

Youngsters' expectations and Context: secondary analysis and interpretation

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Aim of presentation

- Our re-use strategy
- Context & methodological considerations
- Substantive possibilities
 - From the essays
 - Suggestions re context
 - From interview and other data
 - Deeper insight
- Future avenues

Timescapes and young people's futures

- SIBS
- WFL
- YLT & UJIMA

Working across data

- Relevance of question/activity
 - e.g. SAF youngsters
- Context of each study
 - Different aims, questions embedded in different ways
 - Different structures of the research: e.g. WFL participants prior family interview
- Volume/diversity of data
- Specificity of each study
 - Conducting 'comparison', preserving project integrity
- Inroads, ground up analysis

Substantive interest

- Continuity in relative patterns of mobility, change in absolute patterns.
 - More attention to exceptions: spaces of choice and agency
 - (see Croll 2008, Irwin 2009)
- Search for ‘exceptions’, or ‘non-standard’ familial trajectories
 - ‘When I’m 25’ essays
 - Socio-economic maps
 - Interview data

‘When I’m 25’ essays

Imagine you are now 25. Write about the life you are leading, your interests, your home life and your work at the age of 25.

How statements about futures may provide insight into context of young peoples lives:

e.g. Elliot & Morrow 2007

Reading with no knowledge of SES, parental occupations
(Issue of base data)

Can the essay data suggest ‘non standard’ biographies being expressed therein?

Initial thoughts

- Nature of expression
 - Restricted, elaborate
- Content: uni, travel, early parenthood
- Lifestyle descriptions
- Suggestive only, but useful.
 - E.g. Emilia (YLT), Felix (SIBS), Dan & Kate (SIBS)

I have finished my medicine course at Edinburgh University, and am now training to be a forensic pathologist. I have a little green car, which I use to get around. I live in a small flat with a good friend. In the evenings, I read, do work related to my training, and take Catalan classes. Occasionally, when my friend is out, I play my clarinet. Eventually, I will finish my course and move to Barcelona. I email old school friends every now and then, and they update me with their lives. I am still writing stories, in spiral bound notebooks, which litter the floor and the desk. The flat is quite clean, as we keep it in good condition. I take the train down to Leeds during the holidays, and visit my family.

EMILIA (YLT, age 15)

I have graduated from uni three years ago and am now working for a company, covering the photography side of things. Good salary and a small flat in North East London (Hackney, Islington or Shoreditch). Have a girlfriend, long term relationship. Own a small car which takes me and mates camping for weekends every now and then.

Swim three times a week and occasionally use local gym. Often at Bars/Clubs on Friday nights, less often on Saturdays, and Sundays relaxing.

Planning a holiday for a few weeks to NZ to see family.

Felix (SIBS, age 16)

DAN (SIBS,
age 17)

I'm 25 at the weekends I go clubbing I'm also
a fully qualified tree surgeon and I work for @@comp
tree surgeons, I live with my girlfriend she is
22. I have two kids one is two and has a
boy and the other one is one and she's a girl.

I would be a qualified Primary P.E teacher as I like
to encourage kids to keep active, I would like to
rent a private house and live with either ~~for~~ a friend
or with someone I'm with, and maybe settle down
to have a family of my own, I would be happy to
have family as well as a career so that will
make my kids understand how to earn their^{own} money
and learn to be independent.

Kate (SIBS,
age 15)

Continuity/change

- Some sense of 'non standard' biographies
 - Esp university future (e.g. Kate SAF)
- Plotted class locations from essays
- Added parental occupation
 - reliability issues (accuracy, HE)
- Produced interesting cases:
 - discontinuity between intentions/parental occupations (e.g. Kate SIBS, Sophie YLT, Meg YLT)
 - those misplaced by researcher (e.g. Isobel & Florence SIBS)

Kate

Sophie

Isobel

Emilia

Felix

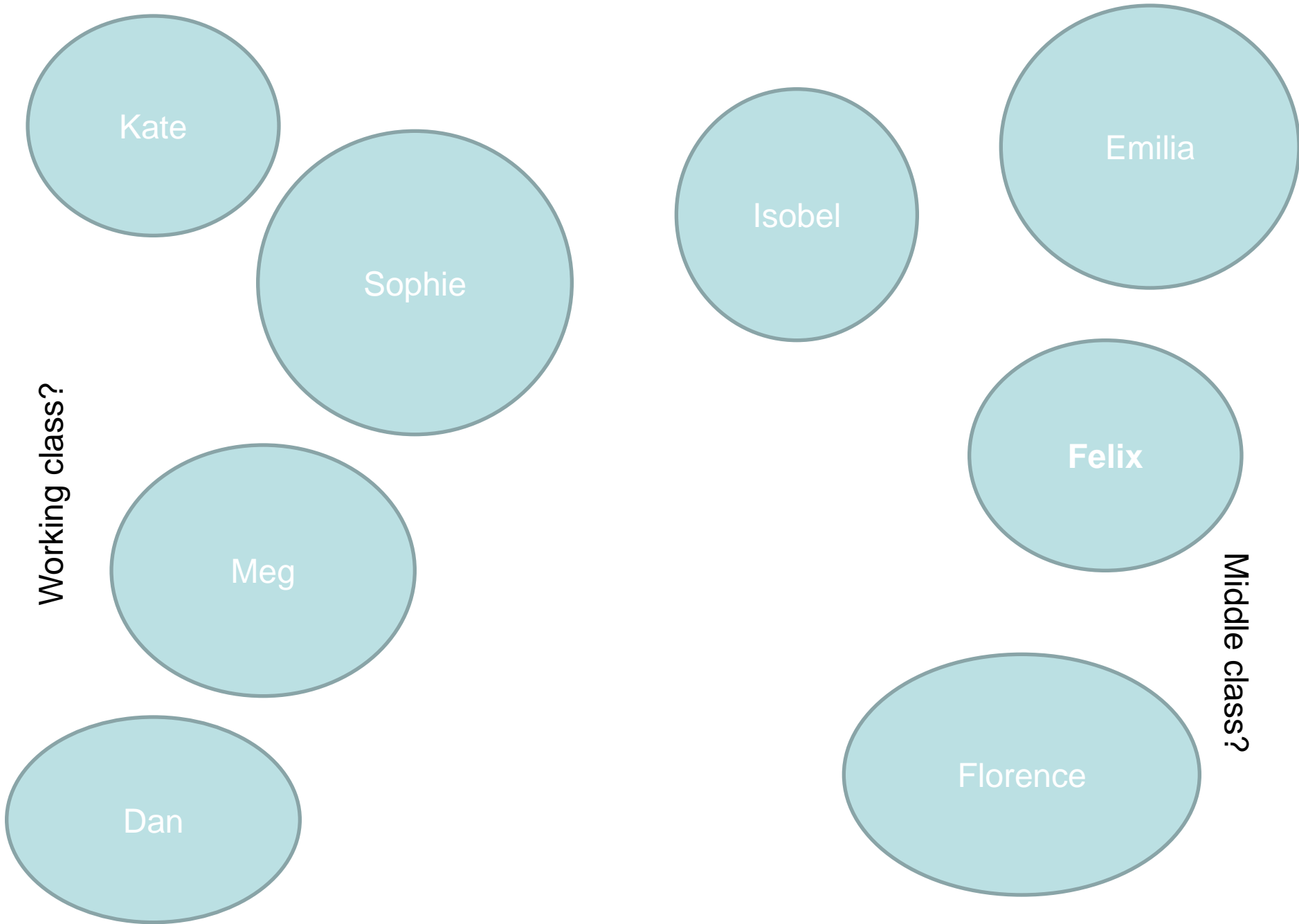
Meg

Dan

Florence

Working class?

Middle class?



Kate's university ambition:

Mum = unemployed former school meals worker, has job interviews lined up.

SW: What about your friends ... what do you think your relationship with your friends will be like? Cos you'll just be leaving school then so ...

K: Don't know. Cos I know for a fact that I'm going to college ... I'm not going to @@local FE College## ... I wanna go somewhere where they have stronger facilities that I want to be when I'm older.

SW: So what do you want to do?

K: Something to do with sport like a PE teacher.

SW: Oh excellent! So something sport-related ... so you want to go to college that's got ...

K: Sport ... I want a job working with sport. I just like it for some reason.

At the age of 25 I am now a key stage 1
in year one class. I really enjoy it + I enjoyed university
when I was 18 I went to Australia for a year
+ it really matured me, I am now married with one
child + want more than one child, my husband + I
live in a regular house + earn enough money to
go abroad + buy our child ~~car~~ toys to keep her/him
happy and content. I enjoy life + love the family aspect.
I love spending time with my family + am lucky
enough to have still kept in touch with lots of
my friends, after I came back from Australia me +
Mollie got a flat together, I met my husband when
I was 20 + we married at 22. I want 3 or 4 children
I'm still in touch with most of my family + see my
mum alot. That's it really.

SOPHIE (YLT, age 15)

Sophie

25: married with 1 child (suggests different class location)
Earn enough money to 'go abroad' – subtleties of class ...
Australia + maturity ?

Interview data:

- Australia/maturity is Mum's experience
 - family in Australia rather than gap/tour
- Older bro is 1st generation uni and Sophie relays sense of university that can be seen as class-related: uni is for clever people (A stars and B's) – she might have to aim for 'lower university' – again incorrect vocabulary
- Travel is resourced/realistic (dec'd father)

AB: Er, do you think, erm, you might be going to university as well?

SOPHIE: *Oh, I were hoping to but because my brother, erm, like, older brother Jordan, he were the first one to go to university, it's easier when you're the first one in the family to go. So he were the first one in the family so it were easier for him to get there but because I'm going to, because he's going to university this year, to Leeds, but because I'm the, I'm the second one to go to university, he's really brainy and he found it hard to get in and he were the first one so I don't know how I'm going to get there. But I really, I hope I do but I don't know how I'll do it, but I might have to go to a, a lower university than that and one that doesn't expect as highly from you.*

You have up to 30 minutes to do this.

I would like to be living ~~on~~ ~~my own~~ in
my own house maybe with a boyfriend
and I would like to have a good job
and ~~get paid~~ ~~earn~~ ~~not~~ quite a bit of money.
I would also like to still be living in
Leeds so that I am close to my
family. I would ~~like to be a model~~ maybe
like to be a model but I wouldn't
want to be married yet and I
wouldn't want children just yet.

MEG (YLT, age 15)
(HE:1, Family:1_

MEG ...

Meg: Then when I'm 17 I'd still be in sixth form, then when I'm 18 I'd have to be at university

- *wants to be a model because*

MEG: ... like, I'm not very, like, academic, like, I'm not very, like, good at working and stuff so I don't know it could be, like, it's ,like, a different thing to do.

- *elsewhere:*

AB: How important do you think it is to [your parents], how you do at school?

MEG: Erm, I think it's quite important cos they, they've, like, paid for my school, like, fee and stuff so they want me to do well. To, like, try and help me do better.C

- Meg, Sophie & Kate express university futures in ways which can be perceived as ‘non standard’
 - Further analysis suggests Kate’s statement is more of a vague aim, relatively speaking
 - Meg: influence of school, Sophie: benefit of structural/institutional change (c.f. Schoon)
 - Both express ‘not being clever enough’, different contexts

**‘non-standard’ trajectories still telling re
classed processes**

Isobel & Florence (SAF)

- Isobel 'misplaced' on SES map
- Sisters: very close, interviewed together
 - Isobel's essay suggests 'non-standard' trajectory
 - Florence seems firmly 'mc'
 - Age related? (similar to Sophie & brother?)
- Mum: parcel tracker
- S-dad: utilities call centre; ex counsellor
- Dad: builder (as far as we/they know)

Isobel: age 13 ↓

I live in Nottingham. I live by myself in a flat ~~at the West part of London~~. I have 2 cats but when I move into a house I want a dog as well, I have a job as an ~~computer~~ architect which I love. And I have a boy friend who has a job as Doctor.

Florence:
age 16 →

When I am 25 I will have got my degree in, French or philosophy. I haven't decided yet. I will probably be renting somewhere hopefully abroad maybe in France or Canada. I'm not completely sure. I might be living with someone but I'll probably be enjoying my independence. Hopefully I will still be editing videos because I really enjoy doing it and hopefully I would have got well on my way to writing my own novels. As before mentioned I'd like to work abroad but always keep strong contacts with the UK but I'm not completely sure what I want to do.

IS: Mum really wants us to go to University.

FL: **Most people I know say they are going to quit school after secondary.**

SW: So do you both have ambitions to go to University?

IS: Yeah.

FL: Yeah my mum has pretty much ... mum never went to university but I think she's always regretted it.

IS: Mum always wanted to be an artist.

SW: So have you got any ideas yourselves the things you'd like to do and what you're interested in?

FL: I'd like to be an author because I love reading ... I probably said that in the last interview but I do ... I LOVE reading and it would be great to write my own book.

That's like a dream job ... really I'd like to do ...

IS: To be like J. K Rowling.

FL: Yeah that would be nice. I'd like to do something where I use my language skills and like travel the world ... I'm not sure what it would be ... I remember my old French teacher ... she's actually now my Spanish teacher ... she's a really good teacher ... **I think she's inspirational to me really ... before she was a teacher she was working for this company and she got to travel all over the world making deals and everything ... I thought ... 'Wow, that so cool ... I want to do something like that!'**

Isobel & Florence

- University is v. real probability
 - Despite parental 'occupations
 - Poor 6th form, peer group ambitions
 - Alternatives are considered
 - Familiarity with universities
 - Visits, sense of what I like (FI),
 - Oxford pay per term, no sense of 1st generation HE

To conclude

In the context of (our) secondary analysis:

- Can see suggestions in the essays of contexts of advantage and disadvantage in which expectations have been produced
 - aspirations don't simply mirror parental trajectories
 - See what shapes decisions
 - 1st generation HE as potentially useful analytical route
- Being able to detect examples which suggest 'non standard' expectations is insightful
 - Exploring these ambiguities: still see classed orientations
 - A more expansive understanding of social class and thus processes of inequality