that these approaches can complement each other.

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented some of the key concepts used in this thesis. I gave an account of the specificities of individualisation as developed by authors in classical and more recent accounts. This literature review also outlined the role of work and activity in self-construction, both historically and in recent times. Finally, this chapter proposed to develop the concept of pathologies of individualisation by linking individualisation with recognition, narcissism and anxiety. The next chapters develop these questions in more detail using first hand data - direct quotes from interviews and participant observation. First, however, before anything else, I shall discuss how these data were collected and how the sample was built.

Chapter 3
Inquiry and Method

3.1 Introduction

This study draws mainly on first hand qualitative data - participant observation and semi-directed interviews - conducted between October 2015 and April 2016 with 32 participants, in the United States (Brooklyn, San Francisco, Oakland and Portland), Sweden (Stockholm) and France (Paris). Furthermore, in agreement with the Leeds Research Ethics Committee at the University of Leeds (PVAR 15-011), preliminary fieldwork undertaken between 2008 and 2014 was used in this thesis as informative data (Roseneil, 2000). The use of longitudinal inspired research and multi-sited fieldwork helped to reduce bias of presentism, lacking historical time frame; technological utopianism; pressure to publish (to the detriment of the time needed to do fieldwork and reflect upon it) and difficulties to develop capacities to see the whole research project without having a totalising perspective (Back and Puwar, 2012, p.8; Billig, 2013).

I used a 'foreground interpretative argument' (Alford, 1998, pp.38–41) to articulate theory and method, especially when considering personal subjectivities. This theory is used to understand the meaning that things have for individuals in a way that casts light on the way the society works at a macro level (Alford, 1998, p.42). The general empirical question was: (w)hat did (human behaviour, experience, activity) mean to the participants? The general theoretical question was: '(h)ow can we understand and explain those meanings?' (Alford, 1998, p.44). Therefore, as was the case with previous research (Sennett, 1998; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008; Ross, 2009; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011; Hochschild, 2012; Gregg, 2013), I paid careful attention to participants' narrative aspects of their working conditions and daily life, the way they talked about their work and how it related positively to the construction of their selves or, to the contrary, how it caused anxiety, stress and uncertainty. As previous work on the subject has shown (McRobbie, 2002, p. 518; Leadbeater, Oakley, 2009; p.15; Lee, 2008, p.270), cultural work represents an important means for building self-identity.

The first section of the present chapter describes the construction of the sample of participants. This section outlines the main features of these musicians attempting to 'make it' in the field of independent production. It explains why the

participants were aged 25-37, with at least three years of experience in the field. This age range was considered as representing a particular moment in their life, often marked by the specific neoliberal precariousness, between student life and a 'serious' life. This first section outlines how the snowball sampling was used to recruit participants. The third section looks at the location of the fieldwork. Drawing on the existing literature indicating the importance of place in cultural production, various clusters of cultural workers were identified. This resulted in a multi-sited approach of the fieldwork proposing a parallel study (and not comparative one) of various cities (often neighbourhood) (McRobbie, 2004). The fourth section presents the different phases of the fieldwork. The section starts by outlining the preliminary observations undertaken prior to the PhD programme which helped to shape the current project. The section then presents the fieldwork undertaken during the PhD, i.e. the 32 semi-directed interviews with musicians. The fifth section outline the method used in this thesis: semi-direct interviews, participant observation and qualitative longitudinal research using unstructured interviews. The sixth section looks at the way anxiety, precariousness and social class background were assessed during fieldwork. The seventh section reviews the way the data collected was coded using the software NVivo11.

3.2 The sample of participants

In total, more than 250 musicians were observed during the two phases of fieldwork - the one which took place prior to the PhD and the one led during the PhD programme at the University of Leeds. During the second phase, 32 individuals (22 men and 10 women) were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. These interviews were conducted in October 2015 in Stockholm, between October and December 2015 in Paris, and in March 2016 in Portland, San Francisco and New York. The set-up of the interviews was made via emails and Facebook messages.

The sample of participants was formed by individuals who were at least 25 years old and with at least three years of experience in the field of independent music industries. This rule was applied to avoid bias specific to the cultural and creative industries: the appraisal for the newcomer in a 'hit-based' industry (see Chapter 7). Keeping in mind the focus of the study, i.e. assessing well-being and path to self-realisation, three years of experience were considered as a reasonable timeframe to distinguish the newcomers over those who were developing strategies to 'make it' in

the field. Indeed, the inclusion of newcomers in the sample would have biased the study of working and living conditions as the study aimed to look at the psychosocial effects of cultural workers' lifestyles in the medium and long term. As Hesmondhalgh (2010, p.281) noted:

> Many workers leave the cultural industries at a relatively early age, burnt out by the need to keep up to date with changing ideas of what is fashionable, relevant and innovative, a process that requires not only hard work at work, but also a blurring of work and leisure.

The inclusion of participants with at least three years of experience reflected the will to look at the psycho-social impact of musicians' working lives on participants. Moreover, three years of experience was considered sufficient to avoid meeting people making music as a hobby. Indeed, during early adulthood and university years, precariousness is often considered as bearable, as part of the tales around youth. On the contrary, I aimed to observe individuals developing strategies to fund their lives, to build a career in the field of independent music. In addition, I considered how musicians' working lives impacted the transition toward adulthood, self-realisation and the shaping of the self. Moreover, this strategy also aimed at countering the fact that the age of entry in the 'job market' tends to be longer for the most privileged part of the population who have access to higher education and to internships (Oakley, 2009b; Frenette, 2013). Therefore, to measure the weight of the impact of success or failure on the well-being of individuals, only participants who had at least three years of experience in the field were included in the sample.

Conversely, participants over 37 years old were not included in the sample in order to reflect the impact of the neoliberal turn, illustrated by a shift from cultural to creative industries and creative economy in cultural policies among recent generations (Garnham, 2005). In France especially, personal observations indicated that the resort to intermittence du spectacle appeared less common today that research has shown in previous generations (Menger, 2009).[25] Indeed, among the participants in France, only

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[25] An 'intermittent du spectacle' is an artist or technician in France working temporarily and under contract for a company in the cultural and creative industries. After subscribing to the regime of 'intermittence du spectacle' and the Assedic, a tax collection office, they may have monetary compensation for the days in between contracts. This system, existing since 1936, is subject to having worked 507 hours or having completed 43 jobs in the last 319 days (or 304 days for technicians). In the sample of musicians observed in France, very few had the opportunity to have access to the 'intermittents du spectacle' regime.

one worker was (barely) securing the minimum amount of declared workdays required to maintain the access to the status of intermittent du spectacle. This finding confirmed existing literature on the neo-liberal turn replacing employability under contract and social benefits (such as pension, social security, paid holidays) by cultural entrepreneurialism without social protection (McRobbie, 2002).

3.2.1 Independent musicians

The study focuses on musicians producing music and playing in local independent venues (but often touring nationally and internationally). The personal consequences of incentives to transform into an entrepreneurial self are illustrated by independent musicians (Scharff, 2015; Scharff, 2016), as is the continuous dismissal of the intrinsic value of music as an aesthetic, social and cultural form (Hesmondhalgh, 2013). Indeed, as shown in section 1.1.3, musicians are torn between the demands of the music industries and the project of self-formation. Moreover, as developed in section 6.2, music production has undergone considerable transformation thanks to digitalisation, which eases access to the means of production, but also puts new pressures on independent musicians, perpetuates the lack of revenues for artists and increases precariousness (Hesmondhalgh and Meier, 2015). More generally, as developed in section 9.2.3, independent musicians are considered to be 'canaries in the coal mine', at the vanguard of precarious working lives beyond the music industries. Indeed, current representations present the artist as a possible ideal worker of the future: creative, mobile, highly motivated, working under contingent labour and exposed to competition (Menger, 2003, p.9). In spite of an anti-market ethos, artists demonstrate new forms of flexibility under neoliberalism (Menger, 2003, p.68).

The music is produced 'independently' which means independent from major commercial record labels. Behind the term independent (the indies) lies a mode of production (and way of being with others) associated with certain aesthetic codes and genres differing from 'mainstream' music (Hesmondhalgh, 1996; Hesmondhalgh, 1998a; Hesmondhalgh, 1998b; Hesmondhalgh, 1999). However, subsequent to the recent reconfiguration of the music industries, the dichotomous boundaries between independent and majors have been recomposed in favour or three layers: DIY and small indies, big indies and majors (Hesmondhalgh, 2012). Moreover, digitalization and the internet created new forms of autonomy but also independence (Hesmondhalgh and Meier, 2015) recomposing, for instance, notions of being a 'sell-

out' (Klein et al., 2017). Independent music is understood here as a set of niche genres which includes, among other genres, ambient music, progressive rock, punk, easy listening, electronica, and post-punk.

The participants represent the majority of the cultural workers, i.e. those who are barely 'making it', very often located at the bottom of the pyramid of redistribution and recognition (Caves, 2002; Menger, 2009). Contrary to the 'fairly well-established large independents', almost 'akin to mini-majors' with 'close financing, distribution and other connections to the majors', the participants belong to 'a world of amateur and precarious semi-professional musical production, including the continuing world of underground scenes and micro-independent institutions' (Hesmondhalgh and Meier, 2015, p.6). Consequently, as developed in further details in Chapter 5, all participants were working in other fields inside and outside the cultural industries. Indeed, the participants were not only musicians but, for instance, illustrators, photographers, filmmakers, graphic designers, among other creative activities. Moreover, on top of being musicians, they often held different positions in the chain of music production, e.g. sound engineer, booking agent, copyright manager, accountant, community manager. Finally, most of them had other (humdrum) jobs outside the cultural industries offsetting the uncertainty of music making (Caves, 2002; Menger, 2009). Overall, as for IT work, the notion of occupation is 'problematic, challenging established demarcations such as stable tasks or clear boundaries' (Gill, 2009b, p.11).

However, for participants, despite precariousness and uncertainty, work represents an important source for self-realisation, a crucial way to shape a sense of their selves (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999; de Gaulejac, 2015; Hesmondhalgh, 2010; McRobbie, 2002; Oakley, 2009b; Taylor, 2012; Taylor and Littleton, 2008). This is particularly the case for "alternative cultural work" where individualisation plays an important role "amongst small, independent firms, artists and entrepreneurs, operating outside or at the margins of the conventional capitalistic cultural economy" (Banks and Milestone, 2011, p.101). More importantly, as Hesmondhalgh points out (2013), it has been argued by some that music, maybe more than any other creative activity, can enhance well-being and lead to flourishing.

3.2.2 Recruitment of participants

Prior to the recruitment of the participants, local independent scenes were identified thanks to acquaintanceship, Facebook profiles and events, Instagram posts and blogs.

Recruitment of the participants was inspired by snowball sampling or chain referral (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981; Noy, 2008). Snowball sampling involve using a member of a group to identify other members (Clark and Adler, 2014, p.112). Previous studies using this sample method include William Foote Whyte's *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum* (Whyte, 1969/1943; Clark and Adler, 2014). Snowball sampling has been widely used in the sociology of deviance in order to gaining entrance to hard-to-reach settings (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981; Becker, 1997). As Becker pointed out, the population of musicians, as for drug consumers, is often hard to reach for anyone outside the field (Becker, 1997). When contacting participants for the first time, a gatekeeper - e.g. label manager, booking agent and PR – was often facilitating the contact. This mode of recruitment presents the advantage of meeting less 'visible', talkative and sociable individuals. Both participant observation and snowball referral offer here the potential for good results with people who develop 'tricks' to hide the secrets of the practice and who are used to performing in front of an audience (Becker, 1997). Participants were approached face to face at recording studios, photo sets, concerts, etc. and by email or Facebook message. However, the snowball method has the drawback of 'community bias', reinforcing homogamy and existing social inequalities in the CCIs, e.g. the sample is composed of 32 individuals (22 men and only 10 women). In the attempt to avoid the bias produced by the initial sampling and subsequent uses of snowball-inspired sampling, various entry points in the independent music scene were taken. Ultimately, the sample remained too homogeneous to extend the analysis to variables beyond class and gender, e.g. race and ethnicity, age and disability. Moreover, as expressed in the introduction and in section 9.3, this thesis does not intend to develop an intersectional approach.

3.3 Location of the fieldwork

The fieldwork took place primarily in three countries: the United States, France and Sweden. More specifically, the fieldwork was led in Bushwick and Williamsburg in Brooklyn; East Burnside Street, Alberta Street and Mississippi Street in Portland; Temescal and Rockridge in Oakland; Mission St in San Francisco; Sodermalm (mainly on Skånegatan) in Stockholm; the area going from Canal Saint Martin to Belleville, Le Haut Marais, and some specific spots in the north and northeast of Paris, such as in the triangle Marcadet-Poissonniers, Château Rouge and Max Dormoy in Paris.

In line with the existing literature (Oakley, 2009a, pp.37–9), the choice of locations was motivated by the fact that cultural workers observed during the preliminary phase of fieldwork musicians were often clustering in small areas, neighbourhoods and blocks. As for local music scenes, these locations were found thanks to acquaintances, Facebook profiles and events, Instagram posts and blogs. Consequently, discourse analysis of different media on independent cultural production (electronic press, journals and lifestyle magazines, blogs) confirmed the recurrence of certain cities and specific neighbourhoods within these cities. These places were presented as the core of 'independent lifestyles' promoting a common culture made of individualisation, cultural entrepreneurialism, and aesthetic lifestyle. As Elliot claims, 'these Do-it-Yourself consumer lifestyles involves a variety of institutions and intermediaries (…) including designers lifestyle advisers, fashion consultants, marketing companies' (Elliott, 2014, p.151).

A large body of literature has investigated the crucial importance of the social relations of workers in cultural production. Such emphasis on social relationships has been referred by Rifkin (Rifkin, 2001, pp.24–28) as the 'Hollywood organisational model' and by Caves (Caves, 2002, pp.5–6) as the 'motley crew property', which both reinforce the idea of a collaborative networked and team-based cultural work. For Leadbeater and Oakley (2004, p.31), '(t)he lonely, existential genius does not exist in modern creative industries. It is virtually impossible for cultural entrepreneurs to work in isolation'. Uzzy and Spiro (Uzzi and Spiro, 2005) identified the myth of the lonely genius as a 'small world problem', where collaboration and ties between individuals foster creativity drifting away from the myth of the lonely genius. In cultural projects, from their early development to their release, close and strong networks seem particularly important, 'as intense experimentation and collaboration require close contact and constant communications' (Oakley, 2009a, p.55). Personal communication helps to spread information, such as rumour or industry 'gossips' and 'untraded interdependencies' (Oakley, 2009a, p.38). This is crucial for recruitment to individuals and firms in order to innovate in fast-changing markets (Oakley, 2009a, p.38) obsolescence of trends (and not necessarily techniques). This remaining importance reiterates creative production as ephemeral collaborative, networked and team-based cultural work.

Consequently, despite the ability of cultural workers to work from anywhere thanks to digitalisation, cultural and IT industries have the tendency to concentrate in

big cities, often in the same neighbourhood, street or block. For Neff (2005), it was the 'night time economy' in Lower Manhattan where social ties were formed and strengthened in places such as bars, cafes and clubs where workers 'hang out'. The concentration of cultural workers in neighbourhoods or blocks may be seen through a Bourdieusian scope: 'a symbolic hierarchy of cities according to their accumulated prestige in terms of culture (or cultural?) capital' (Featherstone, 1990, p.106). Thanks to their symbolic capital, the neighbourhoods concentrate work opportunities which attract cultural workers willing to develop a 'portfolio income' (McRobbie, 2002, p.527; Menger, 2009). These neighbourhoods are considered as the core of the 'global independent culture', widely associated with vague concepts, such as, 'cool', 'hipster', 'bohemian' and 'creative'. This is what Featherstone (1990, p.99) calls 'post-modern-cities', 'image and culturally self-conscious' with inhabitants concerned about shaping the local identity and how it reflects globally.

The places observed were generally post-industrial neighbourhoods refurbished and gentrified over the years. They often shifted from poor and degraded neighbourhoods (often hosting immigrant communities) toward 'creative ghettos' with rising rents. The neighbourhoods observed often had a raw aesthetic, i.e. the premises were often refurbished warehouses in a post-industrial tradition; e.g. Brooklyn Williamsburg, Temescal in Oakland. This aesthetic was even sometimes artificially recreated. Featherstone notes that the 'postmodern city' marks 'a return to culture, style and decoration, within the confines of a 'no-place' space in which traditional senses of culture are decontextualized, simulated, reduplicated and continually renewed and restyled' (1990, p.99). This is particularly visible in cities such as Portland, which publicizes its 'weirdness', or Brooklyn known for its red bricks walls and warehouses. In other words, these cities are known to be attractive for their 'coolness', 'hipster' and post-industrial aesthetic (Zukin, 2014/1989; Heying, 2010).

Cultural industries have long now pictured these spaces through the aesthetic associated with hip hop and punk music, two music genres originating from working-class neighbourhoods, later co-opted from the margins into the centre of cultural industries (Huet et al., 1978). This aesthetic promoted is seen as the 'true art' 'disinhibited' from any notion of low or high culture (McRobbie, 2002). Following what McRobbie calls the 'second turn' (2002), middle-class cultural entrepreneurs turned cultural assets into small business, for example, independent magazine or cafes promoting 'slow life', vegan food and aestheticization of everyday life. While social ties

and work opportunities cluster in these small areas, rents are also highly expensive, which impacts musicians' daily life and trigger social inequalities. Therefore, the cities observed are cities in which real estate and daily cost of live significantly impact individuals in their ways of life.

Inspired by the preliminary data outlined in section 3.4.1 and drawing on McRobbie's 'tale of various cities', this thesis propose a 'parallel study' of various cities rather than a comparative one (McRobbie, 2004). Although this thesis does not attempt to obliterate local differences between the different countries – which includes a different development of neoliberalism (Mirowski and Plehwe, 2009), relation to work ethics and the welfare state (Weber, 2012/1905) – this thesis considers the similarities in living and working conditions among a sample of cultural workers located in different cities. According to Beck (Beck, 2000b, p.80), there is an increasing number of social processes that are indifferent to national boundaries. For Beck, this 'cosmopolitization' does not render nation-state society non-existent but there are realities that exist and deserve to be studied in a non-national context (2000). Consequently, the observation of workers in a 'cosmopolitan' rather than in a national context is relevant. Finally, in line with Scharff (2016, p.110), I did not find (during fieldwork or data analysis) differences that seemed to be nationally-specific – not even the recourse to intermittence du spectacle in France since only one participant managed to secure the minimum hours required to be granted access to this system (explained further in section 6.1).

However, Beck's cosmopolitanism undermines the articulation of globalization and localization. Although he notes that we have to be careful since 'there is a danger of fusing the ideal with the real (Beck, 2000, p.384), some authors think that he may have overestimated cosmopolitization (Martell, 2009; Holton, 2009, 83-111). Indeed, nation states and geography are still vitally important since local socio-economic context differs considerably from one place to another. Therefore, the articulation between global and local is very important to understand cultural workers' daily life. Globalization and localization, as Lash and Urry seem to suggest, are 'two parallel processes' 'proceeding side-by-side' (Lash and Lury, 2007, p.208). Likewise, for Heying (2010), the development of Portland's artisan economy around beers, coffees and bikes is an articulation between a localism 'bringing the place in' and a global connection.

Methodologically, these observations translate into multi-sited ethnography, a methodology, 'enabling to show common characteristics of a group of individuals together at a globalized age' (Marcus, 1995). However, as Marcus (1995, p.83) suggests:

> Although multi-sited ethnography is an exercise in mapping terrain, its goal is not holistic representation, an ethnographic portrayal of the world system as a totality.

Consequently, while there are common patterns in the psychosocial impacts of precarious lives on musicians, there are also local differences to be taken into account. In France, for instance, musicians can claim RSA (revenu de solidarité active), an inalienable right allowing people to earn funds (currently 545 euros per month) in case of emergency. Moreover, people also often use unemployment benefits as a way to fund their music practice alternating between humdrum jobs and the period during which they can concentrate on music, as in 'reversed unemployment' (Schnapper, 1994, p.226).[26] My observations showed that numerous musicians considered benefits as State funding for cultural production. By contrast, in Sweden, although there are similar systems, my observations indicated that musicians looked down on those dependent on the state for funds. The 'chomage inversé' was disparaged by peers in Sweden. In the United States, benefits are much scarcer and often considered by the participants as almost non-existent. However, the relative security offered by the French welfare system is reduced by a restrictive housing market preventing the most precarious fringes of the population from accessing non-precarious accommodations – through rigid requirements, such as, working under permanent contract, earning three times the rent and having a guarantor. In the United States, such requirements are uncommon. Therefore, while looking at similarities in life experiences, the role of the researcher doing a multi-sited ethnography is also to take into account key cultural differences and variables when observing participants and analysing the data they produced.

3.4 Phases and duration of the fieldwork

3.4.1 Preliminary experiences used as informative data

[26] '*[C]homage inversé*' in the original publication.

In agreement with the Leeds Research Ethics Committee at the University of Leeds (PVAR 15-011), this study is informed by extensive observations – with ethnography and informal interviews – conducted between 2008 and 2014 amongst musicians in the United States, Sweden, France and Iceland at concert venues, recording studios and housings. As Peter Collins and Anselma Gallinat suggest, researchers should include their experience to the dataset by drawing 'on their stock of experiences in making sense of the world' (Gallinat and Collins, 2013, p.12). Although there is little mention of this phase of research in this thesis, information gathered prior to the PhD study helped to frame and structure this thesis. The extensive amount of data collected on the field was documented in 12 notebooks of 240 pages, several dozens of hours of recordings, hundreds of digital photos and videos, hundreds of emails and Facebook messages. The preliminary fieldwork was facilitated by personal and professional experiences (as a cultural worker and research assistant). Between 2008 and 2014, i.e. before the start of the PhD programme at the University of Leeds, I held numerous positions: musician, recording assistant, producer assistant, intern, tour manager assistant, driver, cook, builder, photographer assistant and video maker.

However, there are drawbacks associated with the use of what could be considered as an 'autoethnography'. Collins and Gallinat (2013, p.15) warn that it does not have to lead to autobiography. They also warn against the self as a ploy, incautious implication of family and friends, and a retreat into narcissism. In this research, I paid close attention to these warnings. While not using autoethnography in a strict sense, I reflected on my own experiences and the ones of those who were close to me at the time of the research. Participants were sometimes acquaintances, colleagues and friends, especially as the fieldwork went by. Without necessarily using autoethnography, I draw mainly inspiration from Roseneil's implication of the researcher on the fieldwork (Roseneil, 2000).

Concealed in notebooks, these observations were conducted at music venues, personal houses, home studios, and professional recording studios. The participants were informed that I was investigating living and working conditions in the cultural industries and they agreed to participate. However, no formal consent form was distributed to the participants. The participants were aware of the fact that their comments would be used for research purpose, after being anonymised. The participants shared anyhow their reflections and feelings about daily life, things that mattered to them and eventually personal struggles. Overall, the preliminary phase of

fieldwork led between 2008 and 2014 provided rich contextual research which has infused (or informed) the research. The main milestones of this fieldwork previous to the PhD were:

- Between December 2009 and May 2010, observations were held in Stockholm among independent musicians
- Between December 2010 and May 2011, observations were conducted in a recording studio in Iceland, mostly with American musicians.
- Between 2008 and 2013, observations were undertaken during more than 50 gigs in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Berlin, Reykjavik, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Lille and Metz.
- Between January and June 2013, March and May 2014 and in April 2016 observations were carried out among cultural workers in San Francisco, Berkeley and Oakland
- Between 2009 until 2016, 'cultural workers' were observed in 'independent cafes' used as workplaces in London, New York, San Francisco, Paris, Stockholm, Portland, Oakland and Berkeley.

Over the years of fieldwork, both prior to and during the present research, participant observation was contained in field notes books. In line with the method of participant observation (Scott, 2015), these notes contained extracts and summaries of informal interviews, observations of behaviours and interactions between participants, plans of places, and texts produced by the participants. These notes were very detailed, although many of these notes did not prove to be useful in subsequent phases of research, others information that seemed to be mundane and unimportant during the observation was revealed to be crucial during the phase of analysis.

The participant observation had a crucial function in this thesis. First, participant observation led prior to the fieldwork undertaken during the PhD gave context and helped to shape the subject of inquiry and the sample of participants. Second, subsequent participant observation held during the PhD provided additional context to the interviews. In this thesis, I regularly refer to field notes written during the participant observation phase. For instance, a participant may make strong statements about a way of being during an interview, while their daily behaviour observed during participant observation contradicts such statements. I believe that by using different methods, a more complete understanding of participants' behaviour

and subjectivity can be achieved – especially when it comes to measuring the difference between discourse and actual behaviours on a daily basis.

3.4.2 Fieldwork undertaken during the PhD programme

As part of the PhD programme at the University of Leeds, fieldwork was held between September 2015 and March 2016 in the United States, Sweden and France. Alongside participant observation, I conducted 32 semi-directed interviews with musicians aged 25-37. As shown in the table 'List of interviews transcribed' below, 25 interview recordings were fully transcribed, while notes were made on the remaining interview recordings. Although not all interviews and fieldwork notes were transcribed and loaded into NVivo, they were all subject to analysis. While 25 interviews were fully transcribed and loaded into NVivo, all interviews were read and annotated. During the transcription phase, I arrived at a point of saturation where no further significant information was given. According to Given (2008, p.196), 'saturation is the point in data collection when no new or relevant information emerges with respect to the newly constructed theory'. However, the remaining seven interviews were not discarded – notes, comments and extracts from these interviews were stored in separate documents for analysis. When necessary, the relevant parts were loaded and coded in NVivo. The majority of interviews extracts presented in this thesis originate from this phase of research. The interviews were held in the following places:

- Södermalm, Stockholm and Blackeberg, a suburb of Stockholm. From 30th September to 6th October 2015.
- In Paris: Canal Saint Martin, the 18th arrondissement (Château Rouge/Marcadet-Poissonnier/Max Dormoy), Belleville and in Montreuil, a suburb of Paris from 14th September until 29th September, and from 8th October until 20th December.
- Bushwick, in the northern part of the New York City borough of Brooklyn, from 1st to 9th March 2016.
- 'Alberta Arts District' a neighbourhood centred on Alberta Street in Portland, Oregon. The neighbourhood is stretching from approximately Williams Ave to 33rd Ave in the Northeast section of the city. Semi-structured interviews with new participants were led there from 9th until 21st March 2016.

- Temescal, Oakland, California. *Temescal* is located in North *Oakland*, and centred on Telegraph Avenue. Interviews were led there from 21st until 30th March 2016.

Names	**Age** (average = 30.84)	**Gender**	**Location**	**Numbers of interview(s)**	**Social class background**[27]
Jules	32	M	Brooklyn	1	++
Julie	29	F	Brooklyn	1	-+
Matilde	31	F	Paris	1	-+
Michel	33	M	Paris	1	-+
Rene	35	M	Paris	2	--
Gilberte	28	F	Paris	6	+-
Bertrand	37	M	Paris	5	-+
Fido	36	M	Paris	3	++
Antoine	35	M	Paris	1	-+
Ernest	33	M	Portland	1	--
Lars	27	M	Portland	1	--
Nicole	26	F	Portland	1	+-
Linda	34	F	Portland	1	--
Pierre	27	M	Portland	1	++
Helga	29	F	Portland	1	+-
Albert	30	M	Portland	1	+-
Momo	34	M	Portland	1	+-
Lucy	28	F	Portland	1	+-
Guy	37	M	San Francisco	1	+
Jim	35	M	San Francisco	1	--
Plyne	25	M	San Francisco	1	+-
Edouard	26	M	San Francisco	1	-+
Birgitta	27	F	Stockholm	2	+-
Merlin	31	M	Stockholm	8	--
Catherine	26	F	Stockholm	1	+-

Table 1: List of Interviews transcribed[28]

3.5 Methods used

[27] (--) working-class, (-+) lower middle-class, (+-) upper middle-class), (++) upper-class, following answers from participants.

[28] As shown in the chart above, 25 semi-directed interviews were transcribed. I used the software Microsoft Word and VLC for the transcription. Interviews were transcribed with attention to detail. It means that the signs of uncertainty, unsureness, the tone of the participant's voice, the background noise were also transcribed or noted in the transcripts.

The following section presents the two main methods used in this thesis: semi-structured interviews and participant observation.

The semi-structured interview is a data collection instrument in which the researcher asks open-ended question. Semi-structured interviews can be conceived on a continuum between structured and unstructured interviews, ranging from formal to 'looser' contexts of interview (Given, 2008, p.810, p.907). While the interview script contains the main questions organised by themes, forming a guideline of the themes to cover, the researcher does not necessarily ask them in a specific order as it depends on the flow of the discussion. Overall, semi-structured interviews present the advantage of enabling participants to narrate their biographies in ways that are meaningful to them (Allen, 2016, p.809).

Since the topic of the research may have involved precariousness, failure and frustration in their professional life, questions were carefully framed to respect the sensibility and dignity of the interviewee. Questions were often expressed in layman's terms. As Sayer (2011, p.8) points out: "when we ask people how they are, they usually have no trouble telling us, but they would probably be stumped by abstract questions like 'what is well-being or flourishing?". The framing of the questions respected a sense of progression in the interview: at the beginning of the interviews I asked mundane and broad questions such as 'could you introduce yourself and tell me who you are?' Then, once trust was established, more personal/intimate questions were asked such as '(h)ow do you think people perceive you and how do you perceive yourself?' However, questions were asked with care since there was a risk in formulating questions pointing out or suggesting 'normative frameworks of 'proper' transitions and authorised aspirations' which could have induced 'shame or guilt at their perceived 'lack' of achievement' among participants when reflecting on their lifeline (Allen, 2016, p.810).

Active listening was practised to focus the attention on the participant voice, facial and body expression (Given, 2008, p.7). Inspired by therapeutic communication, this active listening consisted of establishing and maintaining connection with the participant during the interview. This was done through active answering, empathetic reaction, open posture and hands and head-shaking. However, an attitude of neutral listening was maintained, even when shocking or distressing remarks were said to make the interviewee comfortable. Techniques used to enhance discussion were: paraphrasing, summarising and asking about interviewee perception (Given, 2008), for

instance: 'you said earlier that you were not satisfied with the way people look at you'. Could you tell me a bit more about it?'. However, these strategies were also formulated in order to prevent individuals from expounding a kind of 'self-mythology'. When the behaviour of the researcher is too encouraging, individuals may be carried away by their own stories. Conversely, a researcher who seems to avoid communication, e.g. by ignoring the look of the interviewee, could upset the participant resulting in an interruption of the interview or leading to a dull discussion, for instance when participants are telling ready-made stories. These precautions were crucial since musicians are accustomed to developing a narrative about their own selves and their own experience of life - as in musicians' biographies and interviews. Although this kind of practice is generally observed among successful musicians, preliminary observations – confirmed by subsequent results – indicated that this practice has spread to independent musicians, even in the smaller fringes of the industries. In the last two decades, the rise of a collaborative web, alongside with a culture of self-promotion, has allowed – if not forced – musicians to be self-conscious about their biography and image. These narratives are observed in platforms presenting their projects, but also increasingly part of promotional material sent to the online press.

Participant observation is a qualitative research method combining different styles of observations (Blaikie, 2009, p.234). It includes ethnography and unstructured interviews (Denzin and Lincoln, 2012, p.652). Participant observation enables the researcher to be part of the everyday activities of participants over an extensive period. This method allows the researcher to gather different sets of data; from objective information (size of rooms, number of workers, number of hours worked, etc.), to perceptions (mood and tensions between workers, appraisal or complaint about a project). During participant observation, the researcher is more than an 'observer' as they are involved in everyday interaction (Lapassade, 1992, p.5). The method used in this thesis draws on existing fieldwork led among musicians, e.g. Perrenoud's ethnography of the 'musicos' - 'average' jazz musicians - in Toulouse, France. While being himself a double bass jazz musician earning a living by playing gigs, Perrenoud (Perrenoud, 2007) wrote an ethnography of the field of independent music. The method developed also drawn on Becker's seminal work *Outsiders*, a study of jazz musicians and marijuana smokers from the perspective of the 'sociology of deviance' (Becker et al., 2012).

Although my position as a researcher was overt, i.e. participants knew that the research was looking at living and working conditions in the field of independent music, several participants called me by the nickname, Dr Jeremy. I was part of the daily life of musicians. During observations, I informally interacted with musicians and other individuals involved in the field. The most fruitful discussions happened during the numerous moments of 'in-between' events in the daily life of a musician, e.g. between sound checks and gigs, between recording takes, while travelling, during cigarette or coffee breaks, cooking time and meals. Observations were conducted in various locations, mostly in workplaces (studio, recording studios, offices, ateliers, co-working spaces and dedicated cafes), homes and venues. Overall, my engagement in the everyday activities of participants was an attempt to overcome the classic performance that artists usually play outside of their fields (Becker et al., 2012). Indeed, musicians, are requested to perform a social role, in common with other social activities. Preliminary observations showed that in the case of independent musicians, it often implies a performance of 'coolness' and detachment from traditional lifestyles.

However, participant observation as a method presents numerous drawbacks, for example, it is complex, time consuming and expensive. Since participant observation is an immersive experience requiring a complete engagement, the researcher often live with participants during the entire duration of the fieldwork which makes it a physically and psychologically demanding method of inquiry. Moreover, since the quality of the data collected depends on observation skills, persistence and luck, researchers run the risk of being accustomed to the fieldwork hence losing concentration. This risk is somehow controlled by concealing data about mundane aspects of daily life, such as drawings, notes, pictures, videos, and voice recording. Furthermore, participant observation presents theoretical disadvantages - it is difficult to make generalisations and they have a low reliability. There is also a risk of compromised subjects such as when the relations between the researcher and participants are hierarchical, e.g. during preliminary observations as outlined above. Consequently, while participant observation is a useful research method, it also presents serious drawbacks to be considered in data analysis.

As for semi-structured interviews, the data collected through participant observation was anonymised. The name of the music projects, companies, bands, labels and artists were also changed to protect the anonymity of the participants. Identifiable public spaces are widely known therefore it is not possible to link them

with the participants or organisations observed. The information gathered does not include sensitive information on individuals or organisations, such as illegal activities, but ordinary information about the daily life and work (number of hours, type of project, duration, etc.). The process of anonymisation was particularly important since participants gave their verbal consent only. Since cultural workers rely on informality and trust between parties, the redaction of contracts of any kind is often considered as a lack of trust that could prevent participants from taking part in the study. Written consent forms are often associated with officialdom and bureaucracy; therefore, they are avoided by musicians. Moreover, the context of the observations was making the collection of written consent unfeasible, e.g. during gigs and recording sessions.

3.5.1 'Qualitative' longitudinal research using unstructured interviews

Between 2008 and 2016 the research was informed by elements of 'qualitative' longitudinal research (Ruspini, 2002, pp.47–52). This method looks at fluctuation over time in participants' lives. Similarly to Taylor and Littleton (2008), I returned to the original participants of the study at several occasions. This method aimed at reducing two biases. Firstly, the bias induced by interviewing a participant at a particular moment of their career which would flaw the results. In a 'hit based' and the project-based industry, work alternates between moments of high exposure, recognition and distribution and, inversely, moments with reduced activity. Therefore, this method was particularly important when considering the psychological aspects and well-being of cultural workers (Allen, 2016). Secondly, this method allowed me to reduce the bias induced by workers' immediate reflection about their daily life and irregularities in participants' memory also known as retrospective or recall bias (Gomm, 2004, p.128). In other words, following Potter and Wetherell (2002), people forget about what happened to them. This was particularly important since the research looks at self-esteem, self-worth and perception about the daily life. Moreover, longitudinal-inspired research weighted changes on participants' working lives over the years.

However, the longitudinal approach presents serious drawbacks. As for participant observation, this method is time-consuming and costly (Ruspini, 2002, p.71; Allen, 2016). Moreover, the panel is hard to manage: the attrition rate, i.e. the subject dropout rate over time is high even when others participants are brought in (Ruspini, 2002, p.71; Allen, 2016). Between 2008 and 2014, the attrition rate was high and only four participants remained. The reasons for this were numerous: the contact

with the participant was lost (change in means of communication or absence of answer), participants lacked motivation for carrying out the study or conversely, or the relationship with the participant became too intimate to continue to carry on interviews. Moreover, when reiterating interviews in the longitudinal inspired method, participants may think that they 'had a story to tell', as part of the 'autobiographical injunction' they face in contemporary society (from artists' biographies and interviews to social media platforms) (Allen, 2016). This 'reflexive imperative' (Archer, 2012) was taken into account as another bias.

3.6 The assessment of variables and the structure of the social

The subsections below present how variables and the structure of the social, such as precariousness (3.6.2), social class and social class background (3.6.3), have been assessed. My background is in sociology and media and communication studies. Before undertaking this thesis I had a very basic knowledge of psychology and psychoanalysis. Clearly, there was little time to develop these skills over the course of the study. Consequently, I developed an accessible scale that could help with the fact that I had no prior training in psychoanalysis (3.6.1) and I have drawn on existing tools to assess coping strategies and defence mechanisms (3.6.4).

3.6.1 The assessment of anxiety

For the assessment of anxiety, my approach was twofold. Firstly, I draw on existing definitions, diagnosis, literature and assessments available (Taylor, 1953; Beck et al., 1988; May, 1996; Wilkinson, 2001; Freud and Bunker, 2013; Crocq, 2015; National Institute of Mental Health, 2018). For instance, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-IV) published by the American Psychiatric Association (DSM-IV, 1994, pp.435–6) defines the Generalized Anxiety Disorder symptoms as restlessness or feeling wound-up or on edge, being easily fatigued, difficulty concentrating or having their minds go blank, irritability, muscle tension, difficulty controlling the worry, sleep problems (difficulty falling or staying asleep or restless, unsatisfying sleep). These subjective and objective factors help to understand the forms anxiety takes. In my attempt to build a simple but efficient assessment of anxiety (considering my limited knowledge of psychology), I also referred to existing tests originating from psychology and psychoanalysis such as Taylor's anxiety scale (1953) and the more recent Manifest Anxiety Scale (Reynolds et al., n.d.).

Secondly, with the help of practitioners and professionals based in Paris, I developed a scale ranging from 1 (not anxious) to 9 (extremely anxious and unable to function in everyday life and behave with others in social contexts).[29] The interviewee was also asked to consider the frequency, time and duration of their anxiety. The questions included were as follows: How anxious are you right now? Today? This week? Month? Year? And in general? I found these questions about time crucial to assess anxiety not as a spontaneous phenomenon but as a general and deep feeling.

The anxiety scale, however, solely informed this thesis. Indeed, at the exception of one participant – 'distant from necessity' –, other declared being anxious from 7 onward, i.e. anxious to an extent that it was impacting negatively their daily life. Although the pervasiveness of anxiety among participants prevented from comparative claims, it confirmed anxiety as an important subject of inquiry. In subsequent analysis, different types of anxieties have been considered – through the lens of gender and social class. In the empirical chapters (4-8), there are no further mention of the numerical scale.

The discussion about whether to use and work with participants' self-assessment of their well-being, their discourses on it and the use of concepts such as the unconscious has been the subject of many debates in the field of the psychosocial. In depicting the reasons underlying the depressive state of Vince, Hollway and Jefferson (2005) unfold the debates in the psychosocial, mostly based around unresolved tension between explanations favouring the psychic or the social dimensions of human behaviours. The authors argue for a non-reductive application that would encompass the complexity of our ability to be agents of our own lives while under social constraints. Put differently, they aim to overcome the 'dualism of social determinism or individual voluntarism' (Hollway and Jefferson, 2005, p.148). By soliciting the reflexivity of the researcher, they claim that a single case study can represent crucial insight in understanding the diverse influences, discourse and mediation by individuals. In a psychosocial fashion, and bearing in mind the fact that Vince's explanation might not be enough, they interpreted the two interviews. Hollway and Jefferson's (2005) interpretation is refined and multi-layered, explaining why Vince cannot leave his job but also cannot continue with it, hence his depression. They

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[29] I am grateful to the various people I met during the course of the PhD who helped me to shape and refine my assessment of psychosocial variables such as anxiety. I am particularly thankful to Hélène Peyroles who provided useful insights into the anxiety scale.

developed the meaning of Vince's job using a psychosocial perspective by considering the experience of the job, its social significance to him as a man (father and husband) and the relationship with his boss.

However, such an approach appeals for a non-reductionist psychic account and has been criticised for being incoherent and undersubstantiated (Wetherell, 2005, p.172). Although Hollway and Jefferson (2005, p.170) claim that they prefer to look at 'the ways in which 'agency' and 'structure' become practical issues for people engaged in their local moral orders', rather than falling into infinite theoretical debates about the nature of agency versus structure, Wetherell (2005) claims that they fail to do so. According to Wetherell, Hollway and Jefferson have 'individualized' Vince, reinforcing the dichotomy of psychological versus the social – although they claim the contrary. Moreover, for Wetherell, they gave a blurred definition of the unconscious, although it is an important concept in their work. Indeed, the authors' contribution consists in part in showing how Vince suffers from an unconscious conflict. For Wetherell, this does not add enough to claim that Vince's struggle is in part the result of powerful unconscious forces.

Such theoretical development, based on first-hand data and subsequent critique, provides crucial insight into how to consider the discourses of individuals about their own well-being and personal biographies as well as the use of psychoanalytical concepts such as the unconscious, even among researchers trained as psychoanalysts. As mentioned above, although the concept of anxiety used in this thesis is informed by philosophical and psychological developments, the anxiety scale used has been considered to be a preliminary assessment of the pervasiveness of anxiety.

Ultimately, existing anxiety tests do not consider social categories such as gender, ethnicity and class nor do they look at structural sources of anxiety such as precariousness. The assessment of psychosocial variables is crucial to understand people's ability to cope with everyday life. This is one of the goals of this thesis: to understand how structural conditions shape people's well-being or conversely ill-being, e.g. anxiety. The observations and interviews described in the previous section, which assess general well-being, aim at tackling the lack identified in existing assessment of anxiety as well as well-being at work, at home and with others. In other words, drawing on existing tools developed in psychology to assess individuals' well-being, and with the help of the capability approach, which I will now discuss, this thesis also

considers the tools of sociology to assess working and living conditions under advanced capitalism.

3.6.2 The assessment of precariousness

The methods used to assess precariousness were also twofold. Firstly, I outlined formal factors which could give an indication about precarious living and working conditions that could prevent well-being and self-realisation (as in objective precariousness). These criteria draw on Nussbaum's list of central capabilities: life, bodily health, bodily integrity, senses, imagination and thought, emotions, practical reason, affiliation and other species, play, control over one's environment politically and materially (Nussbaum, 2000, pp.32–4). As mentioned in the second chapter, the capability approach is a quality-of-life assessment defining the most important capabilities to secure in order to flourish (Nussbaum, 2003, Nussbaum, 2011, p.18). As mentioned earlier, an objective conception of well-being should be pluralist but not relativist (Hesmondhalgh, 2013, p.18). In the present study: precariousness differs from lifestyle patterns such as simple living. Four categories can be outlined in the assessment of precariousness.

Housing	The place of residence: suburbs/centre and distance from the cluster where other musicians usually work and hang out. The overall size of the accommodation: room size, kitchen and modern convenience (bathroom/shower, indoor toilets, etc.). The quality of life in the neighbourhood: street noise, accessibility of public transport, crime, air quality and possibility to going out at night. Cost per month compared to income per month. The number of people living in the household (and reflexions on communal living), ventilation and natural light, heating system, time lived at the same household.

	Number of time household has changed in the past five years. These criteria were adapted from the Swedish level of living survey (Sten et al., n.d.).
Work	The number of hours of work per week. The average income per year. The numbers of jobs held in the past year and at the time of the assessment, the current status (employee, self-employed), the work from home, the satisfaction in jobs, the level of certainty of the continuity of employment, the working conditions and working hours, the protection against unemployment and social protection (and unions) against harassment and abuse (Duell, 2004; Standing, 2014).
Relationship with others	Contact with the parents and the family (eventually declared support from them), close, long and lasting friendships, romantic relationships, economic hardship of parents, sexual opportunities.
Self-assessment of health	The existence of chronic illnesses, medication taken recently, sport activities, quality of sleep and food and mental health.

Table 2: Categories in the assessment of precariousness

Secondly, drawing on previous research (Bourdieu, 2007/1993), I analysed participants' comments about their living and working conditions (as in perceived precariousness). Precariousness means an uncertain relation to the world and by extension to the self (Sennett, 1998) see also the chapter two); therefore, it seemed crucial to assess individuals' reflexivity. Under precariousness, many things become

precarious, including the possibility of being self-sufficient, and of developing healthy relationships and a positive sense of self-worth. Consequently, people were asked questions about their relation to the present as well as visions and hopes about the future upon short, medium and long term, e.g. where do you see yourself in the next few months, in five years' time, and ten years' time? Undoubtedly, these questions are difficult to answer, whether participants are precarious or not.

3.6.3 The assessment of social class and social class background

For the assessment of social class background, this thesis borrows from Bourdieusian conceptions of class (Bourdieu, 1987; Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu, 1979; Wright, 2005, pp.82-118). For Bourdieu, social class depends on various forms of capital (economic, cultural, social and symbolic). Three main forms of capital create stratification among individuals (Bourdieu, 1986). Firstly, cultural capital, i.e. formal and informal knowledge, skills, education and behaviour an individual acquires from their social background and education. Secondly, the social capital, i.e. the resources and support and individual gains from relationships and networks (family, friends, acquaintances). Thirdly, economic capital, i.e. the economic resources an individual has (Bourdieu, 1986). In other words, cultural capital provides dispositions, embodiment and strategies to, for instance, cope with uncertainty and anxiety; the economic capital allows individuals to sustain in their precarious activity, often thanks to the help of parents or relatives; the social capital allows them to compare their own experiences with their peers and consider what is acceptable and what is not. This assessment of social class background is developed in sections 4.4, 4.5, 5.2, 7.4 and 9.1.3.

Bourdieu's forms of capital found some new echoes and continue to evolve in recent studies on class, gender and ethnicity (Savage et al., 2015). Despite the fact that social class has generally been under-researched in social sciences in recent decades (Atkinson, 2007), numerous important works remind us that social class shapes individuals' opportunities and self-development (Skeggs, 1997; Skeggs, 2003; Skeggs, 2005; Wright, 2005, p.20; Sayer, 2009). In the assessment of participants' social class background, I draw on the Great British Class Survey, an online survey of social class in the United Kingdom developed by Savage and Devine (Savage et al., 2013; Savage

and Devine, 2015; Savage et al., 2015).[30] This survey was based on Bourdieu's 'capital' approach to social stratification in order to get a landscape of class and stratification in contemporary Great Britain. Savage and al. define seven social classes: elite, established middle-class, technical middle-class, new affluent workers, traditional working-class, emergent service workers and precariat (Savage et al., 2013, p.230).

When assessing participants' social class, I asked them about any kind of side jobs or other activities they may have. While two participants may hold a similar position in term of distribution and recognition in the field of music, their experience of life will be different if working outside the field means for one being a warehouseman and for the other being a manager in a company. As Wright notes, 'individuals can hold two jobs which are differently located within social relations of production' resulting in being in two (sometimes contradictory) class locations at the same time (Wright, 2005, p.16-17).

Beyond participants' occupations, their social class background was considered. As the recent work showed, an occupational based class schema tends to undermine the importance of social and cultural processes generating class divisions (Savage et al., 2013). To avoid this bias, I have been attentive to any kind of information which could indicate the social class background of the participants: parents and sometimes grandparents' occupation and property, geographic origin. Moreover, apart from the different life opportunities generated by economic capital disparities between social class, cultural and social capital may also influence deeply individual's expectation about life (Allen, 2016).

More formally, I asked participants the kind of work their parents (or caretakers) had when they were a child – and potential major changes in their caretakers' professional lives from their childhood until the moment of the interview to reflect on their family's social upward or downward mobility or stability that could have affected the participant. For reasons of clarity and readability, the seven New Social Classes from the Great British Class Survey outlined by Savage et al. 2015 (see for instance p.175) – precariat; emerging service workers; traditional working-class; new affluent workers; technical middle-class; established middle-class; elite – were reduced to four: working-class (precariat, emerging service workers, traditional

[30] http://doc.ukdataservice.ac.uk/doc/7616/mrdoc/pdf/7616_questionnaire.pdf [Accessed on 6 July 2018].

working-class); middle-class (new affluent workers; technical middle-class; established middle-class) and upper-class (elite). At times, I also described participant's social background as in between social classes, i.e. 'working and lower middle-class background', to reflect the fact that social classes may also be porous (someone can be simultaneously in between two social classes).

3.6.4 The assessment of coping strategies

This thesis looks at the coping strategies and defence mechanisms against anxiety and stress of the everyday life of musicians under neoliberalism and the societal pressure to 'be someone'. The assessment of coping strategies and defence mechanisms was inspired by existing tools (Carver et al., 1989; Carver, 1997; Park and Fenster, 2004), and more specifically by the Brief COPE (Carver, 1997, p. 97), which defines fourteen coping strategies and ways to identify them during interviews. Other theoretical references helped to define coping strategies and defence mechanisms – although authors do not necessarily define them as such (Festinger, 1962; Raskin and Novacek, 1991; Potamianou, 1997; Oakley, 2009b; Ahmed, 2010; Lloyd, 2010; Berlant, 2011; Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013). During the semi-directed and informal interviews with the participants, the moments of silence, doubts and types of answers gave indications about the well-being of individuals in the present and the strategies individuals had developed to cope with precariousness. The gap between the perceived and objective precariousness as well as contradictions showed signs of coping strategies such as denial. Overall, it is in the doubts, hesitations and everyday discussions that coping strategies and defence mechanisms were assessed.

The analysis of coping strategies and defence mechanisms rely heavily on the reflexivity of the researcher and the warrant of seriousness is guaranteed by various safeguard. First, as indicated above, the assessment of coping strategies and defence mechanisms was inspired by existing tools. Second, the notes indicating potential coping strategies and defence mechanisms were compared with the discourses of participants. The context of the interviews – in which numerous non-verbal information was gathered – and participant observation provided crucial additional information to assess such behaviours. Third, the analysis was led during an extended period to ensure that it was more than mere preliminary intuition. By going through several rounds of analysis during an extended period, I intended to lessen the risk of misinterpretation and overvaluation of participants' behaviours.

Concerning how widespread the psychological categories are, I used a case study approach that illustrates observations but does not make a claim for generalisation over the entire sample. As for Vince's case in Hollway and Jefferson (2005, p.150): 'In this way, the single case study can do powerful theoretical work in demonstrating the limits of existing theory and its relevance does not rest on the ability to generalize across a sample.' Consequently, using a case study does not intend a generalisation among all participants – not all participants resorted to fantasy or focalization for instance. But a case study approach to assess coping strategies and defence mechanism allows the development of a single example with great depth.

3.7 Coding the data

The qualitative analysis software NVivo 11 was used to organise and interpret the data. 25 interviews were loaded into the software and coded manually in several rounds. Various transcriptions of fieldwork notes (participant observation and informal interviews) have also been uploaded in the software and used to inform the digital analysis. Attention was paid particularly to their own representations and discourses about their working and living conditions (Roseneil, 2006, p.3; Allen, 2016). The method of analysis used consisted in successive passing through the data in order to evolve into categories with a higher degree of abstraction (Given, 2008, p.88). Coding the data aims at making sense of raw data (interview transcripts, field notes, photos, videos) by processing it in various steps (Given, 2008, p.85-6).

Firstly, I created nodes based on the reading of the participant observation and transcripts of interviews as in 'open coding' (Given, 2008, p.86). This activity, known as 'memoing', consists in digging through the details of the data, keeping track of insights and connections while having the general question of the study in mind (Given, 2008, p.86).

Secondly, I used axial coding, which means that I began to refine the categories (nodes) which emerged inductively through the coding process as in NVivo coding strategy (p.86). Invivo Coding, means assigning a label to a section of data using a word or a short phrase taken from that section. It aims at ensuring that the concepts stay as close as possible to research participants' own words' (Given, 2008, p.472).

Thirdly, I looked at the relationships and links between the nodes to reduce their number by merging them as in selective coding (Given, 2008, p.86). Using 'magnitude coding' (Saldana, 2016, p.58), the nodes used were those with the highest

recurrence. At the end of the coding process, eight main topics with sub-topics and sometimes third round topics were kept.

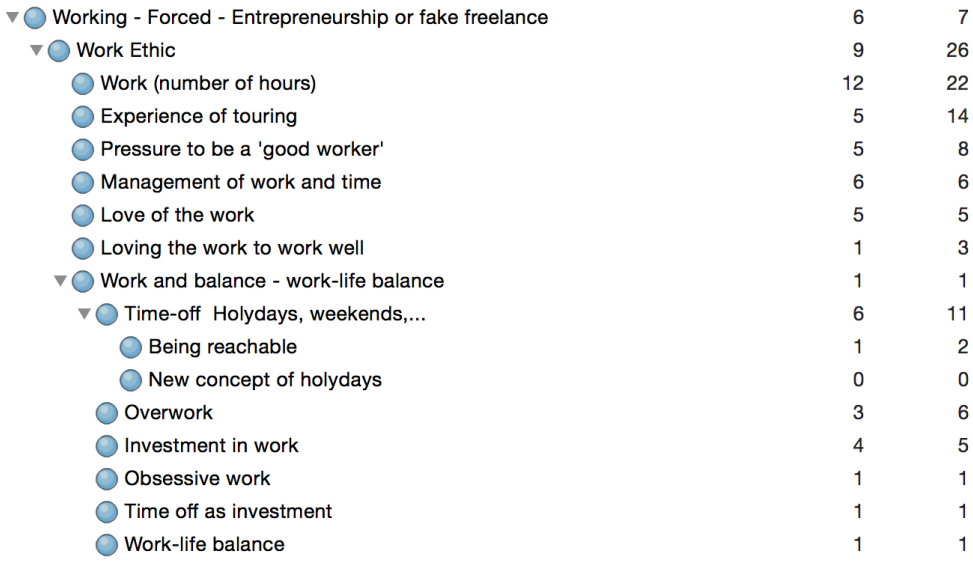

Figure 1: Extract of the coding system

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the methods used in this thesis. Section 3.2 looked at the sample of participants. It outlined the reasons behind the choice to consider solely participants aged 22-37 with at least three years of experience in the field. The participants represented the majority of musicians: the independents who are barely making it. The recruitment was made thanks to personal contacts and subsequent snowball sampling.

Section 3.3 looked at the location of the fieldwork. Drawing on existing literature on cultural work, I outlined the importance to look at specific cities (and sometimes even neighbourhoods) to understand the particular dynamic of living and working conditions in the cultural and creative industries. For the participants, the aura of these cities is twofold: it provides opportunities to gain meaningful jobs but it also increases the living costs. This multi-sited fieldwork looked at similarities rather than differences between socio-economic contexts.

Section 3.4 outlined how preliminary fieldwork undertaken prior to the PhD programme in Leeds informed the present work. Led between 2008 and 2014, it consisted of observations and informal interviews with cultural workers. During the

PhD programme, fieldwork involved 32 semi-directed interviews with musicians and participant observation in places, such as music venues and recording studios.

Section 3.5 presented in further detail the research methods used on the fieldwork – semi-directed interviews, participant observation and qualitative longitudinal research.

Taking into consideration three examples, anxiety, precariousness and social class, the section 3.6 presented the method of assessing the psychosocial impact and the variables of the social. Having no training in psychology prior to this PhD programme, I presented the different strategies I developed to look at structural conditions shaping people's well-being or inversely ill-being.

Section 3.7 looks at the method used to code the data, particularly the semi-directed interviews. I presented the coding strategy used in the software NVivo 11 to go from extensive amount of data to a structured data with relevant nodes.

Chapter 4
Anxiety, Coolness and Confidence

4.1 Introduction

In the USA, between 2001 and 2003, anxiety disorders were experienced by 22.3% of 18-29-year olds and 22.7% of 30-44-year olds according to an estimate made by the National Institute of Mental Health based on data from National Comorbity Survey Replication[31]. In the UK, one adult in six (15.7%) had a common mental disorder in 2014, including anxiety, according to the Health and Social Care Information Centre[32]. A recent study following a sample of 2,211 musicians in the UK showed that 71.1% of participants declared having anxiety and panic attacks (Musgrave, 2017). Compared to the national average, professional musicians are two times more anxious than other individuals, making musicians a population prone to developing anxiety problems.

While anxiety may be explained through psychoanalysis, philosophy, biology, psychiatry or cognitivism, it also finds its roots in culture (Smail, 1984; May, 1996, pp.174–77; Smail, 1996; Smail, 2015). Anxiety is not just the result of an early trauma or problematic relationship during early childhood; although personal responses vary, anxiety is also a common reaction to the world we live in. It is our mind and our body telling us that there is something wrong about the world we live in. It is the cognitive dissonance that results from the fact that we are evaluative beings who experience and perform in our everyday life things which are perceived as ethically and morally wrong, unhealthy, and harmful. In other words, 'we live in anxiety, fear and dread because these constitute a proper response to the nature of our social world' (Smail, 1984, p.98). Like many other feelings, anxiety can be explained as a psychological phenomenon, but there are also social and cultural realities.

Anxiety as a sociological subject of inquiry has been under-researched by sociologists and cultural labour researchers in the last few decades, even though precarious working conditions have been increasingly observed. Recent studies in cultural labour outlined features of cultural work eroding the self: increasing

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[31] https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/any-anxiety-disorder.shtml
[Accessed 30 June 2018].

[32] http://content.digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB21748/apms-2014-cmd.pdf
[Accessed 30 June 2018].

precariousness including low pay, long hours culture, job insecurity, high geographic mobility, diminution of boundaries between work and play, and network sociality (Ursell, 2000; Wittel, 2001; McRobbie, 2002; Flew, 2004; Neff et al., 2005; Banks, 2007; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008; Gill, 2009b; Gill and Pratt, 2009; Oakley, 2009a; Oakley, 2009b; Ross, 2009; Gill, 2011; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011; Oakley, 2014; Allen, 2016). However, while at times referring to the body of literature on individualisation, there have been few references (McRobbie, 2002; Rowlands and Handy, 2012; Scharff, 2016) to how these features of work could potentially trigger anxiety. However, this omission is not exclusive to cultural labour studies. Other fields in social science have shown the same lack of interest in forms of anxieties triggered by the cultural conditions and social structures (Wilkinson, 2001, p.16).

While theories of individualisation accounted for the psychological burden (such as anxiety) of late capitalism on people's identities (Giddens, 1990; Giddens, 1991; Beck, 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1996; Bauman, 2007), they made little account of social class or gender. I advocate here for a reunion of both that could contribute further to an understanding of anxiety in cultural labour, and by extension in late capitalism.

Looking at anxiety as a social fact, I take into account social variables such as gender and social class background. Therefore, I ask the following questions: what are the specific forms anxiety takes among musicians, depending on their gender and social class background? May we see the emergence of a social group which is better at coping with anxiety related to working in music?

Firstly, I consider how the lack of ontological security translates into anxiety among the participants. Using a sociological understanding of anxiety, I claim that anxiety is the result of a lack of ontological security eroding the self in their mind and body.

Secondly, I present the particular forms that anxiety is taking among female musicians. Drawing on existing work and first-hand data, I show that the neoliberal incentive of self-sufficiency is co-opting feminism. Female musicians are constrained by expectation to display a limited set of feelings (such as determination, confidence, sensibility), and to repress others, which then triggers anxiety.

Thirdly, I present the anxiety specific to the working and lower middle-class participants observed. I show how these participants tend to feel illegitimate and like frauds, and develop a fear of failure. Consequently, observations show that

participants are struggling to preform coolness and detachment, which ostracises them from job opportunities.

Fourthly, I argue here that social class background plays a crucial role in embodying strategies to cope with anxiety. Middle- and upper-class values promoting resilience are seen as strategies and dispositions that help in the management of anxiety and uncertainty that is typically felt in music work.

4.2 Anxiety triggered by a lack of ontological security

While anxiety is generally explained as a result of childhood experiences, brain chemical imbalance or existential condition, I propose in this thesis to consider anxiety to be triggered by structural conditions, such as an outcome of precariousness. Indeed, we are evaluative beings with ethical and moral values for whom things matter (Sayer, 2011). Therefore, we may be troubled, lose anchor and be driven to anxiety by the world around us. Feelings are social and cultural realities as well (Illouz, 2006, p.15). Drawing on Smail and Fisher, I consider that anxiety is a symptom of our subjective experience of the world telling us that there is something seriously wrong with the world we live in (Smail, 1984; Smail, 1996; Smail, 2015). Anxiety is a personal response to wider politics and living conditions in precariousness (Fisher, 2009; Fisher, 2010; Fisher, 2014), perhaps the most adequate responses to the nature of our social world (Smail, 1984; Smail, 1996; Smail, 2015).

For R. D. Laing, it is the lack of ontological security that triggers anxiety (R. D. Laing, 2010, p.42). Inversely, with ontological security:

> The individual, then may experience his own being as real, alive, whole; as differentiated from the rest of the world in ordinary circumstances so clearly that his identity and autonomous are never in question; as a continuum in time; as having an inner consistency, substantiality, genuineness, and worth; as spatially co-extensive with the body; and usually, as having begun in or around birth and liable to extinction with death. He thus has a firm core of ontological security (R. D. Laing, 2010, p.42).

R. D. Laing's account of the relationships between a lack of ontological security and anxiety is in line with the 'Professional Musicians in the UK Health and Well-being Survey' that was undertaken in 2014 and showed that musicians have concerns about anti-social working hours (84%), money problems (82%), and work insecurity (79%) (Help Musicians UK, 2014). This anxiety about failure is triggered by the accumulation

of precarious jobs with long and antisocial working hours that often lead to social isolation. As described in subsequent chapters, a lack of ontological security affects all aspect of musicians' lives, from housing, living and working conditions, to physical and mental health (Webster, 2004). Likewise, the extracts below illustrate how a lack of ontological security may encompass all aspects of life:

> Yeah… But it's like. It's just a phase I guess. You have one job, it leads you to another job and continue and gonna go down… and change again. It is really insecure to be creative (Catherine, Stockholm).
>
> Overdraft, not being able to pay your bills, etc. It costs you more money… Having no money led to one thing to another. You tired, you don't work that well and all of a sudden you more tired and stressed and have anxiety and you can't sleep… I have seen that (Guy, San Francisco).

In the extracts above, ontological security relates to financial insecurity as well as uncertainty about the future. In the absence of a grip on the present, and faced by the impossibility of planning ahead, participants developed anxiety, which diminished their ability to work.

As the data show, a lack of ontological security triggering anxiety in participants often goes along with unhealthy lifestyles (sedentary lifestyles, lack of sleep, bad food habits, and drugs), which worsen anxiety. As for Daniel and Ernest:

> Almost every day, I make a big thing of rice at the beginning of the week and then I make a big thing of chicken at the beginning of the week. I have chicken and rice and vegetable almost every day, two meals and different kinds of sauce. It's healthy enough and it's cheap (Daniel, Portland).
>
> You definitely have to save hard. Even on that [beers]. But I do a lot of the liquid dinners (Ernest, Portland).

Although these participants develop strategies to save on daily expenses, this sometimes seems to be at the expense of their physical health. In a context of a lack of ontological security, a balanced diet is often discarded for cheaper alternatives and, more worryingly, the consumption of drugs such as alcohol, that (1) help them temporarily to cope with anxiety, and (2) align with the hedonistic culture attached to the network sociality (Wittel, 2001) described in section 7.4.2.

Beyond typical symptoms of anxiety – such as internal tensions; hostile feelings; hypochondria; anxiety for nothing; phobia; lack of sleep – participants also experienced its physical manifestations, including disorders of the neurovegetative

system; palpitations; respiratory problems; coldness of the extremities; vertigo; trouble in the digestive system (vomiting, diarrhoea, ulcers); and physical pains (Kapsambelis, 2007; Ross, 2004, p.143). In the long run, anxiety can have severe physical consequences on the body if left unchecked, as Bertrand observed:

> There's all this thing about my personal life which is abandoned, and the body, the disease, the flat, the money… I think I have anxiety. I am hypochondriac too. It's structural, I have that. I don't feel insomniac anymore but my sleep is very irregular. My health is not really fine, I have the Crohn's disease[33], very much linked to stress. Ideally everything should do it to improve my condition: a rhythm of life, food, alcohol, coffee, fag obviously no, exercise, something I don't do. I can't do it. I complain about that but I can't motivate to do it. It's hard to disconnect, to say that a moment is devoted to that. There are people who live differently things, who can give structure to their lives. They manage to focus, to manage themselves… I don't know how to say it (Bertrand, Paris).

Bertrand's account of his physical health, very much linked to his lifestyle, illustrates the pervasiveness of anxiety among participants. As he states, this anxiety is related to the absence of structure in his life. Although he is a talented and active musician in the Parisian independent scene, Bertrand blames himself for lacking motivation to give structure to his life – not the absence of institutional support and frames of reference and the musicians' lifestyle. This echoes neoliberal incentives for self-care and transforming the self into an entrepreneurial subject managing all aspects of their life. Moreover, his difficulty in disconnecting from music work illustrates an overwhelmingly present activity, reinforcing an obsessional mental state driving him toward substances such as alcohol, coffee and cigarettes, triggering even more anxiety.

Among participants, the perceived absence of control over their lives and concern about future events was a particularly triggering anxiety (as in Scharff, 2016, pp.116–117). Participants felt obliged to move from one place to another, following working opportunities that, among other things, precluded participants from building meaningful relationships. In the second extract, Nicholas reflects upon his own anxiety-driven experience of music prior to enrolling in a master's degree, which provided him with a fall-back plan to reduce his anxiety:

> It means a lot of stress sort of perpetual not knowing what your future is. You know human spirit changes. It is because we are all afraid of

[33] A long-term condition that causes inflammation of the lining of the digestive system.

> change and the unknown. That's why we hate people that look different than us. Human… You know humans are scared. Human nature is afraid of that stuff. So the uncertainty of a freelance career or like creative career leads to a lot of anxiety, and I wouldn't figure out a way to get better or how to deal with it (Sean, Oakland).

> If you asked that question maybe three years ago or four years ago I would have said, 'yes', definitely because at the time I was working retail in LA so I was making… I don't think I wasn't even making ten dollars an hour. I was working 40 hours a week barely scraping by and trying to make music on the side. Yeah, I was very anxious about the future, about paying rent and paying for recording, to press. That was really hard and now that I've got a better job that is paying more and very flexible, which is very nice, I'm not as stressed and the fact that I'm working towards my masters which could potentially open more opportunities for me, I'm more optimistic about the future, but if I was still working retail I would be like yeah… There is no way I could sustain that… Again, because it's so hard to make money with music, you need to have a fall-back plan and at the time, four years ago, I didn't have a fall-back plan… (Nicholas, San Francisco)

Precarious careers extend to all aspects of daily life, including relationships. Although life is uncertain for all and planning the future is subject to constant change, the extent to which participants' lives appears as a series of unexpected events without control triggers anxiety. Beyond this observation, the extracts above also show two different ways of coping with uncertainty. Sean resorts to intellectualization to temper his anxiety and help him deal with the uncertainty of the future. By thinking in abstract terms and generalising about 'humans', he can distance himself from his anxiety. Nicholas resorts to hope and planning to reduce his anxiety, triggered by a lack of ontological security. Moreover, Nicholas' example illustrates how anxiety can be linked to a lack of ontological security. The ability to plan the present and future helps him to cope with the inherent anxiety of daily life. Although Nicholas is not completely liberated from precariousness – his contract as a primary school teacher is temporary – he has a job and has plans for the future – obtaining a master's degree. Altogether, it helps him to soothe his anxiety, especially in a context in which he is aware that living solely from music is hard.

4.3 Anxiety and women in a 'man's world'

Recent studies on anxiety found higher rates among women than men.[34] One in five women had a common mental disorder (20.7%), including anxiety, compared to about one in eight men (13.2%), according to a 2016 UK study by the Health and Social Care Information Centre.[35] In the USA, young women have emerged as a 'high-risk' group, as women are 60% more likely to have anxiety than men.[36] However, existing statistics do not look at the specific forms anxiety takes among women working in the music industries. There are statistics on the overall split of men and women in the music industries, showing that the older women get, the less likely they are to be represented. Overall, women in the music industries are slightly underrepresented in the UK (49.3%), compared to the UK population (50.7%) (UK Music, 2017). However, statistics say little about the experiences of women in the industry. This section aims to contribute to the current debate about gender inequalities in the creative and cultural industries by looking at the pressures put on women to display confidence and determination, as well as the performance of emotion.

The constant performance of confidence and determination burdens women and triggers anxiety. For Gill and Orgad (2015, p.339), drawing on a post-Foucauldian approach, this confidence culture is a new technology of the self, an imperative of confidence that paradoxically produces self-doubt, lack of confidence, shame and insecurity for women. Gill and Orgad's argument is that confidence cult(ure) is not only gendered, it is also far from being feminist. They effectively show how this technology of confidence – an incentive triggered by neoliberalism – disavows the burden of the structures of inequality. Indeed, by turning the responsibility inward, this culture of confidence systematically avoids pointing out the role of social, political, economic, cultural and corporate institutions in the maintenance and reproduction of inequality and justice (Gill and Orgad, 2015, p.340). Therefore, as in governmentality, it places the 'blame for gender inequality in women's psyche and body' (Gill and

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[34] http://theconversation.com/women-are-far-more-anxious-than-men-heres-the-science-60458 [Accessed 30 June 2018].

[35] https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/health-and-social-care-information-centre [Accessed 30 June 2018].

[36] https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/prevalence/any-anxiety-disorder-among-adults.shtml [Accessed 30 June 2018].

Orgad, 2015, p.144). More generally, this culture of confidence is the lifeblood of neoliberalism; it produces shame about dependence, failure and vulnerability. Their analysis echoes McRobbie's (2007b, p.718) concept of 'top girls' wherein women are 'urged to become hyper-active', 'ideal subjects of female success, exemplars of the new competitive meritocracy'. For McRobbie (2007b), consumer and popular culture – reflecting overarching neoliberal political discourses – by suggesting that gender equality is achieved, consider young women as capable subjects fitting in the fallacious (neoliberal) competitive meritocracy. As a result, young women are compelled to turn into entrepreneurial subjects encouraged to maximize their personal involvement in education, work and intimate relations (Allen, 2016, p.807) at the expense of radical sexual politics challenging masculinity and patriarchies. In the extract below, Eloise illustrates this struggle:

> You have to show that you're belong here. You can't let people walk over you. It's a thin line between being pretty and feared. I'm a shark but I'm kind as well (Eloise, Paris).'

Eloise embodies the tension between the difficulty to express – maybe even to herself – self-doubts and a compelled confidence and hyper-activity in line with current neoliberal understandings of women. Such tension between contradictory feelings triggers anxiety.

Moreover, results showed that women had to work on themselves to repress signs of tiredness, pain or boredom. To the contrary, women declared having to show an outward appearance of enjoyment and commitment, as in Hochschild's example of steward (2012). The tension between repressed feelings and forced expression triggered anxiety. This was the case for Ingrid, a 33-year-old Swedish musician who travelled to France for a recording session a few days after having her first baby. As a musician performing professionally, Ingrid felt that she had to show to the music industries that she was committed and fit to work, even though she was recovering from a traumatic event. In between recording takes, Ingrid was using a breast pump to express milk and phoning her partner to check on their baby. As she stated:

> If I don't show that I'm still present, they'll forget about me, or think that I'm weak and I can't work because I have a baby. I can't allow that (Ingrid, Paris).

Ingrid's comments confirm recent research showing that gender inequalities are reinforced by the working features in the CCIs: long hours, presentism, unpredictable and bulimic patterns of work. Women with caring responsibilities often become

separated from new job opportunities, which gradually excludes them from working in the CCIs. Despite a culture of silence (Wing-Fai et al., 2015, pp.62-63), many of the female participants in this study discussed 'the impossibility of having children' for the reasons stated above. They also discussed financial insecurity in cultural work in a context where childcare is considered to be the job of a mother, reinforcing sexism(Gill, 2014).[37] This is part of the neoliberal culture of work in which work is supposed to be prioritised above everything, including motherhood. Altogether, if women 'get in' to the CCIs, as Wing-Fai, Gill and Randle (2015) showed, they struggle to 'get on', which triggers anxiety.

The anxiety specific to women in the music industries also comes from the fact that the field is generally reluctant to welcome female artists outside of the stereotypical roles, such as lead singer or backing vocalist (Alacovska, 2015). Consequently, women declared that they had to prove constantly to other workers that they were fit for the job, which triggered anxiety. Female participants declared they felt under constant watch from other workers, especially men. As for Matilde, Annah and Gilberte:

> People assume that there is necessarily something wrong with me doing what I'm doing. As if in making music I was not doing what I was supposed to do as a woman, like cleaning, cooking or child-bearing, maybe? (Matilde, Paris).
>
> I'm one of the only recording sound engineers I know. There is this thing about the look of people visiting the studio. If they don't know me from before, I can see in their eyes that they think I'm the girlfriend of one of the musicians or a groupie, when they simply don't ask me: 'can you bring me a coffee?' There is this thing as well that people are afraid that my recordings would sound too girly, or pink. These things are really pissing me off. I feel anxious to show them what I'm capable of (Annah, Reykjavik).
>
> We can't be too bossy and cold, and we can't be too fragile and in doubt. It's tricky and exhausting (Gilberte, Paris).

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[37] As Gill notes (2014, p.511), the emphasis on childcare as a form of explanation for the under representation of women in the CCIs – which is reinforced over time – risks perpetuating the definition of women as 'domestic workers' while the majority of women in these fields do not have children (and yet they are still unrepresented). Moreover, such a focus on childcare might well perpetuate the pressure put on women to give birth – while some of them do not want that.

The extracts above illustrate female participants' struggles to make themselves legitimate in a working environment dominated by men, their everyday experience of misogyny, and their ways of adapting to it. They suggest the impossible demands and double bind messages made to female workers who must navigate between qualities culturally assigned to women – caring and sensitivity – and those often expected or cultivated in men – selfishness, individualism and competitive behaviours – to pursue their activity and be recognised. Compared to male workers, women suffer from much more an anxiety triggered by the fear of not being 'good enough'.

It is much more socially expected of women to display their emotions, through facial expressions, gestures and body language. However, as in cognitive dissonance, the socially accepted display of emotions often differs from those experienced by the individual.[38] Women may feel fear and doubt while being expected to put themselves forward or, inversely, may feel proud and willing to communicate it with others while expected to contain themselves with a 'blasé attitude'. The tension between socially accepted displays of emotion and inner feelings triggered anxiety among participants, especially among those who lacked emotional capital (Illouz, 2006, p.119). For Illouz, emotional capital is a set of dispositions allowing individuals to know when and how to disclose emotions to others.

As for other forms of capital, emotional capital can be transferred into, for instance, economic capital, which can lead to increased job opportunities. This was the case for Marine, a 29-year-old musician and artist based in Paris. In 2015, Marine exhibited a sound installation in an art gallery in Paris. During the participant observation, before the opening of the exhibition, Marine was very anxious about the set-up of her work. Nevertheless, she appeared focused and confident to the audience (the gallerist, the agent and an assistant). However, she was directing the placement of her work and the kind of lighting she needed with an apparent self-assurance. During the informal interviews after the set-up, she confided that she knew that she had to show self-confidence to this audience even though, as she stated, 'I had no clue about what I was doing'. A few days later, during the opening of her exhibition to the public, she displayed her emotions intensely. As she mentioned during an informal interview, even though she thought of herself as pretty good at self-control, the expected display of emotion was nevertheless triggering anxiety.

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[38] See the introduction for a definition of cognitive dissonance.

As in Goffman's 'on stage', 'backstage' and 'off stage' performances (Goffman, 1959/1990), Marine knew that the set-up was playing an important role. On one side, it was expected for her to show professionalism, which implied determination and confidence. On the other side, in front of the public, it was expected of her to show sensitivity and fragility. This description of the disclosure of emotions and control of her own anxiety should not be considered as some sort of cynicism, but rather a set of dispositions embodied through the years as she got to learn her artistic identity (Mauss, 1921; Illouz, 2006). This emotional capital is crucial to provide consistency in the image one is projecting to the world. However, Marine's performance was going beyond the everyday performances observed. The vast range of emotions she was expected to display within a short time and the fear of failing her 'on stage' performance was triggering anxiety. Indeed, despite appearing confident, she admitted to being very anxious of losing control over the display of her emotions.

Under neoliberalism, women's right to have careers turns again them: it becomes a neoliberal exhortation to take care of themselves in an environment where women are generally under-waged and overlooked, especially when ageing (UK Music, 2017). Therefore, female participants, such as Eloise, also expressed anxiety at not being able to 'make it' in a competitive environment ruled by men. First-hand data are in line with gender-based inequality reported in the Australian music industries (Cooper et al., 2017), as well as the UK Music Diversity Survey Results 2016 (UK Music, 2017). However, this neoliberal exhortation also implies an impossibility to fail or simply to experiment with different career paths. For Eloise, this anxiety was visible through her nervous tics, and her intense self-intransigence and self-control.

4.4 Anxiety specific to working and lower middle-class backgrounds

Results from interviews show that anxiety, when understood as a social fact (Durkheim, 2010/1895), is unevenly socially distributed among workers. Interviews show that the level and quality of anxiety due to 'systemic conditions' (related to people's income and housing) is different according to social background.

Individuals with a working and lower middle-class background may experience the autodidact's anxiety of not being good enough. As for Bourdieu, dispositions are 'embodied' through a process of socialisation (Bourdieu, 1977). Class habitus is made up of an array of dispositions and is performed with no effort by those who have the

legitimate capital. However, for those who do not belong to this field, the performance of these dispositions creates anxiety. As Bourdieu says:

> The autodidact constantly betrays, by his very anxiety about the right classification, the arbitrariness of his classifications and therefore of his knowledge – a collection of unstrung pearls, accumulated in the course of an uncharted exploration, unchecked by the institutionalised, standardised stages and obstacles, the curricula and progressions which make scholastic culture a ranked and ranking set of interdependent levels and forms of knowledge (Bourdieu, 2010, p.328).

During participant observations in Stockholm, Merlin, a 31-year-old musician from a working-class background in the North of Sweden, mentioned on several occasions being anxious about 'doing it right, acting the proper way, act well'. Merlin's anxiety was particularly visible in the way he compared himself to others, such as his flatmate, Lucas, the son of a famous jazz drummer. For Merlin, Lucas was an example of someone achieving success without effort, while he was reporting his failure, despite his constant attempts to 'make it'. While Merlin seemed nonchalant and was recognised as a key person in the small independent music scenes of Paris and Stockholm, he revealed a constant effort to adapt and learn dispositions from other individuals with a 'better social background'. This is similar to what Allen et al. (2013, p.445) noted in the case of a participant: 'she was torn between the pressure to accept and attempt to assimilate to the middle-class practices of the design agency employees – an impossible task that will always engender anxiety'.

Likewise, the struggle of participants from a working or lower middle-class to embody respectable (upper middle-class) behaviours tends to make them 'feel like frauds'. René, an established independent musician with a working-class background, feared being 'uncovered', revealing his working-class background. René expressed his discomfort in social settings where he knew he was scrupulously observed by an audience. He feared that his body language, accent and other ways of communicating would lack self-confidence and detachment and hence betray his working-class background:

> I fear that people would discover who I am and where I come from. I know I have been pretty good at hiding it so far but it is a constant effort. I don't feel I am ever relaxed. I come from a working-class family and that is not the kind of values people care here. I am feeling like a fraud really. Sometimes I have few reflexes that lead me back to my primary conditions. Especially if I am in a social context where suddenly… To give you a tangible example. At the TV show where I

> was, I felt… I felt suddenly… I felt that I could be uncovered as someone who does not belong to this field. It's roughly that. It's not conscious, it's the body. I say to myself 'it is not normal to be here'. They gonna see it. I'm gonna sneeze, I'm gonna have a snot. Something like that. Something that will bring me back to my primary condition. It's always something that bounce me back. It always comes back. I think that someone who would come from another field would be much more at ease. Anyway… [pouts] (René, Paris).

René's extract above illustrates various things. First, the difficulty and effort required to embody – or simply simulate adequately – the disposition of this field of adoption. Second, it illustrates René's knowledge of the social distance between the respectable dispositions specific to the field of established independent music and his working-class lower middle-class social background. Third, the fear of being discovered. René's awareness of social distance, his efforts to 'fit in' by hiding what he assimilates as working- to lower middle-class dispositions and the fear of being discovered trigger anxiety.

Moreover, results show that participants from a working or lower middle-class background have an increased fear of failure compared to participants from higher social class backgrounds. I draw here on Bourdieu's concept of 'distance from necessity' and how it triggers anxiety. As for Sayer (2005, p.79):

> The most important axis is 'distance from necessity'. This divides the economically insecure – those for whom the need to make a living is an ever-present pressure, dominating all other decisions and influencing other evaluations of objects, from those whose economic security and wealth are such that they can approach any object or subject without regard of their implication for their economic well-being.

This anxiety about daily life is triggered by the absence of a safety net, which often prevents individuals from choosing career paths that could be financially risky. With her lower middle-class background, Matilde had no safety net and she was very anxious of not 'making it'. Although she temporarily found economic stability working for a non-profit organisation, albeit under a self-employment contract, thinking about the future was triggering anxiety. As she stated, anxiety about the future can deeply prevent her from being focused on her work, which in return can lead to poor decision-making and missed opportunities. Therefore, the scarcity of economic capital and the absence of a safety net have negative consequences on individuals' daily lives and ultimately their futures (Umney and Krestos, 2015). As Mathilde stated:

> I am financially independent, which makes a big difference. You don't have the same freedom. You can't think about your future projects and be that relaxed on all your decisions when you know that you're short of money. You realised that even if you're creative and even if sometimes you like to knock things up, well utopia is lovely but it doesn't happen to everyone. It's much easier for him [her colleague with an upper-class background] of course. I have to think about earning a living. I have to pay bills. I have to think about what will happen within the next months and so on. To make ends meet, I'm also working as a secretary two or three days a week. I'm extremely stressed and anxious and he [colleague] is really relaxed (Mathilde, Paris).

For Mathilde, being financially independent means an absence of a safety net preventing her from engaging in and planning future projects. Mathilde expresses her frustration at not being able to balance the invasion daily economic struggle and the mentally demanding activity of making music.

The performance of 'coolness', crucial to gaining meaningful job opportunities, is related to the distance from necessity. According to Matilde, anxiety has a negative effect on her everyday interactions with others and reduces her job opportunities. Since anxiety has the tendency to ostracise individuals from others, it can prevent people from being employed on projects. This presentation of the self corresponding to stereotypes is crucial to get a chance to be employed on future projects. This impossibility for most of the participants from a working or lower middle-class background to look 'as cool as they should' because of their anxiety is a vicious circle. It creates guilt, self-blame and more anxiety because they feel they are not 'behaving properly'. However, in a context of precariousness and when ontological security is threatened, it may be hard to have a laid-back attitude, as anxiety is rising for those who do not have this distance from necessity. Matilde, whose parents are from the lower middle-class, commented on the constant pressure to be 'doing well' that she puts on herself, and how it triggers anxiety in her daily life. She is, as she said, 'too anxious to hang out properly as she should', that is, 'looking cool and relaxed'. Matilde, whose nickname is 'the sheriff', considers herself to be a 'control freak', while she refers to her colleague as the 'cool' one. During the interview she observed on several occasions that the two of them have the tendency to replicate gender roles. Consequently, for Matilde, gender and social class background inequalities were intertwined.

In the extract below, Matilde comments on her project, which takes various forms. She and her colleague produce music and visual design for various projects. The interview was set on the premises they opened two years ago and recently transformed into a cafe and exhibition space. As Matilde expressed:

> He [her colleague from an upper-class background] has more freedom to think about… strict things and stuff. You still have this little thing that prevents you from being relaxed and detached. They prevent you from doing things because when the others continue to relax completely, you still have to do this and that… (Matilde, Paris).

The extract above illustrates how gender and class inequalities add up. Moreover, Mathilde's case is interesting since she observes how inequalities translate practically into daily life – despite meritocratic discourses – which creates frustration and anxiety of not being able to handle it 'all at once'.

Individuals with a lower social background tend to take on the uncertainty of the field and have a hard time bouncing back. Instead of investing their time in other activities, the uncertainty cripples them, as they tend to conflate these gaps with personal worth. In interviews, individuals from a lower social background reported guilt and self-blame, finding it hard to cope with the absence of work (McRobbie, 2002). Despite the fact that they were aware that this activity was in essence irregular and made of short-term contracts, the end of each contract led to anxiety and questions about their self-worth. This is the case for Melinda, a 32-year-old musician from a working-class background, who self-blames:

> Every time I have no job, I really start to question myself. I know it's just stupid because I could use this time to go to the museum or train myself, but I just can't. I just stay in pyjamas all day and I wait. I feel bad, and I don't feel worthy or good enough to do this job (Melinda, Paris).

Melinda's comments on her management of periods of unemployment illustrate how working identity becomes a crucial aspect of the self among participants. In the absence of work, Melinda does not just question her working skills, or her ability to form a solid network but, as she states: 'I really start to question myself'. Although she knows that intermittent work is structural in the CCIs, she takes on the uncertainty of the job, which leaves her in a depressed mood, unable to function adequately or enjoy moments in between jobs when she could rest. In other words, her fragile working identity – a fundamental aspect of her identity – is threatened by the feature of the CCIs which triggers regular phases of anxiety.

4.5 Social class background, anxiety and the culture of coping

Participants from middle-class and upper middle-class backgrounds declared a different kind of anxiety than the working and lower middle-classes outlined above, although it was also triggered by the generalised precariousness in the field. Indeed, participants expressed being under threat of downward mobility, and therefore felt the pressure of securing their social class location. As Wright has noted, class location is not simply the result of the job held but also the social relation, such as family and kindship (Wright, 2005, p.18).

Juliette, a 27-year-old musician based in Paris, whose parents were petit-bourgeois (her father is a manufacturer and her mother manages a store), felt pressure to 'make it' in the field to prove to her parents that she was 'capable'. For Juliette, making it meant (at least) maintaining the same class location as her parents. However, contrary to her parents, who had a high economic capital but low cultural capital, Juliette focused on cultural capital – and prestige – as she knew she could not earn the same wages as in the corporate sector (Bourdieu, 1975). Although Juliette was often struggling to legitimise the value of working as a musician to her father, who was relying on different values, she was appeasing her anxiety about making it by convincing herself that she was the 'cultural guarantor' of the family.

Likewise, Gilberte was experiencing a constant anxiety resulting from the fear of not 'making it'. Gilberte's family experienced a constant upward mobility over the last three generations until reaching the established middle-class location. Gilberte felt pressure from her relatives to secure the family class location and possibly participate in their constant social upgrading. Although, she understood that by working in music within prestigious institutions, she was holding legitimate cultural capital as a class attribute, a basis for social selection and a resource for power, she was under pressure from her parents for not being able to reach the family's expectations about economic capital. In Gilberte's own words:

> For me, there was no upward mobility but the will to keep it at the same level. My father comes from a working-class background. I mean my grandparents were Polish immigrants working in a mine. My father was the first to experience an upward mobility in the family thanks to a grant from the State to become a teacher. They were pushing me to become a teacher, especially because I am a woman. For them it was the definite dream but I never managed to take this calling. I went to the university up to master's level to please the ambition they had for

> me, but, on the side I was more and more involved in cultural industries. I managed to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds (Gilberte, Paris).

Therefore, Gilberte's anxiety is related to her family's strategy of upward mobility and securing of social position. Taken into her family's expectation about what they consider to be a respectable career for a woman, her way of dealing with the social pressure and resulting anxiety was to pursue higher education and a career in the CCIs together. But since she graduated, she declared that she felt anxious about not being able to hold a position which would be considered respectable – an expectation from her family. This fear of not 'making it' to her family's expectations triggered anxiety.

However, results showed that participants with middle social class backgrounds and above developed ways of coping with the anxiety related to a lack of ontological security. As Allen suggests (2016, p.814), 'class operates as a material and psychological safety net that not only provides resources that help produce meaningful lives, but also generates different orientations to precarity'. This is similar to Beverley Skeggs' claim that there is a normalising bent in individualisation which privileges middle-class values and experiences (Skeggs, 1997).

In a short-term, contract, project-based, precarious economy, results show that time-off between jobs is considered very differently depending on the social class background. The middle-class culture for instance is promoting psychological resilience ahead of the structural constraints that help individuals to cope more easily with uncertainty and reduce stress and anxiety. Psychological resilience means to be 'able to withstand or recover quickly from difficult conditions' (Soanes and Stevenson, 2005) (for further explanation and discussion of the term see Fletcher and Sakar, 2013). As Sennett showed, this 'adaptability' is an incentive for individuals in the post-Fordist era (Sennett, 1998). The participants from a middle social class background and above perceived temporary absence of work as a possibility for self-improvement. This is the 'assured optimism and the buffer of privilege' observed by Allen in one of her interviewees whose 'parents are both professionals within the arts and creative industries, and she described her grandparents as 'rich" (Allen, 2016, p.814).

Similarly, interviews among workers with middle and upper middle-class backgrounds showed that they tend to be more proactive during moments of hesitation, such as in between projects. Instead of questioning their own self-worth, they perceive these moments as opportunities to develop their social network and to

work on their 'personal projects' to gain new skills and develop their portfolio, which may increase future job opportunities.

As interviews and observations have shown, the resilience specific to participants from a middle-class background is gained through the sharing of information with family and relatives. Individuals from a middle-class background, thanks to their social capital – through formal and informal discussions with their family, friends and acquaintances – embody dispositions that are respected in the field, which again increases their chances of gaining employment. Participants with a middle-class background may gain dispositions from informal discussions with relatives, especially those involved in the current 'enterprise culture' promoting project-based work and flexibility (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999).

Consequently, these participants tend to gain better knowledge about the specific nature of their work, which eases the doubts that could threaten their sense of worthiness. Therefore, they blame the uncertain nature of the work rather than themselves. As a consequence, structural conditions of work in the music industries, which could otherwise threaten ontological security, are better handled and therefore lessen anxiety.

Likewise, Christine, a 27-year-old Brooklyn-based illustrator, whose parents are editors for a renowned French magazine, was gaining information about the features of cultural work from her mother, which was helping her to cope with the features of cultural work. When asked if she was stressed and anxious when jobless, she answered:

> Oh but no, my mother told me that there are moments when there is no or little activity. I know that now and it helps me to be more patient. I stay at home in my pyjamas. I work on my portfolio and I get in touch with my clients (Christine, New York).

Intermittent work – a feature of work in the CCIs – was not a source of anxiety for Christine (contrary to Melinda in the extract above). Thanks to her social capital (family members, friends, acquaintances), she considers the period of unemployment as a moment during which she can unwind, learn new skills to keep up with an unceasing flow of trends and maintain and develop her professional network – all crucial aspects for gaining meaningful job opportunities.

Moreover, this nonchalance towards uncertainty may be perceived as determination that can help them in finding other jobs more rapidly. In a context where the entrepreneurial drive is promoted in cultural industries, features and skillsets from other professional fields, such as the field of entrepreneurship, may be

transferable to cultural work (McRobbie, 2002; Gill, 2009b). As the example below shows, Fabienne (extract 2) developed a taste for risk after discussing entrepreneurial work with her family, who were themselves entrepreneurs. Considering herself as a business (Scharff, 2016, p.111), she acknowledged that in this activity risk and bluff were part of the work and negotiation with customers:

> I am used to meetings now where I show my work to clients. I sell them what they want, you know. I feel that I could be a saleswoman, selling them everything […] This skill comes from my father who is an entrepreneur. We often talk about how I should run my business. I know I have inherited this skill from him (Fabienne, Paris).

Consequently, even skills non-directly related to creativity and music-making can be helpful to participants. For Fabienne, entrepreneurial skills she learned from her father – through daily anecdotes, informal and formal discussions – play a crucial role in her ability to sell herself.

Beyond the psychological safety net gained through social capital, observations showed that participants with middle-class and upper-class backgrounds also frequently resort to economic support from their relatives. In a context where the ontological security of participants is often threatened, economic support may reduce anxiety. As Shildrick et al. noted (Shildrick et al., 2015, p.3):

> It is through the mobilisation of economic resources that young people from middle-class backgrounds are able to compete with their peers on the 'down-escalator' of devalued qualifications.

Since the precariousness observed extends far beyond youth and young adulthood, this mobilisation of economic resources may prove to be crucial in overcoming precariousness. Therefore, this economic safety net may be a moral support that compensates for the uncertainty in the music industries (Umney and Krestos, 2015, p.326). The French sociologist Menger (2009), drawing on extensive statistics, found that financial support from relatives was common among musicians. The systemic uncertainty of work in the music industries may be soothed by a relationship with an individual whose activity is more economically steady, such as a civil servant. As shown in Chapter 5, ontological security of individuals is threatened when access to accommodation is uncertain. Among the 32 semi-directed interviews with participants, only one (Fido) reported having no anxiety. As Fido expressed:

> I have a pretty specific situation. I am lucky enough that I don't have to pay rent. My parents inherited a flat here but they don't live here. I

> don't need to make money from my music. But there are ups and downs. And my career is free from anxiety since I have no ambition. I would like to be successful but it doesn't change my lifestyle and my comfort. I feel guilty but not anxious (Fido, Paris).

As further developed in the next chapter, Fido's absence of anxiety illustrates the crucial importance played by housing security to secure ontological security. Moreover, Fido's lack of ambition – as he frames it – can be perceived as the result of a lack of financial pressure. Indeed, as a previous extract seems to suggest, discourses on ambition, success and career development – within and outside the music industries – suggests an anxiety triggered by a lack of financial security. Although it is the only example, Fido seems to illustrate how financial security, housing, ambition and ontological security are interlinked.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter focused attention on a somewhat overlooked component of labour in the music industries: anxiety. Taken as a social fact (Durkheim, 2010/1895), this chapter argued that anxiety is triggered by a lack of ontological security that could be analysed through the scope of social stratifications, such as social class background and gender. Using a Bourdieusian framework, the chapter outlined how cultural, social and economic capital helped to provide ways of coping with anxiety inherent in cultural work, especially among those who are distant from necessity. These dispositions are transmitted through social capital and can be sustained thanks to economic capital in an environment where income is scarce.

Moreover, this chapter considered gender and class inequalities as cross-sectional, whereby social and gender segregation accumulates for participants, increasing their anxiety. For instance, women from a lower social class background suffer from anxiety induced by two kinds of social stratifications. Indeed, as Gill (2007, p.7) remarks, 'we live in a world that is stratified along lines of gender, race, class, age, disability, sexuality and location, and in which the privileges, disadvantages and exclusions associated with such categories are unevenly distributed'. This chapter also uses a framework inspired by symbolic interactionism (Goffman, 1959/1990) and a body of literature on emotion management, for example in the service industry (Hochschild, 2012). It considers that anxiety is triggered by the management and control of emotions: anxiety is the result of impossible institutional demands to display

or control emotions in front of others in the context of music work. Therefore, resilience and the management of emotions, like the dissimulation of anxiety, become crucial skills under neoliberalism.

This understanding moves away from a liberal way of thinking about lifestyle, which may turn precariousness into an individual choice. However, denying that the social environment does not have an influence on individuals is not only cruel but also a way of maintaining the status quo. Such denial also proves to be beneficial to the pharmaceutical industry and the so-called 'well-being industry' (self-help books, life coaches)(Davies, 2015). In other words, instead of becoming a political issue, anxiety becomes a market. This view tends to individualise anxiety and avoid exogenous explanations.

Moreover, anxiety should be considered as a symptom foreseeing potentially dreadful consequences such as burn-out, depression, suicide or addiction in a culture where individuals seem to always be 'on the edge'. When anxiety goes beyond the normal and the bearable, it can seriously alter the well-being of individuals, causing illnesses or amplifying existing ones. As Gregg recalls, this 'burnout' and 'always-on' work culture pressurises professional women (and men), producing anxiety and self-blame (Gregg, 2013, p.165).

In the following chapters, I will outline several aspects of the daily life of musicians (precarious housing, employment and interpersonal relationships and manufacturing of recognition) that may trigger anxiety in participants' lives, and the coping strategies and defence mechanisms they develop to bear it.

Chapter 5
To Find a Place You Can Call Home: Bohemianism and Precariousness

5.1 Introduction

In creative industries subject to a winner-takes-all logic (Caves, 2002), where most of the workers earn little but live in neighbourhoods with rapidly rising rents and expensive lifestyles (Lloyd, 2010), access to accommodation is a key aspect of well-being and flourishing. This chapter shows how participants have their essential means of well-being, such as sleep, intimacy, and housing security, threatened, thus challenging their ontological security (Giddens, 1991). Through the example of housing, this chapter accounts for the difficulty in accessing decent living conditions when pursuing a career in the music industries. Moreover, thanks to parental help, I argue that social background plays a crucial role in the development of such careers. Finally, the underlying argument of this chapter - developed in further detail in section 4 - is that the recurrent reference to 'bohemianism' is a strategy to cope with the precariousness of the present. As in Berlant's *Cruel Optimism*, participants maintain the fantasy of a good life at all costs in order to cope with an unliveable life (Berlant, 2011). Therefore, a bohemian romantic ethos works as a 'psychological bulwark' providing meaning to individuals and turning precariousness into proof of being an artist (Ross, 2004, pp.123–160; Oakley, 2009b, p.282).

Section 2 looks at social class background in relation to housing, re-emphasising the importance of social background in cultural work. Since direct income is rare, economic capital and family strategies may prove to play a crucial role in securing decent housing for participants. This section 2 looks at different examples, from participants staying late in life at their parental household to participants returning home temporarily. Section 3 looks at participants' housing. In contrast to home as a shelter from the outside world, cultural workers' precariousness translates into housing insecurity. Participants are often living in unhealthy accommodation, often inappropriate for communal living. Furthermore, the precariousness often translates into a fear of eviction and even homelessness. The last section of the chapter, by drawing on earlier developments, emphasises the cornerstone argument of this chapter: reference to bohemianism (in its classic or current form) is a strategy to

cope with the precariousness of the present. Moreover, this section proposes a distinction that depends on social class background.

5.2 Social class background matters: Economic independency and the process of self-making

Social class background remains a great source of social distinction between participants, especially since monetary rewards in cultural work are often scarce. As Wright reminds us, individuals are not only bound to class through their location in the process of production and consumption but also through other social relations – what he identifies as 'mediated locations within class relations', such as family and kinship (Wright, 2005, p.18). This distinction is enlightening as it helps to acknowledge the complexities in identifying individuals' class location and the continuity between generations. In the following section, I intend to show how participants' class location is dependent upon social background, while all participants are supposedly part of a pool of (bohemian) cultural workers.

5.2.1 Precariousness and class distinction in lifestyle

As outlined in Chapter 2, bohemia is subject to social stratification. The differences of social background show particularly in cultural capital, for example through the display of lifestyle choices and consumption (Bourdieu, 1984). Moreover, as Scharff (2008, p.18) notes, social class is also constructed through discourse: 'attempts to establish respectability and responsibility as well as the making of distinctions and criticisms of existing class structures'. Indeed, as Bertrand expressed in the extract below, while considering himself as 'poor', his lifestyle is distinct from the working-class. Hence, food consumption is emphasised as an instrument of cultural distinction:

> I am poor, I'm in the 'poor' category except that I'm poor with a flat. I live with 600 euros per month. It's not a lot but I manage to eat organic food and we cook our own food with my flatmate. (Bertrand, Paris).

Drawing on Bourdieu's logic of social distinction through the display of a legitimate taste, the emphasis on organic food might express a wish to avoid any suspicion of downward social mobility or affiliation with the working-class (Bourdieu, 2010, p.184). Indeed, the middle-class culture of health and body maintenance that appeared in the 1990s is part of the distinction between the working-class and the middle-class (Savage and Barlow, 1992, p.101). Inversely, representations of the

working-class emphasise a lack of self-control, especially when it comes to food habits. In other words, fried-food and ready-made meals would be putatively the attributes of the working-class, while home-cooking and healthier food those of the middle-class (Savage and Barlow, 1992, p.101). As Skeggs (2004, p.973) puts it:

> Theories of new middle-class formations also demonstrate that it is *how* culture is put to use […] so the various new theories of the aesthetic, prosthetic, reflexive, rational, enterprising, omnivorousness and mobile self all describe different relationships to culture (usually as accumulation or as experimentation), but what they all have in common is a presumption of *access and entitlement* to a range of cultures that can resource their self-making.

As the extract with Bertrand above shows, organic food and home cooking are mobilised as tools of cultural distinction. By being outspoken about these social indicators of the middle-class, Bertrand reduces the stigma of poverty.

5.2.2 The permanence of parental help in housing for middle-class participants

As for the distinction between the bohemians and dandys in the bohemian mythology, Menger (2009, pp.214-216) showed that musicians often rely on their relatives for direct economic help. This point is crucial since it highlights the remaining importance that the economic capital of social class background has in the day-to-day lives of workers. Amongst the participants of the sample, this help took various forms: some would receive direct funding from their relatives to cover the cost of living or rent; others would have inherited accommodation or had it bought for them. Harvey shows that housing has been playing a major role in the concentration of capital (Harvey, 2009, pp.153–194). This strategy is known as 'familisation' in youth policy, meaning that the welfare state assumes families will contribute to children's living costs in their youth (Shildrick, et al., 2015). As Shildrick et al. (2015) note, the mobilisation of these resources will help them to 'compete with their peers on the down-escalator of devalued qualifications'. Similarly, drawing on the recent British Class Survey and focusing on British actors, Friedman et al. (2016) show the importance of familial economic resources for tempering precarity and uncertainty associated with the cultural and creative industries.

The economic help coming from parents may consist of them paying the rent. This economic bond with parents appears to be crucial when income is insufficient to

support a person's 'lifestyle' requirements. In the extracts below, Andrea mentions how her father occasionally pays her rent. Andrea is a 28-year-old musician, freelance journalist and graphic designer. Although recognised as brilliant by her peers and hardworking, her wages are often irregular and insufficient to cover her rent and daily expenses. She found in parental help the necessary additional income to keep up with cultural labour:

> I couldn't do without my father right now. It's just too tight. My wages are too short to make it happen. It's true that I am spending a lot of money on parties, but that's for work. I wouldn't work if I wasn't going out meeting new people. Then there is the rent and that's another 900 euros. How can I possibly do without my father? (Andrea, Paris).

Moreover, family help is also crucial during transitional moments, for instance, when in between projects or during unpaid work, such as internships. However, such moments are where differences in terms of life path opportunities appear most brutal. As Allen (2016, p.814) suggests, different class backgrounds also means distinct material and psychological safety nets, ultimately generating different reactions toward precariousness. In the extract below, Clara embodies the neoliberal culture of resilience, which intends to transform uncertainty and precariousness into opportunities to challenge life paths of individualisation. Thanks to this mind-set and the safety net provided by her parents, Clara can consider this loss as an opportunity to rebound on another activity, possibly a more meaningful one:

> I lost my job yesterday, now I can be a full-time artist! It's great but it sucks at the same time. It's great because I will have time to work on my music but it sucks because I'll have to ask my parents again to help me paying my rent until I find another job (Clara, Oakland).

In some other cases observed, participants considered their parental households as a 'stepping stone' towards a professional career in the music industries**.** This was the case for Adele, a 25-year-old woman making music, film and photography. Born and raised in Paris, she was taught art at a liberal arts college. While the end of her higher education could have meant an independent life, she decided to continue to live at her mother's flat, as she considered that it was the only way for her to continue in this field. Adele's mother was an executive in a big Parisian cultural institution, and she rented the same flat for the past 20 years in 'Le Haut Marais' (a gentrified neighbourhood in the heart of Paris), which helped to keep a low rent. Adele grew up in the same room where we had the interview and, despite being 25,

her room still resembled a young girl's room with a single bed and rose wallpaper. By staying in her parents' home, Adele saw a possibility to experiment with different professional paths in the music industries without fearing the consequences of failure in terms of housing. Moreover, she can focus on developing skills, experience and a professional network (Lee, 2008, p.190) without the burden of financial pressure. Overall, Adele's relative housing security allowed her to think about the future positively, staying open to new opportunities and having a few possible pathways in mind. This 'state of mind' aligns with Allen's (2016, p.824) description of the 'assured optimism and the buffer of privilege' of the young middle-class. However, Adele's experience of the present is also ambiguous. Indeed, living in her mother's household keeps her in an uncomfortable late childhood. Hence, Adele was complaining about the fact that her mother still considered her a teenager. Her complaints illustrate her difficulties in negotiating her adulthood. During the interview, when mentioning 'growing up', romantic relationships and housing, Adele said that she was torn between an urge towards independence and adult identity, and her economic dependency on her mother as long as she wanted to pursue a career in the music industries.

While in many cultures it has been common to leave the parental house late in life or to co-locate with previous generations, a Western middle-class lifestyle associated with individualism sees independent housing as a mark of success and adulthood. However, it has become common for adults to return to their parental home, and contrary to alarming discourses in the media, this trend does not seem to have changed drastically in recent decades (Jones, 1995; Bitler and Hoynes, 2015). In the USA, for instance, the number of young adults (aged 18-24) living with their parents has been on a downward trend from 1960 to 2016. Yet, for 25 to 34-year-olds, it has increased roughly from 11% to 20% for men and 8% to 12% for women during the same period (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017), which seems problematic. The UK Office for National Statistics stated that although the total population aged 15 to 34 in the UK has increased over the time period, the percentage living with their parents has risen from 36% in 1996 to 39% in 2016 (Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics, 2016). However, the data on English 20 to 34-year-old adults living in their parents' houses shows that there has been an increase of 'only' 4% between 1996 and 2016 (Office for National Statistics, 2017). Moreover, there is a lack of specific data

about individuals who returned home a few years after having already lived independently (Stone et al., 2014).[39]

However, results of the study show that middle-class participants tend to return home during transitional moments, for example in between projects or after a break-up, or when parents are located at a reasonable distance from a source of employment and big urban centres. To have the opportunity to return home is double-edged: it is psychologically reassuring to have a safety net but it may also feel like a personal failure. This tension was experienced by Sarah, a 27-year-old woman who had been working for three years on short-term contracts for two prestigious festivals 600 kilometres apart. Her life was split between two cities; for four months of the year she worked in Bordeaux and for three months she worked in Paris. During the remaining five months of the year she lived on unemployment benefits, slowly recovering from the burdening effects of intense physical and personal engagement in her work. Despite the prestigious position she holds, her income rarely exceeds 1,000 euros a month, therefore she finds it hard to keep the same accommodation throughout the year. Sarah was interviewed twice between January and August 2016. During these eight months she changed residence three times, moving from one shared flat to another. As the years went by, all her belongings fit into two heavy suitcases and a few cardboard boxes. Now in between jobs and psychologically exhausted from constantly relocating, she recently decided to return to her parents' house in the suburbs of Paris, until 'she gets better and bails out'. During the interview, Sarah was bitter when talking about the recent relocation to her parents' house. She decided to return home unwillingly, aware that she would have to commute long distances and that she would be ostracised from the mandatory networking crucial to finding jobs. As she expressed:

> I have now 900 euros of allowance. It's fine. I went back to my teen age, living at my parents' house. It's fine. It's easier like this (Sarah, Paris).

In other cases, results show that the precariousness experienced by participants was contained by the family, such as when parents sublet accommodations to their children. During a subsequent interview in September 2016, Sarah mentioned that she

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[39] The media (e.g. Clowes, 2010) has coined the term 'boomerang generation', which encompasses young adults returning to their parental home and young adults who never left. There is, however, a great difference between delayed parental home residency and returning to the family nest.

was moving into a flat recently bought by her parents, as part of an investment strategy to reduce her parents' taxes. In exchange for a nominal rent, she would inhabit this flat. Fido experienced something similar by living in the family flat his parents inherited in the heart of Paris:

> I have a particular situation actually. I am lucky. I don't have to pay rent in Paris. My parents inherited a flat and they don't live here so I don't have to think about making money from music. I have this security. If I wanted, I could also stop making music, still earn my 600 euros and live like that… Because I do not necessarily want to be rich. I will be the owner of this flat one day. You see, I'm not crooked. I have no ambition (Fido, Paris).

We may ask if precariousness, embodied in housing in these examples, is not jeopardising transition towards adulthood and the process of individualisation. For some, transition to adulthood is considered harder at an age of precariousness (Silva, 2012; Allen, 2016). Silva considers that we live in 'an era of increasing uncertainty, where traditional markers of adulthood have become tenuous' (Silva, 2012, p.505). Moreover, Côté notes that the transition to adulthood – understood as self-exploration and the embodiment of social roles – is jeopardised by current economic circumstances (Côté, 2014, p.182). Questions related to the transition between teenager and adulthood have seen a growing interest in the media and in public policy. In these debates, Arnett's concept of 'Emerging Adulthood' caught the public's attention, and it has been used ever since in numerous public policies. However, Arnett's (2000) consideration of a new transitional phase towards adulthood made of self-discovery, development and identity-exploration has been criticised and even considered as a 'dangerous myth with the potential to seriously undermine the well-being of many young adults of the current generation, and generations to follow' (Côté, 2014, p.178). Rather than the evocation of the notion of choice that Arnett suggests, Côté argues that the economic challenges faced by young people today are more plausible explanations for delays in adopting adult roles and responsibilities (Côté, 2014, p.183).

Moreover, it is also argued that these transitions are even more complex for individuals from a working-class background (Silva, 2012; Allen, 2016). Côté criticises Arnette's lack of consideration of social class. For Côté (2014), young people of middle-class and above have more chance to experience this supposedly emerging adulthood than the working-class, who are pushed quicker toward a transition. Allen

extends Côté's (2014) critique by considering that 'Emerging Adulthood theory privileges a distinctly middle-class model of selfhood in which subjects must display their moral worth through practices of choice, reflexivity and self-reinvention' (Allen, 2016, p.806). Therefore, the distinction between slow and fast transitions toward adulthood illustrates the social distinction between individuals. The most privileged are those who can afford slow transitions towards adulthood – those who have access to higher education and can afford internships. These are necessary conditions to be granted access to more secured positions in the music industries. Inversely, those with a less privileged background tend to make the transition toward adulthood and parenthood earlier in life, excluding them from secured jobs in the music industries and reducing opportunities of self-development outside patterns of parenthood (Schoon and Schulenberg, 2013 in Côté, 2014, p.183).

5.3 Housing and refuge in bohemianism and ontological security

A home is much more than just a shelter for individuals: it is an emotionally-charged place where, at best, individuals find their roots and self-develop. Here I recall Giddens' supposition, which advocates that one can only flourish under ontological security (Giddens, 1991). As mentioned earlier in this thesis, ontological security is obtained by the force of routine in a place where the self can perform day-to-day routine in a site free from surveillance (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998, p.35). Also for Dupuis and Thorns, home remains a secured base from which identity is constructed (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998, p.37). Hulse and Saugeres have identified six dimensions of housing insecurity: mobility, housing instability, lack of privacy, feeling unsafe, lack of belonging and the lack of comfort (2008, pp.20-28). I outline these features using primary data in this chapter. In the examples shown above, precarious housing ranges from shared accommodations (even when in a relationship) to squatting in an acquaintance's house.

5.3.1 Sharing accommodation and housing precariousness

Findings indicate that the precariousness in which cultural workers find themselves translates into housing insecurity. Indeed, the particular features of cultural work, such as irregular income, often make it hard for workers to access steady accommodation. The problem of securing accommodation worsens in cities such as Paris: in a saturated rental market, selection between potential tenants is made on income, job security and

the income of a potential guarantor – often from parents. This system proves to be highly problematic for workers with low income, freelancers or short-term contractors in a competitive housing market. Overall, as for Bertrand in the extract below, such a policy reinforces class distinction and excludes precarious workers from secured forms of housing:

> If you are a musician you can't have your flat or your own space, it's impossible. Here in Paris or in the suburbs, no one will rent you anything. It's even hard for 'intermittents' (it's becoming more and more unusual to be an intermittent by the way).[40] This status is only equal to a short-term contract of ten and half months. No tenant is reassured by that (Bertrand, Paris).

Struggling to secure long-term housing, participants may sublet rooms in shared accommodations. This subletting is often done without contract, which offers little security to the individuals renting the rooms. Moreover, the subletting of rooms is often negotiated on a mid-term basis, which reinforces the difficulty individuals may have in planning for the future. Such precarious housing situations ultimately threaten the ontological security and flourishing of individuals. In the extract below, Bertrand explains his struggle to sublet a room:

> Now I'm paying 650 euros of rent under the table. It's half of my salary and it's not even my home.[41] It's going well, and Aron [his flatmate and landlord] is really straight, but when you are not on a contract, you're a little bit in the hot seat. You can be kicked out from the house at any time. There is nothing protecting you. You're never at ease. Subletting is something rather psychologically precarious. You don't make yourself at home… You don't know for how long you will be there so you don't plan, whereas when you have a contract you know… At the same time, I can go anytime... It already happened to me to sublet a

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40 An '*intermittent du spectacle*' is an artist or technician in France working temporarily and under contract for a company in the cultural and creative industries. After subscribing to the regime of '*intermittence du spectacle*' and the Assedic, a tax collection office, they may have monetary compensation for the days inbetween contracts. This system, in existence since 1936, is subject to having worked 507 hours or having completed 43 jobs in the last 319 days (or 304 days for technicians). In the sample of musicians observed in France, very few had the opportunity to have access to the 'intermittents du spectacle' regime.

41 In countries such as the USA, a rent above 30% of the income of the individual (or family) starts to be considered a burden (Schwartz and Wilson, 2008).

> room without any contract and be kicked out almost from one day to the next (Bertrand, Paris).

Moreover, observations show that participants often live in facilities that are unsuitable for communal living. A bohemian lifestyle, exploring the aestheticization of life and refusing traditional lifestyles, is often associated with non-traditional housing, for instance, in refurbished commercial buildings, lofts, and antique but insalubrious structures (Zukin, 2014/1989; Featherstone, 1990; Lloyd, 2010). However, as the two interview extracts below show, such living conditions are detrimental in the long run. For Jules, Ernest, Lars and Nicole, the situation is so precarious that it is unsustainable:

> [When I moved in to Brooklyn] I found two guys living in a former commercial garage, an actual garage that was converted. It had some rooms built in the back from very thin pieces of wood. Some people had rooms in the back and they were big - 15-foot ceiling - light with a huge skylight, and with a giant steel door. You know, opening to the sidewalk. And you know, that was great place to live because it was huge. It was incredibly cold in the winter. No insulation. The first winter we were incredibly miserable though. You couldn't heat it so you had to wear a winter coat inside all winter which is kind of miserable but in the summer you could have 150 people coming to your party. I left that place and I looked for something that was a little more reasonable (Jules, Brooklyn).

> **Ernest:** We are all staying in the same neighbourhood but the house has been really awful to live in - electrical problem, leaking problems, constant freezing.
> **Lars:** And we have too many people. Constantly people. It's a little too cramped.
> **Nicole:** Yes and that's exactly why… That's another reason why we're moving out because we moved in during springtime and I was like this is great, it's like a bachelor house and I'm throwing shows… And the winter came and then I had nights with the heater. I have an industrial heater, the ones you see at bars and I'm falling asleep in a parka because I'm trying to keep warm. I was like, this is great, I'm glad we have this space to throw shows once a month for like… But I'm like how am I supposed to do freelance work and like function as a person in a place where I don't feel comfortable. I got to the point where I was sleeping on the couch in the house for like months at the time because it was so cold. You know… But still paying 700 dollars a month each because that's the price you have to fucking pay to have a space like that… (Ernest, Lars and Nicole, Portland).

Beyond coolness associated with living in refurbished industrial spaces, the interview extracts above from Jules, Brooklyn and Ernest, Lars and Nicole, Portland, show the limits of untraditional accommodations. Indeed, although those participants are ready to make some sacrifices to follow their drive for aestheticization of life and refusal of traditional lifestyles, those sacrifices cannot go so far as to discard basic needs such as a decent temperature in their accommodations.

5.3.2 Fear of eviction, fear of homelessness and emergency strategies

In a context of precariousness, many participants feared eviction and even homelessness. This fear illustrates the crucial importance of housing security for the well-being of individuals. Moreover, results show that this fear is not unfounded, since several participants were evicted from their accommodation during the research. This was often due to the fact that rent prices are constantly rising in gentrifying neighbourhoods – where observations were carried out. For the participants who are the most exposed to precariousness, the fear of eviction and homelessness may be overwhelming on a daily basis. As the extracts below show, this fear was putting individuals under a great amount of stress:

> I'm losing my apartment at the end of next month in Oakland. I've been there for six years and my landlord is kicking me out just because he wants to double the rent… or maybe sell it… I'm kind of hoping he's getting a divorce or something serious so it justifies it… Whatever… What is he gonna do with that space? (Jason, Oakland).
>
> Like fuck that! It could happen at any moment… It's always on my mind but when it's that close to you, you're like oh… It's good to remember that… So it's a little bit more in my mind than normally (Jim, San Francisco).
>
> I have a friend who works at a bar and at a grocery store and he actually just got evicted. Everyone in my band has had eviction scares. And it's six of us. And all of these guys have good jobs. Our drummer actually just got a job. He was an independent contractor doing marketing stuff but now he actually works for a Tech company called Salesforce. But even then, his landlord… He had to get married sooner because his landlord was like: 'why is he living there?' to his wife. Now wife, by the time she was his girlfriend. He asked why is he living here… Well he is not on the lease. Well he is my boyfriend… But you're not married. Once you're married they can't fuck with you. So they get involved into your personal life. […] You need at least another

> couple of grand to be settled otherwise you're going to finish on the streets. If I lose that house, I'll have to leave the area and I have nowhere to go. I have some kind of admiration for people who stick around but also some kind of pity (Guy, San Francisco).

For participants, the threat of eviction and the difficulty in securing long-term housing triggered stress. While such scares were not necessarily rational – not all the participants had faced eviction – they had internalised housing insecurity as part of their daily lives, ultimately transforming their perception of life.

5.4 'It's better to see yourself as a bohemian than poor'

5.4.1 Historical background and current version of the bohemian life

In this last section I argue that participants' references to bohemianism are strategies to cope with the precariousness of the present. Indeed, by referring to bohemia – in its classic and contemporary versions – participants legitimate low income. As Howell and Hector state, 'the bohemian ethic elevates tolerance of uncertainty to a virtue: 'As an artist you know that you may not be secure for the rest of your life"(2008, p.216). Therefore, this reference to bohemia is a self-fulfilling prophecy: their precariousness reinforces their belonging to bohemianism. Therefore, reference to bohemia is particularly appealing for participants, especially in the case where individuals have to choose their own 'lifestyle' and their own narrative, as in a reflexive project (Giddens, 1991; Archer, 2012).

Indeed, the figures of the bohemian and the dandy are archetypes of the modern self. According to Foucault, Baudelaire – another figure associated with the Bohemian life – considered modernity both a relation to the present and a relation to the self: '(t)he modern man is thus not the one who is discovering himself but more inventing himself'. An archetype of the modern individual is the 'dandy' (Foucault, 1984, p.39). Oscar Wilde often referred to the figure of the dandy as an archetype within his novels, for example, in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Wilde, 2014). In his literary criticism, Wilde stated that an ideal aesthete should 'realize himself in many forms, and by a thousand different ways, and will be curious of new sensations' (Featherstone, 1990, p.66). Bohemianism relies upon a principle of Hegelian philosophy known as 'free subjectivity', wherein each person possesses 'the unlimited right […] to make his (less often her)

personal development and interest the motive of his activity' (Hegel, 1952, pp.84, 280).

Historically, the term 'bohème' first appeared in the writings of Gédéon Tallemant des Réaux in France in 1659. However, not until the publication of various novels, such as Honoré de Balzac's *Un prince de la bohème* (2014/1844), William Makepeace Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (2013/1848), or Henry Murger's *La vie de bohème* (Murger, 2007/1851) did the term become widely used. In England, the term 'bohemianism' appeared in the Oxford English Dictionary in 1848. Murger's book is widely considered to offer the most accurate representation of the bohemian life. It depicts bohemians as a category of Parisian artists and intellectuals seduced by an aesthetic life – willing to live on the margins of society and classical employment for the sake of art. Murger's novel was inspired by nonfiction events and characters, however, even Murger recognises bohemianism as an ambivalent concept: it allows artists to express and emancipate themselves, but material conditions were always a problem for such 'water drinkers' – that is, those who could only afford to drink water in cafes.

Classical paintings of the Bohemian life, such as Carl Spitzweg's *'The Poor Poet'*, or Vincent Van Gogh's *'Bedroom in Arles'* and *'Cafe Terrace At Night'* depict romantic traits, despite the vast evidence of suffering caused by the precariousness that working artists endured. For Baudelaire, who also experienced this bohemian life, bohemianism was neither a choice nor a pleasurable condition. As Siegel wrote on Baudelaire, 'the boundaries of his selfhood were never stable and assured' and 'living in the bohemia he hated was part of this self-torture, confronting himself with his own painful and deeply rooted conflict' (Siegel, 1999, p.98). Despite the ambivalent representations of bohemianism, even among the founders of this movement, the contemporary legacy of bohemianism highlights personal discoveries and considers the burdensome aspect of it as 'romantic'. As Murger said that, echoing his own lifestyle, Bohemia is a 'cul-de-sac' which diminishes individuals' inner lives (Murger, 2007/1851).

5.4.2 Strategies to cope with precariousness

Participants would refer to bohemian references, such as the composer Erik Satie, to explain their precariousness. Indeed, comparing their precariousness to that of archetypical figures of bohemia, I argue, helps participants, such as Merlin, to cope with everyday life:

> Erik Satie was broke and was living in the suburbs of Paris. Satie was a nighthawk, going out every night. Every night he would walk home. Judging by his outfit, everyone thought he was rich. But Satie had only a suit. Although the suit was worn, he managed to keep up appearances (Merlin, Paris).

As Merlin was telling the story of the musician Erik Satie, he was folding his own trendy APC suit, which he had bought in an outlet a few years ago. It was the only suit he had, or even the only outfit he could wear outside. As he told me, he had one suit for the weekdays, one tracksuit for laundry day. Merlin moved to Paris a few years ago in the hope of living a bohemian life, producing niche music. He was living in the 18th arrondissement of Paris, in a Chambre de Bonne owned by one of his friends. The room was just over ten square meters in total, and the room and cellar were filled with dozens of copies of his latest releases on vinyl. Merlin was often making reference to 'la vie de bohème' when talking about his own life and those of his fellows. For him, it meant some sort of bitter dolce vita but also a way to see his own life as bearable (extract from field notes, Paris, 2013).

Furthermore, results show that homelessness, stemming from an impossibility of keeping up with middle-class lifestyle standards, may be transformed into praise for vagrancy. Indeed, individuals who cannot afford the high (and rising) rents in these neighbourhoods have to find alternative solutions to find accommodation. While some individuals find temporary accommodation at friends' houses, sleeping on couches or inflatable mattresses on the floor for extended and undefined periods of time, others found different opportunities, such as house-sitting. As several participants observed, housesitting allowed them to travel and live in designer lofts and flats, without having to pay rent. By making use of their social and cultural capital, and their relative celebrity, they were hosted in accommodations, as were patrons during the bohemian era. However, results also show that although some of these participants were homeless, they presented this as a conscious choice. Hence the imposed vagrancy was presented publicly as the most authentic form of bohemianism. However, the same participants confessed on several occasions the impossibility and burden of being able to afford steady accommodation.

The second time Merlin came to live in Paris he had no accommodation. He lost the small Chambre de Bonne he used to rent to one of his friends in the 18th arrondissement. He found a solution in housesitting in Paris. Most of the time he found these accommodations through his network of acquaintances – or the 'Swedish

Mafia', as he called it. But his contacts also came from other individuals, mostly wealthy foreigners who had bought accommodations in Paris but were living in other countries (extract from field notes, Paris, 2015). This was also the case for Marie: 'I'm living in a suitcase, always looking for another flat'.

As observations show, going to cafés can help to reduce the burden of living in precarious accommodation. Indeed, although accommodation is not always uncertain, it remains small in the majority of the cases observed. Going to cafés helped to avoid working from home or meeting other people in their accommodation, which could ultimately lead them to face their own precariousness. By meeting acquaintances in cafés, they could pretend to be part of a crowd of workers bound to the 'aestheticization of life' (Featherstone, 1990).

> The café – a former garage – is furnished by carefully selected second-hand furniture – comfortable sofas, kitchen chairs, dried flowers, communal tables, electrical sockets on the floor – and trendy independent music is played at a fairly low volume, in a 'spirit of informality'. The café serves mostly coffees of all kind (drip, expresso, flat white) and healthy vegan food (granola, avocado on toast). Prices are beyond those usually observed in the area. 45 individuals are working this morning in this 100 square metre room. While some people are seated alone, looking at their computers, other are meeting in this café. The place is crowded and people are queueing to go to the toilet or to access electrical sockets to charge their computers (field note, Oakland, 2014).

Moreover, working in cafés fits well with the bohemian myth: influential artists such as Apollinaire, Hemingway, Breton, Aragon, Desnos, Giacometti, Picasso and Sartre were known to spend time in cafés parisiens (such as the Café de Flore). According to the bohemian myth, artists attended meetings, gave talks, and met friends and lovers in these cafés. As for Merlin:

> When I work in cafes, I feel this romantic ambiance of the people from the 19th century. I love it! I feel all the past and his inspiration coming to me (Merlin, Paris).

Thus, as mentioned in section 5.2.1, results show that references to bohemianism differed in type depending on the social background of participants. Indeed, for the participants with a middle-class background, the reference to bohemianism helped with the fantasy that they were not downgrading themselves on the social ladder. Embodied in cultural capital, the reference to bohemia is therefore an instrument of social distinction with the

working-class. In that sense, reference to bohemia is also a middle-class strategy to cope with increasing precariousness. As Fido noted:

> I have a good life hygiene even though I've told you I was eating sandwiches. This must happen two-to-three times a week. When I play gigs it's different, it's hard to say. But I try to eat well, good food. The only money I spend is on food: organic and expensive. My flatmate and I we cook and split the food. But it's expensive, and it's not so good by the way. It is now very 'bobo' around here, they must be overwhelmed by requests. It's a bit of a snobbish area here now. We can't buy groceries at Carrefour anymore.[42] Currently, I'm ordering my food from a cooperative and I'm sharing the vegetables with a friend every week (Fido, Paris).

Although Fido endures precariousness daily, under the pressure of his peers and conscious about what he calls the cultural capital of the 'bobo', his focus on food illustrates a middle-class distinction (Savage et al., 1995; Bourdieu, 2010). Admitting that he is contributing to the ongoing process of gentrification in his neighbourhood, the reference to bohemianism through an aestheticization of lifestyle – his consumer choice pointing towards 'organic and expensive' food – is an instrument of cultural distinction.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter considered participants' household situations to illustrate the precariousness lived by the vast majority of people working in the music industries.

Section 5.2 showed that social class background plays a crucial role in participants' experiences of daily life, since monetary rewards are often scarce when making music. Drawing on primary data, as well as on an existing body of research on class and youth studies, I argued that housing disparities illustrate how social class background is responsible for disparities in individuals' life chances. These disparities operate through cultural and economic capital. Firstly, cultural capital is used as a tool for social distinction, for example through food habits. Secondly, results showed that participants often rely on their relatives for economic help, specifically in relation to housing. Indeed, middle-class families

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[42] 'Carrefour' is the equivalent of Sainsbury's or Morrisons in the UK.

strategically mobilise their economic capital in housing to avoid the social downgrading of their children, by buying or renting them a flat. Moreover, while some middle-class participants considered their parental housing as a launching post, delaying their personal independence, others found a refuge in parental housing later in adulthood, in case of emergency.

Section 5.3 shows that the majority of participants often have difficulties in securing decent housing given the precariousness of cultural work. Results showed that they were often living in shared accommodation, unsuitable for communal living and sometimes unhealthy. Furthermore, participants often feared being evicted from their accommodation, which could result in homelessness. This section showed how such living conditions threatened their ontological security.

Drawing on the development presented in previous sections, section 5.4 presented the refuge into bohemianism as a fantasy, a defence mechanism against the pain and anxiety resulting from the precariousness of the present.[43] After a short presentation of the bohemian myth, this section showed how participants, through Merlin's example, might refer to bohemian archetypes – from classic to more recent figures – to legitimise their own precarious housing condition. Moreover, this section argued that the reference to bohemianism as a coping strategy took a particular form among middle-class participants. Indeed, in this case, reference to bohemianism is a defence against the fear of being downgraded on the social ladder. Following this idea, for instance, homelessness is discursively presented as a form of (romantic) bohemian vagrancy.

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[43] Psychoanalysis generally looks at the role of fantasies as a defence against anxieties in life during childhood and later in life. For a return to Isaacs concept's of phantasy see (R. D. Laing, 1990/1961, pp.4–13). See also Anna Freud (Midgley, 2012, pp.54–69).

Chapter 6
Entrepreneurial Hype and Cheap Entrepreneurs: Music Making and Contingent Employment Relationships

Interviewer: What do you do for a living?
Merlin: A bit of this and that.

6.1 Introduction

In recent years, the recurrence of public discourses on entrepreneurship in the creative economy has been so strong that authors such as Oakley named it a 'forced entrepreneurship' (Oakley, 2014). In short, such discourses often draw on the idea that, in the era of digitalisation and convergence in the creative economy, selves would be empowered and engaged in meaningful activities and would hence flourish and take responsibility for themselves, which in return would be beneficial for the whole economy. However, such discourses – often carried out by a soft technological determinism – omit the dark side of creative work, such as the over-reliance on multitasking, multiskilling and personal engagement. Drawing on existing work, I propose to develop further the concept of forced entrepreneurship in relation to individualisation and flourishing.

At the individual level, especially in late modernity, self-reliance on work may appear as a good way to shape the self. McRobbie observed how the appeal for independent work and the refusal to do mundane work appeared in reaction to the workers' struggle in the 1970s, particularly among women (McRobbie, 2007a). Drawing on Ursell, Hesmondhalgh and Baker consider that the 'apparent voluntarism' in cultural labour should be understood in the context whereby freedom is redefined as 'a capacity for self-realisation which can be obtained only through individual activity' (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011, p.133). However, following Banks, 'the emphasis on being entrepreneurial and being 'creative" tends to close down rather than expand opportunities for self-determination' (Banks, 2007, p.182). Indeed, small-scale cultural entrepreneurship often means work that challenges the physical and mental well-being of workers since such work is generally short-term, project based, precarious and insecure (Gill, 2011; Gill & Pratt, 2009; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Neff, Wissinger, & Zukin, 2005; Terranova, 2000). Moreover, entrepreneurship in the

creative economy reinforces ethnic, gender and class inequalities (Oakley, 2004; Oakley, 2009b; Oakley, 2014). Therefore, Banks considers that self-realisation through cultural work is 'a false grail – a tragic prize that promises emancipation but provides only tyranny and unfreedom' (2007, p. 160). Nevertheless, as Hesmondhalgh also shows, flourishing, self-exploration and self-exploitation are complex issues to tackle. An adequate understanding should avoid oversimplification. Indeed, self-exploitation and self-realisation are not antinomic – every activity may contain a bit of the former to attain the latter (2010, p.186). Furthermore, as Hesmondhalgh also notes, the positive experiences in creative work are much more than 'mere sugar coatings for the bitter pill of precariousness' (Hesmondhalgh, 2010, p.282).

In the music industries where a 'winner takes all' logic applies, decent pay is often scarce (Caves, 2002, p.363; see also Guibert, 2006, pp.425–471). Therefore, it has been common to have a second job, often outside the music industries, to balance the uncertainty and precariousness of cultural work (Caves, 2002, p.80; Menger, 2006; Throsby and Zednik, 2011; Banks, 2017, p.126). In a 1989 survey with 2,000 visual artists in the United States, 80% held 'humdrum' jobs, with 40% holding more than one (Caves, 2000, p.80). Similarly, Abbing noted that up to 90% of artists have a supplementary income, which complicates the calculation of cultural workers' earnings (Abbing, 2002, pp.143–145). Furthermore, self-employed workers used to earn 40% less than waged workers, and this gap has widened since the recession (Taylor, 2015, p.177). Observations made during the PhD confirm cultural workers' tendency to be engaged in contingent work, both inside and outside the music industries. Indeed, among the participants of this study, only one worker was a full-time artist at the time of the interview, thanks to the unique status of *intermittence du spectacle* in France.[44]

As Miège et al. noted, it has been very common for participants in the cultural industries to resort to self-employment (Miège et al., 1978, p.178). Indeed, cultural industries have a pre-capitalist division of labour ranging from amateur to professional production organised in pools (*viviers*) of – in the vast majority of cases – inexpensive but skilled labour. However, the reliance on unwaged labour has increased under neoliberalism, resulting in a semantic shift in public policy from self-employment to

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[44] As the participant observed, he managed to obtain the status of *intermittence du spectacle* thanks to the collective solidarity of friends and colleagues in independent production companies, booking agencies and labels who cheated on official documents.

entrepreneurship.[45] Furthermore, while the shift towards an 'enterprise culture' begun in the mid-1980s (McRobbie, 2002), it has found institutional support in public policies favouring entrepreneurship in the creative economy (New Deal of the Mind, 2009; Gunnel and Bright, 2010). Such a shift is an attempt to make individuals and groups 'proactive' in shaping solutions for reinvigorating the creative economy in the UK (DCMS, 2008, p.8; UNCTAD, 2010, p.23), as well as in other countries (see Bouquillion & Le Corf, 2010). However, the idea that creative entrepreneurship could be a source of employment and economic growth has been questioned by many authors (Garnham, 2005; Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005; McRobbie, 2003; Pratt and Gill, 2008; Menger, 2003). Hesmondhalgh and Banks talk of a 'utopian description of work in much UK creative industries discourse' driving countries towards a model where entrepreneurship becomes the norm (Banks and Hesmondhalgh, 2009, p.415).

Institutional incentives that push individuals towards entrepreneurship are part of a 'new mystique' whose purpose is to force people to accept precarious forms of employment (Taylor, 2015).[46] In doing so, individuals are compelled to develop an entrepreneurial subjectivity, which is at the core of the psychic life of neo-liberalism (Scharff, 2016)

Indeed, the rhetorical trick of replacing self-employment with entrepreneurship implies self-reliant workers, free from institutional bonds. Therefore, workers are 'entrepreneurs by necessity', engaged in short-term, precarious, insecure projects with low and scattered sources of income. Indeed, the word 'entrepreneur' is used as an incentive to make workers feel self-reliant and think about themselves as micro-firms; hence the oxymoron 'forced entrepreneurship' mentioned above, illustrating a contradictory situation: workers are forced to become entrepreneurs while entrepreneurship supposes individual initiative. Consequently, I argue in this chapter that entrepreneurship in the music industries resembles a 'double bind', whereby contradictory messages are given to an individual, thus placing them in an uncomfortable position. Indeed, the participants observed are 'entrepreneurs by necessity' and while entrepreneurship is presented as a means of empowerment and self-realisation through activity, work is often burdensome and precarious, threatening

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[45] Neo-liberalism has achieved this thanks to discourse (Bourdieu, 1998a; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 2001).

[46] 'Self-employment', 'portfolio career', 'entrepreneurship' and 'slashers' are all monikers for non-waged or flexible work.

the well-being of workers (Scharff, 2016). Paradoxically, results show that in waged labour and corporate work within and outside the music industries, individuals may often see a way to escape the psychological exhaustion of precarious forms of self-employment in the creative economy.

The first section of this chapter looks at the direct impact of digitalisation and convergence on musicians' work. Besides arguments of individual empowerment, results show that multiskilling and multitasking illustrate the outsourcing to artists of an array of activities formerly undertaken by professionals, as well as the financial risks of making music. The second section focuses on participants with jobs related to music in the music industries, and results are in line with other works which consider that workers more easily adopt a corporate ethics and business aesthetics, 're-evaluating their anti-major label stances' (Hesmondhalgh and Meier, 2015, p.8; Klein et al., 2017). While these participants compromise with market values in order to keep working in the music industries, others prefer to work in fields unrelated to the music industries (see section 6.4). Although participants use 'transferable skills' – nonexclusive skills learned through their music projects – there is little trace of voluntary entrepreneurialism among participants. To the contrary, participants may rather look for the relative security offered by waged labour to balance the contingency of work in the music industries. Put differently, participants are willing to trade off their independence and autonomy – often synonymous with flexibility and precariousness – for the relative security of waged labour. However, this often leads to complex arrangements between day work and music-related activity. Section 6.5 focuses on participants who have resorted to the platform economy as a way of earning income. Beyond celebratory discourses on the gig economy, this section also looks at the different opportunities offered to individuals, which exacerbate class and gender inequalities. Finally, section 6.6 looks at the psychosocial consequences of these working experiences and their effects on the self. This section argues that the features of work become so burdensome to individuals – with among other things, regular overwork and 'presence bleed' – that participants develop a cognitive dissonance, whereby coping strategies take the form of hope labour and over-investment in work.

6.2 'Forced entrepreneurialism', multitasking and multiskilling: From empowerment to burden

In the age of digitalisation and convergence, the means of music production have become more accessible (Prior, 2008; Jenkins, 2008; Deuze, 2009; Deuze, 2013; Rebillard et al., 2016). In recent decades, music production has undergone considerable transformation thanks to digitalisation, which eases access to the means of production. It is now possible to record, compose, edit and mix music on laptop computers by running audio/MIDI multitrack recording software of a professional sound quality, such as Pro Tools, Logic Pro, Ableton Live or Cubase. Furthermore, digitalisation and convergence mean that diffusion and distribution are accessible to the nonprofessional. Online platforms, such as YouTube, enable music diffusion to a wide audience, and music distribution is facilitated on platforms such as Spotify, Apple Store, Amazon or Deezer through dedicated online services like Zimbalam. Consequently, digitalisation and convergence mean multiskilling and multitasking (Christopherson, 2008, p.88; Meier, 2015, p.402):

- Multiskilling as multi-instrumentalism: the use of MIDI programming and audio editing in music software allow individual producers to record themselves and edit their performances on a wide variety of instruments (from drums to symphonic orchestras).
- Multiskilling as the possibility to master the entire chain of production: beyond music production, the development of Web 2.0 enhances broadcasting and self-promotion. While music is played on major platforms such as YouTube, iTunes or Spotify, musicians can also promote their music through online newsletters and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Multiskilling as practicing various creative fields: digitalisation and convergence render the production of content accessible to non-specialists on devices such as laptop computers. For instance, music can be recorded on the same computer used to design an illustration for an album cover or a concert flyer.

However, in the field of independent production, the digitalisation and convergence of technologies is double-edged. Indeed, the burden associated with multiskilling and multitasking has generally been underestimated. In recent years, the

music industries have outsourced to artists an array of activities formerly undertaken by professionals, such as promotion and marketing, which results in even more likelihood to work for free (Meier, 2015, p.139). This means that musicians often undertake several, if not all, positions in the process of production, distribution and diffusion, acting as music producers, sound engineers, graphic designers, Web designers, press relations professionals, illustrators, photographers, booking agents, accountants, and community managers. In other words, multiskilling and multitasking are the norm to which workers must bend. Thus behind the empowerment offered by an increased autonomy lies the burden to do everything. Consequently, the distinctions between artists, technicians and executives tend to blur since the participants observed are intrinsically multiskilled, holding several positions at the same time, or focusing on one or some of their skills depending on the project (Klein et al., 2017). Moreover, such change illustrates the fact that artists have to take on all financial risks when making music (Hesmondhalgh and Meier, 2015, p.12).

In the extracts below, Jim describe how time-consuming it is to be in charge of the whole production process, from first drafts to the marketing stage. For him, such responsibility prevents him from making music, which seems counter-productive. Jim's comments illustrate the drawbacks associated with digitalisation and convergence: although they provide much more opportunity to develop their projects autonomously, they also burden producers, since they are compelled to 'do everything by themselves':

> It just takes up all of your time and there is not enough time to do all of the… It feels like you… Like if you want to cross the country it looks like you have to build the car before you can drive because every single thing you have to like.... I have to do my own scheduling, I have to do my own invoicing and you have to do all that stuff. I have to do enough to be sure people who have to pay me actually pay me… I just apply that to every single aspect of the process. It gets really frustrating like, man, I am spending most of my time like talking to the band and talking to the producer and talking to the studio and just getting stuff in order (Jim, San Francisco).

Likewise for Michel, who feels compelled to 'think strategically' because of a fear of failure (as in Scharff, 2016, pp.111–112). Michel illustrates the pressures put on independent musicians to take charge of their project following institutionalised tales of success and failure. Following discussion and reading on self-management, Michel developed tips to 'maximise' and monetise his production:

> I am spending less time on playing music and more time on developing the project… Thinking strategically. As I am self-produced, it also means that I am planning the shooting of the music video, choosing the font and the illustration on the cover. So now I'm more in a process of saying: well I have done all that, I have this catalogue. I have produced a certain form of estate… What do I do? Do I monetise it? I feel that it could be the case. But how? So this takes me away from my primary goal of making music. These days, I am more finalising some tracks I made couple of years ago. For the next album, the tracks date back to 2008. So I am not a very prolific musician. Not anymore. I am trying to maximize. I want my thing to end in something instead of swapping to something else. Anyway that does not even come to my mind. I don't have the inspiration for that (Michel, Paris).

Ultimately, this focus on entrepreneurialism distracted participants such as Michel from their core activity – being a musician. It triggers frustration and may increase the risk of quitting. In other words, beyond emancipatory discourses promoting entrepreneurialism, multiskilling and multitasking affect the time devoted to music making, and potentially its quality.

6.3 Soft skills and transferable skills: Working within the music industries

As the findings indicate, to find other sources of income, musicians might look for work within the music industries, risking a compromise with their personal artistic stances. To do that, they use a set of 'transferable skills' (McRobbie, 2002, p.520) learned through music practice. Participants willing to transfer their skills and experience express pride in managing to work in the music industries field, even if they have to compromise with market values and lower their artistic expectations (as in Umney and Krestos, 2015, pp.321–322):

> We have to develop other activities. I think the most important is to stay in the field of music and develop activities such as writing for others maybe. So the day job would be that and not something completely outside the field of music (Antoine, Paris).

However, in some other cases, such as in the extract below, the compromise required may extend beyond market values and challenge participants' sense of ethics. Indeed, participants may deal with such delicate ethical issues by themselves often under the pressure of not being able to fund their daily life. As for Jeff, a ghost-writer:

> Yes, but for me it's not just about multiplying [the sources of income]. I have been multiplying it in ways that I enjoy because anyone could have easily multiplied by getting a different job like a day job at a burger chain or working at a clothing store but I'm trying to… What I'm trying to do is multiplying my sources of income using the skills I already have which is a bit harder and I think it's really paying off. Actually one of the things that I have recently started doing this year, cause actually the biggest thing aside from my work probably I haven't mentioned, it is part of the stipulation of me doing this job, is that I don't talk about it, but since it's gonna be anonymous it doesn't really matter anyway: I'm a ghost writer. Yeah, I have ghost written two records for bands and basically that means I write all the songs and I record all the music and no one ever knows that I did it… And they pay me to take off the copyright and sell to others (Jeff, Oakland).

The boundaries between being a sell-out and the 'art for art's sake' idea tend to blur with digitalisation (Klein et al., 2017). Furthermore, while musicians traditionally rejected corporate ethics and aesthetics, they also seemed to increasingly adopt a pragmatic view on business features of the music industries (Hesmondhalgh and Meier, 2015, p.12). In the extract below, Michel, a former employee of a major label, turned to the independent music scene with the hope of 'evangelising' independent musicians to business ethics and entrepreneurship. Michel's view is not isolated since musicians also tend to be 'revaluating their anti-major label stances' (Hesmondhalgh and Meier, 2015, p.12):

> Part of my job is now to give advice once a month. Some kind of Job Centre meeting on how to structure projects, how to make subtle digital marketing campaigns, and so on… And then I said to myself with all the requests I have, I can earn, roughly, several thousand euros a month. But in fact I told myself this is not what I want and it diverts me from my cause [laughs]. My partner told me this: '*It's not win the game, it's change the game*' [in English] and it cleared my mind. To win is not the goal. You never win enough and there's no meaning. Once you've conquered the world, what are you gonna do? So it's a race, it's a rat race. The idea is to influence the opinion makers. If you play the same game as the major labels, then you'll isolate yourself from things from the underground scene that are still too underground to be seen.

> If you do that, you will lose your *street credibility* [in English] … I mean you lose your credibility.
>
> […]
>
> My goal is to find various sources of funding. Anyway the income is totally blown apart so the best way is to multiply each time and judge those who can pay. How to quantify work? It's impossible because my goal is that every movement that I make, I try to find something that will finance it. It can be anything. The goal is to not be a specialist. Specialists are really… I often ask myself: what do I want to do with my experience? (Michel, Paris).

Michel's view on independent music is pragmatic and competitive, which illustrates an entrepreneurial shift from independent music as a form of art for art's sake to independent music as a field that can potentially generate money (McRobbie, 2002). However, conscious about the lack of income generated from independent music-making, he develops strategies for musicians to monetise their music, eventually building bridges between big independents (and sometimes with the majors he used to work for) and the field of independent music. Therefore, as he states, his goal is not inherently different from the majors' stance; his distinction consists of developing niche markets.

6.4 The double shift: Keeping a (steady) day job outside the music industries

Certain features and skills associated with music can also be exploited in other jobs outside the music industries. Indeed, the organisation of concerts and tours, community management, and the project management behind the recording of an album may be, as mentioned above, exploited as 'transferable skills' in other industries (Mc Robbie, 2010, p.520). However, such skills are transferable inasmuch as the worker knows how to sell their 'arty side', which for university degrees is subject to cultural distinction (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). In other words, what is important is not only having these dispositions but also knowing when to display them. The cultural disposition associated with making music – 'coolness and hipness' – is often embodied by musicians through their wardrobe, behaviours, accent and body language, and such a set of dispositions may be transferable to other industries. As Lloyd shows, this is the case for jobs in 'hip' bars, restaurants and cafés where the job

has a performative nature requiring 'the mastery of hip social codes' (Lloyd, 2010, p.186).

However, multiskilling, multitasking and autonomy in work does not make musicians entrepreneurs. Observations showed that participants were entrepreneurs by necessity rather than vocational entrepreneurs. Indeed, as Matilde – a musician, filmmaker and part-time accountant in a family-owned company and co-manager of a small café in Paris – illustrates in the extract below, entrepreneurial status is a euphemism preferred to outsourcing, as well as a management technique used to engage workers in their activity through increasing precariousness and competition. Therefore, instead of being employed under contract, workers are recruited as 'self-employed'. From the worker's perspective, this flexibilisation of work translates into uncertainty, irregular income, and an absence of unemployment benefits and healthcare. As Matilde stated:

> In most of the cases now, companies hire you as an 'entrepreneur' and not as an employee. This is a bit upsetting, this fuss about entrepreneurship. I mean they have the possibility to hire you even when it's a short-term job. Nope, they choose the easy way and force you to be an entrepreneur meaning that you pay 21% more taxes[47], deal with paperwork and can't claim benefits. Amazing (Matilde, Paris).

Despite discourses promising empowerment in self-employment and entrepreneurship, many participants noted how waged work outside the music industries offered a relative shield against precariousness and uncertainty. The wish to work under a waged labour contract, including outside the music industries, is a reaction to what Taylor considers to be the 'personalization of responsibility for dealing with circumstances – retirement, caring responsibilities, unemployment and under-earning – which formerly warranted support from a welfare state' (2016, p.185). Therefore, observations show that for most participants, working outside the music industries was seen as a necessary end to secure decent living conditions.

Jules is a programmer at an IT company in Manhattan. Despite complaining about being a 'weekend warrior' – someone who practises another activity, such as

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[47] In France, this form of outsourcing of waged labour has been allowed by the creation of the status of 'auto-entrepreneur' in 2008. Instead of having to hire workers as employees – and therefore pay employer social contributions – companies can hire 'auto-entrepreneurs' as external contractors. In addition to income taxes, workers pay social contributions by themselves – equal to 21% for services.

music, during the weekends and the evenings – Jules seems relatively satisfied to have found a balance. Indeed, the high salary and the security offered by his day job compensates for the precariousness and uncertainty of his music production. When I asked Jules if he was considering freelancing, he said he was reluctant. Jules' feelings towards freelancing and self-employment in general echo recent surveys in which workers admit to fearing the income unpredictability of freelancing (Kessler, 2016). Indeed, for those who are full-time freelancers, unpredictable income and fear of failure is a major concern in their work (Kessler et al., 2016). Hence, as for Jules, numerous participants expressed how waged labour was perceived as an activity that was certainly less attractive but also crucial as it compensates for the uncertainty of being a musician:

> I actually thought about that [going freelance]. Even if I could convert my current job to like a freelance developer job and turn it to like 20 to 30 hours a week, it's tough though. It's never as easy as it seems to be. And I know about freelance programmers, you end up spending half of your time finding your work. You think the job… You keep searching for new jobs. And then you know he means 'got to manage your client base', you need to check with them… There's a whole set of other skills that come into play if you want to do that. Hence to switch on to something like that, you need to have a portfolio, have your credentials together… Something you can't get over easy if you want to be a freelancer. I don't really have a portfolio of programing projects I did on the side because I've spent all of my free time doing music and stuff. So first, I need to spend a month probably on my own little projects to have a portfolio do some jobs for cheap, just to have them on my portfolio. So that's the main hassle to me to switch to something like that (Jules, Brooklyn).

Surprisingly, the participants who had a 'humdrum' job did not necessarily have to discard their practice of music. Indeed, observations show that participants developed strategies to keep working on their music during the working hours at their day-job. This was the case for Linda, a 34-year-old woman, who was managing her musical project and booking agency from a computer at her day job. Indeed, Linda has several jobs. During office hours she is an administrator at a shopping mall in downtown Portland. As she is 'not burdened by work', she also organises parties and gigs for the several projects she manages. While being poorly paid, this day job offers her a basic income, compensating for the uncertainty of music making and booking management. As she stated:

> I have a day job and a night job – which is awesome. Everything related to organising the party, maintaining the party, booking shows… I do it at work [laughs]. The only reason, not the only one but the main reason, that I am staying at my current job, which is the shittiest job in the world - but my bosses are awesome - is because I sit in front of a computer for 8 hours a day, 5 days a week […] Yeah, I go to my regular job at the mall. It's a full time thing that means if I miss work I have missed what happened on the internet that day. I've missed opportunities to see whatever I was gonna see. I missed time replying to emails. Independence [the name of her project] has picked up so much that I am constantly getting submissions. [At home] I can reply with my phone so I do answer email but PayPal stuff… Any money stuff I'm like no. It's shut down. I'll talk to you on Monday (Linda, Portland).

The choice of a job which can adapt to the features of a music career – such as the possibility of keeping an online presence and a flexible schedule – is crucial if musicians want to keep being offered gigs and press reviews. Linda's situation seems ideal for her, living alongside the precariousness. However, it can be much harder to combine the different activities together. Indeed, except for activities such as social networking and emails, which can be done partly at their day job, participants find it hard to reconcile a day job and a music career (Jules, below). Therefore, the choice of a job outside the practise of music is dependent upon the possibility of working on music-related things (Guy, below), sometimes at the expense of the intrinsic features of their day-job:

> Yeah, so sometimes at my day job, at my desk, some ideas come to my head… Liliana has a perfect pitch with her major in music thing so she has a notation system. She can write down how the melody goes. Whereas I have to go to the cafeteria or go to the bathroom and use Garage Band on my phone and like write up the part on midi unless I forget. At the end of the day, six hours later, you don't remember (Jules, Brooklyn).

> I have a lot of downtime or travel time. Between two lessons, I park there, get on my phone and then just start… My car is also my office. Otherwise I work at home. But I must say that about 75% of the time it's done through my phone. It's always when I'm on the go. So many friends, when they work as a waiter or at a grocery store, they can't check their phone until their break. So two, three hours passed by. And you got to be really quick. That one show we got two grand, where we played at the Polity. I checked this email almost immediately. I checked my email and this email was two minutes old. I said, look this band kind of fell through. I need someone right now. Hit me up. Here is

> how much we cost, here is how much we give… I let her think (Guy, San Francisco).

The extracts above illustrate the fact that participants often juggle with conflict between their daily jobs and their music activity, which can create frustration of not being able to dedicate the time they deem necessary to develop their music. Moreover, behind other professional requirements, music is a pervasive activity: as for other creative activities, it is often hard to predict when ideas will come up. Ultimately, in a context of oversupply of musicians, these extracts above also show the importance of being reachable to secure meaningful job opportunities

6.5 'Worst case scenario': Working in the platform economy

In other cases, participants may resort to the platform economy to earn income while pursuing musical activities.[48] This section considers digital labour markets as digital marketplaces for non-standard and contingent work. Digital labour markets are labour-intensive services matching employers or consumers with workers (see Codagnone et al., 2016, p.17). They are focused on labour and services, such as a rented room or a taxi ride. The connection between employers and job seekers is made electronically through an online platform, hence the intermediation, but the work can be either offline or online.

Online platforms, such as Uber, Airbnb, TaskRabbit and Upwork gained interest among the participants with the general promise made by the gig economy of 'Getting Better Work, Taking More Time Off, and Financing the Life You Want' as per Mulcahy's book (2016). Indeed, as for the collaborative web, the platform economy illustrates the technological utopianism behind Web 2.0 culture, which promises empowerment and autonomy (Bouquillion and Matthews, 2010). The Web 2.0 ethos, infused in the platform, gig and sharing economy, as well as in crowdsourcing, is the co-optation by late capitalism of the hippie ethos of communitarism and self-exploration (Turner, 2008). Therefore, despite discourses

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[48] There are numerous monikers to describe such Web 2.0 platforms that intermediate activity between individuals : sharing economy, gig economy, on-demand economy, peer economy. Each of these platforms differs in the way they present their own 'culture'. Individuals are named Flexers, 'micro-entrepreneurs', 'giggers', 'contractors', 'on-demand workers', 'freelancers, and even 'Lumpen-cognitariat' or 'salariat algorithmique' (Codagnone et al., 2016, p.10).

placing the sharing economy beyond the capitalist economy, the former – in the forms of Airbnb or Uber – embodies the capitalist ideology (Fuchs, 2017). These platforms are typical of what Bouquillion and Matthews (2010) observed whereby technology and capitalist ideology meet. The promise made to individuals by such an economy is to find meaning and engagement in work. In 2017, in the subways of London and San Francisco, the online freelance marketplace *fiverr* advertised a portrait of a woman in her late twenties with the subheading 'You eat a coffee for lunch, you follow through on your follow through. Sleep deprivation is your drug of choice. You might be a doer' (observation, see also Tolentino, 2017). However, as Codagnone et al. noted, workers are mainly motivated by money (2016, p.18), and there is hardly any trace of the drive for work described in fiverr's advertising among the participants of this study.

Despite the presentation of these platforms as empowering the selves and offering alternative sources of income, these platforms are in fact deregulating work (Webster, 2016). Current public institutions in charge of labour policies in most Western countries struggle to find the appropriate regulation for this form of work or even ways to qualify these platforms. Moreover, such platforms, often by the use of rhetoric, currently exploit loopholes in labour and tax regulations, such as the classification of employees as contractors (Codagnone et al., 2016, p.7). But while regulations of such platforms remain obscure, there are common discussions at the level of public policy makers. However, there is little doubt that current political interests – which consider self-employability and entrepreneurialism as ways to fill unemployment rates – would, at least in the UK (Taylor, 2017), see these platforms with ambiguity. Altogether, this view confirms that 'ideas and rhetoric can become endogenous engines of social change, reforms, and policies' (Codagnone at al., 2016, p.5).

Through this contingent form of work that promotes flexibility as a form of freedom, participants were seduced by the idea that they could allocate time to work on their own musical project while working through the platform economy. Moreover, through these platforms, the non-professionals – but not amateurs – can have access to labour markets that were either regulated prior to the introduction of the platform economy, such as taxis and hotels, or those accessible only through a peer network, such as IT industries and graphic design. However, far from the promises of liberation and experience, many participants were simply hoping to fund their lives through work mediated by platforms. Moreover, participants did not consider these jobs as long-

term, as they failed to provide ontological security.

Amongst these companies, car-pooling platforms such as Uber or Lyft have attracted considerable attention in the media since 2015 for outsourcing jobs previously carried out by taxi drivers. Uber promotes itself as a means to make extra money in a flexible way (Hall and Krueger, 2015). Mike, after having lost his day job at a consultancy company, decided to try out car-pooling alongside his musical career. Yet, as he expresses below, he has to borrow his girlfriend's car, as his car is too old and unreliable to car-pool. Indeed, in a 'Bring your own device' fashion, in the car-pooling platforms, the worker drives their own car, which already differentiates between those who use their own car to car-pool and those who have to rent a car. Partly seduced by the micro-wages he was earning after each ride, Mike found the system addictive:

> I've been driving as an Uber driver for the past three weeks or so… Driving my girlfriend's car because my car is too old. And actually it has not been bad but it is challenging to balance your time because it's kind of addictive. It's like there is money out there to be made and the only thing to prevent you from being broke is going out working (Mike, Portland).

Other participants resorted to short-term rental platforms – particularly Airbnb – in order to generate income by renting extra rooms in their own residencies. This thesis focuses on the cities of Brooklyn, San Francisco, Oakland, Portland, Stockholm and Paris. In recent years, these cities – especially Portland, Stockholm and Brooklyn – have become attractive as they are supposedly some of the (numerous) centres of the creative economy. These cities' symbolic value is translated into economic capital (Lloyd, 2010; Zukin, 2014/1989). Some of the participants, willing to take advantage of the ongoing processes of gentrification, have decided to turn their 'bohemian lofts' into 'bohemian rooms' in order to generate income. However, this way of earning extra income is only accessible to the most privileged, hence reproducing social inequalities among participants. Indeed, results show that the attraction for this creative tourism is highly concentrated in creative hubs – a neighbourhood, a block, a street – where the property market is highest, while other areas are shunned by creative workers and tourists (Vivant, 2010). Moreover, in cities where the property market is high, having accommodations that are spacious and comfortable is already a privilege, and these features reproduce social class inequalities.

This is the case for Jules, a white man from an upper middle-class background in his mid-30s, who rents a 4-bedroom loft in a former industrial space in Bushwick, Brooklyn. Now poorly refurbished and subdivided into a series of lofts, the building is known for having hosted some prominent figures of the independent music scene in the 2000s. As Jules mentioned, 'the building even has a Wikipedia page'. When he moved in, he quickly realised that by taking on the lease of the entire loft, he could make money – off the books – by subletting some of the rooms and renting others on Airbnb. While Jules' day job in IT engineering offers him the financial strength to be able to pay the rent of the entire loft, this has never been a requirement since the room is constantly booked. As Jules mentioned, in renting an extra room on Airbnb, occupants live in an 'artist loft' in an 'up-and-coming' neighbourhood of Brooklyn. Aside from the extra income, Jules also benefits from being able to live in a spacious loft, with his own music recording studio in a separate room and a stage with a PA in the living room.

As a report commissioned by Airbnb states, 'Airbnb has become an economic lifeline for the middle-class' who make, on average, $7,530 each year (Airbnb, 2015). The report also claims that the anti-home-sharing ballot planned in San Francisco in 2015 would be detrimental for middle-class households. However, for others such as Myrthe, a 25-year-old black working-class woman born and raised in the neighbourhood, this extra income was not forthcoming. Living in one of the high-rise buildings close to the loft, Myrthe found a temporary job cleaning the lofts and welcoming guests – generally white middle-class tourists visiting this bohemian neighbourhood, according to her. Myrthe was aware that the ongoing process of gentrification in her neighbourhood was profitable for some. She stated: '(w)e have a saying in our community: once you see a white guy in a neighbourhood, you know you gonna have to move' (observation, Brooklyn). Myrthe was assuming that renting rooms in artists' lofts on Airbnb was part of a process of gentrification. While short-term rental platforms such as Airbnb may represent a supplementary source of income, they are mostly aimed at the higher fringes of the middle-class, who already have good economic and cultural capital in order to have a space to rent, following the specific codes of an 'aesthetic lifestyle'.

While the platforms mentioned above are focused on short-term rental and car-pooling, other participants resorted to generalist online platforms, such as TaskRabbit, advertising all kinds of jobs, from low- to highly-skilled. The extracts

below present quotes from Plyne, Albert and Joshua, three white middle-class men in their 30s, living in the United States. All three use the platform economy to complement their income. Each of these extracts illustrate the wide variety of jobs advertised on these online platforms. While Plyne's work requires specific skills, such as the use of music editing software, Albert's job relies on crowdsourcing. This practice was developed by online platforms such as Amazon in the 2000s (Howe, 2006) and consists of giving small tasks requiring low skills to a large number of workers. However, these online platforms also host offers for more typical jobs, often low-skilled and poorly regarded, such as house cleaning or dog-sitting. As with many other self-employed roles, the hours worked are scattered and when work is found, participants struggle to meet deadlines. Moreover, such work is home-based and provides little or no healthcare benefits, nor the possibility to claim unemployment benefits. While participants were looking for a secondary source of income, by engaging in work mediated through an online platform, they found themselves dependent on job offers and their online app, as in an 'always-on culture' (Gregg, 2013).

Plyne – a musician, music producer and sound engineer – recently started to look for jobs on the online platform Upwork. Working from home also means that he has to care for his 2-year-old child, which for him represents both a pleasure and extra 'work'. Plyne and his wife found an arrangement where he takes care of the child during the day-time and his partner during the evenings. Plyne works during the day on self-employed work, mostly online and related to music, and during the evening, five days a week, as a stage engineer at a local venue. As he stated:

> I have been recording bands for a long time and then I just started recently doing freelance composition and podcast editing, just stuff like that. Stuff you can pick up on some websites. Just on the side kind of to… I don't know I just trying to make as much income happen as possible. I put my portfolio on it and the read post got hit and then also I used this website called Upwork.com. It's a freelance website where people post jobs (Plyne, Oakland).

However, jobs found through the platform economy require very different skills and experiences, ranging from low-skilled to high-skilled work (for a typology, see Codagnone et al., 2016, p.18). While Plyne's work (extract above) may involve moments of creativity through composition, Albert's experience of the platform economy is much more dubious and precarious. In Albert own words:

> The computer job I do is from home and it's... I basically do Google and Bing search results analysis. It's not something like I'm coding or nothing like that. They basically train you to analyse users' intent and it's really fascinating or depressing because of what people are looking for. And sometimes it's really boring. But I can make my own hours. Because after being a teacher. I teach after school. So it's cool because I got to not do anything in the morning. That's a good use of my time. […] For the computer job, [I work] up to 20 hours per week. Not more than that because they don't want to pay you out benefits. It's fair but it's not. It's America. Actually the company is based out of Ireland but they outsource in America (Albert, Portland).

Codagnone et al. show that '(i)n Upwork, the average hourly wages are $16 in software, $8 for writing and translation, $4 for administrative support, and $5 for both customer support and sales and marketing. With TaskRabbit, the average job is $55 and now it cannot entail an hourly wage of less than $12.50 per hour' (2016, p.36). But as Codagone et al. also remark, apart from Agrawal et al. (2013a), there are few academic resources on the subject of Upwork and related platforms.

Altogether, the results indicated great wage disparities between participants depending on the availability of skills and resources such as accommodation or cars. While for some participants (such as Albert and Mike), wages were very low, others managed to earn a decent amount of money by working on their skills (Plyne) or renting a room in trendy neighbourhoods (Jules). However, the income generated through the platform economy was irregular and unreliable as a sole source of income. For all the participants resorting to the platform economy, the promise of flexible work that could help them to allocate time to music was a chimera. Eventually, participants considered it to be a temporary solution while waiting for a more reliable option to come along.

6.6 Burden of work and coping strategies

Since Max Weber (2012/1905) and his work on the ethics of capitalism, it has been acknowledged that individuals need external motivation or a vocation (or *Beruf*) to work. Indeed, financial rewards are not sufficient per se to be motivated to work. In Calvinism, this motivation to work was driven by the hope to be closer to God by being a good worker following the idea of a 'calling'. Now this 'spirit', which drives capitalism, has collapsed with secularisation and has taken new forms: a new ethos and new motivations – through management emphasising self-realisation and recognition –

drawing on the 'critique artiste' (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999). Following the events of 1968 in France, this critique has been co-opted as a driving force for the market economy through the use of management. Therefore, self-realisation (and not just salvation) became a motivational tool for individuals. The contemporary ethos of work among musicians links (in a complex way) work, identity as self-realisation, pleasure, passion, and wages. The individuals observed make a strong link between their activity and their identity. As Taylor and Littleton (2008b, p.287) said, identity is a self-actualising project: individuals' engagement in art is much more than hope for accumulation of wealth or fame. Music practice has a much deeper resonance with the self, as Guy expressed:

> Some people have this kind of passion that drives them. Nothing else can do. This is what I'm good at. This is what I'm compelled to do and… I can't just go and do something else because you know when the passion is not into it, the drive is not into it (Guy, San Francisco).

Some authors claim that cultural work represents a form of 'hope labour' (Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013). Engagement and willingness to accept precarious working conditions is explained by the hope of finding reward in the future, as in a form of personal investment in the future. Moreover, a retrenchment into work may be a way of escaping social reproduction when those forces are inherently unequal, especially for women. Henceforth, engagement in work, at the risk of overwork, may illustrate a fear of being absorbed into patriarchal traditional lifestyles. In recent decades, personal engagement in work has been seen for women as a chance to fulfil and escape the confines of traditional family paths (Hochschild, 2001; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001, pp.54–84). However, concepts such as overwork, workaholism and heavy investment in work time are complex concepts, which are blurred in many ways (Harpaz and Snir, 2015, pp.140–171). Age, gender and personal investment in work and their implications on work-life balance are variables to self-definition through work (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011, pp.148–149).

Ultimately, outside individuals' willingness to engage, there are features of work that are burdensome. Current forms of work are fragmented, which makes it hard for individuals to have a clear perception on the number of hours worked on a project – including social networking, emails, phone calls, texting, and so on. As Jules stated:

> 20 to 30 hours a week of working on music. It's nearly the same. But I have a kind of ridiculous work ethic as well. As in the satirical

> newspaper The Onion[49]. The Onion has written: 'you can pursue your love at night and weekend when you're tired' (Jules, Brooklyn).
>
> The amount of hours? I don't keep track of it. But… I'd say 5 to 12 hours a day… 60… it's actually. I never kept track of email etc. Like that you'd probably add another hour to that. Phone or meetings or whatever (Jim, San Francisco).

The pressure to be always on duty, which characterises work under digitalisation (Gregg, 2013, p.165), blurs the boundaries between work and non-work. Gregg calls this a 'presence bleed' (Gregg, 2013, p.19). Work invades the personal sphere in such a fashion that it seems hard for individuals to differentiate working time and night-time, days off or holidays. As the extract below shows, off-work may be considered as a time for personal exploration where new ideas may be conjured up, outside the pressures of deadlines. This echoes Peuter and Dyer-Witheford's 'forced workaholism' in video game development (Oakley, 2009a, pp.47–9). Thus, work seems unescapable, to a certain extent resembling the traits of an 'obsessive activity' (Ursell, 2000b; Paterson, 2001; Banks, 2007). These features of engagement in work resemble the 'sacrificial concept of mental labor' (Ross, 2000), providing a rationale for the latest model of labour exploitation where people are constantly active and still lacking time (Scharff, 2016, pp.112–113). As Lucy and Bertrand observed:

> Talking about holiday… I think you can free your mind out. You can allow yourself to have new ideas. It is what you want. You want to be inspired by new ideas. Have new full ideas for the future and write them down. Even if you know… That's ok. Thinking of a song or taking a nice photo (Lucy, Portland).
>
> Basically I feel that this is something limitless. I am thinking about it constantly. There is nothing to distract me. I don't have a girlfriend, I don't have kids, so I'm constantly thinking about it. And if it's not my project, it's another project. There are always things in progress, fortunately. It's a kind of race. You feel that it is going forward and I'm exploring different tracks like that because you need a lot to survive as a musician (Bertrand, Paris).

Moreover, when considering the question of hope labour, as explained in the last paragraph of this section, individuals are torn between their daily burden and hypothetical well-being in the future. Moreover, participants observed were often aware of the contradiction of the situation: while hoping for better working

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[49] https://www.theonion.com/

conditions, by working for free or for little wages, and by accepting unfair working conditions, they contribute to the normalisation of precariousness in work. As observations show, cultural workers from older generations in the field saw newcomers, often semi-professionals, as a threat because of their willingness to work cheaply. However, for the participants observed, the hope of 'making it' was too strong to risk losing job opportunities by asking for decent working conditions and wages. This is illustrated in the two extracts below, from Nicholas and Martine:

> I feel that a lot of time musicians have to operate under delusion that this is all gonna pay off in the end. Even though the chances are pretty low, right? There is always a hope that the next show you're gonna break out, the next song release will be the one that gets played on the radio (Pierre, Portland).

> Labour rights and work regulation do not apply here: hours, pay, over-work, pressure, harassment and abusive relationships, use of power, all of this does not apply in this industry. You can forget that. And no one says anything about that. But you have to go through to make it (Martine, Paris).

While hope is a powerful engine for action (Potamianou, 1997 in Berlant, 2011, p.14), it offers only a limited explanation for the reasons why people pursue this activity despite precarious working conditions. Indeed, as the participants age, they also observe the chances to succeed shrinking, yet they remain bound to these activities. The 'apparent voluntarism' (Ursell, 2000 in Baker and Hesmondhalgh, 2011, p.71) of workers, despite of years of precarious working conditions, highlights the fact that people have only limited choices. Therefore, Baker and Hesmondhalgh note that for Stahl, subjectivity is solely a 'pacifying device' in the neoliberal era. Individual belief that they can do this too, and the apparent autonomy, masks alienation and domination (Stahl, 2006 in Baker and Hesmondhalgh, 2011, p.74).

Therefore, I argue that individuals resort to cognitive dissonance to make sense of their remaining mental and physical engagement in activity over the years, despite the limited rewards. According to Festinger's groundbreaking study on social psychology (1957), individuals retrospectively adapt their opinions, beliefs and ideologies to align with what has happened to them and their behaviours. While individuals are often conceived as rational beings who act as such, the concept of cognitive dissonance suggests the contrary: individuals rationalise what they have lived afterwards in order to make sense and reduce inner tension and suffering. Following this model, the self is not rational but rationalising (Festinger, 1957; Elliot Aronson

1972). Moreover, for Festinger, the stronger the dissonance, the more individuals will aim to reduce such dissonance. In the case of this study, individuals engage in cultural labour for, among others things, the internal rewards offered by music. However, precariousness keeps them away from these rewards. Yet they pursue cultural labour in order to flourish through activity while knowing that it affects their well-being. While they feel that their situation has little chance of improving significantly, they keep working in music industries and in humdrum jobs. The suffering is twofold: they cannot practice the music they want and they have no choice but to continue on this path. Hence the cognitive dissonance looks at rationalising ex post the reason for the absence of success ('success was not the goal') and the precariousness ('it is fine to live cheaply'). This rationalisation also means that they need to explain why they are doing what they are doing: because they really must enjoy the work. It is important to note that this 'rationalisation' should not be understood through rational choice theory. To the contrary: individuals make choices that are irrational but they tend to legitimate it as rational afterwards to reduce the cognitive dissonance.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter showed that participants struggled to balance their calling for music with economic imperatives, which leads to an everyday burden. Moreover, the findings disputed the current narrative of entrepreneurship inspired by the market-driven focus of neoliberalism. This is the case for the New Enterprise Allowance in the UK, which imagined that unemployed and unpaid workers could be transformed into entrepreneurs by a simple magic trick (Taylor, 2015, p.181). Results showed that participants were instead looking for the security of full-time jobs over the precariousness and uncertainty of temp-work – although they often recognised the value of holding several jobs. These findings tended to contradict the current institutional focus, which implies that flexibilisation of work is an answer to a demand for autonomy and independence that supposedly comes from workers. But in spite of institutional incentives to be self-responsible, individuals discovered that they had no choice but to embrace the current culture of work in music making (entrepreneurialism, multiskilling, multitasking as outsourcing), within the music industries (compromise with market values), and outside the music industries (overwork and the always-on culture). Overall, this chapter showed that while work is an important element for flourishing, the current forms it takes among participants

tended to be burdensome, leading to suffering.

Chapter 7
Impact of Working Lives in the Music Industries on Interpersonal Relationships

7.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the interpersonal implications of working in the music industries. It outlines participants' coping strategies and defence mechanisms that have developed in reaction to fast and fleeting relationships. While selective ties, such as instrumental relationships between partners, can be meaningful, leading to a deepening of the inner-self in a context of individualisation, these ties remain too weak and fleeting to overtake non-instrumental relationships, in which bonds are considered to be an end in themselves (Giddens, 1990; Giddens, 1991). Non-instrumental relationships are crucial to secure a good sense of the self and ontological security and to flourish (Giddens, 1990; Giddens, 1991; Sayer, 2011; May, 1996 p. 166; Nussbaum, 2003; Sayer, 2009 p. 55). Yet, my empirical results have shown that non-instrumental relationships are jeopardised by the features of work in the music industries.

Therefore, in reference to existing literature and the first-hand data of the study, the following question was asked: how do people cope with the features of music industries that seem to induce interpersonal relationships which are uncertain, instrumental and homophilic?[50]

The first section considers how the importance of interpersonal networks in the music industries shapes workers' daily lives. Physical and peer-to-peer relationships – often concentrated in narrow geographical areas – are crucial to obtaining meaningful job opportunities. Moreover, the section identifies the role played by gatekeepers in mitigating the structural uncertainty of the use value of texts in the music industries (Huet et al., 1978; Bouquillion et al., 2013). Consequently, the section claims that the term 'network' should not be understood as the equal distribution of power among workers but rather the concentration to a few gatekeepers, emphasising instrumental relationships between participants.

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[50] The term 'homophilic' refers here to the tendency people have to maintain relationships with people of a similar social group.

The second section considers the psychosocial impact of the predominance of instrumental relationships in a context where professional and personal identities are blurred. The section outlines the forced hedonism and mandatory networking, with their anti-social and long-working-hours patterns, which are important for gaining meaningful job opportunities in the music industries. The results have shown that they reinforce homophily among musicians, which prevents them from developing non-instrumental relationships outside the music industries. Overall, the small size of the music scenes and the nature of bonds are described by participants as unsatisfactory, leaving them 'socially malnourished'. Therefore, the non-traditional lifestyle in the music industries, in a context of individualisation, fails its promise of experimental interpersonal relationships. The working life observed rather prevents individuals from having a partner, especially outside of the music industries.

The third section looks at the role played by gender and social class background in accessing professional networks in the music industries, especially among women and workers from underprivileged social backgrounds. The first part of this section looks at female participants. For them, the non-traditional lifestyle may create hope to question gender norms. However, in line with existing works, the results have shown reliance on the traditional (patriarchal) social pattern, offering little possibility to experiment with new gender roles. Moreover, the findings indicate that the pressure put on women to be outstanding often reduces the possibility of engaging in steady romantic relationships. The second part of the section looks at how social networks reproduce structural social inequalities; the mandatory networking and culture of hedonism discriminates against individuals from underprivileged background and prevents them gaining meaningful employment. Indeed, the analysis has shown that good social capital is subject to an injunction to 'hang out' and to perform a 'cool', relaxed and detached ethos, which exacerbates disparities in the social distribution of economic and cultural capital. Finally, the section concludes by remarking that, although gender and social background distinctions are separately considered, patterns of inequalities remain intersectional.

Drawing on the results presented in the previous section, the fourth section asks: 'how do people cope with the features of music industries that induce uncertain, instrumental and homophilic interpersonal relationships?' The section claims that participants develop coping strategies and defence mechanisms, such as personal fantasies about romantic relationships and friendships. Indeed, the failed promises of

individualisation and the features of the music industries often result in a refusal to engage in close interpersonal relationships. Therefore, participants may consider professional (instrumental) relationships as a scapegoat in order to avoid the potential disillusionment of engaging in meaningful non-instrumental relationships, at the risk of investing too much in the former, which consequently may result in more isolation.

7.2 Features of the music industries

7.2.1 The importance of physical networks

The importance of physical networks and peer-to-peer relationships in cultural and media production, particularly at early stages of projects, has been widely documented in work on cultural production (Caves, 2002; McRobbie, 2004; Neff, 2005; Oakley, 2009a, pp.35–39). According to Christopherson (2008 p. 75), social and economic networks help to 'decrease workers and employers' risks, uncertainties and the costs of individual competition', which recalls Granovetter's notion of 'strength of weak ties' (Granovetter, 1973). Overall, these accounts, supported by empirical, historical and statistical evidence, challenge the romantic representations of the 'lonely genius' in the cultural industries (Uzzi and Spiro, 2005). Therefore, workers are subject to 'mandatory networking' in order to enter and maintain the field (Flew, 2004; Gill, 2011; Lee, 2008), which creates pressure to perform 'network sociality' (Wittel, 2001) on a daily basis. Indeed, as claimed by Gregg, 98% of the jobs in the cultural and creative industries are found through networking. In other words, cultural labour work is subject to a 'patronage system' where 'who you know' helps to gain meaningful job opportunities (Gregg and Seigworth, 2010, p.266). Moreover, as explained in more detail in section 7.4, the informal hiring process tends to exacerbate persistent gender equalities, especially in the context of freelancing jobs ((Wing-Fai et al., 2015). As expressed by Daniel, networking is part of the job of being a musician:

> And you know that takes years and also having relationship with other bands, collaborating and having friends because this is how you end up playing good shows. It is because you end up playing as a band. You invite them to play. Like last week with a friend. We were on a separate band with a friend but with Bill together we recorded a radio show together and traded songs on the radio. It takes years to do that and I didn't understand that when I was in New York (Daniel, Portland).

The formation and maintenance of social networks in cultural labour is concentrated within narrow geographic clusters (Neff, 2005; Vivant, 2010). Concert venues, bars, cafés and clubs where cultural workers 'hang out' are crucial to social ties. Such places are often found in gentrifying neighbourhoods of the so-called 'creative cities', which magnify social and racial discrimination (Lloyd, 2010). Consequently, despite passionate debates about digitalisation and its tendency to liberate people from physical bonding, existing research has shown that physical networks and locations have a crucial importance in making cultural production. Moreover, while there are many factors influencing careers in the CCIs, such as class, race, age, disability and geography, interlinking in complex and sometimes surprising ways, as Wing-Fai et al. noted (2015, p.63), some prevail over others, such as geography. As Lisa observed in the extract below, despite the on-going process of gentrification rising rent prices in blocks surrounding SE Division Street in Portland, the area remains attractive to her, as for many other cultural workers.

> We live in South East Portland. We kind of moved in a neighbourhood where four years ago it wasn't… It was… People would have called it 'the friend ghetto'… Nobody wanted to go that far. But now it's considered hot property because it's close to Division. We talked about relocating closer to the highway, because we go up to Vancouver almost every day so one potential place would be moving further out east. At first, people were living south east and it just continue to push further east. We would probably go that direction or be in Vancouver. That would be rough… Which is not ideal… It's kind of ideal in some way. They don't have income tax up there…. But utterly Vancouver is the void of culture. It's pretty dead. It's mall. I think that in terms of music we need to stay in Portland. It is what we have decided. We want to be part of this thing that is happening… it's supposed to be happening… Portland has a really good scene of musicians. People come to your show and are supportive (Lisa, Portland).

Although Lisa was increasingly struggling to pay the rent of the shared accommodation she occupied with her partner, she knew how important it was for them to remain in this neighbourhood to maintain a professional network and have access to culture. Moreover, as the neighbourhood was gentrifying, it became increasingly attractive to her and her acquaintances. Consequently, she felt that she had much more to gain in remaining around SE Division Street in Portland rather than moving to another (cheaper) city, such as Vancouver.

7.2.2 The symbolic power of gatekeepers

The findings of the present study show that people mitigate the risk of being unfashionable and side lined by referring to gatekeepers. Gatekeepers are granted a high symbolic power as trend-setters who influence the diffusion of texts (Bourdieu, 1979, p.359; Bourdieu, 1980, p.262; Negus, 2002).[51] Gatekeepers are, for instance, press agents (PR), label managers, bookers or journalists who contribute to making the producer a 'legitimate artist' and their production a work of art. For Becker, cultural production is a collective action where the cultural and the symbolic value of a product – and by extension its economic value – is dependent upon its circulation in a complex network of intermediaries who vouch for the cultural product and their producers (Becker, 2008/1982). A cultural product, therefore, has no intrinsic value beforehand, but its symbolic value, including its artistic value, is aggregated by the network of cultural intermediaries. Likewise, Bourdieu asks: 'who is the true producer of the value of the work – the painter or the dealer, the writer or the publisher, the playwright or the theatre manager?' (Bourdieu, 1980, p.263). Therefore, those intermediaries are not only those who give a commercial value to a cultural product but first and foremost the ones who first proclaim the value, vouching for the artist, the 'creator of the creator' (Bourdieu, 1980, pp.263-4). The extract below shows how significant knowing gatekeepers can be:

> Just in terms of attention, like begin offered performance opportunities and having interest being there. Not having quite hard to keep it alive… And because I realise that it takes a long time to know your community and specially as a musician you know there is all these kind of corners of the way in which you get your band heard… who runs the venues, who writes about the band (or bands?) in town… Not just who the editors are but who are the writers. Who run the radio shows, who book the festivals and the venues (Pierre, San Francisco).

Gatekeepers' choices work as a self-fulfilling prophecy: their decision to talk about a musician or vouch for them develops the symbolic value of an artist and their production in the field. Gatekeepers develop a 'feel for the game, that is, the art of anticipating the future of the game' (Bourdieu, 1980, p.267). A gatekeeper's choice to

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[51] Following Bourdieu, 'symbolic capital' is a capital which, under certain conditions, and always in the long run, guarantees 'economic' profits' (1980, p.262).

bet on an artist – once the success of their 'protégé' has been confirmed – reinforces their symbolic capital and ultimately the value of their choice. According to Bourdieu, it is the 'quasi-magical potency of the signature' which is at stake (Bourdieu, 1980, p.267). Moreover, as the extract from Michel below demonstrates, when the symbolic capital of a gatekeeper is high enough, they can decide to vouch for other musical projects (artists, bands) and 'capitalise' on their success (Bourdieu, 1980, p.262). As Céline and Michel stated:

> Melissa, she has the thing for discovering new artists. Last year she came to me and told me: 'Safran (name of the artist) is gonna make it this year. You're gonna hear about him everywhere'. It did not fail. No one knew about him at the time and within a year he became huge. Now everyone is talking about him as the new thing. That's why I trust her when she gives me tips like that. I know I can book a show with a band she has recommended with my eyes closed (Céline, Paris).

> The goal of the Underdog [name of the company] is to put bands on the market and see how I can make business with that. It's a bit like a machine. The goal is to prepare the ground and see if there is a way to accelerate the thing. It means that we find ourselves in a position where we fast-forward careers. I'm gonna make sound a bit more French… It's not career… But it's a bit like that. We work with young bands, sometimes right after they put their first songs online, even before sometimes. We organise parties everywhere in France. There is room for that since no one take care of the underground scene before us. There are two things to take into account. You can invest non-commercial time but you have to feel the game. And the adaptability of the guy with the business. I invest time, you invest time and in two years' time you'll sign with Warner or something like that, and we'll be co-editor of the thing. There are guys who are geniuses but losers. I'm the connection with the zoo. But you have to keep your street credibility otherwise you lose it all (Michel, Paris).

In the cultural industries, the use value of cultural production is uncertain and subject to an unceasing flow of innovation, particularly on the fringes (Huet et al., 1978). Therefore, cultural workers are under pressure to keep up with trends (Gill, 2009b, p.6; Gill, 2011, p.11), triggered by the fear of being out of fashion, which would result in being side lined. First-hand data confirms these statements: ignorance about future trends and the need to keep up with them put pressure on workers. In order to keep a 'feel for the game', individuals tend to get closer to those who hold the higher symbolic capital in the field, which in return reinforces homophily (Wreyford, 2015). As Fido and Birgitta observed:

> Seven years ago it was all about folk music. A guy, an acoustic guitar. Easy. Now it's all about urban music. It's the same with the singing: five years ago you couldn't hear people singing in French. It was considered as tacky. Now the trend is about bands singing in French. It's getting harder to get a gig if you are a French person singing in English (Fido, Paris).

> You have to go out, talk on Facebook, look at what people post, their new favourite band, who is playing with whom. Who is hanging out with whom and where. It's going so fast that you can't allow yourself to be overtaken by trend. And I feel that the older I get, the more difficult it is (Birgitta, Stockholm).

Consequently, the participants tend to rely too much on gatekeepers at the expense of non-instrumental forms of relationships. As for Bertrand:

> I am dependent on the people who hold the reins. And the thing is that building relations with them [the gatekeepers] prevented me from building anything else at a personal level (Bertrand, Paris).

The refusal of keeping up with trends can have severe implications for musicians. Participants are constantly torn between their individual aspiration and the need to consider trends. Moreover, since the process of creation and the learning of new skills requires time, it reinforces the need to get closer to those who are most aware of the upcoming trends in the field. The dependency on gatekeepers is therefore increased.

7.3 Psychological strain of working lives on workers and uncertain relationships

These observations echo the blurring between private and professional lives in the post-Fordist economy, when the skills of the worker, their own qualities as an individual and their self-mastery are interwoven (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999, p.253). In this context, it is also difficult to differentiate between working and leisure time as well as instrumental and affective relationships (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999, p.254; see also Umney and Krestos, 2015, p.321). Boltanski and Chiapello coined the term 'connexionist world', which induces tension and anxiety amongst individuals as they are never fully aware of whether they are in the company of a 'real' friend or a colleague with whom they might be in direct competition. Giving the example of a dinner, the authors claim that nowadays, individuals may not know how to behave since people do not know whether the other individuals seated at the table are acquaintances, friends, colleagues, competitors or if such lines are blurred. However,

for Illouz, the fall of the boundaries between a private and public sphere may also reveal the non-existence of the private self (Illouz, 2007, p.4). As Hesmondhalgh puts it, in reality, those realms we think of as 'personal' (our inner selves), and our relationships with families, lovers and close friends, are actually hugely affected by the world beyond them (Hesmondhalgh, 2008, p.2). While Umney (2017, p.835) recognises that workers are able to 'create spaces sheltered from market pressures, leaving scope for more communitarian and non-instrumental interaction' (p.835), he also notes that musicians do create moral economies but that competition-intensifying industry conditions are undermining their sustainability.

Consequently, in the new world of work, the professional and private lives of workers seem to be completely interwoven (Lair et al., 2005), and even more so in the cultural sector (Taylor and Littleton, 2012). In the music industries, the construction of a self through music may lead to unique forms of individualisation helping to build social identity, which can negotiate the established patterns of the 'good life'. The downside, however, is also that the professional identity of a cultural worker tends to invade all aspects of life. Drawing on Tronti's concept of social factory (1966), Gill (2011, p.19) considers that there is no possibility to switch off from work: every social interaction transforms into a work opportunity. As one of Gill's interviewees said: 'life itself is a pitch' (2010). Likewise, for Albert:

> It's hard to switch off when everyone around you is a musician. You end up talking constantly about music (Albert, Paris).

Mandatory networking and socialising happens during anti-social hours, often at night, when the working day is over for the majority of the population, resulting in a 'double shift'. During a social event, Juliette, a musician and event organiser based in Paris, explained that although working life in the music industries may have seemed exciting in the first few years, it quickly became a burden to her. Despite the fact that she can have the chance to privately see a band, enjoy fine and fancy free food and drinks, she would like to do something other than listening to (often bad) music. However, her job requires her to attend social events, which often happen at night. As she puts it: 'I don't have to stay during the whole show but I'm kind of obliged to pop up and say hello to the people there'. For Juliette, however flattering it might be to be on the 'guest list', mandatory networking can represent a burden since her working day starts at 6:30 am (her colleagues work in different time zones). As the extract of

fieldnotes below shows, Juliette's example illustrates the pleasures and obligations of the field, a 'culture of hedonism' (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011, p.14):

> When I met Juliette at a concert venue, she briefly yelled to my ears: 'Alright, I am just staying for a couple of songs. So they can see that I am here. I am saying hello to the PR. Where is she? And I am leaving. I wish I was at home right now, under my blanket (Juliette, Paris).

Alongside mandatory networking and socialising, participants have developed a 'forced hedonism', which is a form of emotional labour. Informality and collegiality in this regard are not a result of the untraditional conditions of work but more a requirement for this form of work (Ross, 2009b). It is a performance required by the job, at the risk of being perceived as insincere and 'fake' if not properly performed, as in Hochschild's concept of emotional labour (2012) adapted from Goffman's concept of 'front' (1959/1990). Amongst the participants observed, this emotional labour was considered emotionally tiresome as they are expected to perform coolness and a constant enthusiasm. In the extract below, Linda expresses the tensions and limits between the pleasure of being with other and the boredom of having to constantly socialise and perform in front of others. As Linda stated:

> I have to be so outgoing. I have to meet and talk to people all the time. Actually when I do that I do feel a bit of happiness. I guess I do spend a lot of time by myself. Maybe that's why I feel more depressed, it's like by myself but sometimes I just can't stand people. I don't want to talk to anybody (Linda, Portland).

Moreover, the long-hours culture and the project-based work offer limited chances to meet people outside the professional sphere, which tends to reinforce homophily. The vocational character of music activity impacts deeply on their daily lives. Again, while it offers unique chances for individualisation, individuals often feel trapped in a lifestyle that offers little possibility of getting out of their professional environment. As for Becker, the outside world, with its own values and norms, often appears like a strange world in which musicians feel uncomfortable. In Becker's jazz study, there are jazz musicians and there are the 'caves' – everyone who is not a jazz player (Becker, 2012/1963). As Bertrand said:

> All my social interactions, the majority of them are tied to that [his music]. I don't know, I think I work all the time, but in terms of actual work I don't really know. It's not really quantifiable. There's some sort of absurd devotion to work. (Bertrand, Paris).

When partners do not have the same working patterns, it seems hard for the participants to conciliate work and personal engagement. The results of this thesis show that participants' involvement in work, with what it means in terms of long-hours and mobility, makes it hard for an individual to sustain a romantic relationship, especially with someone working outside of the music industries. Out of the 32 interviewees, only 12 were in a steady romantic relationship and only one participant had a romantic relationship with a person outside of the field. In the extract below, Jim expresses the difficulties of having a romantic relationship with someone who has a more traditional career path and lifestyle:

> She had a job in Portland and would stay there and so her career path was more traditional; she was employed at a business in Portland so I would be travelling on the road and she would be living there. It was very difficult and one of the things I didn't realise is something that touring musicians have told me is that you spend a lot of time away. I would be gone for two, three, four weeks and then I would come back and she would want to go on vacations and she wanted to get out, she wanted to go somewhere. I was like I haven't been at home at all… This is my vacation it's like my vacation time is my time at home. And also at home I wasn't working whereas away I was working so I'm like at home I'm not working and she is like… I know I'm like I love it here this is actually where I want to be. I don't want to go to Ohio, I want to be home. This is the part I wasn't prepared for and it was very difficult. I know it's very tough to reconcile and I don't believe it's impossible but in our situation… You know… We tried to make it work but it was very difficult. We would travel together sometimes, or schedule time off but it was just very, very difficult. It ultimately leads to the end of it. We were just completely opposite sides all the time (Jim, San Francisco).

The uncertainty of relationships due to the uncertain nature of the bonds between individuals and emotional labour leads either to a world of superficial encounters or to upsetting feelings about the nature of the bonds. It seems challenging for individuals to find meaningful relationships in this context of long-hours and blurring frontiers between private and professional life. As for Linda:

> It is a very small scene. It is always less than six-degree separation between people. I'm guarantee to know somebody wherever I go and they know me somehow which is cool but not cool because these people have these preconceived notions of who I am but they only know that from internet personality. Speaking of people who know you without telling it to you… Usually it happens like that. They do that to

> me. They bring up something and usually I assume I met them and I just don't remember which happens all the time but they say something and I'm like you could only know that if you like follow me… That's weird… Speaking about meeting people who know you… It's always a kind of soap opera here. It is so small that there is always gossip. It's just hilarious. It's my business to know everybody's business you know so… It's like high school I guess. It could be very dramatic: 'Oh did you hear who bought this place. Who is gonna do the sound… Who is gonna be… (Linda, Portland).

In spite of the lack of resources discussed in Chapter 5, participants had vivid social lives. However, many declared feeling 'socially malnourished'. Indeed, a gap was observed between what was immediately observable (an apparent enjoyment) and a feeling of loneliness in the longer term. Fast and fleeting interpersonal relationships create a feeling of isolation. In that sense, the nature of cultural work seems contradictory. While it requires intense networking and communication with others, individuals complain about the lack of friends and meaningful relationships. When asking about his feelings of isolation, Jim replied:

> Fairly strong. I feel that probably most of the people of my age have a closer circle of friends than I do. I feel I'm probably socially malnourished. I love the people I work with. I love the people around here so… I can't worry about it you know what I mean? (Jim, Portland).

In the context of cultural production, where recognition and distribution is often clustered among very few individuals, competition is exacerbated at the expense of collaboration and the quality of the bonds. Moreover, texts are often considered as proxies of the self. Therefore, workers' respectability is judged upon the uniqueness and freshness of their production. The pressure put on workers, in a context of fast and fleeting relationships, triggers a fear of having their work (and intrinsically their identity) stolen by others. Observations showed that distrust toward others was sometimes caused by past traumatic experiences, which could lead to paranoid reactions and delusions. Moreover, the most fragile and uncertain participants negated the possibility of being part of a broader community of people influencing each other on a daily basis. This behaviour is widely observed: people tend to forget about the influence others have on themselves, as in Cryptomnesia (American Psychiatric Association, 2002).[52] This 'common memory glitch' may make people think that an

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[52] http://www.apa.org/monitor/feb02/glitch.aspx [Accessed 4 July 2018].

idea is their own when it is the result of everyday interpersonal influences. Even if the creative process can be lonely, the production of ideas and tastes is rather collaborative: on a daily basis people share ideas about songs, mixes, bands or trends (Uzzi and Spiro, 2005). As for Fido and Marion:

> Well you know these songs I've mentioned? Now she's getting famous because of them, but did you ever asked yourself who recorded it? Who found the ideas about the instruments? Who made this analogic vibe? Do you see my name on the cover? On the greeting? When we started it was all for fun. I wouldn't have thought it would be that big. At the time she said she'd split the revenue if there was any. I haven't seen anything of it. That's all because she said we were friends and therefore we did not need to sign any official documents. She fucked me over (Fido, Paris).

> Have you seen how she's stealing my work? I know she came to my concerts and she's stalking me on social platforms. She even came to me once to ask me what gear I was using. I found her nice at the time, I told her some of the tricks I'm using. I was pleased to share them with someone. Now she's using them all the time on her productions. It's ridiculous. I don't know what to do. It looks like it's the only thing she has (Marion, Paris).

In the context of cultural production, where individual uniqueness is exaggerated – at the expense of collective production – these extracts illustrate how the sharing of information and collaboration may be done with suspicion. This feeling may undermine the positive influence of others and isolate people from positive feelings about collective bonds, potentially leading to suffering.

7.4 Multivariate relations of gender and class on psychological strain

7.4.1 Failed promises of an experimental lifestyle

The process of individualisation carries the promise of having personalised and meaningful relationships with others, or as Giddens puts it: 'pure relationships' (Giddens, 1990, pp.118–124; Giddens, 1991, pp.87–98). Moreover, the precariousness of work in the music industries – which ostracises individuals from more traditional lifestyles – could be seen as opening a space for negotiation of relationships. During the interview, Guy emphasised the choice he made with his partner to experiment with a lifestyle that would not necessarily include a day job or a child. For Guy and his

partner, self-exploration meant experimenting with a life path outside the traditional patterns:

> She is following me in this. She's like, let's go all the way on this. Alright let's do something different. You know I could work for, with just with my background I could work with specialised kids. I could go and get my master's and have education and go work and something. Like that, which would be good. A kid and a good health insurance to take care of him… Not be rich but being more comfortable. But she's like no. Let's go, let's do music. We're not 21 and we can't do whatever we want but we're still in our 30s. It is fairly young. She feels: 'let's see where this thing goes'. That sort of a thing. I think we will know pretty quickly whether this is working out or whether it is not. At this point it's just let's go for it (Guy, San Francisco).

For female participants, the uncertainty associated with a musician's lifestyle may be positively experienced as an opportunity to escape traditional lifestyle and gender roles. This was the case for 24-year-old Lucy, who dedicated herself to music after divorcing from her husband and quitting church. During the interview, Lucy described this life path change as a turn to adulthood and a positive break, away from the conservative environment in which she grew up. According to Lucy, she stopped 'pleasing somebody else', being 'someone else':

> I'm from Southern Oregon. I come from the country. I have never moved anywhere besides Oregon. So… I moved there [Portland] when I was 19 or 20 and I was married for about 5 years, divorced when I was 24. I got married when I was 19. Yeah… And started over. Started whatever I wanted to do after 5 years of kind of trying to please someone else and… So I really feel I have been my own adult for three of four years so I feel there was a lot to figure out and I am just grateful. I don't want to talk too much about the dark because even it's part of my life, it's not why you here for… So I don't. I think right now there is a lot of expectation for what's next. I am not supposed to be at a desk my all life (Lucy, Portland).

However, beyond optimistic discourses on the influence of a musician's lifestyle on self-experimentation outside the traditional and gender norms, first-hand data generally showed that individualisation results in more dependence upon traditional social patterns, especially concerning gender, as in Adkins (1999; 2000; 2005). Although Lucy's account seems to illustrate the enhancing possibilities of self-experimentation, she also regrets not being 'weirder', which can be understood as

limits in the challenging of stereotypes, conventions, traditions and gender patterns. As Lucy observed:

> I have a couple of goals to make sure I am a little bit weirder in the next couple of years because I am in a very safe environment so the weirdness factor could go way up. I'm probably like a 2 or 3 on the scale of weirdness so I'm pretty safe and I'm hoping for bitching to be that to fuck it. Hopefully we're gonna be real weird (Lucy, Portland).

Likewise, for Helga and Albert, their distance from traditional lifestyle patterns was perceived as a burden and not a possibility for self-experimentation. The extract below shows how the gender patterns remained unequal, at least in the division of domestic labour:

> **Helga:** We would like to have a house. We would like to have a home and a family and I think… Kind of with the circumstances a lot of that stuff has been put on hold because we just… it's too tight. It's not possible. We are also at a point where we are working all the time. We don't work on weekend. I mean… We do give a couple of lessons on the weekends.
>
> **Albert:** I work on weekends…
>
> **Helga:** I just feel that in terms of our time there is just not a lot of more time. It kind of structure right now… For myself, I got to work all day, I drive home. Sometimes I teach before dinner. I come home. I make dinner. Sometimes we have rehearsal, sometimes it's just that I have to get something done to the house. I go to bed and you're doing it all over it again.
>
> **Albert:** It's just life.
>
> **Helga:** Yeah, yeah, yeah… But kind of in a dream world, it wouldn't have to be that tight.
>
> **Albert:** So it ain't no dream. That's pretty sure. It's fine. I'm having a great time…
>
> **Helga:** (yeah…) It's just a lot of work all of the time.
>
> Albert: I just don't want to gripe about it. This is the best I have felt for about my employment and my ability to exist in pride in Portland. I mean it's definitely getting hard to do the same things we used to want to do like we don't go out that much. But I feel, I'm 30. I turned 30 last year. I guess I feel like an adult now. Maybe. I feel like there can be a space in that adulthood to music. So far. Once we have a kid, it will be different.
>
> **Helga:** We'll figure that out…

Albert: We'll figure that out when we get there. Because we have to…

Helga: Necessity.

Various female participants retreated into personal fantasies about relationships to cope with the lack of meaningful and non-instrumental relationships. This was the case for Adelaide, a 28-year-old woman. During a participant observation in Paris, she said to her housemates, leaning on the door frame of her room: 'well guys, good night, I'm going to see my other friends'. Adelaide meant that she was about to watch an episode of the American TV show *Friends*. Aside from music, Adelaide holds several jobs, although all are precarious and short-term. Uncertain about what and where her next job would be, she felt that she could not commit to a long-term relationship and settle down. Moreover, she felt betrayed on several occasions by colleagues who became friends. Overall, as she stated, the vast majority of the people she knows are linked to music, therefore there is always some sort of interest in the relationship, outside of the relationship itself. Consequently, she developed a strong identification with the characters of *Friends*. Indeed, Adelaide felt that the protagonists of the show, although fictional, were more consistent than her 'friends' and acquaintances. During the interview, she confessed that even though she jokes about Joey, Rachel and Chandler (the protagonists of the show) being her flatmates, she also, at times, likes to believe it is true to have the comforting feeling of not being alone. After all, Adelaide's life was similar in many aspects to those represented on the show: the same drive for a career in the cultural and creative industries (television, fashion, cinema, and gastronomy), urban life and a shared flat, difficulty in being an adult, reliability on friendships despite personal disappointment, and a struggle to engage in romantic relationships.

The difficulties in engaging in a romantic relationship translate into fantasies about romantic love, which allows little possibility of living a romantic and sexual relationship. As with Balzac's *Madame Bovary*, there is no distinction between love and the image of love; for Illouz, 'the misery of a properly modern consciousness saturated with imaginary scenarios of love and their fate when they confront the real' (Illouz, 2013, p.205). The romantic relationship becomes, in itself, a focal point that is in fact triggered by the struggle to accommodate the institutional pressure put on participants, especially women. Indeed, as Wreyford (2015) suggests, it is easier to blame the partner for the sources of the struggles than the features of work themselves and managerial pressures. While working features reduce the chances of experiencing

romantic relationships, it seems less painful for some of the participants to blame the other, ultimately helping to regain a feeling of control over their lives.

For Catherine, pressure comes in a context in which singleness is often considered as proof that there is something 'wrong' in the subject – often a woman (Reynolds et al., 2007). Although Catherine had no problem in engaging in recreational sex with partners, she was hoping for the 'next steps' as she called it: a romantic relationship in which she was projecting emotional security and the possibility of developing and expressing feelings of belonging and love. As Catherine was accumulating so-called 'meaningless relationships', but 'successful professional achievements', she was developing fantasies about the 'ultimate love' with, for instance, a married man. During observations, Catherine commented on what she named 'failed relationships', that is affairs with men she liked that did not translate into romantic relationships. But Catherine's statements were often contradictory. On one side, Catherine liked to express the fact that she was free to choose her sexual partner without having to commit to a romantic relationship. She cynically joked about the fact that she would end up alone with cats, drinking white wine. On the other side, she was also projecting herself in a traditional romantic relationship using expressions such as the 'love of my life', and 'the father of my children'.

Ultimately, Catherine was also aware that the emotional and physical commitment required by her work was not compatible with a romantic relationship. However, she preferred to avoid blaming the features of the work and retreat into fantasy about a romantic relationship. This coping strategy against all-encompassing work echoes the 'psychological narrative' developed by Walkerdine (2003). In her article, she describes a female worker constantly harassed by fulfilling impossible working demands, ultimately preferring to explain her overinvestment in work by her relationship to her father – and the idea that she was never good enough – instead of blaming – or identifying – the impossible standards set in her temporary, precarious job. This seemed to be also the case for Catherine: this psychological narrative was a coping strategy that helped her to cope with the present by diverting attention towards another object.

Sexual opportunities are crucial for flourishing (Nussbaum, 2011). However, in order to protect themselves from being hurt, participants may also refuse intimacies (including sexual intimacies) that reinforce their feeling of being 'socially malnourished'. Participants such as Melanie refused to experiment with their sexuality

as a defence mechanism – after having experienced rejection on several occasions. Although sexual desire should not be considered to be an injunction (Cerankowski and Milks, 2010), in Melanie's case, she labelled herself 'asexual' after reading an article in a post-feminist magazine. She preferred seeing herself as an 'exceptional case' rather than seeing her lack of desire for others as a sign of her struggle in finding a balance between a romantic relationship and a professional life.

For many female participants observed, the pressure to perform professionalism – what Wreyford (2015) also calls in the case of the film industry avoiding 'looking like a trouble maker so as to avoid 'scaring off' (cited in Conor et al., 2015, p.14) – and to be passionate about work was often thought of as incompatible with a steady romantic relationship (McRobbie, 2007b). Contrary to men, women said that they 'had a lot to lose' by engaging in romantic relationships. Facing the failed promises of individualisation that could have challenged gender patterns, female participants saw personal involvement in work as a chance to find self-exploration away from patriarchal patterns. Indeed, a romantic relationship was perceived as threatening in a context where women have to be 'exceptionally good in order to receive the notice and rewards which would be granted to a man for more ordinary achievements' (McRobbie, 2007b, p.14). Female participants feared reproducing gender patterns that would result in conflicting demands with a music career. As for Melinda, renouncing years of personal investment in her work was too risky compared to the uncertain rewards offered by a romantic relationship. For some authors, a whole generation has been 'hooked on work' (Trinca and Fox, 2004), 'married to the job' (Philipson, 2002 in Lair et al., 2005, p.326) and similarly, cultural workers develop 'addictive psycho-social dynamics' in relation to work (Rowlands and Handy, 2012).

Paradoxically, professional relationships, with their distance, institutional feel and reduced emotional commitment, may be considered by workers to be protecting the inner citadel of the self against the threat of being overwhelmed by emotions. Informal and semi-directed interviews show that participants tend to perform a narcissistic withdrawal (Lasch, 1991/1979) in order to cope with the overwhelming emotions and to avoid deception. As Hesmondhalgh and Baker noted, workers tend to be compelled to keep a good balance between distance and closeness 'because working well together on short-term projects is important in the longer term for developing contacts and a reputation that will lead to further contracts' (2011, pp.111–112). Consequently, the polite distance set up between people in professional relationships

appeared more gratifying to some participants. Professional relationships may be more satisfying, more engaging and more fulfilling since individuals can experiment without the fear of losing their brittle self by engaging too personally. Lucy's extract below described her friends as her new family, allowing a safe environment for self-exploration: 'helping yourself to be yourself'. However, applying the vocabulary of non-instrumental relationships to instrumental – but meaningful – relationships, may also illustrate in itself a denial strategy that could lead to potential disappointment:

> My friends who work in the music industries, they are like my family… So sometimes I bartender for a show and that I love so much… That it doesn't feel like a job. We hang out after work, we drink and smoke. It's unlike what I've ever had with anybody else (Lucy, Portland).

Lucy's comment about relationships above illustrates the blurring between professional and personal spheres in the music industries and the requirement to be emotionally invested in work. Although she describes a personally fulfilling environment, the fact that she confuses professional relationships and family, as well as work and leisure can lead to misunderstandings and disappointments.

7.4.2 Mandatory networking and culture of hedonism as social class background distinction

In spite of their apparent tolerance, openness to informality and coolness, protectionism, nepotism and exclusion are also key parts of networks in the cultural industries (Banks, 2007; Banks, 2017). As Oakley notes, 'networks are themselves the product of structural social inequalities' (Oakley, 2009a, p.33). Therefore, the cultural and creative sectors are not, in fact, very representative of the population as a whole. Out of the sample of participants observed and interviewed, only one was non-white and the majority had (at least) middle-class backgrounds.

Mandatory networking and a culture of hedonism, which require high economic capital, play a major role in excluding individuals from necessary networks that are crucial for gaining meaningful employment. Indeed, the creation and maintenance of the networks often happens at night in formal and informal contexts, such as bars, cafes, restaurants, concert venues and clubs. Even if workers adapt to the mandatory networking and culture of hedonism by having, for instance, a moderated consumption of food and beverages, the frequency of the consumption represents a high cost, especially in the cities observed (see extract below). First-hand data shows that the mandatory networking and culture of hedonism represents a serious burden in

the long run for the participants with low economic capital. Participants declared feeling ostracised from networks due to a lack of financial resources. However, results have shown that participants developed strategies to cope with the contradictory demands of the music industries, which require an investment of economic capital (while offering little direct income), with the hope that their investment will be returned in the long run. This was the case for Gilberte, interviewed in her shared flat in Paris. While setting up the recorder for the interview, Gilberte confessed that she proposed to do the interview in her flat because she was 'broke' to an extent that she blocked her credit card through overdraft excess. However, Gilberte was not complaining. As she said, 'it just happens every month' and she proposed to eat dinner – a plate of pasta with tomato sauce – during the interview. On this occasion, she pointed out the irony of the situation: the last time we met, she was generously drinking champagne on a weekday during a 'hip' industrial event which took place on a Parisian rooftop. In the extract below, Gilbert describes the strategies she developed to cope with the mandatory networking and culture of hedonism, which are in contradiction with her limited personal finances:

> It either I don't eat or when I eat, I eat pasta at lunch and then at night I drink. These are 'meal drink'. Very often I am starving but I simply cannot afford that. I often avoid restaurants by joining people afterword, when they have finished their meal, pretexting I had a meeting beforehand. But this does not always work and you really have to be smart (Gilberte, Paris).

Workers are caught between impossible demands tempered through denial, humour and cynical detachment. Indeed, they are expected to hang out and lead a hedonist lifestyle while income generated by music is scarce. Moreover, they are caught between recurrent professional social events where economic wealth is displayed and a precarious daily life.

Beyond the material conditions ostracising those who cannot afford to go out lies the difficulty to perform the 'cool' and relaxed ethos attached to such forced hedonism. The extract below presents Matilde, who compares her struggle to hang out with others to the 'lightness' of her colleague. Participants with low economic capital tend to self-blame since they are conscious that performing helps to get meaningful job opportunities. Indeed, as Wreyford (2015) has noted, informal networking is a key mechanism for reproducing gender and other inequalities. However, the lightness Matilde describe in her professional partner is also in itself a performance that is

necessary for professional advancement (Morgan and Nelligan, 2015, p.80). Matilde's example illustrates how, in the music industries, informal networks are often more valued than qualifications:

> His artistic feeling and his lightness. I can't have it. I don't allow myself to be that light-hearted. Then I am much stricter… I mean we're all a bit moody but we don't have the same social status and it matters a lot. I am from the lower middle-class and Marcus [her colleague] is from an old Parisian bourgeois family. They have real estate, it's the Parisian bourgeoisie, you see. In his daily life he has less obligations than me. Therefore, a difference in perceptions about daily life. I am very much down-to-earth, which means that if this project does not work, I will move on quickly. He does not have that and it's good for him. It's the reality. Sometimes he does not realise that… That we're not on the same page in terms of finances (Matilde, Paris).

Surprisingly, some of the participants were quite keen to outline their understanding of the relation between networking and meaningful job opportunities. As Albert answered when asked to talk about networking:

> You have to make your own kingdom and rule over it. You have to use your influence and use it right. You have to play the social game, be able to use your music in order to get or even just your status or your personality as a way to get people on the door. Because people think they have something to gain by going to your show (Albert, Portland).

> I think relationship is a big currency too because I mean I have seen times where a relationship gets you to a bigger opportunity. I think people are willing to sacrifice money sometimes with the hope that the relationship will bring them money. But I don't know if that's necessarily a great way to… I would not recommend that as a way to… If money motivates you, you should question it… Maybe at the end of the day relationships are just worth it because they are… Like it's not. Potentially having a benefit from that it's not something. I think that would be lying to say that it didn't cross your mind, you know… (Helga, Portland).

However, consciousness about the importance of networking and the performance of coolness was only expressed by people struggling to create and maintain such networks. Participants originating from middle-class background and above such as Marcus, who were more integrated in legitimate networks, and at ease with the performance of coolness, did not make comments about it, considering these facts to be 'natural' and taken for granted. Conversely, the pragmatism outlined in the extract above expresses personal strategies to tackle their failure to integrate in the necessary

dispositions and networks. Those are rationalisations, attempts to reduce the feeling of rejection by resorting to thinking and strategy.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter looked at another set of complex challenges associated with attempting to make a living in the music industries, which as I have argued threatens the core of the self: inescapable mandatory networking and forced hedonism.

The first section showed that physical networks and peer-to-peer relationships, also known as mandatory networking, remain crucial for obtaining meaningful jobs. Within these networks, gatekeepers help to reduce the uncertainty of the texts' use value by holding legitimate power. Therefore, participants mitigate the risk associated with music production by getting close to gatekeepers, which in return reinforces their legitimate power, and acknowledging these features of the music industries.

The second section showed how these put a psychological strain on workers. The collusion between the private and the professional, the anti-social and long hours and the mandatory networking burdens the self in the long run. Although very often hanging out with other workers, participants claimed to be socially malnourished, which shows the limits of instrumental relationships for flourishing. While the professional sphere appears to be a 'small world', the positive aspects of hanging out with other workers do not seem to compensate for the negative aspect of instrumental relationships, which emphasises competitiveness. Indeed, behind the forced hedonism, participants often presented the professional sphere as too small, therefore reinforcing homophily, making it hard for individuals to maintain non-instrumental relationships outside music. Participants were often unsure about the nature of the bonds between workers, which sometimes triggered paranoia about having their work and ideas stolen. Overall, results found that the features of work in the music industries affected the quality of bonds with others and the well-being of workers.

The third section showed that these results were, however, weighted by variables of gender and social class background.[53] Firstly, while working in the cultural industries may promise to challenge traditional gender norms, in a context of individualisation, the results found the opposite: gender patterns are reinforced. Therefore, the findings indicate that women, under pressure to be exceptionally good,

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[53] Although intersectional, gender and social class background were analysed separately.

may look to work for a way of escaping gender patterns. However, by over-defining themselves through work, at the expense of looking at others, women are at risk of 'making-over their psychic lives' (Gill and Orgad, 2015, p.341). Secondly, the section found that the mandatory networking and culture of hedonism discriminated against the less privileged part of the sample. Indeed, in the context of expensive cities, the lifestyle associated with music making implies high economic capital. Numerous observed individuals declared having developed strategies to hide the fact that they could not participate in a conformist culture of hedonism, or an alternative to this culture, as they appeared to be out of reach. Indeed, many participants expressed their difficulties in being able to perform the 'cool' and relaxed ethos of the musician, a cultural capital crucial to maintaining their network and finding meaningful job opportunities.

Finally, the last section looked at the coping strategies and defence mechanisms that individuals have developed to cope with what some participants, such as Bertrand, described as being 'socially malnourished'. Indeed, the homophily of workers – the 'small world problem' – albeit profitable for gaining meaningful job opportunities and to develop projects, burdens the self, preventing them from maintaining and developing other forms of non-instrumental relationships. The examples of Adelaide and Catherine, though very different, show that some participants seek refuge in personal fantasies about friendships and romantic relationships. This retreat into personal fantasy is the result of the complex challenges participants experience in their professional lives ostracising them from meaningful relationships.

This chapter outlined the pathological role that work plays in the lives of participants who are emotionally bound to their work at the expense of non-instrumental relationships with others. This emotional labour exerts contradictory demands on workers and ostracises them from meaningful non-instrumental relationships. Moreover, those who cannot afford the mandatory networking and forced hedonism for lack of economic or social capital are excluded. Yet, individuals develop coping strategies and defence mechanisms to bear the fact that they need to develop and maintain non-instrumental relationships with others. Indeed, the nature and quality of the bonds with others are crucial for well-being, maintaining ontological security and flourishing (Sayer, 2011).

Chapter 8
Psychosocial Impact of the Features of Work in the Music Industries, Coping Strategies and Recognition

8.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the psychosocial impact of the features of work in the cultural and creatives industries. The cultural industries' aim is to sell and manage texts, the result of a creative work, yet these cultural industries are a 'risky business' (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, pp.27–31). Indeed, contrary to other industries, texts are semi-public goods, which means that they are not destroyed by their consumption. Moreover, the use value of a text is never assured in advance (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, p.84). To reduce this uncertainty, cultural industries have set a range of strategies to control production, distribution and marketing (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, p.26). In other words, cultural industries deploy strategies to lessen uncertainty by concentrating people's attention towards few and new cultural products. These strategies take the form of a constant showcase of a selection of the vivier (or reservoir) of new talents – non-professional, generally young and under-employed cultural workers (Miege, 1989, p.72). In doing so, the cultural industries reduce the use value uncertainty of cultural products by ensuring an ongoing consumption of new texts.

Taking into account the specificities of such industries, this chapter looks at the coping strategies and defence mechanisms developed by cultural workers. Although self-esteem, narcissism, and recognition are psychological concepts, often focused on the very first experiences of childhood, as for Honneth with recognition, there is no reason why we could not extend these concepts to the whole social world and to interpersonal relationships with adults (Honneth, 2008, p.242). I argue here that we need to go beyond interpretations of self-esteem, narcissism and recognition finding their sources within the self and childhood experiences. There are structural conditions challenging individuals' sense of self-esteem and recognition. To put it differently, I argue that self-esteem is also induced (or influenced) by structural conditions. This is in line with Smail's observations (Smail, 1991):

> Many of my older patients are shocked and bemused by the sudden devaluing of their social contribution and, sadly, tend to assume that the confusion and despair they feel is somehow their "own fault". The therapy industry does little to disabuse them of this interpretation,

> reinforcing through the use of concepts such as "stress management" and "coping skills" the idea that there is something lacking in them as people.

Likewise, as Walkerdine notes (Walkerdine, 2003, p.241), under constant discourses on success and failure modelling techniques of self-regulation and management, 'the subject of neo-liberal choice' is under constant pressure of overcoming external constraints by work on the self and effort.

In this chapter, I draw on the political economy of the media (Hesmondhalgh, 2012) to outline features of cultural industries that are, ultimately, harmful to cultural workers. Using first-hand data, I show how these features affect individuals' self-esteem and sense of recognition. The main argument in this chapter is that music industries' strategies to reduce uncertainty of use value, such as the manufacturing of recognition, have a psychosocial impact on cultural workers. In other words, the absence of norms in recognition and distribution of workers' participation causes people to suffer. To avoid this suffering, individuals develop coping strategies and defence mechanisms.

This psychosocial impact is also due to the fact that texts are generally considered to be a proxy of the selves. Indeed, distributing and managing texts is not the same as producing a car or selling bottled water. Despite attempts to make it a rational activity or to find recipes for hits, it is still rather complex and uncertain, and the burden is often on cultural workers. For participants, making music goes beyond a simple job. Music means something to individuals and ultimately, cultural work becomes a proxy of their selves. Indeed, in a context where individuals may feel that they have little control over their lives, they may engage in cultural work in order to self-define through activity. A creative career becomes a reflexive project of the self, which helps to cope with the pressure individuals feel to 'be someone' in contemporary societies (Ehrenberg, 2000; Ehrenberg, 1996; Honneth, 2004). Therefore, cultural production becomes a means for potential flourishing and texts a reflection of their own selves, a proof of their existence as individuals. As Helga, a musician based in San Francisco, declared: 'it's our baby'. Likewise, for Becky, a musician in Portland: her music is an extension of herself. As she said, every time she finishes a record, she grieves for it, as if she was too close to the music. Workers have difficulties in distancing themselves from their texts, resulting in a sensitivity to judgment and recognition of their production.

Drawing on exiting literature as well as first-hand data, the second section looks at the unequal distribution and recognition organised by the industry. The disparities between workers as well as between the different ends of texts are considered, be they promotional, commercial or 'purely' artistic. Two specific examples are then used to illustrate the psychological impact of the features of work in the music industries: the human cost of touring; the difficulties in returning to a 'normal' life; the constant need for newcomers; and the attention focused on few workers.

The third section looks at musicians' relationships with recognition. Results show that in an economy where distribution is concentrated on a few musicians, others may turn to recognition as a way of compensation. Recognition should not, however, be considered as tokenistic since it can be turned into distribution and, as an essential need, contribute to a positive sense of self-esteem. Yet, recognition should be considered as 'legitimate' to enhance a sense of self-worth. The example of recognition from the field is opposed to recognition found on social media platforms.

The fourth section looks at the coping strategies and defence mechanisms developed by individuals to cope with the effects of organised recognition in the music industries. Four kinds of coping strategies and defence mechanisms are outlined in the section: those where the participants have an inflated view of themselves, which reflects supposedly positively on the future (delusions of grandeur, fantasy and feeling of omnipotence); those that involve trying to avoid suffering by focusing attention on a less threatening object (rationalisation, intellectualisation and displacement); those where the self develops strategies of avoidance (denial strategy); and those where the self develops a cynical detachment and blasé attitude as a way of coping with potential threats about their view on authenticity and recognition in art.

8.2 Features of the music industries: Challenges in distribution and recognition

8.2.1 Unequal and variable distribution in the music industries

In music industries, inequalities in terms of distribution of income and recognition are severe. Subject to a 'superstar effect', where the 'winner takes all' rule applies (Caves, 2002, p.78), 'A list' workers enjoy a much higher income than 'B list' workers (Caves, 2002., p.73). Such inequalities are striking when looking at the wages and income disparities between 'top artists' and the majority of artists. For example, Ed Sheeran had accrued a personal fortune of £110 million by 2018[54], while the average income of musicians was less than £20,000 a year (Banks, 2017, pp.122-30). Therefore, according to the UK-based agency of composers, Sound and Music, 1% of musicians received over 25% of all new commission income in 2014. However, statistics remain incomplete and little information is provided beyond the average income. Moreover, as mentioned in the fifth chapter, a great number of musicians are not full-time cultural workers and have 'humdrum jobs' or other professional activities, both within and outside the music industries, hence escaping clear-cut statistics relating to art wages (Banks, 2017, pp.121-41). There have been, however, attempts to collect statistics on cultural workers' wages in different countries (see for instance Banks, 2017, pp.82-83), although these statistics generally omit wages and income in relation to recognition disparities between workers and their potential effects on workers' self-esteem and sense of self-worth. Overall, as Banks remarked (2017, p.129), distribution in cultural industries is a good analogy of the capitalist economy. A representation of income and wages would resemble a pyramid, which would be concentrated on the few at the top of the pyramid.

Observations and interviews with cultural workers confirm Caves' and more recent quantitative data collected from unions and reports: distribution of income and recognition in the music industries suffer great disparities (see Banks, 2017, pp.121-41). The data in the chart below was collected during observations and interviews made in two medium-size recording studios in the United States and 10 concert venues in France (with a capacity between 300 and 600 people). As results show, recording assistants were earning up to 60 times less than the top recording producers,

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[54] https://www.forbes.com/profile/ed-sheeran/#1d6229ba4c07 [Accessed 20 August 2018].

and musicians opened shows for 80 times less than the headliners. Moreover, observations showed that top artists (recording producers, well-known musicians) enjoy a 'god-like' status while the contribution of recording assistants, interns and opening musicians is generally undermined, such as by reducing or removing sound-check time before a show or prohibiting access to a dressing room. Drawing on Sayer (2009), such disparity may be explained by the fact that the music industries (as for other industries) rely on the existence of cheap labour to survive. While the numbers below do not claim any generalisation, they illustrate the severe disparities in terms of distribution and recognition observed in the field.

Role	Pay	Recognition
Top recording producers and top sound recording engineers	Between £800 and £3,000/day depending on the reputation	VERY HIGH
Headliners of a show	Between £800 and £8,000, £4,000 per show, being an average (for a band)	VERY HIGH
Recording musicians	Up to £200/day depending on the fame and uniqueness of instrumental approach	AVERAGE to GOOD
Stage musicians (before the feature act)	Up to £1,500 per show (for a band)	Generally LOW
Recording studio manager	£1,500/month	LOW
Recording assistants	£1,300/month	LOW to GOOD
Interns	Unpaid	VERY LOW
Musicians (opening act)	Unpaid to £150 per show (for the band)	VERY LOW

Table 3: Distribution of wages and recognition in recording studio and concert venues

Beyond existing 'hierarchies' between workers, fees and recognition can also vary dramatically depending on the nature of the work, making people unsure about the value of their contribution (Honneth, 2013, p.321). In line with existing work showing that price expectations are uneven depending on the sections of the labour market (Umney, 2015, pp.712–714), observations show that fees are often higher when involving commercial or corporate work compared to promotional or art work. As Melinda expressed during an interview, there are unpaid or poorly paid gigs (most often given for promotional purpose), and well-paid gigs (generally corporate).

However, for Melinda, her performance remains the same. In a context where wages are so different, it may be hard for workers to keep a steady feeling about the value of their work. Indeed, alongside other things such as the size of the venue, the prestige of the event and the other band with whom the workers are playing, redistribution is often considered to be a mirror of their participation in the field. Consequently, in the absence of definitive rules about wages, cultural workers can doubt the quality of their contribution to the field, which may prevent individuals from keeping a steady sense of self-worth. The extract below shows a musician's uncertainty about how to define his fees:

> For this corporate show, honestly I just throw out the numbers. They were like oh yeah, sure. I was fuck, I should have asked for five grand. I am so used to music being undervalued (Guy, San Francisco).

In the extract above, Guy has little understanding about how his contribution can translate into wages. In the absence of norms, wages can differ greatly depending on the musician, client, and events. However, more surprisingly, Guy directly links the wages he earned on the 'corporate show' he mentioned with the intrinsic value given to his music.

8.2.2 Example 1: Touring

Touring is a twofold experience. On one side, participants described it as a unique opportunity for self-discovery, to meet people and strengthen existing friendships. Participants also described enjoying tours since they represent a period in their life entirely dedicated to music, where daily trouble is left aside. Other participants, particularly women, saw in touring an opportunity to challenge established (sexist) lifestyle patterns. Indeed, during interviews, various women mentioned that it was easier for them to challenge existing gender-roles during a tour, including when they were in a relationship with a partner – although existing research shows that female musicians experience other struggles (Bayton, 1998; Scharff, 2015).

However, beyond the romantic image of touring assuming a life of adventures and genuine camaraderie – or even a life where the boredom of touring becomes cool (Mills, 2000), also pictured in 'rockumentaries' (Stahl, 2012) – touring is a psychologically and physically exhausting activity, especially for independent bands who have a limited budget. Touring is repetitive and often includes long hours of travel between venues, sleeping at different places every night, takeaway food,

cohabitation with band members in a tour bus or a car, and long hours of waiting between sound checks and gigs. In other words, touring challenges sleeping patterns, healthy food habits and intimacy during an extended period of time. Moreover, touring often means for musicians playing the same set of songs at every show, which can be psychologically dull. As Momo and Plyne expressed:

> Touring is hard because of sleeping… And diet is very hard too. I always try to find the healthiest snacks at the truck stop, and I always try to do stretches whenever the vehicle stops, and I try not to stay too late even though it's very tempting on tour to hang out and drink beers. I try to go to bed at a reasonable time and then in the morning just… Try to find some fruit, but touring is definitely the… It's like the endurance test for me. We did six weeks in Europe. That was rough… It's kind of funny because touring is really addictive because it's fun to play shows for people and do it every night and meet new people by playing at different venues like that… And the adventure of travel and those parts. There are parts that are not good: not eating well, not sleeping well. Just it's becoming really unhealthy (Momo, Portland).

> A lot of the touring side. Like sleeping in the van and finding somewhere to sleep… A lot of sides of it, depending on the type of tour, are not fun… At all. My last tour was nothing like that. It was sleeping at a bus stop, in a van with like 4 to 5 other dudes. And then maybe a hundred bucks a night barely enough to cover the gas. Trying to sell merch. You personally you don't have any money. Maybe 5 dollars a day to like eat on. All of the money in playing shows and trying to sell merch and finding a place to sleep and wondering about catering, wondering about how many people got into the show (Plyne, Oakland).

However, participants observed that the psychological burden of touring worsens with their return to daily life. Participants expressed difficulties in coping with the brutal gap between intense moments of activity and self-exposure to an audience, and the quieter and more mundane aspects of life. This was the case for Martin who recently returned home to his family after being on tour for several weeks. Martin felt 'trapped' and 'like a tiger in a cage' in his daily life. As in Voirol's work (2013, pp.57–96; 2014, pp.9–36), Martin was suffering the consequences of a sudden move from visibility to invisibility, that is, from being an artist celebrated by a crowd to an individual among others. Moreover, aside from the inner tensions coming from the variation in visibility, Martin was suffering from the gap between a busy touring schedule and the standard flexible and autonomous schedule of the musician. Physically and mentally exhausted by the tour and this gap upon return, Martin found

himself incapable of doing anything else other than 'the laundry and watching TV for several weeks'.

8.2.3 Example 2: The unceasing renewal of a pool of newcomers and their 'hit'

Creative and cultural industries' constant need for newness and its manufacturing of distribution and recognition can have severe psychosocial consequences on musicians. The participants who experienced music industries' manufacturing of exposure in their early career, finding themselves highly exposed to an audience before being replaced by a newcomer, described it as an emotionally unsettling experience. This was the case for Anita.

Anita is a 29-year-old woman who was pushed to the forefront of the (large) independent Scandinavian scene in 2010, when she was 23. Within the first weeks of the release of her self-produced album, released on a big independent label, her music was widely broadcast on major music blogs and music magazines. After a few months of media exposure, she was broadcast on national radio and TV and headlined major music festivals in Europe. Anita's music was praised by the media for being 'fresh, dreamy and naïve'. She did not know, however, how to handle what appeared to be 'an unceasing flow of new opportunities'. As she said, she was 'floating', 'trying to keep the pace of what was happening to her', as if every new artistic opportunity was strengthening her weak self-esteem. However, while observing her artist name becoming a brand, Anita felt overwhelmed.

Following the preliminary interview with Anita in 2010, a further interview was arranged with her in 2015. On this occasion, Anita mentioned that she was experiencing a difficult time. Indeed, in spite of producing new music, the feedback she was receiving from the field were unsatisfying. Anita admitted that she had spent years 'desperately seeking the same media exposure and recognition she had when she started', although, she knew that it was a 'hopeless situation' since it was in the 'logic of the industry to look for new talents and foster its attention on very few individuals'. Notwithstanding her disillusioned discourse on the industry, her recent experience of misrecognition negatively affected her sense of self-worth. Despite her rationalising discourse, Anita was struggling to make sense of what was happening to her. Soon to be 30, Anita decided to break her contract with her record label and booking agency to resume art school. In Anita's own words:

> The relative success I had came quickly, kind of out of the blue. At first, I didn't get what was happening to me but now I feel the pain of having people not interested in my work. Whatever I do, they don't give a shit anymore. It's quite painful to realise that. I saw other musicians going mad about the same thing… Trying to catch again people's eyes, being ridiculous, and feeling even worse after that. They take you and they leave you when they're done with you. You're just a disposable piece of shit. It's a slow pain to see that the same people who praised you in the past are turning their back on you. I don't know… I'm just cynical maybe and I lost myself and want to go back to that… To a time where I was creating stuff and people cared about it. Because now I want to… Now I'm worrying too much about people's opinion. They put too much pressure on me. People don't like my music anymore. They like younger musicians. Folk is dead. I tried to play a different genre of music but it didn't work. People don't like my music anymore (Anita, Stockholm).

As for Anita's extract above, knowledge of the logic of the industries does not help to soothe the frustration, emotional pain and anxiety. Although she was rationalising the reason for her struggle, she illustrates how participants tend to take their failure (less often their success) personally (as in Lee, 2019), although they perform in a complex system manufacturing recognition and redistribution. For the participants who are deeply emotionally engaged in their career, being the subject of manufactured recognition and redistribution is an unsettling experience.

8.3 A thirst for recognition: Overinvestment in recognition

Recognition is an essential psychological need for the well-being of the self (Sayer, 2009, p.54). It is fundamental in the process of self-development and flourishing from primary infancy to later development of the self (Nussbaum, 2001, pp.19–23). Through the dialectic of the master and slave, Hegelian philosophy developed the idea that a self can only flourish when she knows she is recognised by others (Honneth, 2013, p.51). Therefore, recognition cannot be achieved alone. Our constant need for approval, recognition, respect and trust shows our dependency on others. As Bertrand expressed below:

> Even the slightest positive feedback on my work makes me feel good. You're so happy when someone you admire as an artist is telling you that your work is cool. It's the same as when someone is telling you: 'ok, we're gonna release your record now'. It feels good because there's a form of absurd devotion to art. Usually, no one cares about your

> music, you don't have any recognition. From the moment they gave me feedback… When they told me: 'yes, that's what you are. You are the guy who does that… It's good stuff, it's you... From that moment, they validated me as a musician. It brought me trust and consistency. I feel much more at ease since then. I feel free with musicians now. Much more than before anyway since it was not the case at all before that (Bertrand).

Since income and wages are often scarce in the field of independent music, results show that participants tend to look at recognition at the expense of distribution. This helps participants to make sense of their own contribution to the field, especially when work is unsatisfying (as in Sayer, 2009, pp.67-8). Musicians may feel pleased to participate in an event for 'art for art's sake'. In doing so, they may feel that they belong to a community of practice where they learn and share experiences together, which, in return, may enable positive self-esteem:

> I can't believe I've been asked to play for Mothers [a well-regarded artist in the independent music scene]. I love her work. Her music is amazing. I've been listening a lot to her new record lately. The booking agency told me they could pay me 150 euros. It'll take place in the Point Ephémère [in Paris]. The show is already sold out. I know that's exploitation but it's fine for now… (Bertrand, Paris).

Recognition of the field and exposure to an audience are not just 'tokenistic' since these experiences can be turned into economic capital (Bourdieu, 2010, pp.230–44). Unpaid or badly paid work in this case is a form of investment in the future, as in a 'hope industry'. Individuals accept unfair working conditions and low pay with the hope that it will, in return, bring paid or meaningful opportunities (Banks, 2017, p.128). As for Caves, 'fledging artists trying to catch the gatekeeper's eye will, we know, accept near-zero artistic wages as an investment in creative success' (Caves, 2002, p.78). Observations showed that such practice became normalised in the field of independent music. Cultural industries have taken advantage of the fact that people, especially the unceasing pool of newcomers, were willing to take up more responsibilities and work in exchange for exposure, often without financial rewards. The prestige of being affiliated to famous (and legitimate) organisations – such as prestigious labels or booking agencies – and having reviews in blogs and magazines are forms of symbolic capital. This legitimate prestige is often seen as an opportunity to earn a living and to reconcile commercial imperatives and artistic integrity (second extract below). In the first extract below, Guy's engagement and decision to play for

low wages is not a dedication to the independent ethos but about 'visibility' – exposure, recognition, potential economic rewards and opportunities in the future:

> We've been asked to open for a pretty big show, an independent one, and we got paid 100 bucks and we were like: sure! And you know, hundred bucks that's not gonna cover anything for a band with six people. But the recognition, the exposure, the name… You say 'yes' to that. There are too many advantages. Again, when there is no money… If it's independent, you have to say yes (Guy, San Francisco).

> Last year, I had my shows booked between 150 and 400 euros in fairly small venues: up to 300 people. But this year it's different. I've been the industry whore for years in the past, playing for free in shitty conditions. Now I got my album released, I got my face in music magazines, and with good reviews. People know my name a bit more. My booker just told me he sold a show for 7,000 euros to play on the rooftop of a building for a luxury brand event… It's hard for me to get how and why there's such big differences (Alex, Brooklyn).

The value of recognition in the field is conditional as it depends on who granted it. 'Legitimate recognition' is gained from cultural intermediaries – gatekeepers and institutions. Gatekeepers are journalists, booking agents, label managers and influential cultural workers who discuss and judge the cultural 'value' of other bands, for instance, during concerts, social events and on social media platforms (Bennett et al., 2006, p.335; Negus, 2002). Gatekeepers hold a symbolic power: they may grant recognition to a selection of cultural workers. Such recognition is important in this field since there are no possibilities to know the use value of a cultural product beforehand (Miège, 2004). In return, cultural workers may convert the granted recognition into other forms of recognition and meaningful artistic opportunities such as awards, prestigious scholarships, prices and residencies.

Moreover, this recognition may be exchanged into economic capital, through branding and advertising. To put it differently, the artistic and economic value of texts is made through cultural intermediaries (Becker, 2008/1982). This shows in the second extract below. Indeed, for Brigitte, getting recognition from gatekeepers meant getting recognition from the field in return and ultimately 'getting to work'. At the level of the self, first-hand data shows that the recognition from the field is extremely meaningful to individuals. In the first extract below, the recognition Bertrand gained from the field of independent music gave him trust and confidence to continue his music, lifestyle and aesthetic choices. However, this self-esteem appears quite precarious since it relies

on power relations within the field. This power is in the hands of 'the people who hold the reins' – the gatekeepers:

> Until recently, I was struggling with people. I'm better off now. I'm more confident in what I'm doing. The change happened in recent years, when I began to be recognised as a musician. In independent music, it's not that there is a hierarchy but… I am dependent on the people who hold the reins. And the thing is that building relations with them [the gatekeepers] prevented me from building anything else at a personal level (Bertrand, Paris).

> Macy is somehow the star of the night you know. She knows how to deal with the 'world'. When she knew we were on the same label, she took me by the arm and she presented me to the people "hey look at her she's Brigitte Mafia, she plays wonderful music and she's on the same label as me". Suddenly people talked to me and they were interested in my work (Brigitte, San Francisco).

However, people may look for recognition through other means, such as social media platform statistics (Rauh Ortega, 2018). According to the participants, such practice is motivated by two things: firstly (as seen in the previous paragraphs), recognition from the field is precarious; and secondly, as seen in the second section of this chapter, recognition often alternates between intense but short moments of exposure – during a concert or the promotion of a record – and low exposure with little sign of recognition the rest of the time. Participants mentioned on several occasions that they looked at the comments, views and plays on social platforms as a way of finding out the value of their texts. According to the participants, such a practice became quickly 'addictive' and harmful. Indeed, since texts are considered to be proxy of the self, participants (especially the most fragile ones) tended to relate the evaluation of their text with their own value as an artist and ultimately their own self-worth. During an interview, Ingrid commented on her own use of online statistics. While she was insensitive to the comments of the users, she appeared to be much more concerned about online statistics. Indeed, Ingrid looked at the number of hits on her website, plays on her YouTube videos, and plays on her songs uploaded to Bandcamp and SoundCloud. At first Alex also liked to follow the statistics on the content he was uploading online (songs, comments and videos). However, Alex described a moment when he got 'hooked' and started to look at statistics, using data analysis plug-ins embedded on social media platforms and on his own website. Alex started to develop strategies to get more exposure and (instant) recognition from users, but ultimately, as he described, he started to feel like a fraud and the recognition he

received was artificial, which triggered guilt in him, eroding his own sense of self-worth.

As a result of the manufacturing of recognition and distribution in the music industries, observations and interviews showed that participants' self-esteem alternates between a sense of grandiosity and worthlessness. For instance, Sonia, a 32-year-old musician living in Stockholm, described her life as 'living on a roller coaster'. Likewise, for Pierre, a 34-year-old musician living in Paris, whose perception of himself fluctuated between delusion of grandeur (with fantasy of success and fame) and a hopeless vision of the future. Ultimately, Pierre blamed himself for 'being such a fool'. Sonia and Pierre's self-perceptions echo Giddens' observations that consider 'omnipotent feelings of self-worth are likely to alternate with their opposite, a sense of emptiness and despair' among individuals in late modernity (1991, p.178). Following Giddens and Lasch, Sonia and Pierre are not isolated cases, since maintaining a good self-esteem and healthy narcissism in modern times appears to be almost an impossible task (Giddens, 1991; Lasch, 2000). Sonia and Pierre's comments resemble Giddens' account of the narcissist who suffers from a 'pervasive feeling of emptiness and a deep disturbance of self-esteem' (1991, p.177). However, Lasch considers that narcissistic behaviours seem to be, for many, the best way to endure the tension and anxieties of modern life (Lasch, 2000/1979, p.83).

8.4 Coping strategies

Although participants acknowledged that sudden changes of recognition are a feature of the music industries, it remains an emotionally violent experience. Results indicate that such gaps between high and low recognition are eroding participants' sense of wholeness. In order to cope with such inconsistency of recognition, this section argues that individuals develop (albeit often unconsciously) coping strategies and defence mechanisms. These unconscious defences are responses to the brutality of the manufacturing of recognition in the music industries, which threatens individuals' sense of wholeness. These coping strategies echo Potamianou's (1997) 'shields' – 'skills for adjusting to newly proliferating pressures to scramble for modes of living' (Berlant, 2011, p.8). The section below looks at different coping strategies that have been consciously or unconsciously developed by participants.

8.4.1 Delusion of grandeur, fantasy, feelings of omnipotence and hope

Participants observed were prone to developing inflated views of their selves as a defence mechanism to cope with the lack of control over their own lives. More precisely, these defence mechanisms took the form of delusions of grandeur, fantasy and feelings of omnipotence. A fantasy as a coping strategy is a (sometimes conscious although most often unconscious) behaviour consisting of avoiding stress and anxiety by resorting to (day)dreams. Moreover, a 'feeling of omnipotence' is when an individual believes they are driven by unlimited or universal power and superior to others. More commonly, these could be described as 'Don Quixote-like' behaviour, following the character who would turn the crudeness of everyday life into a dream-like pretence. Fantasy would therefore involve sustaining strategies to cope with the stress of daily life (Raskin and Novacek, 1991), a 'magical voluntarism' (Smail, 2005, p.7) or 'cruel optimism' (Berlant, 2011). Altogether these concepts describe an attachment to fantasy as a defence mechanism easing (the too often unbearable) daily life and its lack of meaning under neoliberalism. This was the case for Pierre, who described himself as having 'delusions of grandeur' in the same way as Alex, who defined himself as ambitious, declaring in an interview that 'if you want to reach the moon, try to reach the sun'. Likewise, Edouard confirmed during an interview that:

> A lot of time musicians have to operate under the delusion that this is all gonna pay off in the end. Even though the chances are pretty low, right? There is always a hope that the next show you're gonna break out, the next song release will be the one that gets played on the radio (Edouard, Portland).

8.4.2 Rationalisation, intellectualisation and displacement

As a reaction against emotional conflict triggered by external stressors (in this case the organised recognition in the music industries), other participants used rationalisation and intellectualisation as a defence mechanism. In psychology, rationalisation, and closely related intellectualisation, are defence mechanisms against attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that may be otherwise unbearable. In rationalisation, the subject focuses their attention towards an element of the problem to avoid other elements. Rationalisation helps to divert the cause of suffering by elaborating reassuring but often incorrect or incomplete explanations. Intellectualisation differs slightly since it corresponds to the use of abstract thinking or generalization to minimize suffering. Both rationalisation and intellectualisation use cognition to avoid suffering. In this

study's case, social recognition is distributed differently depending on social backgrounds, which affects individuals' self-esteem and consequently their potential flourishing (Sayer, 2009). As reflexive beings, participants of this study compare their own personal experience of recognition to social class structures. In the extract below, Guy relates his own lack of recognition to his social background: an aristocratic Cuban family who experienced social downgrading when they emigrated to the United States. As he stated, Guy was angry and frustrated at being denied recognition, especially by those who held both the legitimate and social capital in the United States, who he named as the 'educated white middle-class kids working in IT'. As Guy states:

> What push people up is people who can afford PR. PR are the huge ones. I understand that when I ask to a friend of a friend: "how do you know this person?" Not that I need a reason to hate these people but I kind of get to the bottom what do they do… I want to understand what does it take… I hear that band that is not that good but that may be totally subjective. I'm missing something. But digging deeper: Oh! This band has a family member in the industry, they are working in the industry. So again, they can afford what it takes. It's like with the actors (Guy, San Francisco).

However, the example above may also be interpreted as displacement. Displacement happens when an individual handles anxiety by transferring the source of suffering from one object to another. Indeed, in the extract above (and during the interview), Guy overemphasised the role played by the economic and social capital of the 'weekend warriors' and 'tech people'. Guy preferred to focus his attention on abstract concepts such as economic and social capital as reasons for his relative lack of success in order to avoid the pain of taking into account other disturbing aspects of his life, such as his mild depression, his frustration at aging, and his potential lack of talent. This is not to undermine the importance of economic and social capital in people's life chances, but rather to outline the different layers of interpretation in the discourse of an individual. While Guy's statement aligns with reality, economic and social capital play a crucial role in life chances, especially in expensive cities such as San Francisco. His emphasis on structure may also be interpreted as a retreat into rationalisation and displacement in order to not feel the pain of having his music rejected (and by way of consequence, having himself rejected). Consequently, assuming that Guy was resorting to displacement and rationalization does not equate to him providing an empirically incorrect analysis of his situation. To the contrary,

Guy's example above shows how participants simultaneously interpret their daily struggle in a wider context to soothe their suffering – they resort to a coping strategy.

8.4.3 Misrecognition and denial strategy

Misrecognition of an individual can trigger defence mechanisms, such as denial, as a way of coping. Observations show that workers with the lowest recognition, such as interns and assistants, tend to deny the burden of misrecognition and, as a way of compensation, take up more responsibilities. This 'cruel optimism' (Berlant, 2011) of working 'voluntarily' harder, in spite of the lack of recognition (and often redistribution), may be considered as a defence mechanism: participants prefer to retreat into denial rather than to bear the emotional conflict induced by an abusive context. However, paradoxically, taking on more responsibilities helps maintain and legitimate power and domination, as in the French expression of 'voluntary servitude' (de La Boétie, 1975). This was the case for Emile, a 29-year-old freelance recording assistant and musician, who was complaining about the fact that his duties and responsibilities did not change between his current position and when he was an intern. Emile felt that his position as an assistant was not recognised and his wages were too low. However, this complaint did not stop him from taking on as much work as he could, evenings and weekends included. Indeed, in his struggle for recognition, Emile was often taking on more responsibility and work despite the burden it put on his health. After several years of lack of sleep, constant stress and anxiety and bad food habits, he recently started to have skin problems on his face and stomach problems (ulcers). Retreating into denial, Emile also considered that 'the harder it gets, the more rewarding it will be in the end'. In a professional environment where economic rewards remain uncertain and where competition is fierce, recognition represents a focal point for the participants observed. Denial as a defence mechanism explains a lot about people's dependency on recognition to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth. As Emile declared during an informal meeting:

> Well, I know, I shouldn't be doing that. That's not my job, really. But I'm so glad I get to lead this project now. The producer could not stay as he is involved in another bigger project. It's been great so far, a lot of work but great. I almost work for free on this project but it's good visibility for me as well. […] I'm pro-active, heavily engaged in my work. If I'm working hard, if I'm always engaging, they'll see that I'm a good resource for the company. There's many good workers around.

> But if they like you, you'll have better chances to stay in the hot seat. That's what I'd figure out (Emile, Portland).

8.4.4 Cynical detachment and blasé attitudes

Results show that participants developed a 'cynical detachment' (Lasch, 1991/1979, p.95) and a 'blasé attitude' (Simmel, 1950/1903) toward recognition as a coping strategy against organised recognition in the music industries. When recognition is gained, it can be seen as counterfeit, since participants' romantic ideals of authenticity are broken. Indeed, participants perceive their exposure not as the recognition of their intrinsic artistic qualities but as the result of an economic exchange between the musicians, PRs and the media. In other words, media attention is 'bought' whereas individuals are looking for 'meaningful' recognition, drawn into the romantic art for art's sake ideal of authenticity. This issue appears particularly sensitive to musicians at a time when the values of artistic autonomy are recomposing (Klein et al., 2017). Moreover, in these cases, participants start to doubt the authenticity of others, even when the audience assures them that they have been seduced by their performances (Lasch, 2000/1979, p.131). Indeed, to obtain recognition that reflects positively on individuals' self-esteem, recognition needs to be considered as sincere and not simply formulated. As for Sayer, 'I may say things that indicate recognition of you but if everything I do indicates insensitivity to your needs and disrespect of your intelligence my words will be worthless' (2005, p.56). In the extract below, Guy, a self-produced musician, reflected upon his own (personal) investment into a public relation campaign:

> And I remember she called me when she got the review in Nosey. She said "hey we got Nosey, you should be happy it is a lot of competition to get that". I was like yes, that's great but then when I looked at the receipt, 25 hundred to get one article I am really really excited about. Once again, I had to talk to my fiancée who is the voice of reason, and she was: "look, before you talked with them, you typed Break Down [name of the band] on Google and there was no hit. Now when you look at it, there are pages and pages of stuff. Their job is to make people aware of you and now, when people Google you, you're the first things that come up and you know…" They did their job to a certain extent. As we talked earlier, so the life of that art is kind of coming and going. You can't sit around and wait for… (Guy, San Francisco).

8.5 Conclusion

Recognition is an essential need which, when denied, affects individuals' sense of self-worth. The organised politics of recognition and distribution in the music industries, specific to the production of texts (see Miège, 1989), creates working conditions often unbearable to selves with its uncertain value. This worsens in the fringe observed, the independent music field, where income and wages are even more often scarce than in the rest of the music industries. Consequently, participants observed developed (unconscious) coping strategies and (conscious) defence mechanisms as ways of pursuing their activity which, as they hoped, could provide meaning and self-realisation.

The second section looked at the unequal distribution and recognition between workers in the music industries. Using existing literature as well as first-hand data, the section showed how inequalities in terms of recognition and distribution are organised by the industry. Ultimately, such disparities between workers are similar to other fringes of capitalism were the capital is concentrated on the few. Moreover, the section showed how distribution and recognition remained obscure to participants, making them unsure about the quality of their contribution to the field. The section gives two examples of the impact of the features of work in the music industries on workers. Touring was first considered for its positive aspect, before arguing that touring, for many independent musicians observed, is rather psychologically challenging. Moreover, observations showed that the challenges tended to worsen when workers returned from tour; the gap in exposure and recognition being the main reason why musicians suffer. The second example looked more specifically at the manufacturing of recognition in the music industries. The example of Anita aimed to show how selves may struggle to make sense of their own contribution when subject to organised recognition in the music industries.

The third section looks more specifically at recognition in the music industries. Firstly, drawing on Hegelian philosophy and moral philosophy, the section reminds us that recognition is a basic need for individuals. Since distribution in the music industries is often scarce, results show that participants tend to focus their attention on recognition as a way of compensation. However, recognition should not be considered simply as tokenistic since, as the examples show, high recognition can, in return, lead to distribution. Recognition is also dependent on who grants it: recognition from the field being here the best example of a legitimate recognition fostering in individuals a

positive sense of self-worth. Since recognition is often irregular in the music industries and subject to a specific event, such as a tour or a record release, the results show that participants may look at recognition through other means, such as social media platforms. However, participants agreed that despite the temptation of gaining forms of 'instant recognition', it provided little support and little help in fostering a positive sense of self-worth. This section shows that overall, organised recognition in the music industries affects participants' sense of self-worth. Participants often alternate between a feeling of grandiosity and worthlessness.

Acknowledging the fact that the manufacturing of recognition in the music industries has negative effects on selves, section 8.4 looked at coping strategies and defence mechanisms developed by individuals. Four kinds of strategies and mechanisms were outlined in this section. Firstly, participants developed an inflated version of themselves or fantasies about the future, which may be referred to as 'delusions of grandeur', 'fantasies' and 'feelings of omnipotence'. Secondly, participants also used rationalisation, intellectualisation and displacement as a defence mechanism against contexts that were otherwise unbearable. In other words, the participants developed strategies of avoidance. Thirdly, individuals used denial as a way of coping. Denial is a strategy helping individuals to cope with situations which would not be bearable otherwise. However, the results show that denial helped participants to cope with the present. Fourthly, individuals also developed a cynical detachment and a blasé attitude toward the organised recognition of the music industries. Sceptical about the legitimacy (and lack of control) of recognition in the music industries, participants also retreat into cynical detachment and develop a blasé attitude in order to avoid the suffering of having their ideal of authenticity threatened.

I have outlined in this chapter some of the structural conditions in the cultural industries around manufacturing recognition, which directly affects self-esteem and sense of self-worth. Drawing on Sayer (2009; 2011), I advocate an understanding of these issues not only in terms of psychology or moral philosophy but also in term of sociology and political economy in order to apprehend that these coping strategies and defence mechanisms are the results of different factors in our lives, such as features of work in the music industries, class, ethnicity and gender, which affect our well-being. The coping strategies and defence mechanisms developed by participants aim to lower their anxiety towards daily life.

Chapter 9
Conclusion

This thesis explored the psychosocial impact on people of precariousness and problematic working features in the cultural industries. The research questions explored participants' responses to structural pressures through the following questions:

- What is the psychosocial impact of precariousness on participants working in the independent music industries?
- What are the coping strategies developed by musicians to bear the struggle between an organised self-realisation (with fantasies about the good life) and the contingency of daily life under neoliberalism?
- Are there different ways of coping depending on gender and social class background?

The study looked at participants aged 25-37, living in cities known for their neo-bohemian lifestyle (Lloyd, 2010) and high cost of living: Brooklyn, San Francisco, Oakland, Portland, Stockholm and Paris. Therefore, this thesis proposed a 'parallel study': similarities in living and working conditions were sought among participants located in different cities (McRobbie, 2004).

9.1 Findings: precariousness leads to struggles to secure ontological security, preventing individualisation and flourishing

Findings indicated that living under precariousness of the present had a deep psychosocial impact on participants. While differently handled depending on gender and social class background, this study looked at the coping strategies and defence mechanisms developed by participants to cope with the daily life. The findings of this study can be divided into five categories:

1) Precariousness affects all aspects of life.
2) While music offers unique opportunities for self-exploration, under such precariousness, findings showed that participants' working lives triggered anxiety, struggle for recognition and narcissistic behaviours.
3) Precariousness in the music industries affects people differently depending on their social background and gender.

4) Contrary to the idea that self-exploration could lead to experimental lives, challenging traditional patterns, participants preferred to find refuge – and even fantasise about – more traditional lifestyles.
5) People develop coping strategies and defence mechanisms to bear daily life under neoliberalism, e.g. denial, fantasy

9.1.1 Precariousness affects all aspects of life

It should be clear by now that the participants observed do not earn a living from their music. Work is generally short-term, project based, precarious and insecure (Gill, 2011; Gill & Pratt, 2009; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; Neff, Wissinger, & Zukin, 2005; Terranova, 2000). Consequently, as Banks summarises drawing on existing research, cultural work is 'a false grail – a tragic prize that promises emancipation but provides only tyranny and unfreedom' (2007, p. 160). Furthermore, while digitalisation and convergence are generally considered as positive ways of reducing the cost of cultural production, findings showed that they were double-edged. In line with previous works, participants were 'always on duty' (Gregg, 2013, p.165) and many tasks were outsourced to them (Meier, 2015).

For most cultural workers (and for all the participants of the study), it is common to have a second job, often outside the field of the music and cultural industries, in order to balance the uncertain precariousness of cultural work (Caves, 2002, p.80; Menger, 2006; Throsby and Zednik, 2011; Banks, 2017, p.126). Participants found other sources of income within the music industries, using 'transferable skills', e.g. skills learned through practice or knowledge of the music scene (McRobbie, 2002, p.520), that either challenged their idea of the 'sell-out' artist (Klein et al., 2017) or participated in incentives to 'sell themselves' (Scharff, 2016). In certain cases, these transferable skills were, however, exploited in other jobs outside the music industries, e.g. in community management. While attractive, findings indicated that these jobs were precarious and participants struggled to handle them at the same time. In other cases, participants had (poorly paid) humdrum jobs outside the field of independent music. Surprisingly, findings showed that participants were better at handling their music careers by using cunning, sometimes with the help of their boss. Findings also showed that some participants resorted to the platform economy, hoping to juggle between music and other jobs. Findings showed, however,

that work in the platform economy was contingent, poorly paid and scattered, and this exerted a considerable burden on workers.

Collectively participants had precarious lives and attempted to find the 'least bad option' which is in line with recent literature showing that workers were 'entrepreneurs by necessity': engaged in short-term, precarious and insecure projects with scattered income (Oakley, 2014; Taylor, 2015; Scharff, 2016). Furthermore, as Chapters 6 and 7 showed, working patterns often led to over-work and 'presence bleed' (Gregg, 2013).

Furthermore, through the superstar effect and the winner take all rule (Caves, 2002, p.78), the music industries are creating severe inequalities in terms of distribution of income (Banks, 2017, pp-121-141). Although these numbers are solely indicative, observations showed that recording assistants were earning up to 60 times less than the top recording producers and musicians and opening shows for 80 times less than the headliners. These findings confirmed the idea that the music industries rely on a pool of non-professionals to survive (Miège, 1989, p.72).

Moreover, findings indicated that working in the music industries, in a context of precariousness, tended to make interpersonal relationships fast and fleeting. Non-instrumental and meaningful relationships are crucial for flourishing and ontological security (Giddens, 1991; Sayer, 2011) and findings showed that participants struggled to secure them. The precariousness and the working features of the music industries were mutually reinforcing exclusion from non-instrumental relationships. Albeit important to gain meaningful job opportunities, forced hedonism, mandatory networking and antisocial hours were reinforcing homophily between workers. This tension was clearly illustrated when a participant declared that although he had a vibrant social life, he felt 'socially malnourished' (chapter 7). Consequently, considering the working patterns and the emotional labour required by the work, it seemed difficult for participants to maintain a steady romantic relationship, especially with someone outside of their working lives. Moreover, for many participants, it was difficult to differentiate working and leisure time, as well as instrumental and affective relationships (Boltanski and Chiapello, 1999, p. 254), since their professional and private lives were somewhat merged (Lair et al., 2005). Although professional relationships may be meaningful to individuals (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008), participants described socialising in the music industries as mainly superficial. Furthermore, in a context of contemporary neoliberalism where competition was

exacerbated (McRobbie, 2015), participants experienced problematic feelings about the nature of their bonds with others, including a fear of being betrayed, copied and having their ideas stolen.

Beyond work and interpersonal relationships, precariousness extended to all aspects of life. As seen in chapter 5, while accommodation is a key aspect of well-being, flourishing and ontological security, participants struggled to gain access to decent housing, especially in cities where rent is expensive. Some participants treated their parental households as a 'stepping stone' towards a professional career in the music industries and while some never left, other came back during difficult times. In the absence of parental help, many workers were living in precarious housing, struggling to secure long-term accommodation and subletting rooms in shared homes that were unsuitable for communal living. Moreover, unreliable contracts of tenancy triggered fears of being evicted and homelessness, which eventually happened to several participants during this research.

9.1.2 Participants' working lives triggered anxiety, struggle for recognition and narcissistic behaviours.

All participants, except for one (who was 'distant from necessity', to use Bourdieu's terms), reported feelings of anxiety to an extent that they felt that anxiety was preventing them from living a good life – from 7 to 9, the maximum on the anxiety scale outlined on section 3.6.1. Findings indicated that anxiety often came with unhealthy lifestyles (sedentary lifestyles, sleep deprivation, bad food habits, drug consumption) and physical manifestations (disorders of the neurovegetative system, physical pains). While a daily routine helps to secure ontological security (McRobbie, 2015), the absence of control over their lives and lack of predictable future events led individuals towards an impasse, causing them great anxiety.

Moreover, results showed that the manufacture of distribution and recognition by the music industries was challenging participants' sense of self-esteem and recognition. As shown in Chapter 8, touring, as well as the industries' constant showcase of newcomers, was emotionally disturbing for participants as they were experiencing alternatively high and low recognition, if not misrecognition. Furthermore, in a context where rewards are highly concentrated on a few musicians, participants tended to look for recognition at the expense of rewards, which reinforced precariousness and lack of self-esteem e.g. when participants accepted

unfair working conditions in exchange for exposure. Altogether, findings showed that participants' self-esteem alternated between a sense of grandiosity and worthlessness, which encouraged unhealthy narcissistic behaviours in the participants.

9.1.3 Precariousness affects people differently depending on their social background and gender

This study has shown that, when considered as social facts (Durkheim, 2010/1895), anxiety, self-esteem, recognition and narcissism can be analysed through the scope of social variables, such as gender and social class background.

Drawing on existing research and primary data, the thesis suggested that the neoliberal incentive to take responsibility for oneself was a source of anxiety in a context where chances remained unequal. Female participants were encouraged to develop their careers while the field was reluctant to welcome female artists outside of stereotypical, overly sexualised roles (Scharff, 2015, pp.105–108), such as lead singer or backing vocalist (Alacovska, 2015). Consequently, female participants declared that they had to prove to other workers, including women, that they were fit for the job, which was triggering anxiety. In their struggle for legitimacy in the eyes of their colleagues, many participants declared feeling 'under watch'. Female musicians often felt that they could only display a limited set of feelings and emotions, e.g. determination, confidence, sensibility, and repress others, such as deception and anger. Participants declared that the repression of the display of feelings and emotions was triggering anxiety.

Furthermore, findings confirmed that social class background remained a great source of social distinction between participants, especially since monetary rewards in cultural work were often scarce (see also Umney and Krestos, 2015). As Allen suggests (2016, p.814), a middle-class background (or higher) creates a 'material and psychological safety net' which helps economically and ontologically. Chapter 4 presents the anxiety specific to participants with working and lower middle-class participants. Findings suggested that they were struggling with legitimacy, developing the autodidact's anxiety of not being 'good enough' and a fear of failure.

Middle-class background participants expressed being under the threat of downward mobility. As a result, they felt pressure to secure their social class location, which was triggering anxiety. However, findings also showed that participants with middle and higher social class backgrounds developed ways of coping with

precariousness. These coping strategies and defence mechanisms helped to reduce the anxiety induced by a lack of ontological security. As findings showed in Chapter 4, the resilience specific to participants with middle- and higher-class backgrounds was gained through the sharing of information with family and relatives. Inversely, participants with a lower-class background who could not compete with precariousness developed 'adaptive preferences' by refusing what they are refused (Bourdieu, 1984; Sen, 1999 in Sayer, 2011, p.134), i.e. they prefer to give up or to blame themselves rather than conceiving their struggle as the results of more systemic conditions. In other words, for Bourdieu dispositions toward precariousness were 'embodied' through a process of socialisation (Bourdieu, 1977).

9.1.4 Participants preferred to find refuge – and even fantasise about – more traditional lifestyles.

Contrary to discourses on the creative and collaborative economies in public policies and in the media, findings indicated that participants were not willingly embracing entrepreneurial incentives. Indeed, the findings disputed the current narratives on entrepreneurship inspired by the market-driven focus of neoliberalism, such as the New Enterprise Allowance in the UK, which assumes that unemployed and unpaid workers can be transformed into entrepreneurs by a kind of 'magical trick' (Taylor, 2015, p.181), as developed in Chapter 6. Therefore, the findings of the thesis were at odds with the current policy focus, which assumes that flexible work is an answer to demands for autonomy and independence coming from workers. Participants discovered that they had no choice but to embrace the current culture of music production in the music industries (entrepreneurialism, multiskilling, multitasking as outsourcing), in creative labour within the creative industries (compromise with market values (Scharff, 2016)) and in work outside the creative industries (overwork and 'always on' culture).

Therefore, as the findings presented above outlined, work in the cultural sector was contingent, as well as psychologically and physically burdensome. After years of practice, several participants declared being willing to trade their working lives in the music industries for more traditional lifestyles and humdrum jobs since they were tired of not being able to secure decent living conditions. For participants, this meant being willing to trade off independence and autonomy in work for the relative security of waged labour. Indeed, as participants declared, independence, autonomy and flexibility

were often synonymous of precariousness. For the most part, these findings disputed claims that cultural entrepreneurs are empowered by their activity. Moreover, findings indicated that the precariousness often reduced the positive aspects of working lives in the music industries. Chapter 6 showed how participants found waged labour and corporate work within and outside the music industries, as a way to escape the psychological exhaustion of precarious forms of self-employment.

Findings extended to other aspects of participants' working lives. In spite of claims that bohemianism and entrepreneurialism could lead to an experimental lifestyle, outside traditional lifestyle patterns, data indicated that precariousness tended to inhibit the self in such a way that it reduced possibilities for exploration of the self and relationships with others. On several occasions in this study, findings suggested that the promises of individualisation and negotiation of gender norms and roles translated into more (rather than less) traditional patterns, in line with the claims made by Adkins (1999; 2000; 2005). More generally, the precariousness prevented participants from experimenting and reflecting on non-traditional lifestyle paths. Communal living, for instance, was often expressed by participants as the only way to achieve steady accommodation. Moreover, as chapter 5 showed, these findings challenged the assumption that adulthood was late or delayed. Indeed, we should not confuse a delayed adulthood with a lifestyle path distant from traditional lifestyle patterns. For many, however, the situation seemed quite desperate, as they often conveyed the impression that they were waiting for something to happen. They felt as though they were negotiating between two irreconcilable life paths: traditional adulthood and a more experimental lifestyle.

More generally, participants often felt estranged from politics, even in their grassroots forms, which confirms some existing studies (Wilson and Ebert, 2013). Participants, such as Michel (chapter 6), were replacing politics by the management of interpersonal relationships inspired by self-help books. However, as Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1997) argued, people should not be blamed for their lack of consideration for politics or communal gathering around shared struggles. Indeed, precariousness has such a deep impact on individuals that it prevents them from developing a 'rational anticipation' (Bourdieu, 1997) and the hope required to revolt against an unbearable present. Consequently, participants' lack of political consciousness reflected the fact that they were too busy and distracted by unceasing deadlines and incentives to 'make it' as a musician, which also meant, by proxy, to be recognised as

a 'true' self. Participants were inhibited by fears, such as the fear of failure, the fear of being rejected by others (as shown in Chapter 8) and the fear of being evicted (as shown in Chapter 5). Moreover, observations suggested that it was hard for participants to relate to wider politics that could engage them in talk about mid-term and long term-future, e.g. pension schemes. Furthermore, workers' rights (unemployment allowance, maternity leave and even healthcare) seemed to be fairly abstract notions to them, since they were regularly denied access to them. The hardening of social welfare policies in the past decades meant a lack of the indirect help that was available in recent decades (Schnapper, 1994; Esping-Andersen et al., 2002; Menger, 2009), which ultimately made States key actors of precarisation (Alberti et al., 2018, pp.450–453) .

9.1.5 People develop coping strategies and defence mechanisms to bear daily life under neoliberalism

As Lee suggested, people are 'more than just passive dupes of an illegible capitalism' (Lee, 2008, p.270). Indeed, this study has shown that participants developed ways of coping, i.e. strategies of resistance, against the precariousness of the daily life under neoliberalism. I have argued in this study that the coping strategies and defence mechanisms were attempts to counter the neoliberal incentive to transform individuals into rational subjects. Although there may be many other coping strategies, the following paragraphs reiterate some of the strategies identified in this thesis.

Some authors claim that cultural work is 'hope labour': engagement and willingness to accept precarious working conditions are explained by the hope of finding reward in the future (Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013, p.10). Indeed, hope is a powerful engine for action (Potamianou, 1997) and is a coping strategy. Hope, however, can take harmful forms, such as when delusions of a good life prevent individuals from living one, as in 'cruel optimism' (Berlant, 2011).

Rationalisation and closely related, intellectualisation, are defence mechanisms against attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that may be otherwise unbearable. In rationalisation, the subject focuses their attention on an element of the problem to avoid more disturbing elements. Following Festinger, individuals retrospectively adapt their opinions, beliefs and ideologies to align with what happened to them and what they have done (Festinger, 1962). Likewise, rationalisation occurs when the subject provides less threatening explanations to reduce suffering. Intellectualisation differs

slightly, since it uses generalization and abstract thinking to avoid disturbing feelings. Both rationalisation and intellectualisation use cognition to avoid suffering.

Rationalisation should not be understood in the same way as rational choice theory (Becker, 1992). As Sen (Sen, 1977) argues, the understanding of the term 'rational' in some fields of economic theory - to define an individual acting on their self-interest – is misleading. In this study, rationalisation means that individuals are rationalising afterwards what they have lived to find meaning and reduce inner tension and suffering, as in cognitive dissonance. Following this model, the self is not rational but rationalising (Festinger, 1957, Elliot Aronson 1972).

In the context of this study, results also indicated that participants coped with the emotional conflict triggered by external stressors by resorting to rationalisation and intellectualisation. While participants are engaged in music making for its internal rewards, the precariousness and the features of the music industries affect their well-being. Therefore, findings suggested that participants rationalised *ex post* the reason for their suffering or problems. They legitimised, for instance, their absence of commercial success by claiming that success was not the goal and they bore their precarious living conditions by undertaking voluntary frugality.

Another coping strategy participants developed was denial. They preferred to find refuge in denial rather than to bear the emotional conflict (as in cognitive dissonance) induced by an abusive context. Findings in Chapter 8 suggested that participants were taking up more responsibilities to deny the burden of misrecognition and lack of distribution. Denial echoes Berlant's 'cruel optimism' and Ahmed's, 'promise of happiness', i.e. when certain fantasies about the good life help an individual cope with daily life, even though these fantasies prove to be particularly harmful (Ahmed, 2010; Berlant, 2011). This 'cruel optimism' of working 'voluntarily' harder, in spite of the lack of recognition (and often redistribution), may be considered as defence mechanisms. However, paradoxically, taking on more responsibilities without adequate recognition and distribution helps maintain and legitimate power and domination, as in 'voluntary servitude' (de La Boétie, 1975).

Berlant's 'cruel optimism' extends to other coping strategies identified in this thesis, such as the refuge of bohemianism (Chapter 5). Indeed, participants' references to bohemianism were considered as strategies to cope with the precariousness of the present: by referring to bohemia – in its classic and contemporary versions – participants legitimated precarious living conditions. As

Oakley noted, a bohemian romantic ethos works as a 'psychological bulwark', providing meaning to individuals and turning precariousness into proof of being an artist (Oakley, 2009b, p.282). Likewise, for Lloyd, 'the bohemian ethic elevates tolerance of uncertainty to a virtue: 'as an artist you know that you may not be secure for the rest of your life" (Lloyd, 2008, p. 216). Following this argument, participants even considered homelessness as proof of affiliations to bohemia (as seen in Chapter 5).

Some of the coping strategies developed by participants proved to be particularly disturbing and harmful in the long run, such as delusions of grandeur and feelings of omnipotence (Chapter 8). These coping strategies meant that participants were developing inflated views of themselves to cope with the lack of control over their own lives. A 'feeling of omnipotence' can be defined as when an individual is behaving as if they had special gift and were superior to others. In Chapters 6 and 8, some participants declared having 'delusions of grandeur', as a way to bear harmful working lives. Ultimately, as chapter 8 argues, the continuing absences of distribution, and misrecognition were triggering exacerbated narcissistic behaviours. These coping strategies are the most extreme versions of the 'cruel optimism' observed among participants.

In 'Don Quixote-like' behaviour, everyday life is turned into a dream-like life. As in Cervantes' novel, fantasy is a strategy to cope with the stress of daily life (Raskin and Novacek, 1991). This coping strategy is outlined in Chapter 7 (for instance when Adelaide fantasizes about the TV Show *Friends*) and in Chapter 8 (when Pierre declares having 'delusion of grandeur'). Altogether these concepts describe an attachment to fantasy, as a coping strategy, to ease the (too often unbearable) daily life under such precariousness.

Finally, this study suggested that participants also coped with precariousness through displacement towards another object. As chapter 7 showed, while selective ties in the music industries were simultaneously meaningful and crucial to get job opportunities, they could not replace non-instrumental relationships. However, forced hedonism and mandatory networking, with their anti-social and long working hours, reinforced homophily between workers, at the risk of ostracising participants from non-instrumental relationships. In this context, participants declared being socially malnourished and secluded from meaningful romantic and sexual opportunities. Consequently, findings suggested that some participants were burying

themselves into work as a form of compensation. Findings showed that engagement with work, at the risk of overworking, was seen as a chance to be fulfilled and escape confining traditional family paths for women (Chapter 6) (Hochschild, 2001; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001, pp.54–84).

9.2 Implications of the findings

9.2.1 People are beings with emotions influenced by structures

It should be clear by now that the coping strategies should not be understood as in Rational Action Theory but rather as a psychological reaction, a survival strategy in a social world that provides profound challenges to the self. The findings of this study do not support the idea that people are solely driven by competitive individualism or narcissistic behaviours. Although participants would have struggled to answer questions such as 'what is well-being or flourishing?' (Sayer, 2011, p. 8), these concepts were commonly implied as a life goal. It was surprising, however, to observe the degree to which participants had a tendency to self-harm. Participants were cutting themselves off from pleasures, believing that they had little right to experience them, or to flourish. In other cases, people were prone to self-deception, as a strategy to cope with daily life. We should not forget that people are consistently torn by contradictory feelings, such as determination and ambivalence, consistency and contradictoriness (Chancer and Andrews, 2014, p. 3). In other words, we are beings who often who often make mistakes in the ways in which we evaluate the world (Sayer, 2011, p.134).

Recognising people as independent, unique, sensible selves with idiosyncratic features does not mean that their needs and wishes are necessarily personal preferences or tastes as in an 'individualist, market view of the good' (Sayer, 2011 pp. 262–3). Indeed, such a view would imply that 'starving for food is no different from the preference of a wine buff for a particular vintage' (Sayer, 2011, p.263). For Sayer, the reduction of needs to preferences serves the ideological interest of the few since '*Homo economicus* has no needs, only preferences of differing strengths, which they seek to satisfy, as if no harm other than dissatisfaction would come to someone whose 'preference' for food and shelter were not meet' (Sayer, 2011, p.263). In line with such fallacious views, the bohemian lifestyle led by participants would be understood as mere preferences or tastes and not the result of systemic conditions. Such views tend

to overstate the individual will and diminish the influence of social factors, such as gender and social class background.

Therefore, following Sayer, an appropriate account should be pluralist, not relativist in the sense that not every kind of life is said to lead to flourishing. What pluralism means is that self-realisation and flourishing differ from a view implying that what might be good for one situation or person might not be good for another. Thus, even if the definition of the good life resists simple definition, it does not mean that we should avoid assessing good or bad life experiences. In accounting for what enhances or spoils the ability to flourish, concrete capabilities can be provided and not only abstract states of mind (Sayer, 2011, p.112, pp.134-7). Accordingly, the normative tools offered by the capability approach (as in chapter 2), allow for the assessment of both objective and subjective well-being, i.e. what is needed for people to flourish before accounting for the strategies they develop when they are struggling to access well-being. Those are tools that take into account interpersonal features of the good life as well as individual differences. Discussions about the good life, flourishing and self-realisation raise ethical discussions about the quality of working life within a framework that considers both well-being and social justice (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011; Banks, 2017).

9.2.2 Problems associated with the process of individualisation

Drawing on existing literature and first-hand data, the main argument concerning individualisation was twofold: while the self aims towards individualisation and flourishing, especially through (musical) work, it is constrained by standardised lifestyle patterns and precariousness. Consequently, as in a double bind message, these are conflicting demands that allow no correct or satisfactory response.

Firstly, while individualisation promises unique opportunities for self-experimentation, relationships and lifestyles, resisting oppressive and misogynistic aspects of traditional models of life, individualisation under such precariousness placed burdens on the self, inducing 'pathologies of individualisation'. However, as should be clear by now, these limitations of individualisation extended far beyond the lack of monetary rewards: they involved all aspects of the experience of daily life including housing (Chapter 5), relationships with others (Chapter 7) and self-esteem and recognition (Chapter 8).

Secondly, individualisation and flourishing are severely limited by standardised

lifestyle patterns (Brooks, 2001; Frank, 1998; Honneth, 2004; Lloyd, 2010). The projects of individualisation and flourishing are co-opted by capitalism and turned into a productive force (Honneth, 2004). Rather than free to explore their selves and unique forms of relationships with others, people are enjoined to 'become someone', which resembles a double bind (Ehrenberg, 1996; de Gaulejac, 2011).

Furthermore, the understanding of the concept of individualisation developed in this study diverges from more traditional accounts, pitched at the level of meta-theory, as in the works of Giddens, Beck and Bauman (Giddens, 1990; Giddens, 1991; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2001; Bauman, 2007). Indeed, those authors have generally failed to consider how social variables, such as class and gender, accounted for people's experience of life (Craib, 1992; Lewis, 2006, p.477; Atkinson, 2007). According to some authors, such undermining of social construct may even suggest that these theories of individualisation dovetail neoliberal discourses of self-management and empowerment by sweeping away systematic inequalities (Brannen and Nilsen, 2005).

9.2.3 Implications: Canaries in the coal mine?

I hope it is clear by now that the independent music industries have been used here as a case study to examine the personal consequences of an industry exposing individuals to precariousness. As several authors claimed, various features of work in the cultural industries have been increasingly extended in recent decades to other industries (Menger, 2003; Ross, 2009b). To some extent, Chapter 6 confirmed such claims since participants were also working in other fields, within and outside the music and cultural industries. The porosity between cultural industries and other fields indicated that participants' working lives are illustrative of current trends in work (Eurofound, 2015), especially in the digital economy. In other words, participants can be seen as 'canaries in the coal mine', at the vanguard of precarious working lives, beyond the music industries (Stahl, 2012, p.10). Consequently, by taking the independent music industries as a case study showing the psychosocial impact of working lives under neoliberalism, I believe that this study has provided a theoretical and normative framework that could be expanded to other industries, such as the digital and platform economies (Vachet, 2015; Vachet, 2017; Benistant and Vachet, 2018).

I hope that the observations undertaken in this study can provide a useful basis for future discussions on well-being under conditions of precariousness and

neoliberalism. The struggles that participants were facing encompass basic functioning, which threatens their sense of wholeness, e.g. housing, food, sleep, income, security. In line with recent research (Banks, 2017; Hesmondhalgh, 2013, 2016), this study extended the capability approach beyond poverty in 'developing' countries to cultural labour in Western countries. In doing so, I outlined the failure of current Western societies to secure people's well-being despite the huge material wealth apparent in them. Indeed, while the participants of the study were more privileged than others (most of them were white, educated, brought up and living in Western countries with middle-class and above backgrounds), this study confirmed existing research showing that, although experienced very differently, social and economic contingency affects everyone regardless of class, gender and localities (Bourdieu, 2007/1993; Berlant, 2011; Sennett, 1998).

9.3 Limitations of the research

Several important limitations, mostly based on the construction of the sample, need to be considered. First, since the snowball sampling does not claim for representativeness, the lack of women – 10 contrary to 22 men – and the nearly absence of non-white participants in the sample - there were only two BAME participants in the sample[56] - mirrored the unequal parity of participation in the cultural industries (Banks, 2017, p. 152; UK Music, 2017). Moreover, the 'whiteness' of participants has not been discussed in this thesis (Spracklen, 2013). Future works may explore this question further, especially, for instance, by looking at how racial and gender differences are commodified and considered as an economic value in the cultural industries (as in Scharff, 2016, p.101).

Second, with a sample of 32 participants (and around 250 participants who 'informed' the research) based in Brooklyn, San Francisco, Portland, Stockholm and Paris, it is hard to claim any generalisation.

Third, although I claimed intersectionality in this study, I analysed social variables such as gender and social class backgrounds separately. Moreover, I used dichotomous categories, such as man versus woman and working-class versus middle-class, while those are often seen as a continuum. However, regarding social class location, Chapter 3 explained in detail how these limitations were assessed, especially

[56] Black, Asian and minority ethnic.

by considering the social background of participants.

Fourth, I did not consider the pleasure of making music nor music practice as a coping strategy. Consequently, although I recognise the significance of the fields of psychology of music and music therapy (Hesmondhalgh, 2013, p.38), the focus of this study was on the personal consequences of and engagement in music at the risk of threatening well-being. Here again, future works may explore this question further.

9.4 Contribution

Drawing on a wide body of literature (political and moral economy, cultural studies, psychology, sociology and moral philosophy), this study contributes to studies of the psychosocial by developing a better understanding of the multi-dimensional influences that shape participants' mental health. Consequently, considering the interdisciplinary nature of the study (Sayer, 1999), I hope it has made a significant contribution to several fields.

This thesis has contributed to sociology and cultural studies by elaborating a sociological definition of psychological concepts, such as anxiety. In doing so, I analysed anxiety through the scope of numerous social variables. Moreover, the study has contributed to sociology and cultural studies by showing how participants developed coping strategies and defence mechanisms to bear the precariousness of daily life under neoliberalism. Furthermore, by drawing on primary qualitative research across a range of independent musicians, I hope this thesis has contributed to the field of sociology and cultural studies by revealing participants' unceasing internal struggles between self-reflexivity and the coercion of (social) structures. Furthermore, by looking at how working lives and ways of coping were dependent on gender, I hope this study contributes to debates in the field of feminist studies.

This study has also made a contribution to current debates which claim that the political economy needs to be informed by moral economy, particularly in relation to problems of neoliberalism and well-being (Sayer, 2000; Hesmondhalgh, 2017). More specifically, I hope the study successfully connected empirical sociology with the moral economy of culture. Using a post-Aristotelian theoretical framework of the good life (Sayer, 2009; Sayer, 2011), this thesis referred to moral economy as a way to develop a normative position about what is well-being and the ability to flourish in capitalist economies. In this study, a normative framework drawing on moral economy helped to go beyond the mere observation of precariousness in the music industries.

Consequently, this constitutes a contribution since, as Hesmondhalgh argued, although the political economy of the media observed the impact of capitalism on the media, it has little to say about gender, class and ethnicity (Hesmondhalgh, 2016, p.8).

Moreover, this study contributes to the field of cultural labour studies by further developing a psychosocial approach to cultural labour. Indeed, the key strength of this study is its emphasis on the psychosocial impact of precariousness. In other words, beyond observations challenging the notion of a good work I asked: what is the psychosocial effect of precariousness on the self?

Beyond the academic field, this thesis has aimed to enhance discussion amongst readers in non-academic spaces, such as workers and activists. Indeed, although we can be sceptical about the contribution of sociology to public debate, there is hope in the possibility that individuals might come to understand that their suffering, even the most intimate and secret aspects of it, has social origins (Bourdieu, 2007/1993, pp. 1453–4). Moreover, I believe that such views are consistent with the historic mission of psychoanalysis - to build skills to live and flourish in spite of disorientation and insecurity (Phillips, 2002). Consequently, I hope that my contribution will provide meaningful arguments against pop psychology and armchair debates, which put the blame on individuals, forcing them towards resilience and denying the social sources of their troubles. I also hope that my research might provide the basis for discussion of alternative visions of the good life, not solely based on material accumulation, and more respectful of biological rhythms of life and ecological sustainability (Oakley and Ward, 2018).

Finally, this thesis' action agenda is to enhance discussion of public policies concerned with innovation and creativity, by raising questions about well-being, flexible work, precariousness and social justice. While flexible work is often considered as inevitable in a post-Fordist economy, I hope this research might make a noteworthy contribution to debates in favour of a realist and responsible development of new forms of economic life, by taking into account social class background, gender, race and well-being. If engagement and autonomy are keys elements of 'good work' (see for instance, Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008), individuals also need adequate mental resources to engage themselves. The increasing pressure put on individuals as workers and selves makes this difficult. There is a need to understand that well-being is neither a luxury nor trivial, but a resource that needs to be more equally shared. Overall, my hope is that this study will contribute to public debates about the nature of flourishing

and well-being of individuals, in the context of work in the so-called creative and digital economies, and beyond.

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