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# THE STRUCTURAL AND PERSONAL EFFECTS OF THE SWIFT TRUST FILM ENVIRONMENT.

A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
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University

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# ABSTRACT

This thesis investigated New Zealand film production workers' experiences of the 'swift trust' environment within the Auckland film and television industry. Previous research has identified swift trust between workers as a crucial mechanism for organising work within project based organisations. This research explored the ways in which working in a swift trust environment affects the personal and social identity of film workers.

Semi structured, in-depth interviews were carried out with seven female and four male film production workers. Respondents had all worked successfully within the industry for over ten years and understood both the rewards and drawbacks of freelance film work.

Respondents all identified swift trust as a key mechanism for facilitating the organisation of work within their industry. Clear cultural norms ensured workplace behaviours which supported cognitive, relational and motive-based trust mechanisms and facilitated collaboration, creativity and collective problem solving.

The swift trust environment was experienced by respondents as personally validating. It had given them a strong sense of individual and social identity as well as a clear sense of individual and collective purpose. However, all had experienced breakdowns in trust. Respondents recounted early difficulties coping with the extremes of working in an intense, high trust environment followed by the rejection of unemployment. Effects could be substantial and anxiety, depression and burnout was observed during the early years of careers.

All respondents had also experienced the breakdown of trust at an organisational level with several suggesting that cultural norms around trust mean that interpersonal conflicts are poorly handled and constructive performance appraisals seldom given within the industry.

Over time interviewees developed a range of personal and industry focussed coping skills which enabled them to experience a high level of psychological safety and satisfaction from their work. These skills included a rapid ability to judge the trustworthiness of others; development of multiple social identities to soften the transition between work and unemployment and developing work related boundaries. Respondents believed these skills enabled them to thrive in project based freelance work environment and had added to their lives outside the industry.

The thesis concludes with suggestions for increasing swift trust by improving performance and relational conflict management skills within the industry. It also suggests that the high trust environment of the film industry is highly rewarding for workers and would benefit more traditional organisations.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgement and Thanks	iii
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 This Study	1
1.2 Positioning Myself	2
1.3 The New Zealand Context	3
<b>2. Literature Review</b>	<b>6</b>
The Screen Industry	6
2.1 Project Orientation	6
2.2 The Sourcing of Projects	8
2.3 Gaining Funding for Productions	9
2.4 The new Zealand Situations	10
2.5 Working in the Industry	12
2.6 Disadvantages of the Film Industry	14
2.7 Compensating for the Downside of Operating in the Industry	16
2.8 The Unique Structure of a Production	17
Trust and its Related Mechanisms	20
2.9 Trust	20
2.10 Political Skill	25
2.11 Social Identity	28

2.12	Trust and Psychological Safety	36
2.13	Social Identity and Self-Concept	37
<b>3.</b>	<b>Methodology</b>	<b>42</b>
3.1	Theoretical Foundation	42
3.2	Research design	46
	• The respondents	46
	• Interview research	50
3.3	Analysis	52
	• Familiarisation with data	53
	• Coding data	53
3.4	Ethics	53
	• Respect for persons	54
	• Minimisation of risk of harm	54
	• Respect for privacy and confidentiality	54
	• My own experiences of the industry	55
<b>4.</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>57</b>
4.1	Trust as a mechanism for facilitating organisational performance	58
	• Cognitive trust	59
	• Trust and cooperation	64
	• Learning organisation and creativity	66
4.2	Personal Impact of the High Trust Environment	72
	• Social Identity	72

• Fundamental social needs	75
• The positive personal impact	78
4.3 Breakdown of Trust	83
• Breakdown of cognitive trust	83
• Breakdown of interpersonal trust	89
4.4 Personal Impact of the Breakdown of Trust	95
4.5 Coping of Thriving	103
• Trust skills	103
• Trustworthiness skills	106
• Coping with the high pressure film environment	108
• Developing boundaries	111
• Team management	115
• Skills gained	119
<b>5. Discussion and Conclusion</b>	<b>124</b>
5.1 The Contractual Environment	124
5.2 High Psychological Safety	129
5.3 Enhanced Life Skills	132
5.4 Performance and Relational Conflict Management Skills	135
5.5 Excessive Working Hours and Potential Loss of Key Talent	138
5.6 Suggestions for Dealing with the Negatives of the Industry	139
5.7 Insights for Other Industries	142

References	146
Appendix 1: Information Sheet	158
Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form	161
Appendix 3: Interview Structure	162
Appendix 4: Summary for Respondents	164
Appendix 5: Typical Film Organisation Chart	166



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 This Study

Both academics and policy makers have shown an increasing interest in creative industries such as film since the early 1990s. Policy makers have predominantly concentrated on the economic benefits of these industries. The creative sector is viewed both as a rich source of new revenue and as a new model for the organisation of work within post-industrial societies. Policy documents often pay relatively little attention to the work experiences of the creative labour force. Instead there is a tendency to assume that these industries provide an exemplar of self actualising and enjoyable work which other industries should emulate (Bechky, 2006; Hesmondhalgh & Baker 2010; Paterson, 2001; Paterson, 2010).

Academic research has tended to concentrate on the macro-level workings of the creative industries. Individual conditions and experiences were viewed in a somewhat romantic light in initial forays into the contractual working conditions of the film industry. These conditions were to be the future of employment and models were built to this effect. The advantages as well as disadvantages of employment conditions in the creative industries such as film are now being explored. These perspectives are often more critical of this highly individualised, competitive and insecure work. It is often suggested that workers in these industries are exploited by industry power-holders. They have also been found to be self-exploiting because the intrinsic rewards and job insecurity make them accept poor working conditions (Rowlands & Handy, 2012; Paterson, 2010; Rowlands, 2009; Bechky, 2006; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010).

The approach I am taking in this thesis differs from that of much of academic literature. While I recognise that working conditions within the New Zealand film industry are often problematic, I believe that industry can be a genuinely psychologically rewarding one for those workers who have learnt to deal with the vagaries of contract work.

Writers such as Meyerson et al. (1996) have observed that the film industry utilised a “swift trust” environment in which workers are trusted to be competent. My aim in this thesis is to explore the psychological consequences of working in a high trust creative environment. I have chosen to study experienced film production workers with over ten years in the industry. These individuals are most likely to have learnt constructively how to cope with the challenges of this unique work environment as well as the precariousness of their working conditions.

In some ways my approach is aligned with positive psychology which focuses on examining what enables individuals and communities to thrive. Although exploring both the positive and negative experiences of respondents, I am particularly interested in understanding how they may have learnt to cope and perhaps thrive in this environment (Seligman, 1998; Compton, 2005; Peterson, 2006).

### **1.2 Positioning Myself**

I have decided to research the industry for several reasons. I worked in the industry from 2002 to 2008. I was employed in a range of roles in the production department, the equivalent to operations and human resources functions in other industries. I found the environment and the way the industry operated as a whole to be very different to my previous experiences. This inspired me to explore how and why it differed from an academic perspective. I am particularly interested in exploring an environment where there appears to be a high level of trust between workers. From my observations during this time, people seemed unusually open minded towards those they worked with. A range of personalities operated effectively that, in my opinion, may not be deemed acceptable in many other work environments. Instead they seemed to flourish, running counter to many preconceptions of how and what individuals succeeded in the workplace.

The specific area I have decided to focus on is the notion of trust, described at an organisational level in the screen industry as Swift Trust by Meyerson et al. (1996). My aim is to explore individual experiences of this notion through interviews with long term participants in the industry and, if the concept of swift trust is supported

by interviewees, to explore the ways in which working in this environment it affects them at an individual level.

It is important for both the readers of this thesis and for me as the researcher, to be aware of the possibility of pre-conceived ideas I may have of research findings because of my background in this industry. I hope that I have found a balance between drawing on my previous experience to guide my understanding and being sensitive and open to what respondents say in interviews.

### **1.3 The New Zealand Context**

The New Zealand film and television industry has grown significantly in recent decades. Screen industry turnover in New Zealand in 2011 was close to three billion dollars. There is an even split in revenue between film and television. As at 2011 the broadcast industry employed approximately 2,800 businesses which included many sole-trader companies set up by contractors. There were 84 film production companies operating (Statistics New Zealand, 2012). The Statistics New Zealand Screen Industry Survey 2010/2011 report commented that spikes in revenue year to year are not uncommon because of the highly contingent nature of this industry.

The United States contributes the largest proportion of local screen production funding with New Zealand funding following in second place (Statistics New Zealand, 2012). Locally there are three main government funding bodies, the Film Commission and New Zealand on Air which fund film and television projects, and Te Mangai Pahe which provides Maori culture and language-based funding. Creative New Zealand and miscellaneous other government agencies also contribute to a smaller extent (Statistics New Zealand, 2012). These bodies provide significant assistance to the local film and television industry and often work in partnership with film and television creators, assisting them in a number of ways to complete their projects. Local television broadcasters also play this role, predominantly with television programming but on occasion with one-off big screen, or television, film projects. Local sponsorship and private funding also contributes to the screen industry in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2012). Local producers, in a

## INTRODUCTION

similar role to a Chief Executive, also pitch their ideas to overseas television networks and film companies, international funding agencies and private investors, to gain funding for their projects. Additionally, Film New Zealand can act as a conduit between potential overseas studios and funders and New Zealand producers, providing them considerable assistance.

The Code of Practice for the Engagement of Crew (The Blue Book) is provided as a guide for working conditions in this industry. It has been produced by The Screen Production and Development Association Inc. (SPADA) and the New Zealand Film & Video Technicians' guild Inc. It is a reference document of best-practice processes for the engagement of crew, for both producers and workers. It includes a guide on working hours, length of week, extra time, turnaround, days off, night shoots, broken days, meals, breaks and fees. For example, a minimum of 10 hours turnaround is required between the end of the working day and the beginning of the next working day. A normal working week is either five or six days. As most working in this industry work contractually, they are not entitled to sick or holiday leave (SPADA, 2013).

With regard to legislation governing the New Zealand film industry, the National government passed The Employment Relations (Film Production Work) Amendment Act 2010. It was enacted in response to concerns raised by Warner Brothers, producers of *The Hobbit*. The Act provides that workers involved with film production work will be independent contractors rather than employees, unless they have entered into an employment agreement which states that they are employees. The Act does not apply to TV production (Film New Zealand, 2013).

At a structural level, the employment conditions of New Zealand film production workers are obviously highly insecure. A substantial body of research suggests that insecure working conditions are associated with adverse outcomes for workers across a wide range of health related, psychological and social factors (De Cuyper et al., 2008; Ertel et al., 2005). While I accept that the precarious working conditions within the New Zealand film industry may result in exploitation of the film labour force the findings of this research suggest that that the swift trust environment of

## INTRODUCTION

the film industry can provide a positive psycho-social environment which enables film production workers to develop strong and enduring personal and social identities. In contrast to other research into the creative industries which often suggests that the precarious nature of these industries creates equally precarious personal and social identities (e.g. Huws, 2010; Roderick, 2006), the experienced film production workers in this study had learnt to cope with the vagaries of contract employment. They had forged secure and satisfying personal and social identities through their involvement with the New Zealand film industry.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This literature review begins by providing a summary of international and local research into the film and television industry. It highlights the project-based and temporary nature of work within the industry and discusses the ways in which 'swift trust' has been theorised as compensating for the lack of long-term organisational structures. The chapter then examines the more general organisational psychology literature on trust within organisations, examining the meaning of the concept, the ways in which trust develops, the organisational benefits of trust and the individual benefits and costs of trust and trust breach.

### **The Screen Industry**

#### **2.1 PROJECT ORIENTATION**

The film industry has a long history of being organised on a project basis (Bechky, 2006; DeFillippi & Arthur, 1998; Daskalaki 2010; McKinlay & Smith, 2009). As an industry it has a level of precariousness not seen elsewhere for both employers and workers, the majority of whom work on a contractual basis. The reasons for this include the short-term one-off characteristics of many film projects, the challenge of gaining backing for film and television projects and the insecurity of funding. There are also unique resource capabilities and restraints attached to each project, which means the way the industry operates does not fit with conventional organisational design. A complex, creative, high quality product is the end goal of film and television production. It may require different behaviours than many other types of work, particularly given the level of interdependence of many tasks (Bechky, 2006; Coe, 2000; Blair, 2001, Paterson, 2001; Finney, 2008).

In recent decades as trends in other industries have moved towards being more project and flexibility focused, several researchers have looked to the film industry for inspiration on how to manage and deal with this different way of operating (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1998; Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Christopherson & Storper,

## LITERATURE REVIEW

1989; Meyerson et al., 1996). These studies appear to reveal differing levels of success and accuracy (Blair, 2003). DeFillippi and Arthur (1998), for example, used film making to create their model of new ways of working adding to Arthur and Rousseau's 1996 work on the "Boundaryless Career". Individuals were perceived as having as much to gain from project work as organisations did. This may have been a helpful initial foray into different ways of working that provided a base point for future researchers. However, it may have gained only a partial, and perhaps overly positive, understanding of the industry and neglected such negative aspects as the constant change and uncertainty. There also appears to be a trend for film and television work to be glamorised from the outside by the popular media with little concern for how it actually functions from the perspective of the film workforce (Bechky, 2006; Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2010; Paterson, 2001).

Hollywood has been dominant since the film industry's inception. By post-World War Two, Hollywood films were produced under the umbrella of large studio organisations where staff were employed on a permanent basis and moved between projects with their employer (Blair, 2001). Independent film productions were on the periphery but were a small part of the industry. The 'studio system' was replaced over time by project based work where labour was hired temporarily for a specific project. This is how most films, television programmes and commercials are currently produced. Most film and television production work is still controlled by large studio organisations based in Hollywood. These organisations have large numbers of permanent employees, but most of the operational aspects of film-making are contracted out to independent production companies (Blair, 2001; Coe, 2000). The projects themselves can be based anywhere in the world. Work in the film and television industry in Canada, Britain, Australia and New Zealand is dominated by independent production companies. They are created solely for a specific project or a series of separate projects, all of which are run on a temporary basis (Coe, 2000; Blair, 2001). A project is referred to as a 'production' in this industry. These productions supply to Hollywood studios; are co-productions with other international organisations or government agencies; are local independent productions that may or may not be co-funded by

governmental organisations or they are local co-productions with television networks. Some are also funded by private investors or are funded by the filmmakers themselves. Production formats include films, series and commercials which are made for film, television or internet distribution. Their size ranges from very large projects with multi-million dollar budgets through to self-funded 'guerrilla' productions with minimal budgets and resources, where few working on the project may be paid (Coe, 2000; Blair, 2001).

## **2.2 THE SOURCING OF PROJECTS**

Film production can be viewed as a form of venture capital where each film project is a start up company with a corresponding low likelihood of success. For example, only 10-20% of Hollywood films break even or become financially successful but this top 10% tends to be highly profitable (Lorenzen & Taube, 2008). Consequently there is a high level of uncertainty that potential projects will gain funding. It is often a requirement for producers or project creators to do significant network building, relationship development and numerous funding proposals before they have even gained the financial backing for a project (Coe, 2000). Thus there is a state of uncertainty and instability from the very early stages of a project, even for reasonably senior and experienced members of the industry.

Another aspect of film and television production is projects undertaken for Hollywood companies. These can be made in numerous locations internationally. As they tend to be one-off productions they have the capacity to be mobile and to change locations as the studios see fit. Such factors as exchange rate fluctuations, labour costs and availability, and tax incentives, can influence these decisions (Gasher, 1995). The precariousness of production funding, combined with location mobility can lead productions that are already in pre-production (preparation for the shoot) or production (the shoot itself) to be cancelled or delayed at the last minute. In New Zealand productions which have been cancelled include such big budget feature films as 'Halo' and 'Noir' through to smaller co-funded films such as 'Hard Drive'.



Exchange rate fluctuations and tax incentives have impacted on the quantity of Hollywood projects in New Zealand in recent years. For example the steep reduction in B-grade or Movie of the Week being produced here, when our exchange rate rose above 60 US cents in the mid-2000s. Subsequently the exchange rate fell against the US dollar between 2007 and 2008, which led to large increases in big budget overseas commercials. It may have also influenced decisions to fund two large budget, ongoing television series productions in New Zealand—'Spartacus' and 'Legend of the Seeker'. These fluctuations are reflected in production levels which dropped somewhat between 2006 and 2007 but increased by 11% between 2007 and 2008 (Statistics New Zealand, 2012). With the New Zealand exchange rate currently sitting as high as 84 US cents, anecdotal evidence indicates that there may be relatively few productions in Auckland in 2013. These examples illustrate the industry's vulnerability to changes outside its control.

Despite New Zealand's fluctuations, it is known in Hollywood as having a diverse range of spectacular locations within a small geographical area; for the pleasantness of crew, and New Zealanders in general, to deal with; for our high production values, and willingness to go the extra mile for considerably lower fees than those of the United States (Film New Zealand, 2012). A contrasting perspective could be that our cast and crew are easily exploited due to our lack of unionisation and high need for work continuity (Rowlands and Handy, 2012).

### **2.3 GAINING FUNDING FOR PRODUCTIONS**

In Neil Coe's study (2000) into the indigenous film industry in Vancouver, Canada he saw independent producers as key facilitators in the development of the local industry. He recognised that this small group of producers and their interpersonal networks were central to the attainment and distribution of local projects. Producers needed to build interpersonal relationships at an international, national and local level in order to gain funding and projects. The relationships required at a local level were important to gain funding. These relationships were also crucial in order to mobilise cast and crew (labour), and resources such as equipment and locations, when projects did get funding and went into production. Successful

relationships and power broking on all these levels were required and were dynamic at every level. Changes seen in these relationship dynamics included attempting to move from a dependent relationship with United States studios to more collaborative and co-funded ventures, and building further relationships with potential funders on a national and local level. Local producers also competed with international projects for local labour and resources but have the advantage of promoting 'worthy' projects which local cast and crew saw as desirable and worth taking cuts in rates to work on. These dynamics were highly interwoven and interconnected.

Amin and Hauser's (1997) breakdown of social networks into four important aspects (behavioural rationality, contextuality, the strength of ties, and power relations) has been used to describe producer networks internationally. Behavioural rationality is the reasoning for the creation of a network which will determine its scope and arrangement. Mobilising resources, for example, fits within this definition and was found by Coe (2000) to be extremely important in the film industry. Formal contracts for productions, both with funders and suppliers of resources, are seen to emerge from the informal web of relations that producers have developed through behavioural rationality. The aspect of contextuality describes the contextual backdrop of networks and indicates the wider economic and policy realities that independent producers work within. The strength of ties is likely to vary, strong ties have the disadvantage of being less flexible while weaker ties make it harder to gain resources. There are dynamic power relations in this industry which are an advantage and disadvantage at different times (Hesmondalgh & Baker, 2010). This model appears to fit well with the situation in New Zealand for local producers and production companies (Rowlands, 2009).

### **2.4 THE NEW ZEALAND SITUATION**

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

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Regarding geographical concentration, the New Zealand industry is based predominantly in Auckland and Wellington. Statistics New Zealand (2012) sees Auckland as the hub of television and broadcast productions whilst Wellington is the centre for film production. Wellington is dominated by feature films, usually oriented around Peter Jackson's projects, with independent films and occasional television series also being produced. Auckland is host to a broader industry. It is home to the production of commercials, both local and international. It is also where most local and internationally funded television drama series are produced. South Pacific Pictures who produce a range of local television drama series and

films, and Pacific Renaissance, who have made international series such as 'Spartacus', 'Legend of the Seeker' and 'Xena' are both based here and tend to have regular projects. They provide the Auckland industry's backbone. However, there are several other production companies that have had ongoing production work. Additionally, large budget international films such as 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' and 'The Emperor' are shot out of Auckland as is 'Power Rangers', a long running, ongoing children's television series. Larger budget local films are produced out of Auckland such as 'Mr Pip'. To add to this, small budget local films and television series are also made in Auckland. Percentage wise, Auckland revenue has tended to remain relatively stable in recent years, oscillating between 700 and 850 million dollars. Wellington revenue, however, fluctuated between approximately 300 and 500 million dollars in revenue between 2008 and 2011, which is close to movements of 40% in value of work between years. Its overall revenue is also lower than that of Auckland.

This creates quite a different employment market between these two cities. In Wellington there is one key employer and there are likely to be significant breaks between work even for the most skilled and adept of workers. Lorraine Rowlands (2009) based her Masters Thesis on working in the film industry in Wellington and her findings reflect this. Auckland, on the other hand, has a range of employers as well as types of productions crew can work on. Another significant difference could be that the significantly larger population of Auckland allows a wider range of opportunities for work outside the industry to subsidise or compensate for times when film work is scarce.

### **2.5 WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY**

In New Zealand most projects are one-off or run as completely separate entities if managed by the same production company. Consequently, few working in the industry have permanent roles; instead work in a freelance capacity on discrete projects. This appears to fit with the experiences of those working in both Britain and Canada (Blair, 2001; Coe, 2000; McKinlay & Smith, 2009). Additionally, contracts for each project are generally relatively short. A survey in Britain found

## LITERATURE REVIEW

that the average project length that film crew engaged in was 7.4 weeks (Blair et al, 2001). This may be shorter than in New Zealand where many overseas productions shot here tend to be of longer duration, particularly television series. Local film productions tend to be shorter because of their limited resources. Productions can be less than a week for small budget commercials, through to over a year with consecutive seasons booked in to follow. This paints a picture of a potentially precarious working existence for the majority operating in the film and television industry.

As in Britain and Canada few formal human resource practices are undertaken when recruiting crew. Most hear of and gain work via personal contacts (Blair, 2001; McKinlay & Smith, 2009). Gaining entry into the industry can be challenging. It could be seen as a closed and exclusive industry. There may be reasons for this. Firstly, work hours are very long and unpredictable and often do not fit within a normal working week (Bechky, 2006; Paterson, 2001). Secondly, production schedules are often planned without room for delays. It is therefore in the best interest of those hiring to employ someone that is known or is verified by contacts so they are less likely to let the team down (Blair, 2003; Skilton, 2008). Consequently most gain initial entry into the industry via family or friends (Blair, 2001). Blair (2001) made the comment the industry is seen as highly desirable to work in, and in Britain at least, considerably more are trained and aspire to gain entry than there are jobs available. Anecdotal evidence in New Zealand would support this situation here but perhaps to a lesser extent as there is less training and what is available is of varying quality. Paul Skilton (2008) researched how inexperienced directors gained work on high budget studio associated films in Hollywood, finding that similarity to decision makers and especially familiarity were the two main factors in obtaining it. The study found 'elite' producers were far less likely to hire inexperienced directors. Familiarity was more likely as a result of prospective directors' 'non-directing' work in the industry and their relationships with mutual 'elite' project work contacts. Mere family or friend ties were not enough to ensure entry to this highly specialised and important role.

The predominance of familiarity, similarity and reputation, regarding both technical and interpersonal skills, appears to dominate hiring in most other roles as well (Blair, 2001; Paterson, 2001; McKinlay & Smith, 2009; Skilton, 2008).

When there are many productions shooting concurrently supply of labour becomes short. Rules are likely to be relaxed at these times out of necessity (Skilton, 2008; Blair, 2003) creating a pivotal entry point for industry newcomers.

Another potential entry point for those who have already entered the industry is through casual fill-in work. This is often organised in Auckland through Film Crews, a form of recruitment agency. Crew pay a monthly fee to be on their books rather than prospective employers paying for services. Film Crews acts as a supplier of names of people who are currently available. They do not officially recommend certain crew but are aware of their experience. At times of high demand, production coordinators (who tend to hire the casual staff on a production) will be forced to hire crew unknown to them or the relevant department. This is an entry point for those that are still relatively unknown in the industry or who hail from other regions. If they do a good job with this opportunity they are likely to be hired again by the production coordinator and/or the relevant head of department (Blair, 2003; Paterson, 2001). This does have parallels with temporary agency workers in other industries when their temporary role offers opportunities for finding more permanent work within an organisation. In one study temporary workers were found to have higher levels of performance. This continued once they gained a permanent role, as did positive attitudes towards their co-workers and supervisors (Broschak et al., 2008).

### **2.6 DISADVANTAGES OF THE FILM INDUSTRY**

The workers in this industry have been found to experience similar negative issues to fixed-term contractors in other industries. In Redpath et al.'s (2009) study, highly skilled fixed-term contractors were keenly aware of the downside of working contingently. The negative impact of non-permanent work revolved around their

## LITERATURE REVIEW

career development and the lack of control around when they worked certain contracts and impacted on other aspects of their lives. The most impacted areas were frustrated career goals, chances for promotion and missing out on training and development. This fits with the experiences of those interviewed by Richard Paterson (2001) in his study of the work histories of those working in factual television production in Britain. This was an interesting exercise as the industry was deregulated in the 1980's and several of those interviewed had experienced working both permanently and contractually. For these respondents in particular, the availability of work and their ability to negotiate their contracts in what they regarded as a fair way was negatively affected by the move towards contract work. They had to cope with increased uncertainty; maintain a network of contacts; pay for their own training programmes and sustain links and good relationships with often changing commissioning editors, (television executives who fund productions). They needed to do this while maintaining their capacity to be creative, develop new ideas and have adequate cash flow. This was with the backdrop of no work certainty beyond their present project. The younger cohorts were less affected by these changes as they had come into the industry knowing little else. Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2010) came to a similar conclusion.

A key issue arose once interviewees had families with the ensuing financial commitments and a desire to spend time with family. Working in the industry became less viable and there was significant attrition of older, and therefore more experienced, crew (Paterson, 2001; Blair, 2003). Lorraine Rowlands also found this to be the case with those she interviewed in Wellington, New Zealand (2009). This creates a potentially significant issue, with the threat of knowledge loss and experience in what is still an immature industry in New Zealand at least. Rowlands and Handy (2012) felt that crew working in the film industry in Wellington were in an addictive situation as they loved their work, continuing to return to it, but they also found the working conditions had a negative impact on many aspects of their lives.

## **2.7 COMPENSATING FOR THE DOWNSIDE OF OPERATING IN THE INDUSTRY**

While many contractors have been shown to enjoy their flexibility, they are aware of the uncertainty and insecurity of their work. Consequently they work hard building their social networks, both in reach and range. This is traditionally seen as solely to find future jobs (Barley & Kunda, 2004). Gernot Grabher (2002), in his study of the Soho advertising industry in London, discussed a process that extended beyond this rational decision making explanation of network building. He saw that the recurring collaborative, cooperative interactions and relations between small advertising teams and their external contacts evolved into personal ties. The strong loyalties that developed led to personal ties solidifying into a form of social infrastructure. This appeared to offer a considerably higher degree of stability and continuity than affiliations with the organisations the individuals worked for and agency-client relations. These latter relationships being comparatively short term. As the agencies were generally based in Soho, a geographically dense, fashionable part of central London, with large numbers of bars, restaurants and cafes, a 'vibrant' site was available to support the building of these relationships. This compensatory building of strong, stable networks is likely to be mirrored in the film and television production industry.

Another way workers in this industry have learnt to cope with the insecurity of contracts is to work with the same team from project to project. A producer, for example, will try to take many of their team from project to project, as will their heads of department (Blair, 2003; Blair, 2001). Blair likens this to pre-industrialised craft groups, seeing this as advantageous for both parties. The head of department, for example, will obtain work through their well established, far reaching network. Work may come to them or they may seek it via this network. Hiring practices are such that a producer and/or production manager (equivalent to a general manager in other industries) will hire their departmental heads but will leave them to a greater or lesser extent to hire their teams. A head of department ideally wants people who they have worked with in the past, who they know are skilled enough, have appropriate communication skills or at least understand how they operate. It



is in their best interest to continue to work with the same team, if it functions well. It is also beneficial for their team to continue to work together, because of the reduction of uncertainty and increased stability (Blair, 2003). As mentioned, people are less likely to hire contingent workers into roles that they have no experience in because these roles do not include training (Redpath et al., 2009). However, a “semi-permanent work group” (Blair, 2001) appears to take on some of the qualities that permanent work does, enabling on the job training for new tasks and roles, in a pseudo-apprenticeship as well as opportunities for promotion.

Another key aspect associated with success via social networks is reputation (Antcliff, Saundry & Stuart, 2007; Blair, 2001; Coe, 2000). People perform at a very high standard because of the awareness of how their behaviours impact on their reputation. This applies to all levels in the industry including producers and heads of departments. If people do not perform well negative comments are likely to move quickly through the social networks in this industry (Antcliff, Saundry & Stuart, 2007; Blair, 2001; Bechky, 2006). It is another reason people are seen to be cautious in their hiring practices. As most aspects of filmmaking are so interconnected, even small mistakes can have a significant impact on many areas of a production. The less risky the hire, the less likelihood of mistakes happening.

## **2.8 THE UNIQUE STRUCTURE OF A PRODUCTION**

Grabher (2002) commented on the intricate interdependencies within a temporary project (including outside networks) describing this form of social organisation as a project ecology. This concept appears to fit well with the way the film and television industry operates, both with particular projects and the way that the overall industry is organised. The networks that producers create for future work, and/or funding, provide a specific example (Coe, 2000). So many aspects are interconnected but not in a hegemonic way as is the case in the more structured forms of organisations (Grabher, 2002). Even on a particular project, numerous outside organisations are involved including equipment hiring firms, visual special effects companies, prop-making companies, post-production companies, television

networks, property owners, information technology support and overseas payroll organisations.

Because of the relatively short term nature of many productions, and therefore roles, those in the industry will get to know others working in the industry considerably faster than elsewhere (Blair, 2001; Coe, 2001). Beth Bechky (2006), in her study into film productions argued that a production becomes a “temporary total institution”. Those on a production work very long, unpredictable hours, often at unconventional times. This was found to create an intense bond between crew. They were isolated from connections outside the production and consequently had a tendency to socialise together outside work. Bechky (2006) proposed that this contributed to the creation of a stable organisational structure in a short period of time. Mechanisms such as this were seen as necessary for the organisation to work effectively when the usual rules of organisational cohesiveness did not have time to be enacted. These usual rules include formal processes, structures and hierarchies that slowly build over the life of a company, similarly the relationships between employees that usually take a long period to develop.

Meyerson et al. (1996) explored film productions as a form of temporary institution, to understand what it was that held an organisation together when the usual formal structures, and longer working periods were not available. They described film productions as equivalent to an organisational “one night stand” with its finite life span, its clear shared goal and success being dependent on a “tight, coordinated coupling of activity” (pg. 167). Meyerson et al. proposed that something unique must hold the temporary organisation together so well in this situation. They introduced the notion of “swift trust” saying it facilitated the coordination and control of a high complexity, low structure organisation. Workers were dependent on collective bodies of knowledge and diverse skills but had little time to get up to speed to understand this. The film production environment was seen as high-risk and high-stake but lacking in normative structures and institutional safeguards that prevent things going wrong.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This environment did not allow for the usual antecedents of trust to occur as they normally would. These precursors include familiarity, shared experiences, reciprocal exposure, threats, deterrents, fulfilling promises and demonstrating that vulnerability would not be exploited (Meyerson et al., 1996). They proposed that this unique swift form of trust operated at an organisational level in altered ways. Particularly around the management of vulnerability, uncertainty, risks and expectations and became a unique form of collective perception and relating.

Bechky (2006) discussed the defined structure of many roles, including how they intersected with other roles, as being a key factor in a production quickly coming up to speed. She described strong norms supporting these highly delineated roles that tended to be common across the industry. Crew on a production tended to communicate expectations of others through enthusiastic thanking, polite admonishing and role-oriented joking. This, she felt, communicated the temporary role structures which enabled the organisation to quickly move up to speed together. Bechky's opinion differed from Meyerson et al. (1996) as she saw this defined role structure and the associated norms providing stability across productions in the industry.

Additional to highly defined roles, there are several streamlined formal structures around how a production is set up and run in the New Zealand environment. These assist considerably in the smoother running of such short term organisations. For example, there is a standard sequence and frequency of formal meetings during pre-production and shooting which is used across most productions. Standard documents such as crew and cast lists, pre-production and shooting schedules and call sheets also tend to be common to all productions. However, these systems and structures are still adaptable, and role structures will differ depending on the type of production, although there is commonality within each type of production (Bechky, 2006).

## Trust and its Related Mechanisms

### 2.9 TRUST

The second section of this literature review discusses trust in organisations. Like most research in organisational psychology, empirical research into trust is predominately quantitative, with few qualitative studies of trust appearing in the literature.

Much of the literature on trust in organisations is written from a managerial perspective, examining the ways trust contributes to successful organisational functioning. Trust is increasingly seen as an important mechanism. It aids the successful workings of organisations, as hierarchical 'command and control' style structures become less able to operate to hold organisations together (Bijlsma & Koopman, 2003; Tyler, 2003). Factors such as increasing flexibility in labour relations, globalisation, rapid advances in technology and economic challenges have created an environment of continuous change and uncertainty in many organisations. Some industry environments are purported to be moving closer to those of temporary institutions. This more fluid environment is seen as requiring a different means with which to support organisations operating effectively. Trust is seen as key in enabling employees to remain as a cohesive unit in this new environment (Barczak et al., 2010). These new environments appear to be increasingly similar to those of the film and television production industry.

Trust as a construct has a range of definitions from an organisational psychology perspective. This is partly as a result of a broad base of roles and functions including individual processes, group dynamics and organisational situations (Bijlsma & Koopman, 2003; Lee et al., 2010; Costa et al., 2001). However, two key facets appear to be common across most definitions. These are positive expectations of others and the willingness to become vulnerable when others' actions are not under one's control (Lee et al., 2010; Costa et al., 2001).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Trust is related to individual attributions of other peoples' intentions and motives. They influence and are influenced by expectations and beliefs about how the individual will be treated. These attributions and beliefs are contingent and depend on both personal and situational information (Costa et al., 2001; Mayer et al., 1995; Lee et al., 2010).

From a business performance perspective, trust has shown overwhelmingly to work as a lubricant in economic and social transactions. It reduces transactional costs relating to control, as well as smoothing relations between people (Bijlsma & Koopman, 2003). Kanawattanachai and Yoo (2002) define trust amongst work team members as "the extent to which a person is confident in, and willing to act on the basis of, the words, actions and decisions of another" (p. 43). Two key individual antecedents of trust have been described as, propensity to trust, which is relatively dispositional, and perceived trustworthiness which is more situation based (Costa et al., 2001; Lee et al., 2010). Wildman et al. (2012) proposed that perceived trustworthiness be replaced with surface level cues and imported information for fast forming teams. Surface level cues are data from the immediate environment and imported information includes previous personal experiences and third party information provided by trusted sources. Fast forming teams have a close similarity to the film industry environment and thus it is likely that these factors will have a strong influence on the building of trust there also.

Dirks and Ferrin (2002) undertook a meta-analysis of the antecedents and consequences of trust within organisations. The range of antecedents to trust in the workplace included: perceived organisational support, transformational leadership and procedural justice (Connell et al., 2003), participative decision making and meeting the expectations of followers (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002), shared social bonds, understandable actions by management and quality of managerial decision making (Tyler, 2003) as well as perceived trustworthiness.

Consequences of trust were found to be: believing information, organisational commitment, decision commitment, and job satisfaction, satisfaction with leaders, organisational citizenship behaviour, intention to stay and leader-member

exchange. It has also been associated with extra-role behaviours and acceptance of decisions (Tyler, 2003), absence of monitoring and team satisfaction (Bijlsma-Frankemase & Costa, 2005) and attribution of positive motives (Kramer, 1999). It is strongly associated with high levels of cooperation and performance (Bijlsma-Frankemase & Costa, 2005; Gambetta, 1988).

There have been conflicting views as to whether trust replaces formal controls to enable organisations to operate more effectively, or whether it is advantageous to have both. Trust is seen by many as the heir apparent to formal 'command and control' styles of organisational structure which, as discussed, are becoming rapidly obsolete. However, research has also indicated that trust and control can be conceptualised as complementary mechanisms (Morris & Moberg, 1994). Mutual performance monitoring has been shown to be a key contributor to team performance particularly in swift forming, emerging situations (Lee et al., 2010; Wildman et al., 2012). This balance of monitoring trust is likely to have some importance in the fast moving, highly interdependent film industry environment.

Individual trust behaviours that result from trust include cooperative behaviours – defined as open communication, acceptance of influence, forbearance from opportunism and reduction of monitoring behaviours (Smith & Barclay, 1997; Costa et al., 2001). These behaviours are seen as complimentary (Costa et al., 2001).

Understanding the ways that people trust each other in the workplace has expanded in recent times. This was initially defined as how much others could be trusted to be competent and effective in the completion of their tasks—described as cognitive or instrumental trust (Barczak et al., 2010; Bijlsma & Koopman, 2003; McAllister, 1995). However, this has now been expanded to include the notion of affective or relational trust – the perception that others will show care and concern (McAllister, 1995). Tyler (2003) expands affective trust to social trust where judgements of trust are based on attributions about the motives of others, or motive-based trust. He saw two social factors influencing motive-based trust. The first of these is shared background and values, where those that are seen to have a similar background are likely to be trusted more. The other is whether an individual

can understand why others behave the way they do. This was understanding the motivations and drivers of others or their 'character'. It was distinct from feeling able to predict the behaviour of another (Tyler, 2003). This latter form of trust is associated with recent findings in neuropsychology. Inauthentic or insincere communication is seen to result in a threat response which leads to fear, whereas clarity of perception of the intentions of another does not induce this (Rock, 2009). This trio of forms of trust has been described elsewhere as ability, benevolence and integrity (Mayer et al., 1995; Lee et al., 2010).

In social groups and teams both instrumental and affective trust have been shown to increase the ability to work together more effectively (Barczak et al., 2010). McAllister found that these two forms of trust functioned in an independent manner to each other. Tyler and DeGoey (1996) found that relational-based trust was more powerful than cognitive trust in predicting overall trust, which was repeated in the findings of Kerkhof et al., (2003) and Tyler (2003). The research of Kerkhof et al. (2003) found trust to be a reaction to social information about the quality of a relationship rather than its reciprocal potential which contradicts some earlier concepts of trust being only rationale based.

Trust has been strongly associated with collaboration and holding interdependent relationships together. Mutual trust is seen to increase motivation to devote resources to shared goals (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). In a high trust environment individuals seek and give help whereas where there is a lack of trust, team members have become pitted against each other with negative political behaviour emerging within a team (Adler, 2001; Barczak et al., 2010). Teams displaying trust have been found to be more tolerant and accepting of differing ideas and perspectives. The reasons for this are believed to be that if an individual feels their perspective is being heard they are more likely to trust their fellow team members (McAllister, 1995).

Teams are believed to require more trust than individual relationships because of the high degree of interdependence required to undertake tasks (Barczak et al., 2010). Team emotional intelligence was found to be highly predictive of team trust

## LITERATURE REVIEW

by Barczak et al. (2010). Emotions are seen as highly influential in the way team members interact and work with each other (Druskat & Wolff, 2001). Druskat & Wolff saw the capacity to develop a set of norms that manage emotional processes as what defined emotional intelligence at this group level. These norms are seen to facilitate group cohesiveness and collaboration which are strongly associated with team effectiveness. Team emotional intelligence is also associated with stronger relationships within the team and decreased conflict (Jordan & Troth, 2004) as well as better information sharing and decision making (Pelled et al., 1999). Barczak et al. (2010) undertook a quantitative exploration of the connection between team emotional intelligence and cognitive and affective trust. They found there to be a strongly significant correlation between awareness of one's own emotions and affective trust while the management of one's own emotions was associated with cognitive trust. However, the management of others' emotions was seen to be a highly significant predictor of both cognitive and affective trust. No connection however, was found between awareness of others' emotions and either cognitive or affective trust.

Team creativity appears to be closely connected to collaboration and team trust. Both team trust and a collaborative culture facilitate better information sharing, focus, communication and cooperation (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). When team members have high levels of support, interpersonal communication and clarity of purpose, they have been found to become more creative and innovative (Jaskyte, 2008).

The mechanisms of communication and information sharing are also heavily linked to the concept of organisational learning which is associated with organisations successfully adapting, innovating and creatively problem solving. Knowledge is acquired, shared and combined in an iterative or 'double loop' learning process (Argyris, 1977; Carmeli et al., 2009:2). Researchers view this as key to continued organisational success with its positive impact on productivity and performance. Consequently, many leaders aspire to develop this double loop learning environment in their organisations (Argote et al., 2001; Carmeli et al., 2009:1).



Barczak et al. (2010) investigated the connections between team trust, collaboration and creativity. They found a direct connection between both cognitive and affective trust and collaborative culture. They also found that cognitive trust had a small direct link to team creativity. Most significantly though, they found that collaboration had a very strong connection to team creativity. Collaboration alone has been found previously to result in creative outcomes (DeCusatis, 2008). Barczak et al. (2010) proposed that high cooperation, interpersonal communication, focus, social support and working together as a team were what lead to team creativity.

Trust appears likely to be fundamental to the effective operation of the film industry environment. Productions are formed quickly from scratch and consist of newly formed teams. Crew may have worked together previously but each production is unique in its requirements and its collection of crew. Individuals need to quickly ascertain whether they can trust others. This is likely to be formed through a combination of the information they gather from their immediate environment and what they have gleaned from their previous experiences both directly with regard to their workmates and generally. Even if trust is high there are still likely to be some monitoring behaviours to ensure team and project success. There may be informal rules guiding workers, in behaviour in a way that enhances trust.

Trust is likely to be separated into trust in the competence, benevolence and integrity of others but all are likely to be important because of the relatively unstructured but collective film environment. This in turn may create a double loop learning environment creating an upward spiral of performance. It is expected that trust will be fundamental to enabling this creative and collective industry to operate successfully.

### **2.10 POLITICAL SKILL**

Team emotional intelligence appears to have similarities to that of political skill. This construct was proposed by Mintzberg (1983, 1985) and Pfeffer (1981) but was

only recently revisited in more detail and validated empirically (Ferris et al, 2005; Ferris, Treadway et al., 2005; Ferris et al., 2007). Political skill has been described as “the ability to effectively understand others at work and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one’s personal and/or organisational objectives” (p. 127, Ferris, Treadway et al, 2005). It incorporates intra-psychic, interpersonal and group-level processes. Political skill is thus conceptualised as a multilevel, meta-theoretical framework which is connected to cognition, affect and behaviour (Ferris et al., 2007). Those that are seen to be high in political skill are likely to read situations and people well and effectively adjust their behaviour to suit. They combine this social astuteness and capacity to adapt their behaviour to situational demands in a way that is viewed as sincere and without ulterior motive by others. As a result, this inspires support and trust which influences the responses of others in a positive way (Ferris et al., 2007). Politically skilled individuals are therefore likely to have strong and extensive networks to leverage for social capital and resources (Blickle et al., 2011).

The political skill construct is seen to encompass factors, including motivation, experience, social competencies and cultural variables, which combine with cognitive ability to reach conclusions (Blickle et al., 2011). Having said this, the connection between political skill and cognitive ability has been found to be zero (Ferris, Treadway et al., 2005). Political skill has been most closely related to extraversion of the big five personality factors (Liu et al., 2007).

With regard to connections with performance, political skill was shown to be the best predictor of managerial performance compared to three other social effectiveness constructs including emotional intelligence, leadership self-efficacy and self monitoring (Semadar et al., 2006). It has also been found to be a more accurate predictor of contextual job performance than that of self-efficacy (Jawahar et al., 2008). Blickle, Ferris et al. (2011) found that employees that possess political skill fare better in supervisory performance assessments. They proposed that political skill enables individuals to more effectively manage their work environment, personal relationships and social interactions at work. These combined to influence the performance assessments that individuals receive.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Blickle et al. (2011) found that political skill significantly predicted job performance beyond cognitive ability and personality. Job performance in this study included task performance, contextual performance and adaptive performance, which was separated into job dedication and interpersonal facilitation. Extraversion was found to correlate with political skill but not with job performance unless combined with political skill. While extraversion is a stable personality factor, political skill is a social effectiveness construct and is a combination of personality and environmental experiences. Political skill can therefore be developed (Ferris et al., 2007; Blickle et al., 2011).

Political skill has also been shown to predict career success, indicated by hierarchical position, income and career satisfaction (Blickle, Liu et al., 2011). Reputation mediated the relationship between political skill, hierarchical position and career satisfaction in this study. Reputation in this study was described as being formed directly through observation and indirectly based on information shared by other parties. Bromley (1993) summarised reputation as “a nucleus of interconnected impressions shared and expressed by a high proportion of members of a defined social network” and as a socially constructed reality (p. 42). Political skill was shown to be vital in developing a favourable personal reputation which in turn had significant positive effects on career success (Blickle, Liu et al., 2011).

Political skill has been found to be a neutraliser of stressor and strain relationships (Perrewe et al., 2004). It has a positive influence on role conflict, role overload and emotional labour (Perrewe et al., 2004; Treadway et al., 2007). It also positively influences workplace politics, coping with others entitlement behaviour and negative affectivity (Brouer et al., 2005; Hochwarter et al., 2010; Zellars et al., 2008). They in turn impact the likes of job performance and depression. Political skill has been seen to neutralise stress brought on by job limiting pain. Job limiting pain had little effect on job satisfaction and organisational citizenship for those with high political skill whereas there was a negative impact for those with low political skill (Ferris et al., 2009).

One proposed mechanism that facilitates coping and performance for those high in political skill has been the capacity to build broad networks. It is argued by Ferris et al. (2007) that politically skilled individuals will view even difficult social interactions as opportunities to facilitate their network positioning. The benefits of having a wide ranging network include access to information and cooperation as well as trust. Those with strong political skill are therefore seen to be able to garner social support when they need it (Hochwarter et al., 2009).

Political skill is likely to become particularly useful in industries such as film and television production because of the limited formal structures present. It appears to have connections to trust, both in ascertaining trustworthiness of others and in gaining trust from others. Political skill is likely to facilitate trust during productions. Its close connection to the building of reputations also implies a strong correlation with the film industry as reputation is seen as key to success and longevity in this environment. Thus it is expected that political skill will be a key mediator of long term success in the industry. This may be a skill that develops through observation of political skill working in the film environment as well as a coping mechanism developed through personal experiences.

### **2.11 SOCIAL IDENTITY**

Tajfel (1981, p. 255) described social identity as “that part of the individual’s self-concept which derives from his or her knowledge of membership to a social group (or groups) together with the value and the emotional significance attached to it”. Social identity is closely linked to Social Categorisation Theory. Individuals contrast the qualities of a group to that of others, categorising themselves into a particular group or groups and therefore creating a social identity (Turner et al., 1987). It creates an ‘us’ and ‘them’ form of categorisation. Social entities are seen to become ‘relational structures’ which we engage with and that define who we are (Haslam et al., 2009). It appears that a high level of social identity, or social cohesiveness and togetherness, is created quickly or is already present for many working on a creative production as they may have worked together previously (Haslam, 2001). Haslam found a high level of social identity in a theatre production

that he researched. Cattani & Ferriani (2008) found that social networks conveying identity and knowledge were critical in fostering creativity in the film industry. They saw this as critical particularly because organisations are created and dissolved in a short period of time and therefore operate under highly uncertain and volatile circumstances.

High social identity has been associated with a range of positive outcomes. Haslam et al. (2009) discussed that being part of a group provides a sense of belonging, purpose and place, imbuing meaning into our lives. They have been found to aid individuals in feeling special and distinctive, efficacious and successful as well as enhancing self-esteem and sense of self-worth. Haslam et al. (2009) discuss how high social identity buffers well-being when it is threatened and it helps individuals cope with the negative consequences of being a member of a devalued group. High social identity has been shown to have a positive effect even at a fundamental level on basic autonomic functioning and physical well-being. The authors of this article saw it as central to health, well-being and the capacity to deal with the world at large.

Shared social identity has been shown to be the basis for a number of types of productive social interactions between people. These include communication, cooperation, helping, leadership, motivation and also, importantly for this study, trust (Ellemers et al., 2004; Haslam, 2001; Haslam et al., 2003; Reicher et al., 2005; Turner & Haslam, 2001). Social identity has been particularly closely linked to social support. Self-categoration and social identity processes are believed to underlie and structure social interactions at a fundamental level. Thus they are central to the accumulation of social capital which is itself the basis of helping behaviour and social support (Campbell & Jovchelovitch, 2000). Evidence indicates that perceptions of a shared social identity will influence the likelihood that social support will be given, interpreted or received in the spirit in which it is intended (Haslam et al., 2009). This appears to be the reason that social identity is so strongly and widely linked to well-being, from hospital patients recovering from heart attacks through to groups of workers such as bomb disposal experts and bar staff (Haslam et al., 2005; Wegge et al., 2006). Social identity is seen as key to

## LITERATURE REVIEW

whether an individual will accept social support, including advice and appreciation. It is also strongly connected with the positive long term impact of identifying with a work group on individual health, well-being and morale. This in turn has been found to protect individuals from burnout during times of high demand on teams. This is particularly relevant to the film industry environment where hours are long and pressure often high (Haslam, Jetten & Waghorn, 2009).

Social identity has also been seen to aid disadvantaged groups, buffering them from the negative consequences of their circumstances (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002; Postmes & Branscombe, 2002; Branscombe et al., 1999). It is central to the rejection-identification model proposed by Schmitt & Branscombe (2002). Here the shared social identities of members of groups who were stigmatised provided the foundation for the giving and receiving of social support and its benefits. This enabled individuals to access the intellectual, emotional and material resources to resist and cope with discrimination, prejudice and stigma (Muldoon et al., 2009; Outten et al., 2009; Camp et al., 2002).

In his meta-analysis of organisational identity, Riketta (2005) found that increased organisational identity predicted lengthened organisational tenure and increased job scope and challenge. It also increased organisational prestige while lowering intentions to leave, which lead to increases in both role and extra role performance.

High levels of social identification have been linked to altruism, citizenship and personal sacrifice (Tyler & Blader, 2003). It is believed that because individuals associate themselves internally with their social identity, they connect their goals to those of other group members and are therefore likely to put energy into advancing the outcomes of others in this group as well as their own (Ellemers et al., 2004). This has also been shown to occur within organisations (Van Dick et al., 2004). It seems particularly the case for organisational citizenship where individuals voluntarily undertake tasks which are not formally required for a role (Organ, 1988). Haslam, Jetten and Waghorn (2009) undertook longitudinal research with two theatre productions (an industry with many similarities to film and television production) to understand more about the connections between social identity and

citizenship behaviour as well as responses to social and organisational stressors. They found that social identification with the production was a significant predictor of individuals' attitudes and disposition towards the production and their fellow crew through the different phases of a production. High initial identification predicted work satisfaction and pride at the beginning of rehearsals, immediately at the end of a production and three months after a production was completed. It predicted organisational citizenship behaviour from immediately after dress rehearsal onwards. Those that had high identification with the production were significantly buffered against burnout during production which in turn influenced how positively they felt about it at its conclusion.

Haslam et al. (2005) undertook research into the connection between social identity and buffering stress through social support. They used Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model where dealing with stress is psychologically mediated. Lazarus and Folkman created a two stage appraisal model where the primary stage involved appraising the level of threat. The secondary stage was a coping appraisal in light of the outcome of the threat appraisal. Haslam et al. (2005) proposed that social identity theory and social support factors could overlay this model. They proposed that primary threat appraisal stage was influenced by the level of informational support available to an individual. At the secondary stage the following influenced how much an individual feels they can cope: emotional support which provides a sense of acceptance and self-worth; social companionship via affiliation and contact with others; instrumental support whereby concrete, material and financial resources are provided by other members of a group and, lastly, informational support. In their research into teams of bomb disposal experts, bar staff and recovering heart patients, they found that an internalised group identity resulted in openness to giving and receiving social support. Social identity predicted the impact of a stressor on groups, as the giving and receiving of social support was dependent on how much individuals identified with each other. Haslam and his colleagues (2005) also found that the meaning of a specific stressor in relation to an overall group identity predicted how much impact this would have on an individual. For example, handling bombs was not seen as dangerous by the

## LITERATURE REVIEW

bomb disposal experts and therefore individuals were less likely to be impacted by the stress of operating in this environment. They suggested that social identity increases social support and psychological well-being which in turn increase social identification thereby creating an 'upward spiral'.

Proposed reasons and motives for identifying with groups include self-esteem and distinctiveness (Abrahams & Hogg, 1988), inclusion (Brewer, 1991), the need to create subjective meaning to alleviate uncertainty (Hogg, 2000), to provide continuity between past, present and future (Sani et al., 2007) and to gain feelings of efficacy or mastery over one's environment (Breakwell, 1993).

Amiot et al. (2010) explored the individual antecedents to developing a new social identity. They proposed that two social factors, social support and need satisfaction, would facilitate an individual's adjustment to their new group and the integration of their new social identity. They used self-determination theory developed by Sheldon and Bettencourt (2002) as a model on which to base their understanding of what constitutes the satisfaction of fundamental social psychological needs. Sheldon and Bettencourt (2002) focused on three key features of self-determination theory: autonomy, where an individual undertakes activities concordant with their sense of self and feels a sense of acceptance by others in their group; competence, where an individual feels to be a capable group member and that their contribution is valued; and relatedness, where an individual feels they have established meaningful relations with other group members. They found that the satisfaction of these needs had a positive impact on both identification with a group and psychological well-being.

Amiot and her colleagues (2010) also proposed that individual coping and adaptation processes would play a mediating role between social support, psychological need satisfaction and building identification with a new group. Coping has been found to influence the forming of new social identities (Amiot et al., 2006). Amiot et al. (2010) focused on task-oriented individuals' coping strategies including planning, seeking relevant information and investing effort in general along with disengagement-oriented individuals' coping strategies including



disengaging mentally and behaviourally from a new situation. Two group level strategies were also investigated as antecedents for changing social identity. Firstly inclusion efforts – the effort an individual is willing to exert to adapt to and fit with a new group, and positive affirmation – where in-group members are seen to affirm their group's positive value comparative to other groups.

Both social support and need satisfaction were found to predict increased individual task-level coping strategies and group level inclusion efforts and positive affirmations. Conversely social support resulted in lowered use of disengagement-oriented coping strategies. In turn disengagement-oriented coping strategies were seen to have no connection to changes in social identity whilst task-oriented coping strategies did. In their second study the predictability of social support and need satisfaction on task oriented coping was combined with inclusion efforts and positive affirmations. Social support was shown to predict all three forms of coping as was need satisfaction. However, only the two group strategies were shown to significantly account for changes to social identification. In both studies social support and need satisfaction were not significant direct predictors of social identification but rather coping processes needed to mediate it.

The significant consequence of increased social identity in this study was seen to be increased well-being. An increase in hedonic well-being (immediate happiness) was evidenced through increased positive affect and decreased negative affect. Increased social identity also resulted in raised eudaimonic well-being which is associated with self-realisation and finding a sense of meaning, purpose or belonging. This is a similar outcome to that of much other research into the outcomes of social identity (Haslam et al., 2009).

Easterbrook and Vignoles (2012) developed a model of the motives behind identifying with a new group. They categorised social identity into two key types: The first being social categories which are abstract notions, such as being part of the film industry, and where identity is defined. The second type is an interpersonal network group which is based mainly on social interactions among group members rather than a shared self-definition. It is where individuals enact their social

identities by performing their social roles and interacting with other group members, such as a department in the film environment. There were found to be different motives for identifying with these two types of social identity. Meaning, distinctiveness and self-esteem were the motives for identifying with a social category while self-esteem, belonging and efficacy were seen as the motives that predicted identification with interpersonal networks. These factors were seen to account for over half of the individual variance in identification with both types of identities.

There are a range of inhibitors of the development of social identities. A key inhibitor is feelings of threat from possible social changes, which have the potential to alter current social identities. This feeling of threat also impacts negatively on individual adjustment (Terry et al., 2001). Status and power asymmetries within a group are also seen as a key precursor to loss of social identification with a group. This can encourage the dominance of one social identity over others and impede the overall group identity development process (Amiot et al., 2007).

Loss of social identity, through such things as work restructures, illness or retirement, has been shown to have the potential for dramatic negative impacts on well-being and mental health (Jetten et al., 2002; Haslam et al., 2009). Jetten et al. (2002) in their investigation of organisational restructure found that work team and organisational identity both dropped as a result of restructure as did general job satisfaction and perceptions of team performance. Lack of information and uncertainty about the upcoming change had a significant negative impact on adjustment as well as perceived threats to team identity. A high work team identity resulted in increased negative feelings while a high organisational identity led to increased positive feelings. However, if both work team and organisational identity were high, organisational identity was not seen to be a buffer to the negative impact of loss of team identity.

Packer et al. (2011) in their study into the effects of prospective changes to social identity found that those that strongly identified with their group projected significantly lower self-esteem and well-being than those that did not. This was

## LITERATURE REVIEW

with regard to long term loss of their identity as they moved from being young adults to old age. However, this negative effect was buffered by projected high levels of identification with a prospective identity. This implies that how replaceable an identity is perceived to be, may determine the impact of the loss of a social identity. Perceived continuity in the traditions and history, of the social group which is identified with, has been positively associated with social well-being as are perceptions of personal continuity (Sani et al., 2008).

Transitions to new social identities have been found to be aided when the new identity is perceived as compatible with existing identities (Iyer et al., 2009). Niessen et al. (2010) found that intentional disengagement from previous work roles predicts adaptation to a new work role. In this study, psychological attachment to past roles correlated negatively with the pursuit of learning and fit to a new role. Iyer and Jetten's (2011) study into the connection between nostalgia, breaks in identity and negative psychological outcomes added more nuance to these findings. They found that if there was not continuity in identity between past and present then nostalgia had a negative impact on well-being, perceptions about the manageability of present challenges, interest in pursuing new opportunities and interest in familiar surroundings and experiences. However, if there was no break in identity between past and present, nostalgia was associated with increased emotional well-being, perceptions of manageability of current challenges and interest in pursuing new opportunities. Thus the connections between loss of identity and negative psychological outcomes appear to be contingent on a number of aspects.

Because of the collective nature of the film industry and the likely high trust environment that enables it to operate effectively, it is proposed that social identity will be high for those working on a production. It is likely to be fundamental, at an individual level, for coping with the pressures of the environment and aiding the further building of affective trusts in particular. Alongside trust, high social identity may lubricate the workings of a production in lieu of long term, ongoing formal structures. The environment is also likely to be beneficial to crew as a result of this social identity.

## 2.12 TRUST AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Relatedness, which is one of the key social psychological needs required to increase social identity, connects closely to the concept of high quality relationships (Amiot et al., 2010; Brueller & Carmeli, 2011; Carmeli, Brueller & Dutton, 2009; Carmeli & Gittell, 2008). High quality relationships between individuals manifest via shared goals, knowledge and mutual respect (Carmeli & Gittell, 2008). These kinds of relationships have the capacity to carry both positive and negative emotions and can adapt to different kinds of pressures. Those in high quality relationships have been found to have a higher degree of openness to new ideas and influences suggested by each other. High quality relationships could also be linked to Easterbrook and Vignole's (2012) interpersonal network group form of social identity, which is based mainly on social interactions among group members. Additionally, there appear to be similarities between high quality relationships and their outcomes and the links between trust and collaboration.

High quality relationships have been strongly linked to psychological safety and team or organisational learning (Brueller & Carmelli, 2011; Carmelli & Gittell, 2009). Psychological safety is described as the feeling that one can express oneself "without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status or career" (Kahn, 1990). Psychological safety is the outcome of trust. While the object of trust is others, the object of psychological safety is the self. Both involve perceptions of vulnerability, the benefit of the doubt and making choices to minimise negative outcomes for a relationship. Psychological safety has also been proposed to be the outcome of feeling supported and cared about by one's organisation, which can be described as feeling affectively trusted. Consequently, those experiencing high psychological safety have a sense of comfort in taking interpersonal risks as is the case with trust (Carmeli & Gittell, 2008). These two concepts differ where trust can be longer term and psychological safety tends to be short term. It also tends to be collective rather than two way as trust usually is (Edmondson, 2004).

Psychological safety is thought to be a key facilitator of reflective thinking and learning (Edmondson, 2004). It enables individuals to feel comfortable in speaking

up to ask questions, seek feedback, reflect on results and discuss mistakes or unexpected outcomes. It also facilitates experimentation without fear of detrimental consequences (Edmondson, 1999). Edmondson (2004) proposed a model specifying five key antecedents of psychological safety in the workplace as well as five key learning behaviours aided by the creation of psychological safety. The antecedents included the trustworthy behaviour of a team leader, informal team dynamics being conducive to psychological safety, a supportive organisational context, opportunities to trial actions before they are implemented and, lastly, trust and respect from colleagues. The behaviours seen to facilitate learning behaviour in organisations as a result of psychological safety included: seeking feedback, seeking help, innovation, speaking up about concerns or mistakes and spanning the usual boundaries. As can be seen these outcomes provide a good fit to the requirements of a film industry project.

This outcome of trust is likely to be prevalent in the film environment when trust is operating effectively. It is likely to have a positive effect from an organisational perspective, particularly around contributing to double loop learning and creativity. It may also be beneficial from a personal perspective because of the freedom to be oneself. However, as discussed, previous research into the film industry has provided evidence of lowered psychological safety because of the pressure to maintain reputations to ensure future work. Psychological safety could be high in some contexts, such as when trust is high, but not in others for example when actions could impact on career prospects.

### **2.13 SOCIAL IDENTITY AND SELF-CONCEPT**

A deep connection has been found between the concept of the self, or self-identity, and social identities (Amiot et al., 2007). Over time, as experiences reinforce a social identity, it becomes an increasing part of an individual's personal identity, or self-concept (Ashmore et al., 2004). Taylor (1997) proposes that clearly defined social identity is essential for the development of a clearly defined personal identity. With personal identity it appears the self is compared to others, similarly with social identity, the social categorisation of one's in-group is compared against out-groups.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Clarity of social identity provides a clear understanding of such aspects as values, traits, ideological positions, shared experiences, history and behaviours. It is therefore likely to make the comparison of self to others considerably easier (Hammack, 2008; Usborne & Taylor, 2010). Likewise high group clarity is likely to reduce personal uncertainty (Jetten et al., 2000). Clarity of identity, at both a personal and a collective level, is seen as fundamental to positive self-esteem and psychological well-being (Usborne & Taylor, 2012). Usborne & Taylor (2010) undertook a series of five studies with a range of different cultural groups, internationally. They wanted to better understand the links between cultural and personal identity, with self-esteem, positive and negative affect and life satisfaction. They found there to be a significant relationship between clarity of both cultural and personal identity and increased self-esteem and psychological well-being, measured via positive and negative affect, and increased life satisfaction. Cultural identity on its own did not have a direct impact on self-esteem but rather clarity of personal identity needed to also be present. However, when gender and personality were factored out, cultural identity did have a direct impact on self-esteem.

The self provides the core to identity while social identities change, develop and become integrated intra-individually over the period of a lifetime (Amiot et al., 2007). The development of multiple social identities is seen to be an inherent part of the self-development process in humans (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Identifying with multiple groups can be a buffer to stress as if one social identity is threatened or lowered then there are other identities that an individual can fall back on (Amiot et al., 2010). The development of multiple social identities is likely to lead to the evolution of a broader personal identity which has been associated with increased well-being (Amiot et al., 2012). However, there does need to be clarity of these social identities for the process of broadening of personal identity to work effectively. Clarity of self-concept in itself has been found to fully mediate the connection between stressors such as work and social rejection and subjective well-being (Ritchie et al., 2011). Conversely, lowered self-clarity has been shown to be related to lowered self-esteem and confidence (Campbell, 1990). For example

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Usborne and Taylor (2010) demonstrated the challenges for Native American cultures that have two fundamental cultural identities, that of their native culture and also being a citizen of the United States. This group struggled in integrating these two identities because they were unfamiliar with the overall culture of the United States. This lack of clarity created a challenge.

If there is incongruence between self-concept and social identities this can result in increased stress and other poor psychological and physical outcomes (Sharma & Sharma, 2010). This incongruence is associated with emotional labour, which Morris and Feldman (1996, p. 987) define as “the effort, planning and control needed to express organisationally-desired emotion during interpersonal transactions”. An individual regulates emotion for the benefit of an organisation or a role being undertaken. They may suppress, fake or amplify their emotions or undertake surface or deep acting, altering responses to fit with organisational requirements. (Diefendorff et al., 2005). There is significant evidence supporting the negative impact of surface acting for individuals including increased stress, job dissatisfaction, negative affect and burnout. However, there is conflicting evidence regarding the impact of deep acting. It has been found to have a weak positive link to personal accomplishment and job satisfaction as well as having no significant links to outcomes (Diefendorff et al., 2011; Judge et al., 2009). Banks and Hesmondhalgh (2009) observed the workings of a television programme and proposed that individuals working on this production undertook emotional labour. They were required to handle strong emotions from performers and also needed to maintain good relations with their colleagues to ensure future employment. The latter in particular could be replicated in this study.

A similar notion described as “Emotional Work” also exists where emotions are regulated but for the benefit of the performer’s relationships with others (Strazdins, 2000). Here employees regulate their own emotions to meet emotional and professional role demands but also regulate the emotions of others to improve their well-being and ultimately for the benefit of interpersonal relationships. The companionship aspect of emotional work has been found to contribute to positive health and well-being (Pisaniello et al., 2012).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Within the film and television industry formal structures and processes have been shown in some way to be replaced by role structures and norms. Swift trust appears to also compensate for the limited formal structures at an organisational level. Trust has been found to be highly beneficial to the workings of teams and organisations as well as for individuals operating in this environment. There appear to be different forms of trust which function independently to each other. They include trusting the competence of others, trusting that another will be supportive and caring and trusting in the integrity of others. A high trust team environment is strongly associated with collaboration, double loop learning and creativity, which is a reflection of the culture of film environments.

It is proposed that individuals will develop political skills over their time in the film industry. This will aid them in ascertaining the trustworthiness of others as well as developing perceptions of their own trustworthiness. It will also support their successful navigation of the less structured, swift trust working environment.

Individuals working in this high trust and collaborative environment are likely to develop high social identity and in many situations high psychological safety. High psychological safety is the direct outcome of feeling trusted. Individuals feel comfortable communicating their needs and views. It is thought to be key to facilitating double loop learning and creativity. Lack of psychological safety can result in emotional labour where an individual feels restricted in their behaviour and may act in a manner contrary to their personal identity. This is potentially detrimental to individual mental well-being. There may be many situations where psychological safety is experienced by individuals working on a production. However, because of the temporary nature of this work, there may be times where individuals feel they cannot speak their mind because of the potential consequences to their career. The latter has been already found to be the case in research into the film and television industry.

Individuals are more likely to develop high social identity if they satisfy feelings of autonomy, competency and relatedness as a result of their social environment. The film and television production environment is likely to satisfy these social needs.



## LITERATURE REVIEW

High social identity is associated with many positive outcomes including increased communication, motivation, helping, leadership and reinforcing trust. At a personal level it leads to social and health benefits and is a buffer to stress. Loss of social identity is associated with negative health and social outcomes for individuals. However, a smooth transitioning to an alternative identity aids this considerably. Those working in the film industry may struggle early in their careers with adjusting to the gain and loss of social identity as they move between work on productions and unemployment.

As individuals build social identification with their teams, each production they work on, and the industry as whole, the clarity of their social identities is likely to increase. Clarity of social identity has been associated with clarity of personal identity. This in turn is closely associated with self-esteem and hedonic well-being as well as the deeper eudemonic well-being. Although clarity of social identity may oscillate early in individuals' careers experienced film production workers are likely to learn ways to maintain a stable sense of social and personal identity over time. The high trust environment of the film industry may therefore have beneficial results for their sense of well-being and identity.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This chapter has four main parts. The first section outlines the epistemological approach taken in this research. The second describes the research design, giving details of the respondents and interview questions. The third section discusses the process of data analysis and the fourth discusses ethical issues.

#### **3.1 Theoretical Foundation**

In contrast to most research in organisational psychology this thesis used a qualitative research methodology. Epistemologically, organisational psychology is dominated by the empiricist paradigm. Most research undertaken is quantitative and highly dependent on statistical measurement and analysis. This is reflected in the dominance of these forms of research in the major organisational psychology journals (Schaubroeck & Kuehn, 1992; Symon & Cassell, 1998).

One of the key tenets of empiricism is that of objectivity and distance from the subject matter. However, criticism has been growing recently regarding the validity of some quantitative research from those that operate within this paradigm. Criticism has also centred on researchers making assumptions without enough evidence to support their views, as well as the manipulation of data in a way that negates its validity (Kepes & McDaniel, 2013; McDaniel, Rothstein & Whetzel, 2006). Some assert that the empiricist, or positivist, paradigm has contributed to the stagnation of research in the field of organisational psychology (Anderson, 1998; Johnson & Cassell, 2001).

I have chosen to undertake qualitative research to explore the experiences of those working in the film and television production industry. The research strategy has been based on interviewing participants in this industry. Epistemologically, I have taken a hermeneutic approach to interpreting and understanding the findings. By taking this approach I feel able to delve deeper into the exploration, sense-making and experiences of this group in their engagement with the trust environment of

their workplace. The research utilised interpretative phenomenological analysis as the specific guiding methodological framework (Brocki & Wearden, 2006; Smith et al., 2009).

Choosing to base this research in the hermeneutic tradition is a break from the empiricist paradigm norm of research in organisational psychology. Hermeneutics is a process of interpretation, what the protestant scholar Schleiermacher (1768 – 1834) referred to as “the art of understanding” (Inwood, 2005, p. 353). Hermeneutic phenomenology is about making meaning and documenting experience, although this can only be a reflection of the internal experiences of others. Within a psychological framework this is making sense of human action. Sandage et al. (2008) proposed that hermeneutic phenomenology is neither as universalist as empiricism in which the aim is to create general, universal laws, nor as context specific as social constructivism. Interpretations are pluralistic rather than singular, as with empiricism. Interactions are complex and ambiguous and therefore unable to be separated into specific and separate categories. For example, life experiences and realities are seen to precede the separation into the dualities of mind and body or self and world (Martin & Sugarman, 2001). Subjectivity and objectivity are interconnected rather than separate in this epistemology (Packer, 1985; Sandage et al., 2008). It is acknowledged that humans all have an interpretive lens through which they view the world, their interactions and themselves. This is constructed through social and cultural conditioning as well as experience. Interpretation is thus contextual as we are “self-interpreting animals” (Sandage et al., 2008; Hughes & Sharrock, 1990; Taylor, 1985). As the researcher, I am inextricably connected to the research I am undertaking, rather than separate from the respondents in order to remain objective, as is the case with empiricism. I understand that both myself and those I am researching will make meaning out of a specific context and that we will both have our specific narrative.

Interactions are seen by Sandage et al. (2008) as respectful “I-thou” encounters rather than a fully controlled scientific process. Studies and perspectives, therefore, are not fully objective or neutral as is the aim in empiricism. Hermeneutic research, rather than being deductive and a process of proving hypotheses, is an inductive

## METHODOLOGY

process where it is more specific, concrete and ideographic. It is about making sense and meaning from human action and trying to understand what human purposes interests and activities serve rather than finding universal answers (Hughes & Shamrock, 1990).

Hermeneutic phenomenology is about finding a semantic structure and making human action meaningful. This process of explicating experiences cannot be free of interpretation (Parker, 1985). We are all “social flesh”, where we are connected to each other as well as embodied (Venn, 2004). Martin and Sugarman (2001) proposed that as psychologists we “must always consider [we are a]... feeling, desiring agent within a shared, practical life-world” (p.196). Humans are viewed as interactive with social cultural events. These events may be embedded in us and constitute a part of our identity but we cannot just be reduced to them (Martin & Sugarman; 2001).

The hermeneutic circle is an ongoing process of both transmitting and modifying what is understood (Martin & Sugarman, 2001). The aim is to understand the making of meaning of the subject/object and the internal component of their behaviour. This meaning making can be revised, both retrospectively and prospectively whenever further evidence comes to light (Sandage et al, 2008). The role of a partly unconscious, or pre-understanding, frame of reference is acknowledged for both the researcher and respondents.

There is a holistic character, a “referential totality” (Heidegger, 1971), where action and situation sit together but they are still historically situated (Packer, 1985). As the researcher, the findings from this study are located within a specific temporal structure and context, rather than timeless and ahistorical as in empiricism (Packer, 1985).

Kunz (2006) compared phenomenology to positivist psychology in five foundational empiricist areas: objectivity, empiricity, causal determination, reduction and value neutrality. Firstly, he used out-there and in-here to distinguish between object and subject or researcher and participant. In-here and out-there were instead co-participants. Biases were accepted and attended to, both on the part of the

## METHODOLOGY

observer and the observed, through acceptance and understanding rather than attempting to control (Kunz, 2006). Secondly, the researcher was not necessarily privileged in phenomenology but rather co-participating in the research, projecting and reflecting as did the participant (Kunz, 2006; Sandage et al., 2008).

Thirdly, phenomenology looked at the meaning of phenomena for participants and their reasons for actions rather than finding cause and effect. Reasons for actions were voluntary and involuntary, reflexive and pre-reflexive. The relationship between these was dialectical rather than an opposition and separation. Fourthly, in phenomenology the constituent parts expressed the whole experience where lived behaviour showed itself, rather than humans being reduced to an object. Phenomena are not removed or separated in this form of research as this may distort findings (Kunz, 2006).

In the last of Kunz's five themes, the values of both the researcher and the respondent were respected. There was no attempt to retain value neutrality in order to remain objective and unbiased. Researchers were not "neutral, dispassionate observers" (Packer & Addison, 1989). Rather there was an inherent moral and social commitment as well as responsibility.

In hermeneutic phenomenology the 'otherness' is necessary to understand the contextual meaning of both parties. It is embraced rather than excluded (Sandage et al., 2008). Access to others' sense making is through "empathy and imaginative reconstruction" and "concerned engagement". It is not trying to add to or conform to general, formal laws which may in themselves be value laden and ethnocentrically specific (Hughes & Sharrock, 1990; Kunz, 2006; Martin & Sugarman, 2001).

Of Heidegger's (1971) three modes of engagement, the emphasis in this form of research is on the ready-to-hand mode of engagement. Here agents may not be aware of the cultural or historical aspects of their actions. It also operates at the unready-to-hand mode where a problem in an activity, or an interruption, provides an opening to those cultural or historical aspects an agent is unaware of. Interviews explore both modes through explorations of experiences, but also interruptions,

where there is an opportunity for the unconscious to surface. In contrast, positivist psychology works in the present-at-hand mode in which objects are observed while the researcher remains independent of a situation.

Another area where this study differs from most organisational research is with regard to the community that is represented. In 1960 Baritz argued that American organisational psychologists were more interested in enhancing profitability and managerial control than improving people's working lives or increasing general understanding. The title of his book *The Servants of Power* was a reflection of his perspective on the focus of the discipline. In 2000 Brief reviewed how much the organisational psychology discipline had changed since the time of Baritz's book. He concluded that the criticisms were as relevant today as they had been 40 years ago.

The respondents I have represented consist of a mix of those in managerial and in non-managerial roles. I have focused on their experiences as individuals, including historically, in the industry. Although performance and productivity are included in the themes resulting from this research, so too are the personal experiences of the respondents.

## **3.2 Research Design**

### **THE RESPONDENTS**

There is considerable diversity in the kind of work undertaken in the film and television production industry. As this study is based in Auckland, where commercials, films and television series are shot, I chose to include experiences of all three types of production. Processes and experiences appear by and large similar between these.

Individuals can work in a number of phases of the film process before and after the actual shooting of material. There are also companies that operate on the periphery of a production providing specific products and services such as visual effects and post-production. However, for the purpose of this study, I chose to

## METHODOLOGY

focus on the experiences of those that have worked on very central aspects of productions.

There are also several departments who contribute quite different services to a production and it was likely that those working in these departments may have different experiences. I tried to find respondents who worked in a range of departments.

The other area of diversity is regarding level of experience in the industry. Those first starting out in their careers were likely to have a different perspective to those that have been operating in the industry for some time. For this reason I chose to work with respondents who had considerable experience. All had been in the industry for over 10 years. They were able to recall their early experiences as well as discuss how they currently felt about the film environment.

I accessed the respondents through my informal connections within the industry. These connections then enabled access to a wider group of potential participants, through their own networks, in a “snowballing” chain (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). When the pool became large enough respondents were chosen based on providing variety in departments worked in, as well as roles.

The final pool contained 11 respondents. The three main department categories of a production were represented which were technical, production and creative. The technical category includes the lighting, camera and grip departments. The production category includes production, accounts, locations and assistant directors. Creative departments include art, costume and make-up. All had worked on a mix of films, television and commercial productions during their careers. Two had left the industry altogether. One was transitioning between working in the industry and building their own business.

I initially contacted all potential respondents either in person or by telephone to see if they were interested in participating in this research. I provided them with a short explanation of what and why I intended researching as well as explaining how the research would be undertaken. For those interested and available, I sent an

## METHODOLOGY

information sheet describing the study, an interview questions outline and a consent form (examples are provided in the Appendices). This was followed by a phone call, and interview times were set up.

The interviews were undertaken over a period of five months depending on the availability of respondents. Of the respondents still working in the industry, there was a mix between those currently working and those between contracts. This allowed for a variety of insights.

There was however, less balance regarding gender. Seven of the 11 final respondents were women. This was partly due to availability. The other reason for this lack of balance was that by completion of the eighth and ninth respondent's interviews, overall themes were becoming clear and repeating themselves. There did not appear to be significant gender differentiation regarding experiences.

Table 3.1 provides information for each of the respondents. It includes the age, level of role currently worked in, type of department worked in and years of experience in the industry. An overview of the typical role structure of productions is provided in the appendix. All respondents have been provided with pseudonyms, and their specific roles have not been mentioned, in order to protect their identities. The confidentiality and anonymity aspects of this research will be elaborated on in the ethics section of this chapter.



**TABLE 3.1: Respondent Information**

Caroline	Age: 40 – 50 Role/s: Senior Supervisor Kind of department/s worked in: Production Years of experience: 15+
Melanie	Age: 40 – 50 Roles: Supervisor/Coordinator Department/s: Production and Creative Years of experience: 18+
Paul	Age: 30 - 40 Role/s: Supervisor/Worker Kind of department/s worked in: Creative Years of experience: 14+
Bridget	Age: 40 - 50 Role/s: Supervisor/Worker Kind of department/s worked in: Creative Years of experience: 18+
Hannah	Age: 40 - 50 Role/s: Supervisor Kind of department/s worked in: Creative Years of experience: 15+
Sarah	Age: 40 - 50 Role/s: Supervisor/Worker Kind of department/s worked in: Creative Years of experience: 15+
John	Age: 40 - 50 Role/s: Supervisor/Worker Kind of department/s worked in: Creative Years of experience: 15+
Bruce	Age: 40 - 50 Role/s: Technician Kind of department/s worked in: Technical Years of experience: 14
Anna	Age: 40 - 50 Role/s: Senior Supervisor Kind of department/s worked in: Production Years of experience: 20+

## METHODOLOGY

Dan	Age: 40 - 50 Role/s: Supervisor/Worker Kind of department/s worked in: Creative Years of experience: 15+
Jane	Age: 30 - 40 Role/s: Supervisor Kind of department/s worked in: Production Years of experience: 15+

### INTERVIEW RESEARCH

Interviews are seen as one of the most widely used and powerful tools available within qualitative research (Smith and Eatough, 2006). For this study a series of semi-structured interviews was undertaken with 11 respondents. These occurred between January and May 2012.

The interviews were designed to explore respondents' experiences of swift trust within the film industry.

The initial broad themes were as follows:

- a. How quickly trust develops on a production.
- b. How trust is built, and the trustworthiness of others is ascertained, at a personal level.
- c. Early experiences of working in the industry and the trust environment.
- d. Experiences of lack of trust.
- e. Dealing with conflict.
- f. Building connections and friendships with colleagues.
- g. Comparison of work connections and friendships between film and other industries.
- h. Advantages and disadvantages of fast connections in the film industry.
- i. Changes in perspective and development of skills from working in a swift trust environment.
- j. Differences between the film industry environment and other industries.
- k. Current satisfaction in working in the film industry.

## METHODOLOGY

The full initial interview outline is contained in the Appendices.

At the beginning of interviews I provided respondents with a background and introduction. I explained my background within the industry and how I came to choose this topic. This included a brief explanation of swift trust. I then formally explained the information sheet and consent forms, which were both completed by respondents before beginning the interview.

The interview guideline was explained as was this style of research, where interviews are semi-structured and expected to expand beyond the confines of this guide when new and interesting material surfaced. Respondents were advised that they did not need to answer any questions they did not want to and that the interviews would be taped and later transcribed. I discussed the importance of confidentiality at every stage of the research process. Names would be changed and all identifiable material would be removed for their safety. I offered to provide transcriptions of interviews to all interviewees but none took up this option. Several were interested in reading a summary of the research findings which will be provided to them.

Some respondents also asked whether the findings of this study would be provided to industry and government organisations that support film and television. They felt there might be valuable information that could be passed on to aid in improving the industry. I discussed that I would endeavour to do this.

Respondents were interviewed in their homes or at my home, depending on their preference.

All interviews, but two, were over 1.5 hours in length with three lasting as long as 2.5 hours. The shorter interviews were because of the interviewees' time constraints. All respondents were interested in discussing trust and their experiences in the industry. Most became quite passionate, reflecting on and broadening their understanding of their own experiences, during the interview. Several commented that an opportunity to reflect on the industry in a guided way is a rare opportunity, although most appeared to have discussed many aspects of the

material with their colleagues and friends. There were times where difficult experiences were brought up by interviewees. At these points I tried to act with sensitivity and empathy to ensure that the well-being of the interviewee was maintained.

I added to and developed the interview questions as themes began to emerge in discussions. As themes began to emerge early on, I was able to adjust and tailor interviews to expand on and deepen my, and respondents', understanding of key issues. Where interviewees had differing views on a subject I delved into this to clarify reasons for these different perspectives. I explained the differing opinions and the interviewees' reasons for these. This appeared to be a particularly valuable exercise for respondents. The industry is fast paced and project focused, so it is extremely rare for reviews to be undertaken where differing perspectives would usually be aired. Thus through the iterative, interpretative, phenomenological process I was able to begin building on themes and their interconnections even before beginning the formal analysis stage (Eatough & Smith, 2008).

### **3.3 Analysis**

All 11 interviews were recorded and transcribed in full. I transcribed the interviews during the five months of interviewing. This enabled me to make sense of their content from a different perspective to when I was participating in the interview. It also helped in the iterative process of building themes and expanding on them. Transcription of interviews is seen as key in the preliminary analysis of data, because of the interpretation that is already in process as a result (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The next phase was to explore more deeply the themes that were beginning to be revealed during the interview and transcription stage. This involved identification, analysis and reporting of patterns in information. In thematic analysis the aim is to provide organisation and describe information in rich detail. This is seen as a widely used though under-acknowledged method of analysis within psychology (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The themes for this research tended to develop through repetition across all interviews even from early on. They were also based on the interest respondents showed regarding certain topics and perspectives. Trust became an excellent starting point as did memories of first experiences of the industry. As these themes developed so early I was able to tease this information out further during the interview, as well as with those that followed.

The following are the interpretive phases I went through in order to reach the final results.

### **FAMILIARISATION WITH DATA**

This began at interview and transcription phase where themes began iteratively revealing themselves.

### **CODING DATA**

Here I initially highlighted quotes which I felt salient to the original purpose of my research which was further exploration of the swift trust film environment. I then coded them into the initial themes that were appearing. I gathered together the data from the different initial themes to make better sense of them.

I returned to some respondents to test these initial themes and to gain their feedback. I also talked in-depth with my research supervisor about these ideas. I followed this up by writing a one page summary of each of the main themes that were now becoming clear. The process of data analysis, theme identification and theme summary was repeated several times until the final set of themes reported in the Results chapter was settled on.

## **3.4 Ethics**

I used the New Zealand Psychologists' Board Code of Ethics as my guide in undertaking this research. These were the clauses in particular that I focused on throughout the process, which I have not expanded on thus far.

## **RESPECT FOR PERSONS**

Strong emphasis was placed on retaining a power balance and respect between researcher and respondent. This aligns with the principles of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis where participants are seen as co-facilitators in research. This is also in accordance with Massey Ethics Guidelines.

## **MINIMISATION OF RISK OF HARM**

As research with participants was conducted via individual qualitative interviews there was unlikely to be risk of physical harm. Interviews were carried out in the location of an individual's choice, and agreed to by myself, so that we both felt safe.

There was curiosity by many interviewees regarding other participants' perspectives, as discussed. Because of the collegial and highly networked nature of the industry I shared this information but kept identifiable contributions anonymous.

As there has been little research into the film and television industry in New Zealand, it was hoped that participants would feel this to be a worthwhile exercise and use of their time. Because of the time and energy demands of their employment I put a strong emphasis on maximising use of their time and not wasting it. Respondents seemed to engage with the interviews and to use them as an opportunity for reflection. On several occasions I found that respondents were keen to continue our discussions on an informal basis after the main interview had finished. Several have since asked how the research is progressing, again stating that they would be interested in seeing the finished research.

## **RESPECT FOR PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality was a key issue for participants. The film and television industry is small and generally consists of short term projects. Thus crew quickly get to know or know of a lot of people working in the industry. Reputation is key to continuing to gain further contracts. Comments made by participants needed to be protected

for this reason or they could be tracked back to specific individuals which could impact on their career opportunities. To protect the anonymity of the participants and their careers, individual names have been changed, as have production companies, production titles and similarly identifiable information. Specific roles and departments have also not been provided.

### **MY OWN EXPERIENCES OF THE INDUSTRY**

The film and television industry can appear closed to outsiders. Hours worked are long and often at unusual times. The industry's structure and ways of operating are comparatively unusual. I was aided in this respect with my association and experience within the industry. It also provided me with initial access to potential respondents. Respondents were likely to, and appeared to trust me quickly, as I could understand most references they made to the industry. I explained the care that I would take with the information they shared with me and that I understood the importance of protecting their reputation by retaining their anonymity. The trust that they placed in me, and the great interest that many showed in the findings of my research, meant that I felt a responsibility to report my research in a way deserving of their trust.

As this research has been undertaken using the hermeneutic phenomenology approach, I have strived to understand my own preconceptions throughout the process. This is both with regard to the ready-to-hand mode, where I may not have been aware of the cultural or historical aspects of my actions, and of the unready-to-hand mode. There were a number of occasions where respondents' views differed from my expectations. Where I was conscious of this in the interview, I explored this unexpected viewpoint further with the interviewee. When I felt it appropriate, I shared other interviewees' differing viewpoints or experiences, and was thus able to investigate both our ready-to-hand and unready-to-hand modes, to gain a better understanding.

One area where my subjectivities were challenged was regarding psychological safety and emotional labour. From my own experiences my initial views were that

## METHODOLOGY

psychological safety was particularly high and emotional labour particularly low compared to other industries. However, much of the extant research in this area takes a different perspective, with findings pointing to considerable emotional labour because of the contractual nature of the industry. I strove to keep an awareness of my views, the literature and respondents' answers as I went through the interview, interpretation, analysis and writing stages. By so doing I hoped to arrive at an analysis which remained true to respondents' views while locating those views within a wider theoretical framework of research into the film industry.



## 4. RESULTS

This chapter presents the interview findings and interprets respondents' experiences of Swift Trust. It suggests that the swift trust environment of the film and television production industry has both structural and personal effects. Structurally, swift trust facilitates the smooth operation of the creative work environment. It enables the temporary organisation structure to become operational quickly. At an individual level, swift trust affirms the film worker's personal identity. Breakdowns in trust have negative effects on both the work environment and workers' self-esteem. Participants in the industry gain specific skills over time, enabling them to effectively navigate and cope with this unique environment.

The results are separated into five key sections. The first two sections are oriented around interviewees' positive experiences of this environment. The first of these investigates trust as a mechanism for facilitating organisational performance describing the organisational advantages of swift trust. The second section looks at the personal impact of trust and discusses how individuals were influenced by operating in this environment. The third and fourth sections discuss the breakdown of trust, and what impact this had at both organisational and personal levels. The final section discusses how interviewees appear to have developed skills to cope with or thrive in the industry.

## 4.1 Trust as a Mechanism for Facilitating Organisational Performance

All participants in this study viewed trust as an essential mechanism to the successful operating of productions throughout the industry, this covered commercials, films and television series, funded locally and internationally. Respondents' answers provide clear support for Meyerson et al.'s (1996) assertion that trust is an indispensable means of ensuring temporary creative organisations function effectively.

All eleven respondents had worked in the industry for over ten years. This provided an opportunity to understand how their perspective of this environment may have altered with experience. There appeared to be several mechanisms that had developed alongside and out of trust. Many of these were experienced as unique, comparative to other industries, including those industries that were creatively based.

Film, television and commercial productions do share a number of specific defined roles, processes and hierarchies. This provides some formal structure with which to effectively operate these temporary organisations. However, every project is highly complex and unique with widely varying subject matter. Several departments make their own complicated contribution to the end product, which is complexly intertwined and interdependent with that of many other departments. Consequently, there is a need for a certain amount of fluidity to allow room for innovation, creativity and fast problem solving. High trust appears to facilitate an environment which encourages these behaviours. Cooperative behaviour and high performance appear to be the mechanisms enabling this. As a result crew trust others and feel safe to take risks, both psychological and task based.

From discussions with interviewees, the trust mechanism appeared to be broken down into three main forms. The first of these is cognitive trust which is trust in the competence of others. The second is affective trust which is feeling that support, care and connection will be provided by another. The third is understanding the

## RESULTS

motives of others. These three forms of trust significantly contributed to a cooperative environment, facilitating creativity and innovation. It contributed to Double Loop learning and a learning organisation culture which are both seen as highly desirable by many writers on organisations (e.g. Argyris, 1977; Argote et al., 2001).

These mechanisms all appeared to contribute to a high performance culture within the industry where it was a given that individuals would work hard and follow through on often challenging tasks. An environment of high task complexity and interdependence was mirrored in open communication and trusting relations.

### **COGNITIVE TRUST**

All respondents could distinctly remember their first days in film, in a predominantly highly positive way, noticeably contrasting with their previous work experiences. First observations centred on trust. One aspect clearly described was cognitive or instrumental trust (Barczak et al, 2010; Bijlsma & Koopman, 2003) which is trusting that others can be relied on to be competent in their work and the completion of their tasks.

Initial work experience in the industry was usually via a casual contract as limited as a day. Despite this, all discussed that their colleagues had high expectations they would successfully carry out their assigned tasks. These tasks, or how they were to be carried out, were often new to the interviewees and they were provided with little explanation or training. Several commented on the high level of responsibility given to them, describing it as a 'sink or swim' style of initiation which they found challenging. Sarah, a supervisor in a creative department with over 15 years industry experience, discussed this:

*There's pressure on and you've got to get it done so you instantly gel into whatever's going on and the people that don't do that don't stay.*

Some used the word "expected" whilst others used the word "trusted" when describing this. The views appeared to differ, based on the interviewee's current

## RESULTS

perspective of the industry. Several remembered these first few days as intimidating, because they saw a crew operating so effectively, with so much skill. The prospect of increasing their competence to this level was daunting. If they succeeded in the tasks ascribed to them, they were invited back or hired for other jobs rapidly. All that were interviewed had succeeded in this initial ‘baptism by fire’ and had since worked in the industry for many years. Most described a significant sense of accomplishment for having achieved this initial milestone. Hannah, a supervisor in a creative department with over 15 years experience, commented on this:

*I guess though that you do feel pretty cool that you’ve managed to just do it because you have to work very hard.*

Their success seemed to magnify their enthusiasm about the industry and they could see the potential to be part of a high functioning, challenging and exciting industry.

These descriptions fit closely with research undertaken by Chen and Kimoski (2003) regarding the impact of expectations on newcomer performance. They referred to the “Pygmalion Effect” where expectations of performance from a newcomer’s team and leader influenced individual motivation and performance as per the “self-fulfilling prophesy”. Therefore, if expectations of a newcomer were high, their performance was shown to be significantly higher than if expectations of performance were low.

Bruce, with 14 years experience working in a technical department, and Dan with over 15 years experience in a creative department, provided examples of being trusted with large amounts of cash in their first days in the industry and being surprised by this. As they proved their worthiness after passing these initial tests, the trust in them increased. Bruce discussed his personal experience of this:

*So I jumped into the van with \$3,500 in cash and bought 400 umbrellas. It was inconceivable to me!*

## RESULTS

Some interviewees discussed the absence of micromanaging comparative to other industries. They enjoyed this from the start. Limited monitoring, and therefore implied trust, appeared to be common to the industry.

This high cognitive trust environment appeared to contribute to the development of a hard working ethic within the industry. It was expected that crew would take full responsibility and own their tasks and role. There were norms to support this work ethic including reliability, particularly following through on time commitments, and starting work on time. Times that crew needed to be at work or 'call times' could be extremely early, sometimes before 5am, and it was unacceptable to be late. Dan discussed this:

*Work ethic, 90% of the people I know in this game are grafters, they know how to work. You don't see people turn up to work late.*

With such tight time frames, crew may work until very late at night, even consecutively over several days, to complete to a high quality and to deadline. It was part and parcel of working in the industry and something to be proud of for many. This provided evidence of willing conformity to norms as Sarah discussed:

*I've always done my time at work and gone over because personally I can't leave a job I haven't finished. I have pride in my own work.*

For most interviewees this work ethic appeared to differ significantly to other industries they had been exposed to. Again pride was often displayed at how competent those in the film industry were, providing more support of the willing compliance to these unwritten rules. Hannah described this:

*I must say I'm often dismayed at how shoddily people do their job when I encounter it in a bank or in a bureaucratic environment, as opposed to working in the film industry where everything happens extremely quickly with the least amount of chatter and dawdling, and then you go into some government department and you go: oh my God, do some people operate like this?*

Trust in others' competence was literally connected to physical safety for several, particularly on the shooting set, with the range of heavy and potentially dangerous

## RESULTS

equipment involved. For many this physical danger combined with long hours and pressure. Disparate departments worked together in an enclosed environment where crew may not have control over or knowledge of what others were doing. They nevertheless needed to implicitly trust that they would be kept safe by those responsible for the potentially dangerous equipment and situations. As Hannah commented:

*You've got a huge project to accomplish and you do work very long hours and you work in environments where things sometimes seem a little unsafe or are extreme and you really trust that the producers and the safety guys and the grips and the lighting guys know what they're doing because there's this huge machinery above your heads, there's this huge stuff moving around and you assume that production have got it covered, that they know what's there and what's been covered off.*

Most interviewees provided clear examples of their commitment to their jobs and the production, providing evidence of another norm supporting high cognitive trust. This norm of commitment was happily conformed to and expected of others, inevitably increasing performance and productivity. Bruce and Melanie, who had over 14 and 18 years experience respectively in production and creative departments, discussed that no matter what, the job took top priority. Other needs, including those of a personal nature, were expected to yield to the job. Bruce described this whilst reinforcing how evident behavioural norms are on a production:

*So there's a really rigid set of rules and I guess at the heart of that was that you couldn't do anything to compromise the job, whatever that was. There's a really strict, I guess that was the focus for everyone. There was just no arbitration on the job itself. The job just had to be done.*

Total commitment to a job did appear to be voluntary for interviewees. However, it was helped by knowing that most other crew would be equally committed and thus relied upon. Caroline, a supervisor with over 18 years experience in production, took comfort from being provided with clear direction to prioritise her work over her personal life.

## RESULTS

Commitment to a job was finite, enabling such an intensity of commitment to be sustained. There was no expectation of commitment to the next job that a supervisor or production company secured either. Interviewees felt they had freedom to choose their next contract, potentially reinforcing their commitment. In many ways this freedom of commitment beyond the job enhanced its enjoyment which in turn further reinforced commitment in an upward spiral of cognitive trust. Melanie commented on this:

*Something I really loved when I first started working in the industry was that every job, even if it was just a commercial, there were no expectations of expecting you to do anything else after that. You could take another job if you wanted to or you could go do something else. So everything was project work and it got wrapped up and it was done and then you went and looked for something else, long, short, whatever, a lot of flexibility in that and I still find that appealing. I like that.*

Bridget, a supervisor in a creative department with over 18 years experience, compared this aspect to other creative industries where roles were permanent. She implied that a finite commitment and appreciation of gaining a contract created a more engaged crew:

*Whereas for film or a television series there's always an end date and everyone's really happy to have the work and everyone's that much more enthusiastic.*

These behavioural norms supporting cognitive trust, including showing reliability and commitment, completing work well and meeting promised deadlines did allow for circumstances where the tasks could not be achieved. Tolerance appeared to vary depending on how trustworthy those not meeting their commitments were. Where individuals were seen to conform to the trust norms, and had a history of doing so, allowances were likely to be made for them. However, support would wane if the same issues or mistakes continued to occur, as John, with over 15 years experience in creative departments including supervisory roles, discussed:

*They do understand when things happen that are out of your control as well... People don't suffer fools. If they see you working hard, doing your best and things go*

## RESULTS

*wrong then they'll often be quite forgiving, to a certain degree. But if it happens over and over again then it's, well, why does this always happen to them?*

Bruce and Dan provided an example of high trust in the competence and integrity of others, describing how the industry ran on 'goodwill'. The way they used this term fits closely with both motive-based and cognitive trust, where verbal requests and promises did not need to be backed up by written documentation. Dan commented he had not worked in another industry with such high trust, or goodwill that others would follow through on their verbal commitments. Paperwork and 'bureaucracy' were minimised as a result of this goodwill. Consequently slowdowns were limited and they could maintain their productivity. This goodwill was required to 'lubricate the machine' Dan discussed:

*Goodwill is what the film and television industry trades on and I don't know any other industry that does that. And with the dollars involved people call us up and they go, we need this done in 3 days and it's usually a large, expensive commercial venture and it is all on goodwill because there is not a contract, there is not a piece of paper signed. There is an obligation and it's verbal so the whole industry works purely on goodwill. Have you ever heard of an industry like it?*

### **TRUST AND COOPERATION**

Not only did crew trust and expect each other to be competent in their work, but there was also an interpersonal trust where workmates cooperated with and helped each other. All interviewees discussed the fundamental interdependence between crew in order to do their jobs and for a production to operate successfully. Consequently they needed to have relational trust in each other beyond just trusting their competence. Working together as a team rather than as separate individuals was a clear theme throughout interviews. Caroline, a supervisor in a production department with over 15 years experience, commented on this:

*Instantly [you need to work collaboratively with others to do your work], everything's co-joined. There's not a stand alone job in a production.*



## RESULTS

This fits with theories regarding the connection between trust and cooperation (Barczak et al., 2012). Gambetta encompasses cooperation within his definition of trust: “when we say that we trust someone or that someone is trustworthy, we implicitly mean that the probability that he will perform an action that is beneficial or at least not detrimental to us is high enough for us to consider engaging in some form of cooperation with him” (1988, pp. 217-18).

Collaboration appeared to be a fundamental norm that was observed and experienced by all interviewees from their first days in the industry. Melanie discussed that she experienced trust from others straight away across the board:

*I reckon I was trusted immediately, it was assumed.*

Team work and cohesiveness appeared to be a given on productions and were supported by high trust. Interviewees discussed how much they enjoyed being a part of this environment which they described as highly social. This cohesiveness appeared to begin as soon as a production came together as Hannah commented:

*I think they're really excited by it, and they come together as a team and it's the social thing and often, I suppose, because people have gaps in between as well. It's like jump in.*

Team work often covered the whole production, rather than just a specific team, because of the need to create one cohesive product. Individuals and teams did not have to compete with each other and there was little desire to do so as it would detract from the common goal. John commented:

*There's lots of cooperation that needs to happen and that's when it works well between departments is when you understand those rules of cooperation... there's a kind of unwritten rule that we'll help each other out.*

Bruce discussed the togetherness and common understanding within his department, that is associated with affective trust:

*Then there's that kind of personal trust, that camaraderie of people who are aligned and understand each other.*

## RESULTS

For John, norms around cooperating and trusting others led to expectations regarding honesty and integrity. He felt there was not time for dishonesty and manipulation of others and suggested that a production operated in a similar way to a community where specific behaviours were required for it work. The authentic behaviour that was required for this kind of trust to occur appeared to be normal. It was described as 'behaving with integrity'. Motive-based trust, another form of social trust where individuals feel they understand the motives of others, fits with what John was describing and was well evidenced in interviews:

*The thing about that coming together and having to work so closely is that it brings about the necessity for a degree of integrity and people haven't time to afford bullshit and posturing so it is often, the rules are operating with integrity and as a good person... The whole thing relies on that degree of society happening at a level of honesty and good behaviour. Not trying to steal from your fellow worker in terms of stealing energy, time, credit. It's cooperation.*

John also appears to describe the requirement to behave like a 'good citizen' and to communicate openly. Both open communication and organisational citizenship behaviour are seen as outcomes of trust (LePine et al., 2002).

## **LEARNING ORGANISATION AND CREATIVITY**

The trust mechanisms operating in the film industry are closely associated with collaboration by interviewees. Collaboration has been shown to be a significant antecedent of team creativity (Barczak et al., 2010). Positive communication and information sharing are strongly associated with a reflexive Double Loop learning environment. Many researchers see double loop learning as key to organisational success because of its positive impact on productivity and performance (Argyris, 1977; Argote et al., 2001). There were many examples provided of a learning organisation environment by interviewees. Some discussed the willingness of others to share their knowledge and experience with them, often with no personal gain. Interviewees directly connected this to their quickly learning about the industry and becoming more competent in their craft. Hannah discussed the

## RESULTS

attraction of being surrounded by so many who were highly skilled and experienced and willing to share their knowledge:

*It's a really fast learning environment so you've got a lot of opportunity where you can get up to speed pretty quickly because there are so many people and people are generally keen to tell you if you don't know what's going on.*

Others compared their experiences in film and television production to industries they had worked in previously, some creatively oriented and others more practical. Dan remembered the enthusiastic responses he received in his first days in the industry when asking questions of his new colleagues. He felt he learnt more information, from people he did not know who were willing to share, than from his immediate supervisors in his roles previous to film:

*Just really generous, just enthusiastic, you know. Like some crazed Christian on the street. You're not necessarily into what they're into but they're so happy to tell you and maybe not the right analogy but, you know, you get that over-enthusiasm from them. But, of course, they're really excited: "I know something you don't know. I'm going to tell you about it" ... And when you ask the question of them, and not all of them by any stretch of the imagination but enough of them for me to learn a huge amount about the filmic process in a relatively short period of time.*

John described several features of an organisational or team learning environment when he compared the film industry to other creative industries he had worked in. He focused on the lack of hierarchy in film and television, despite its demarcated structure. He observed that people were respected as individuals beyond the confines of their particular role on a production. This facilitated positive communication and information sharing:

*I guess there's a lot less hierarchy in terms of identity in the film community. You are pretty much able to stand alone and be recognised as who you are not as your role. You are considered first as a person really and it's understood that every role is important. There is still the hierarchy and the acknowledgement of people's roles being more important but at the end of the day we all sit down at the same tables in the lunchroom, sitting on set, waiting for other departments and so that's time where*

## RESULTS

*we are all equal. We all have different roles but there's not that dynamic of position overriding personality.*

This does contradict Bechky's (2006) findings where she observed that delineation of roles and hierarchy provided the basis for a film production to work effectively. Role structure does appear to provide a foundation for the effective workings of a production but is combined with swift trust to facilitate it. Role structure also appeared to take on different degrees of importance depending on, for example, how close to the shooting action individuals were and what activities were required. The closer to where footage was shot, the more the role superseded the individual as John discussed:

*It's not until you get into that central area of the actual shooting set where all of a sudden all of the roles are important because nobody's allowed on set unless you need to be there... So that's where every role's important. You cease to be that character. You're the role you play... Outside that you become less defined by your role, more defined by who you are as a person and so I guess it helps that, because that happens all the time, that moving in and out of that central time, there's always that mingling and that facilitates that swift trust.*

Another factor associated with organisational learning is the capacity for teams to learn from failures through creatively problem solving and then reaching positive outcomes (Carmeli et al., 2009). Interviewees recalled many situations where crew worked together to overcome problems and reach a satisfactory conclusion. Jane, an onset production supervisor with over 15 years experience, discussed that it was expected for individuals to admit mistakes. Crew could then work together to find a solution. This has been directly associated with creativity (Larson & Lafasto, 1989; Jaskyte, 2008).

*Yea it's almost a code of ethics in its own way with that enthusiasm but also that trust, just the honesty of someone because there are a lot of things that people do, lie to cover themselves up but that in the long run doesn't cut it, and that honesty to be able to fess up and say I fucked up and because it's a collective thing one person may fuck up, something's gone wrong, let's problem solve because we have to and everyone has from runner down to director. There's a possibility I could fuck up and*

## RESULTS

*really affect the film. And so if things do change then ok the film as a collective has to go “ok what are we going to do about this now?” which can lead to quite interesting results as well which I think is one of the exciting things.*

There appeared to be behavioural norms present around helping others and accepting help, which supported creative problem solving. This intensified when working on set with the particularly rigid time frames. A day of shooting is carefully planned out down to individual shots. A number of tasks need to be successfully carried out to “make the shot” and then move on to the next on the schedule. These all needed to be completed within set hours. Considerable costs can be incurred from extending the shooting hours for the day or carrying shots over to the next day. John discussed the direct links between trust, cooperation, organisational learning and creativity in the microcosm of a set and how necessary he felt cooperation was to a shoot:

*You’re still relying on other people and other departments. So immediately there’s that cooperation that needs to happen that’s defined by your job. So if you can’t find a way to cooperate as people inside that job then it’s going to be difficult for you and will cause problems because if you don’t have that trust then it will fall apart. It will happen less efficiently and that willingness for another department to help you do your job by maybe seeing things and suggesting things and being more creatively helpful will be diminished because they won’t be so willing to do that.*

This willingness to help and cooperate extended to confronting issues and managing conflict, specifically of the operational kind. It was acceptable to have a heated debate and raise voices when discussing an operational issue important to a production and crew would let go of the conflict after. This enabled problems to be resolved, preventing the production being impeded by operational issues. Melanie and Caroline, who both worked in production roles, described these confrontations. They could have an altercation with others on an issue they felt important to the production and expected that a relationship could weather this. Melanie commented:

## RESULTS

*I don't think it's a big deal, I don't care. It's a storm in a tea cup most of the time and you have to get your point across and it might be that particular time it becomes a bit heated but it's nothing to hang onto.*

There appeared to be an understanding that when some people communicated in an overly passionate and confrontational way this was because of their dedication to achieving the best end result. This kind of behaviour was usually explained by the substantial creative talent of some, which could spill over into this style of communication. Caroline discussed this:

*Because of the number of creatives there might be the odd dispute about something but because everyone's on the clock so everyone has to deal with things quickly so they have to deal with it. You can't f... off and come back and discuss it tomorrow, you're taking the shot now so let's go outside and come back and whoever the stronger man is has the call on the shot.*

However, acceptance of this behaviour did have its limits. Crew were still required to work in a functional way with others most of the time. There were few that continued to work who had ongoing destructive behaviours, as John explained:

*You've got to be a very talented person to be given the room to be an arsehole. You've got to be very talented.*

This sits well with the concept of a learning organisation where operational disputes are aired and resolved to enhance productivity and are perceived as a positive, and perhaps necessary, part of this culture.

There also appeared to be a trust in the creative process once a shoot was in motion and control over its preparation had significantly diminished. Not knowing what lay ahead and what solutions may be found, it was implicitly trusted that problems would be solved and the shoot would progress. Jane discussed:

*You've done as much as you can, you start shooting and it's like we've got to just go for it, and it's the flow. And when things come up you've got to trust that things are going to keep moving forward.*

## RESULTS

Having a transparent set of group norms to manage behavioural processes has been found to be a key precursor of team trust. This in turn leads to a collaborative culture and team creativity (Barczak et al., 2010). The research findings of Barczak et al. appear to be well supported in this study.

John brought together many of the trust related mechanisms discussed. He juxtaposed willingness to work to an informal set of norms that were conducive to creativity in film, against his experiences of the need to fight formal rules to achieve this in other creative industries such as advertising. He observed respect for others, high emotional intelligence, innovation, fluidity, creativity and productivity on a production. He saw this industry standing alone within the creative sector in these respects:

*I guess it's really reassuring to know that people can come together and operate on that level of being more socially aware of each other while still being able to produce a high end product that involves such a degree of high end technology, a high degree of all aspects really and it does require quality in all aspects for it to work well. In a lot of workplaces, you see so much that's done at the expense of the individual or roles get reduced so much to more written and hard and fast rules in order to be able to achieve similar sort of quality and efficiency. It's good to see it working and not having that creativity stifled.*

Respondents provided many examples of the prevalence of cognitive, interpersonal and motive-based trust within the film and television production industry. Swift trust appeared to be well supported by a clear set of norms guiding the behaviours of individuals on productions. Trust was closely linked to cooperation, creativity and a learning organisation environment. This combination of trust, collaboration, problem solving and creativity supported by high conformity to norms appeared to result in a highly engaged, productive and high performance work environment.

## 4.2 Personal Impact of the High Trust Environment

Working in a high trust environment with strong social support, collaboration, reflexive learning and creativity had a positive impact at a personal level for all respondents. They described their strong identification with their teams, productions and the overall industry. Most felt satisfied being a part of this unique environment, describing increased well-being as a result.

### SOCIAL IDENTITY

Tajfel (1981) described social identity as the key element linking the individual to a social group: the “knowledge that [we] belong to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to [us] of this group membership” (Tajfel, 1972). Social identification was a common theme in interviewees’ descriptions of trust, collaboration and creativity in the industry. Respondents identified with their teams and with the overall production. They also appeared to have a strong superordinate identity regarding the industry as a whole with examples such as references to “the film community”.

Jane discussed a colleague’s comments on the Facebook social network website describing a crew working together on a production as a “Species”, a specific social identity that was created on each new production. Crew worked long hours under significant pressure creating a unique end product and consequently a myriad of shared experiences. The development of this unique social identity also appeared to be a creative process similar to that of producing a film. When a production ended crew needed to adapt to a different environment. This description aligns directly with definitions of social identity. Jane supported this analogy, observing that several others had similar experiences:

*And you understand each other and you’re in that species and in that world and then that film finishes and that species has to readapt. And all of us were like yea because you do become like each other for that time, in a way. You feel like you’re going through a process of understanding it together and you see it at the beginning, how it*



## RESULTS

*transforms towards the end of the project and you are, you're like each other because you've been working on that film together.*

Similarities were drawn to other industries that were inherently collective or group oriented. Jane, for example, compared her experience of working on set to going to war together but in order to create something rather than fight the enemy. She described the work ethic, collaboration, camaraderie and fun contributed to this feeling of togetherness:

*Often on a work day, people are genuinely excited. You get to go to amazing locations. To be doing that and be having fun. Even though you're working hard, there's that camaraderie. It's like going to war to make a piece of art and it's fun. You're not going to war to kill someone; you're going to war to make something.*

Several interviewees used mechanical and industrial metaphors when describing the film industry, where they were part of a whole rather than working in separate individual roles. Dan described a production as the "the machine" while crew were each "cogs" in this machine. Each had a part to play but was highly dependent on many of the other cogs in order to do their particular job.

Feeling a sense of group distinctiveness when comparing one's group to that of others in an 'us' versus 'them' categorisation is described as Social Categorisation Theory. This categorisation often works alongside social identity (Tajfel, 1971). There were numerous examples of interviewees' pride in the distinctiveness of the film industry, a super-ordinate identity, in comparison to 'the outside world'.

The public perception of the industry being glamorous added to the sense of identity and a feeling of increased status for some. Several discussed that outsiders were often impressed with their occupation and that it had a certain allure. Most interviewees enjoyed the irony of this. From their perspective the reality of their work, on a day-to-day basis, was far from glamorous. They commented that their studio bases were often in disused warehouses or manufacturing facilities, they worked very long hours and their work if broken down to tasks could be somewhat mundane. However, many were happy to play along with this illusion. The façade

## RESULTS

versus the reality of the industry was an in-joke. It was an experience that insiders could share and laugh at together, a prime example of social categorisation and identity.

There also appeared to be a strong identification with the industry being peripheral to what was viewed as mainstream, conservative and conforming society, and a pride in being outsiders. Several respondents contrasted the creativity and freedom of the film industry with the restrictions of more conventional organisations like government departments or bureaucracies. Positive comparisons were also made to both circus and gypsy culture, both of which are seen as on the periphery of society. Melanie commented that film crew might have worked in the circus, if not in film and television production, because of the similarities between these. Dan immediately referred to the industry as “the circus” when beginning his interview. He recalled his sense of belonging when he first began working in the industry using the word “us” with “the circus” and “us freaks”:

*As a punk rock kid I was always fairly visually different and that kind of crosses over where you see heaps of film techs are covered in pictures [tattoos] down and they've got long dreadlocks and whatever they happen to look like, not that it mattered to me but they were definitely not suits and that works for me instantly because I don't fit that mould either so here we are in the circus, us bunch of freaks, and it felt very instantly comfortable.*

Bruce and Dan discussed feeling outsiders when shooting in a provincial or rural location, again in a highly positive and reinforcing light. Numerous trucks and large pieces of equipment along with a sizeable crew would arrive in a small town. They observed that the locals often found this sight unusual and foreign, on occasion describing the crew as “bloody film wankers”. Interviewees, rather than feeling prejudiced against, were proud of being associated with this ‘illegitimate identity’. These “Insecure” identities, which occur where a group is denigrated by those outside of it, can provide increased belonging and, in turn, increased social identity (Haslam et al., 2009).

## FUNDAMENTAL SOCIAL NEEDS

Amiot et al. (2012) proposed three social factors that individuals needed to satisfy to identify with a group. These are autonomy, competence and relatedness. Autonomy, where an individual undertakes activities fitting with their sense of self and feels accepted by others, fits closely to the notion of psychological safety (Kahn, 1990).

Several interviewees in this research commented that they felt safe to speak their minds and in the way that they wished to. They could behave in a way that fitted with their own personal identity. Broad acceptance of others appeared to remain consistent across roles and the organisational hierarchy, creating a sense of equality. Paul, with over 14 years experience who worked in a creative department, implied that individuals felt accepted and that a culture of authenticity was likely to be engendered:

*99% of the time the way people work is the way that they are... You can be yourself and get away with it. You don't need to put on airs and graces particularly. You don't need to pretend to be someone who you're not. You can do your job whoever you are.*

All interviewees felt that this general acceptance of others meant that a wide range of behaviours could be displayed, so long as they were ultimately constructive. Consequently, the industry had its share of eccentric personalities and several felt proud of this. Hannah discussed:

*There's room for acceptance of unusual personalities.*

Interviewees felt that they did not need to play a part or repress significant aspects of their personality as they had when working in other industries. Many interviewees had found this experience quite liberating. Some discussed that many working in the industry may struggle to fit into other environments with stricter behavioural requirements. Bruce, who has since left the industry to start his own business, saw a clear contrast between his time in the industry and after:

## RESULTS

*Reflecting back on myself, I can see I had a lot of freedom in the film industry, you didn't have to watch yourself as you might so the rules are a lot broader.*

Competence, feeling capable and that one's contribution to the group is valued, is the second fundamental social need outlined by Amiot et al. (2012). Jane felt appreciated for her skills and work attitude when she first began working in the industry. She felt that she belonged and found this new experience very positive:

*That's what it felt like for me. It was like coming home. I was appreciated for being a hard worker. I was appreciated for being a bit creative, a bit different and I was appreciated that I could get on with people quickly. All these things that were so quickly appreciated that I was wow, awesome... I found my own niche but it's also I'm socially accepted.*

The third fundamental social need, relatedness, where an individual feels they have established meaningful relations with others, was also strongly supported in discussions regarding affective and relational trust. When interviewees discussed their early experiences of the industry, a key appeal was the fast connections they made with their workmates. They described the invitations they received to socialise and attend parties within a few days of their first job. Many found commonality with their colleagues and quickly struck up new friendships. This was a particularly appealing facet of the culture for those new to the industry as Anna, a senior supervisor in production with over 20 years experience, commented:

*When people come into the industry, that's one thing that really attracts them to it and they form these relationships within the industry and it becomes all there is and that becomes what's important to them.*

Hannah, when referring to her current experiences, specifically associated the high trust environment and camaraderie with speeding up friendship and connection between crew:

*And I definitely think it speeds up the friendship process. You're there, you're a team, you're trusting them, you're best friends all of a sudden.*

## RESULTS

Not only did interviewees appear to quickly bond with their workmates but these bonds deepened fast because of the intense working environment. At least ten hour days, to fit with the length of shooting, are usually the norm. Additionally, many on-set crew set up and pack down outside shooting hours resulting in even longer hours. Overtime is an accepted part of the culture for onset and offset crew with most undertaken as a team. A feeling of comradeship against the odds could be engendered, which was frequently described as exhilarating, as Sarah discussed:

*That feeling of belonging when you're doing overtime together and everyone else has gone home but you can't because you've really got to get that job done. Everyone's working really hard, hilarious sense of camaraderie. You just laugh because if you don't you just end up crying and it's really great.*

Closeness to others appeared to intensify for on-set crew and became more so when shooting on location rather than in the studio. It was described as intensifying even further when on 'away jobs' where crew live and work together away from their homes, families and friends. Caroline, who worked off set, commented on this higher team intensity and identification of on-set crew:

*I would say that on-set crews, just from observing, they all seem to be a lot clickier than...the people that are off set, you're there 24 hours a day with the on-set crew...like departments, you get quite close with the people in your own team. Well on-set crew is just like one big team isn't it?*

Crew bonds intensified, working long hours together against the elements with the added challenges and frustrations of a location shoot. Here teams really needed to support each other to achieve their objectives as they had little access to additional crew, equipment or other resources. The challenges of working together in adversity created a sense of excitement and adrenaline for some similar to that discussed by Sarah where a team undertook overtime together. Hannah described working in a snow blizzard with crew from departments she usually had little to do with that traditionally operated with different priorities. In this situation everyone chipped in to help each other and, consequently, a deep connection between crew was created:

*You go into high survival mode and do forge deep connections with those people. It's like I remember him, he was awesome, he was a great guy and you feel like you've been through something really extreme with that person.*

Autonomy and relatedness have close similarities to the notion of high quality relationships, which are formed as a result of high trust and social identity. These kinds of relationships have been found to correlate highly with both psychological safety and creativity (Carmeli & Gittell, 2008). This connection has been supported in this study.

### **THE POSITIVE PERSONAL IMPACT**

The satisfaction of these fundamental social needs and consequent social identity has been strongly associated with increased well-being (Haslam et al., 2009; Amiot et al., 2012). Well-being can be separated into two distinct forms. The first is immediate happiness and pleasure measured through maximised positive and minimised negative affect. This can be described as hedonic well-being (Sharma & Sharma, 2010; Amiot et al., 2012). The second deeper form, eudaemonic well-being, is described as having a sense of meaning, purpose and belonging which in turn contributes to self-realisation and self-actualisation. Interviewees provided evidence of experiencing both from working in this high trust environment.

There were many examples provided of hedonic well-being resulting from operating in the film environment. The word "exciting" came up for all interviewed when describing their experiences of working in the film and television industry. Sarah used the words "extreme" and "exciting" in her description of how she found working in the film industry:

*It's extreme, it's exciting.*

Discussions also centred on the word "fun". A sense of fun appeared to be woven into most aspects of the working environment as has already been seen in descriptions. Hannah discussed this from the perspective of the environment and the people she worked with:

## RESULTS

*But it also makes it really fun and lots of lively personalities that you probably don't come across in your average government department.*

Working in the high trust and high social identity environment of the film industry appeared to buffer individuals against negative affect, an aspect of hedonic well-being. High social identity has been shown to buffer individuals and groups from stress (Haslam et al, 2005; Haslam et al, 2009). There was a lack of discussion amongst interviewees of everyday stress. This was despite the long hours and high pressure, the tight deadlines and dependence on many others for the completion of tasks of which there was limited control. However, descriptions of these situations, as previously quoted, were usually associated with positive words, rather than the likes of 'stress', 'daily grind' or a resentment of the conditions. Anna wondered why more people didn't feel strain under the conditions:

*Why don't they? I'm not quite sure why they don't in some scenarios. The expectation is huge on the workload and the amount we have to get through in a certain time period and then you just get used to that. You get used to that amount of workload and then there are some days which are just like, you literally go home and I just go "I have no idea how I got through that today. I literally have no idea how I got out the other end of that." If you were in a normal environment and they were expecting you to get that amount of work in a day.*

Jane discussed that crew do tend to work at a high stress level but that they provide each other with social support. Social support is likely to occur because of the strong connections between crew. Norms also underlay these behaviours. There has been found to be a significant link between social support and stress buffering (Amiot et al., 2012; Haslam, 2009):

*Yep on a mini-basis you do and also because everyone is kind of working at that same stress level, everyone does try and be supportive of those around them and supportive of the fact that we are all working at that heightened level.*

Two interviewees did specifically refer to the hours worked as being too long but simultaneously reinforced their enjoyment of the industry and the hedonic well-being they gained. Melanie discussed:

## RESULTS

*I don't like the hours. I like everything else about it. If I could do that same job in a 40 hour week, oh that would be heaven. Even a 45 hour week, if you're listening God, just for the record!*

This high trust, creative environment also appeared to contribute to deeper eudaemonic well-being of belonging and purpose for some interviewees. Several examples were provided in discussions regarding social identity. When Dan began working in the industry he felt he fitted in and was similar to his workmates. There was congruence between his own identity and that of his new colleagues and environment:

*I instantly found that I was amongst fairly like-minded people, no matter which cog they played in it and it's a hugely diverse process. So it came very easily to me because they spoke my language I guess.*

Several discussed that working in film and television production provided them with an identity, perhaps at a time when this was not clear to them. Most interviewees were in their twenties when they began working in the industry. They appeared to be searching for a sense of belonging and an understanding of themselves.

Interviewees quickly integrated their new social identity, which they enjoyed, into their own personal identity. This was facilitated by the "total institution" environment of a film production, as Bechky (2006) described. The wholesale adoption of this new identity filled a gap for several interviewees. The long hours, the expectation of close to total commitment to one's job, the camaraderie and collective purpose appeared to quickly facilitate a feeling of belonging. The total commitment appealed to many early in their careers as Melanie described:

*People looking for an identity, you know, because it takes up so much of your time. If you get into it when you're young like most of us do, you're kind of at that stage of your life where you're looking for, I'm only talking about myself, looking for a place to belong, looking for what it is that you're going to do. And you get this gig that's all consuming...And also you don't mind, you don't care that you're working a 12 hour shoot day plus. You're happy to give up your life for the fact that you're belonging.*



## RESULTS

Bruce discussed how much he enjoyed working in this new fun and open environment where he got to do interesting work and was not micromanaged. This was so enjoyable that it did not seem like work to him:

*And it was this wildly exciting world, it just felt like fantasy land. \$200 a day for turning up. I got this huge meal, tea and coffee. I would have done it for free. That was the crazy part of it.*

Similarly, both Jane and Melanie discussed their high level of personal commitment to their roles and to the industry, describing their work being their “life” rather than just a job. This reinforces the contribution it made to their eudaemonic well-being.

Those that worked in creative and technical departments discussed the enjoyment, pride and sense of purpose they gained from being involved in what they saw as a high functioning creative industry. This was one of the draw cards for several to working in the industry. This resulted in their commitment to doing their best to create a high quality and creative product. Jane spoke of the collaboration and the learning organisation environment of film and television production, contrasting this to other forms of art and creativity she had been involved in. This appeared to be a significant drawcard for her:

*I really like the collective creation part of it; I think it's the coolest art form in that it cannot be made alone, that everyone is contributing.*

Those that worked in production took a slightly different attitude to their sense of purpose, with their direct involvement in design and creation being more limited. For Anna the attractiveness of film and television production was found through working with creative people:

*The freedom is in the personalities that are attracted to it and the creative minds that people have because I don't think it's really that particularly creative, not once you get into the nitty gritty of it. It's creative for some people but it's always creative within parameters.*

Again the word “freedom” was used when describing the reasons for enjoying the industry. This is despite the, already alluded to, range of behavioural norms

## RESULTS

required to be adhered to in order to succeed. Anna also discussed the confidence and self-worth she gained from others depending on her from an emotional and task-oriented perspective. She really enjoyed and felt 'validated' by this:

*Absolutely. Huge validation from being needed.*

All these provide examples of both hedonic and eudaemonic well-being gained as a result of participating in the film industry. Although the sense of purpose was particularly strong when respondents first began operating in the industry, all discussed how much they still loved what they did after working in the industry so long.

All this indicates that the film and television production environment facilitated high social identity. The social factors of autonomy, competence and relatedness appeared to be well satisfied as a result of operating in this high trust culture. Psychological safety was generally high. Hedonic and eudaemonic well-being appeared to be positively impacted as a result for most. While clarity of personal identity was provided for many who appeared to be searching for this when they joined the industry.

### **4.3 Breakdown of Trust**

Despite substantial discussion regarding the high trust environment of the film and television production industry, all interviewees freely offered examples of times when this had broken down. Some spoke of their own experiences of being part of this breakdown and others discussed their observations of others in these situations.

As their time in the industry wore on, interviewees saw or experienced occasions where trust and its related mechanisms broke down. This appeared to occur in three main areas: through the breakdown of cognitive trust because of perceived incompetence, through the breakdown of affective, relational and motive-based trust and resulting collaboration; and thirdly, the see-sawing of social identity in their early years in the industry, with the contractual nature of the film and television production industry.

#### **BREAKDOWN OF COGNITIVE TRUST**

As discussed, cognitive trust is one of the cornerstones of the film industry environment in Auckland. Crew trust each other to be competent in their role and craft, and to successfully follow through on the tasks allocated to them. Norms guide crew regarding behaviours that are expected of them, enabling this environment of cognitive trust to develop and be sustained.

Consequently, one of the ways trust broke down was when others were perceived to be incompetent in undertaking their work. Tolerance around incompetence depended on how trusted an individual was to begin with. This was influenced by how established an individual's reputation was, their seniority and the level of power they wielded in the industry. Those that were new to the industry or unknown to a production were therefore more likely to quickly lose the trust of others if they broke the norms. As their roles and tasks were usually less complex and of a lower level of responsibility, it was likely to be transparent to most around them when they were incompetent. To add to this transparency, others may be

## RESULTS

unwilling to cover up for them as they might for others more known and established. Even with the considerable interdependence of tasks and roles on a production, the impact on the production was likely to be less significant than incompetence in senior roles. Anna provided an example of how quickly a new participant in the industry could lose the trust of others, even those they were not directly working with, which then impacted on their reputation and capacity to secure a new contract:

*Last week I heard something about people being marched off. Mental note, don't use them! But without actually really finding out. At some point I will delve deeper. Second or third story so maybe you think don't think I'll be trusting them.*

In contrast, the breaking of trust by those in senior roles appeared to be an opaque and complex matter, with the protection by others far more likely. Ironically, the potential impact of lowered competence of those at a senior level on productivity and engagement was significant. The more an individual was known and the stronger their reputation, the greater the tolerance appeared to be around perceived incompetence. There was significant discussion regarding this, because those in this level role appeared somewhat exempt from the consequences of breaking norms. When exploring the reasons for this perceived exemption, the main theme appeared to be the level of power they had.

One key area, alluded to by several interviewees, where incompetence at this senior level could occur, was poor creative vision or poor communication of this vision. Anna, in a senior supervisory role in production, discussed this:

*Some people don't have the vision, they can't actually visualise. The only way they can visualise is if that have something put in front of them and they can just say no but they can't visualise. You see that a lot which is strange for a creative industry. There are a lot at the top of a creative industry that can't visualise.*

This could create significant problems for crew working directly with this individual. If a team was provided with poor vision then they would not have a clear brief. It was therefore more challenging to create a product that fit with what the head of

## RESULTS

department wanted. Teams would have to unnecessarily recreate a product, often several times, until reaching a satisfactory result. Paul, a supervisor in a creative department, discussed an example of this situation, illustrating the frustration of crew working under these conditions:

*Like they don't know what the hell they want, they just want you to come back to them and then they'll decide what they want to do. It's such an arse-about way of doing things.*

This inevitably led to ineffective use of time, energy and resources. Overtime may then be required for a department to meet deadlines. This lack of vision, or poor communication of it, could also occur at production leader, or senior executive, level. It could impact across the production due to the influence of such a role. Paul discussed a situation where he felt a head of production was incompetent in this area and how this led to the broad breakdown of trust. He described the impact on engagement, productivity and, particularly, creativity:

*The way that they work and they are is that they're indecisive people, and they have an idea of what it is they want but they don't quite know how to get there. So they can't direct their HODs as to how to get there because they don't quite know themselves. So people have made four films worth already but it's been wasted and discarded and it gets to the point where you produce things enough times, that never get used, you stop caring. And that becomes very demoralising... People just don't give a shit. That's the bottom line. They just know it's probably not going to be used so they don't bother making the effort that they should because it's like they're not going to use it so it doesn't matter.*

Another major area where cognitive trust could break down was where senior leaders implemented ambiguous or disorganised structures and processes. This issue was alluded to particularly by those working in the costume department. Comparisons were made between those costume designers that created clear structures and processes and those who did not. It could be that the costume department does not have the same depth of standardised processes as other departments, which may relate to the historical status of this department. Sarah

## RESULTS

felt that costume had a lower ranking, and less power within a production, because it has historically been female dominated. This is evidenced most obviously by lower pay rates. Lower status could potentially influence the level of resourcing as well as the sophistication of processes:

*There's still a great amount of sexism [in the industry] though. Huge. Just one little point, you just look at the costume department and how much they're paid and what everyone else is paid. I think we're the lowest paid department because we're predominantly women.*

There were three main reasons for lack of structure provided by the costume designer: firstly, a head of department may simply have a disorganised style; secondly, they may specifically prefer ambiguity as they feel it facilitates more effective creativity; or lastly, the power and control they felt they gained from holding back information and delegation to a team. Bridget and Paul discussed productions where the designer purposely had greater ambiguity in structure from a creative perspective. They observed that, where roles and processes were not clearly demarcated, empire building and conflict within the department tended to result. This ironically led to lowered trust as well as creativity. Bridget discussed this:

*At X Production everything's more open so, depending on the person, there's room for them to spread or take control over areas that they deem to be theirs that aren't. And there's no boundaries and it can be quite difficult to negotiate if you choose to... That's the way that Y likes it and it works for them because it's fluid I suppose but it just takes one or two bad eggs to manipulate that situation and they do.*

Sarah had observed instances where heads of department had power and control issues, and how the ensuring lack of structure or communication impacted on trust and eventually performance within the department. All three felt that an erosion of trust within a department occurred if unclear structures and processes were implemented by their head of department. The ramifications appeared to be significant not only with poor use of use of time and money but also an eventual

## RESULTS

feeling of lack of respect for creative output. This could combine with lowered engagement in a vicious cycle. Paul commented:

*It leads to stress which leads to bad management which leads to conflict, long hours, people not being able to you know, we're creative people, we want to be able to do a good job. If you don't get the time to do a good job, it's leads to not much respect for your own work, whereas if you've got time, even if you've got loads and loads of stuff to do, if you've got the time to manage it, you can manage it so you could do the best that you could do.*

Paul saw this as the tension between creativity and structure, the latter of which was associated with commercialism and corporatisation. These values had negative connotations for many who worked in this industry who wanted to escape such environments. Paul, however, felt that in order to be successful creatively there also needed to be effective structures and processes channelling this:

*It's the ultimate conflict in a creative industry with creative minded people thinking that because they're creative they don't need structure and all flowy and that these geniuses just do their thing. Well no it's a business and it's a business that's got tight time constraints and tight money constraints and it's got to be efficiently run and managed otherwise it just turns to shit. And that's the fundamental crux of the industry – it's those two worlds colliding.*

Bruce, who worked in a technical department, however, took a different perspective. He felt that the increased structure of the industry was detrimental to creativity and competence and was certainly not as enjoyable to work in as it had been. This seemed an interesting tension between freedom and structure in the facilitation of creativity.

Beyond the breakdown of cognitive trust, as a result of individual incompetence, there appeared to be variance in how well crew conformed to cognitive trust norms across types of productions. On commercials, for example, a production was short in duration but with very high demands regarding task completion within tight timeframes. Consequently, there was a quick ramp up in and strict conformity to the behavioural norms. On film productions of longer duration, particularly

## RESULTS

international projects, there were high expectations of task achievement, professionalism and capability. On television series that were long running, however, whether local or international, expectations of and conforming to cognitive trust norms were described as lower by several interviewees. One reason for this appeared to be that as contracts were long and ongoing, in time they developed greater similarity to working permanently. However, crew continued to be managed using the same formal and informal processes as the other more temporary production types. Productivity could be lower on these kinds of productions because of this greater leeway with norm compliance. Jane discussed how these environments could develop their own unique culture over time which could be a dysfunctional one:

*Those really intense jobs, a really long television episodic thing almost develops into its own culture that is often can be quite weird... a whole environment gets created. And often that's usually from the top and how the heads were chosen and you can so see how it trickles down.*

How a crew member was dealt with again appeared to differ considerably depending on their seniority. If their role was relatively unimportant and they were not known, they were likely to be dealt with in a cut and dried way. They may be kept on until the job's end and not hired again, without feedback, or their contract may be terminated during the production. Bruce provided an example of the latter:

*It's not certain death when you do it but if you've been late 3 or 4 times in a row mate, you just might as well forget about it. To the point where... we're leaving we see them running down the road but we go f... it! We've already waited for them 10 minutes and they're not here... We'd be on the phone saying hey we're down one person. We need another person so we're getting someone out at 5.30 in the morning saying are you awake? Do you want to work with us? Come in. And when that person turned up we said sorry we've got someone else.*

However, dealing with an individual who had significant influence was a more daunting prospect for many, and often was not dealt with directly. Hannah discussed how she had found ways of operating around a head of department who



## RESULTS

was not performing, particularly where the situation had not been dealt with at a more senior level. She altered structures and processes and double-checked her supervisor's work, an inefficient use of a department's energy and resources:

*So you actually start working through mechanisms of not having to deal with them or how you're going to position that department differently. How you are going to work around the fact that you can't trust them, how are you going to double-check that they're going to do the work that they say they're going to do.*

This situation could often be viewed as nepotism by crew, lowering trust in both the decision maker and the individual hired. Several respondents saw nepotism as a significant impediment to the smooth working of the industry. Particularly for those that had also worked in the industry overseas where this was not as prevalent. Bridget described nepotism as trumping competence:

*Nepotism is more important here than professionalism across the board.*

Jane discussed how those in senior roles that were not performing may continue to gain new contracts, despite their lack of cognitive trustworthiness. At times this had the potential to distort the high performance culture of the industry:

*It sounds quite harsh but often people just get employed again and again even if that happens [they do not perform] because they are known.*

### **BREAKDOWN OF INTERPERSONAL TRUST**

Several interviewees felt that another key reason for the breakdown in trust was the lack of capabilities in undertaking challenging conversations and handling confrontation. Those that were not performing to expectations may not be provided with feedback and constructive ideas about how to remedy the situation. In time this also led to lowered trust in the individual who was not effectively managing these situations. The management of challenging conversations and dealing with conflict of a relational nature was also perceived by most interviewees as an area that did not work well on productions.

## RESULTS

There were norms regarding operational conflict, which involved dealing with issues as they occurred, to minimise damage to the production. However, conflict and issues pivoting around relationships and ongoing performance issues seemed to be dealt with quite differently. They did not appear to be clearly normed in the way that many other behaviours were. Hannah discussed this:

*Yea, or behind their back... no one really puts a standard down up front, complaints need to be upfront to a person, you know, this needs to be how you talk to a person if you've got issues.*

There did not seem to be formal processes regarding managing performance or relationship issues either. One reason for this was the contractual nature of most roles, where formal processes are usually absent and issues can be avoided. Anna commented:

*There isn't a protocol to deal with it. Non-performance is always a difficult one because we go: "it's only 14 weeks, I'll just deal with it and at the end of it they're off. I'm not having them back. I'm not working with them again."*

The absence of performance feedback structures, formal or informal, appeared to lead to issues. This was particularly apparent with ongoing television series with their longer, often ongoing contracts. However, the implication was that those that were not performing were not provided with an opportunity to learn. Hannah observed:

*There's definitely an unhealthy side of the industry where you can get away with avoiding conflict till you get to the end of a job because you know that's going to be the end you don't need to work with that person again probably. It's like get the job done, cover up the tracks and then move onto the next job that happens, that person hopefully won't be there so it's quite unforgiving in that respect as well, that people don't normally get the opportunity to talk through the issues and really learn from them.*

Several respondents noted that confronting even relatively minor issues of a competence or relationship nature might escalate, as this could be seen as breaking

## RESULTS

norms regarding collaboration and support. John discussed the lack of processes and skills in effectively managing relationship issues:

*It's just the little things. If you do run into problems there is so much riding on the way that you will sort that problem out. If you're seen to complain then it will bring about so many consequences that you don't want because it's operating so much on those interpersonal relationships.*

Conflict management appeared to be flawed at a senior level also. Even production leaders discussed the challenge of managing poor performance or interpersonal issues that were affecting trust in their teams. Conflict with people of an equal or greater level of power and influence within the industry was seen as particularly problematic. This seemed to be connected to the fear of damage to one's reputation by the criticised person. However, the avoidance of these issues at a senior level was often viewed in a cynical way by crew, implying a loss of trust. From the outside they looked to be avoiding dealing with a situation for selfish reasons. Jane indicated her cynicism:

*They get shitty at each other but they also don't tell each other to pull their heads in because they're just going to be in that same position next time because they're both using each other I suppose.*

There appeared to be a lack of understanding of what skills and processes to use to manage performance and conflict in general. Hannah felt that there was little time to deal with it effectively, formally or informally. Hannah, who is in a senior supervisory role in a creative department, appeared to have stronger conflict management skills than most interviewed:

*Ultimately what's most important is getting the job done because it's often in such a tight timeframe that there isn't really much time for people to be talked to, interviewed, problems to be ironed out, bring someone else in. I guess in a big organisation you would do all those things.*

Jane displayed a lack of competence around performance management and constructive feedback when describing how she dealt with a team member. She

## RESULTS

demonstrated a common attitude of the 'sink or swim' mentality that was experienced by interviewees when they first entered the industry.

*And it was slowly revealing that she didn't have that "it" stuff but it didn't get to the point that I could give her a warning, it got to the point where I needed to find someone else and so I didn't get the opportunity to say 'buck up your ideas'. I showed her things and she didn't learn. For me the point in that was the warning and because she was casual I didn't have that trust level to hire her more than casually and I just had to say look I just need to hire someone with more experience.*

There was little critical mass of skill in managing difficult conversations, which crew could model from. This is particularly significant when modelling behaviour appears to be the primary form of learning within the industry. Very little formal training is available that is seen as useful and it rarely pivots around managing interpersonal communication and relationships, despite the importance of these skills in the industry. When a supervisor had effective constructive feedback skills, both performance and interpersonal, this was clearly noticed and respected as these behaviours are so rare. Paul discussed such a situation:

*If you've been run by a good, skilled HOD you'll come away with a clear idea of a., whether you did a good job or b., whether you did a bad job, how you did. You'll get some form of feedback. I know with the designers I respect and love working for, they're the designers that have given me clear feedback and this is awesome, you really need to work on this, like X said "you need to shut the f. up and just chill out" and I love her for that. So I always come away feeling that I have achieved what I was hired to achieve but there's so many costume designers that don't do that.*

If significant issues occur the outcome of this skill deficit could be lowering of trust, which in turn could lead to lowered productivity. Potentially destructive behaviours could occur in these situations when feedback was not provided to the individual concerned. The destructive conversations about this individual could escalate. Examples were provided of individuals being scapegoated for issues, without the issues being explored properly. Sarah discussed:

## RESULTS

*I've been in a situation where there was this conflict and it was all being centred on this person. She became this scapegoat for other people that weren't doing their job properly so everybody believed it and instead of, I just could not understand why the designer did not stop it except she was partly the cause of it. We had a meeting about it, without the person involved I may say, and she got this meeting together because she'd been pulled up on something and she said this is happening, that's happening, they're not doing their job properly and I said why have you let that go, why have you let it come to this, why haven't you talked to this person? And she was flabbergasted that I'd said that. She was like well I've tried. But no, she hadn't.*

Views did vary considerably on whether the interpersonal issues that occurred were structural or individual. Three discussed that many of these situations were blown out of proportion and were not as serious as made out to be by participants. All three operated in predominantly operational roles within production and in a production role in a creative department. Anna felt there was far too much avoidable conflict, and most of it was as a result of friends falling out with each other and losing their relational trust. She felt this was partly because of the kinds of people who worked in the industry, they were creative and 'dramatic' and were more prone to create these kinds of situations:

*Relationship conflict. Yea but I just think there's too much going on because we've got all these personalities that are involved in a pressure situation, in a long hours situation that, honestly if you had to listen to everything that was happening, that would be your full time job. You'd be sitting there listening to it. And also I think the personality types that are attracted to the industry are attracted to that as well.*

After discussing with her in the interview the anonymous opinions of those in creative supervisory roles such as Sarah and John, Anna felt that she understood their perspective better. She consequently adjusted her view in their direction.

There does appear to be some development of processes to support challenging discussions though. Jane, who has worked on a number of international film projects in recent years, commented that there was now a protocol for handling performance or interpersonal issues on these types of productions. Conflict was

## RESULTS

referred to the heads of departments who were expected to resolve this quickly and efficiently:

*You know your HOD is your representative so if someone has a problem they go and talk to your HOD to talk to their person... it's like a departmental self monitoring... I think that's come basically from it becoming more professional.*

Jane's explanation for the development of these protocols was that international film productions had more sophisticated norms. Also the longevity of an international film, often as long or longer than a television series, meant that interpersonal as well as operational conflict could potentially occur. It needed to be resolved effectively to prevent the production being jeopardised. She felt a reason why professionalism in the New Zealand industry had increased in recent years was because local crew now modelled behaviour from international films that they had not previously been exposed to. Local crew then carried these behaviours to other kinds of productions. However, the uses of these protocols appeared to be limited to certain significant issues and had not yet broadened in scope or skill.

In summary, both cognitive and relational trust did break down at times. Interviewees could clearly recall these instances and the impact they had on crew. This occurred through feeling that individuals were not performing or not treating others with respect. It also appeared to breakdown when performance or interpersonal issues were avoided. There was fear around management of performance and relationship issues, for those in senior roles in particular, because of the potential loss of reputation as a consequence of trust breakdown.

There is a significant lack of both formal and informal protocols within the film industry to guide crew through managing performance and interpersonal issues. As there was a deficit of skill in this area with the industry, there appeared to be few role models to learn from as well.

## 4.4 Personal Impact of the Breakdown of Trust

As discussed, all interviewees had clear recollections of either experiencing or observing the breakdown of trust and its related mechanisms. These situations could become exacerbated by the industry-wide deficit in competence around managing difficult, performance and relationship related, discussions. This appeared to have a significant impact at a personal level for many individuals. The loss of trust described by respondents was associated with loss of social identity. Loss of social identity is associated with lowered psychological well-being, both hedonic and eudaemonic, as well as lowered self-esteem via the loss of certainty in self-identity. It is also associated with increased stress and lowered physical well-being (Haslam et al., 2009). If the social cohesiveness, created by the usual high trust film environment, breaks down then this can substantially impact individuals psychologically and physically.

These experiences appeared to be prevalent earlier in careers where individuals were vulnerable to breakdowns in trust. One area of vulnerability was connection with others. Quickly formed friendships were a significant draw card for new participants. They felt close connections to their fellow crew and they gained a strong sense of acceptance and support from working in this environment. These connections appeared to have more importance at this stage, particularly if an individual's own identity was less secure. Consequently, newcomers might try hard to build connections and please others. These connections were thought to be deep and that friends and teams would always provide support when challenges arose. Newcomers were more likely to be vulnerable to criticism and loss of relationships through the breakdown in trust. However, the trust towards those new to the industry with tenuous reputations tended to have a low threshold.

Paul discussed an experience early in his career where his trust and deep connection to his team was not warranted as they were dysfunctional. His openness towards others and keenness to make friends left him open to destructive behaviour. To add to this, at that point he had poorly developed conflict

## RESULTS

management skills and felt unable to stand up for himself. From his perspective, trust was broken in a significant way. This impacted on his capacity to cope with the pressures of his role and was exacerbated by his extreme working conditions. He was affected significantly by this situation, both physically and mentally:

*I used to wear my heart on my sleeve and I couldn't understand why everyone was being so mean to me. I was trying my hardest, doing my best, wasn't being unpleasant, why were people slagging me off?... I went nuts. That was probably the closest I've ever been to psychotic. By the end of it I was deeply paranoid and I was borderline psychotic. I was suffering from severe sleep deprivation – maximum of 3–4 hours sleep a night. Because of the hours.*

Another significant area of personal difficulty in their early years, was dealing with a production ending. It appeared to almost be a shock to transition from a high trust, high social identity environment, where there was significant collaboration and team creativity, to unemployment. The high social identity created within that production also ended. Crew would then go their separate ways until the next project they were employed on. Dan did not comment about his own feelings of depression but could empathise with how this could occur with others early in their careers, particularly with the loss of purpose. Finding a sense of purpose was a strong attraction for several when they started. Loss of purpose is associated with lowered eudaemonic well-being, which can affect personal identity:

*I could imagine the depression. The hole that is left from the lack of purpose. I can understand that and I don't think there's no easy way of dealing with that.*

There was a loss of camaraderie and social support when a production ended. The common identity, of working together 'against all odds' towards the same goal, was also lost. Interviewees recalled their experiences of a production ending, believing they had a deep connection with some of their fellow crew that would continue beyond the production's end. However, this was not necessarily the case. Connections could be intense but they did not always last. Anna discussed what she described as her naivety, in her initial understanding of the longevity of her connections with others, when she reached the end of a production:



## RESULTS

*And also finishing a project and thinking we were all best of mates and then there was no one to be seen. It was experiences like that where I went “hold on now, I get it!” Realising what those relationships were and the environments were as well...At home in your flat on your own, or your perceived friends. Hey they’ve just swanned off to the job you didn’t get, oh right and you’ve got no money and you’re sitting at home by yourself all day. What do you do? There’s a real emotional rollercoaster that happens.*

Anna felt that the long hours crew worked in the film industry contributed to this false sense of enduring connection, when they were, in fact, often fleeting:

*I also wonder whether the relationships that are formed are a lot more fleeting than people think they are. They think they are forming in-depth relationships with people but the reality is that they’re not always continuous relationships that are going to continue on through. I’ve always felt, and that probably has affected how people think in terms of integrity and trust and communication and all those sorts of things, there is a lot of people who are really thinking they’re making another friend as opposed to this is a job that you’re all on but this is skewed because of the hours that we’re working to. I have no doubt of that.*

A few interviewees, now they had been in the industry for a few years, found it strange catching up with people they had developed a very close on-the-job bond with. They no longer expected to stay in touch with them but it still felt uncomfortable when they did see each other. Jane discussed:

*It has a sour taste, we’re not working on that job even though we were so incredibly close. I don’t know what we talk about; we can’t just talk about that old job any more! And also you don’t want to be talking about the future jobs, oh you’ve got another job, you’ve got another job, I haven’t got another job! I think most people have their small pool of friends that they stick with and then we don’t keep in touch with everybody.*

Most interviewees described feeling they were on an emotional rollercoaster in their early film career, as they frequently transitioned between work and unemployment – two extremely different environments. Earlier in her career, Jane

## RESULTS

had oscillated between burnout, and wanting to extricate herself from the industry, and wanting to be a part of it again because of the sense of social identity, or 'family', she gained from participating in it:

*And then I went through periods of burnout from that and then I just don't want to do that again and then totally coming back to it so it was like a family type world for me that I felt comfort and a lot of people do refer to it as film family.*

Despite the fact interviewees were now experienced in the industry, they still felt the impact of a production coming to an end, but in different ways. Most commented that this sudden transition from full stimulation and occupation of time, to nothing, had a significant impact on their energy and well-being. Several described the sense of physical and mental exhaustion they often felt after finishing an intense production, which required so much energy and commitment. Some felt this was masked by high social identity and the stimulating environment. This appeared to exacerbate lowered well-being when a production did end. Anna discussed:

*Yea at the end as a result of that highly stressed state that we're working in... The real sense of grief at the end when you finish it all because you've been in that hyper sense of reality you go down to your shooting stage and then you're spat out at the end.*

Either the interviewees themselves had personally experienced anxiety and/or depression in-between contracts or had observed this first hand as Hannah discussed:

*I think without a doubt I know people get seriously depressed after film jobs and it's just like, you're so hyped up and operating on such a different level and then bang it's over and you've got weeks of your body, your adrenaline, your emotions, your social contacts, all of that, you're needing to adjust and it's a really huge shift for a human being who's used to operating on a really steady level and having some kind of a routine.*

## RESULTS

This appeared to be magnified if an individual had experienced a loss of trust on the job they had been working on. Stress and distress levels had already risen substantially from operating in this environment and the sudden transition appeared to increase this, despite the hope that it would lessen. Sarah had experienced this in her most recent job. She discussed her reaction to ending a contract, even though she had chosen to. Sarah appeared to have a substantial identity crisis as well as depression:

*Yea at X I couldn't think of anything else in the last week. "I just want to get out of here; I'm just going to love it so much." And I got home and I was like "Is this all there is? Now I have to paint and stuff but I don't want to, I just want to stare into space for hours. I don't know what to do, who am I?"... That's probably been building for the last few years anyway, because I've been working for quite a time solidly and that's good because you don't think.*

Sarah had a more negative attitude towards the industry than others interviewed. She had a particularly challenging environment in her last job and was still feeling significantly psychologically affected. At the time of the interview Sarah felt that many film industry crew were not emotionally resilient and that the high octane environment provided them with a sense of purpose they could not perhaps fill from within.

*So I'm sure there's a lot of emotionally damaged people in the industry and it suits them to work that hours because it's insane.*

Hannah discussed that now she had been operating in the industry for a long time, and was in a senior role which required more energy and performance, she felt significant depression towards the end of a production rather than after it had finished. She felt this was because of the energy required and the lack of freedom she felt which combined with her increased levels of exhaustion as the shoot progressed. It also seemed that she sank now during a production, rather than after, because of her lowered dependence on connections and social identity within a production. Her social and personal identities appeared to lie equally outside of a production:

## RESULTS

*Well I definitely suffer from depression, I definitely get really low during work but it's not necessarily about, these days it's a yearning for the gap, for the in-between but I'm just not looking for those deep relationships in the film environment.*

Jane discussed working with supervisors, who were new to New Zealand over two productions. On the first she felt they did not trust her, whilst on the second she felt they did. There was a marked difference in her physical and mental well-being between the ends of these two productions. The effects of not feeling trusted in the first production were highly negative to the point of breakdown, while the second production was a very positive experience where she regained her love for the film industry:

*In one job they had trouble trusting us and when they came back for a second job they trusted me and it was a completely different feeling... That first job was a seven month job and I left it feeling like I was going to have a nervous breakdown and the second job came along and I reluctantly took it. It was one of the best jobs I've ever done and it was probably also the healing aspect.*

Both Sarah and Jane provided examples on specific productions, of experiencing lowered social identity, primarily through the loss of psychological safety. This affected the well-being of both. They chose to leave these productions as they felt they could not change their situations and continuing to work in these conditions was untenable. As both were in pivotal roles at the time, this was likely to significantly affect the performance of the production they had been working on. Sarah commented:

*And I've just worked on something that has just been just issue, after issue, after issue, after issue the whole damned time with the entire thing being emotional crap that went on. It created a whole entire workspace of unresolved anger and frustration.*

The lack of skill in performance and creative feedback discussions from a head of department resulted in general tiredness and cynicism in the department. Anna observed the difficulties crew in creative roles had, if receiving poor direction or feedback regarding their work:

## RESULTS

*Every time they come up with an idea they don't get enough productive feedback on what was wrong with what they presented. They just get told no they're not wanting that. Just not getting that which I think is really difficult. It's one thing to put something in front of someone but another thing to get a constructive reason why or a direction to go in.*

When crew had been working in the industry longer, and had a more established reputation, issues could also occur around the souring of relationships. Relationships deepened between crew as they continued to work on productions together. If these relationships disintegrated, when serious conflict or issues occurred, the general deficit in conflict management skills could worsen these situations. This could lead to the breakdown of trust, with potential ramifications for those involved, but also for the greater production if situations remained unresolved. This could happen especially on television series and could reoccur the next time these individuals worked together unless issues were resolved. John had personally experienced this and felt strongly that he was unsupported within the production when the breakdown occurred which appeared to exacerbate the impact. His reputation and career was affected by this situation and he struggled to gain work for over two years, despite his vindication regarding the issue. This was a very challenging time for him emotionally and financially. It significantly affected his self-esteem and he contemplated exiting the industry. His experiences from this difficult period still appear to influence his perspective several years on:

*And it [interpersonal conflict] comes into it a lot more in long productions because those things are allowed to hang around and become more important to people because that's a period of time and people. It does become very unhealthy for people because they will come out in those relationships in the end and will affect people the way they work. I don't know whether there's a lot of attrition with people leaving the industry or not because they can't stand things not being resolved. It would certainly be true for me at a point for me after X. I felt completely unsupported and acutely aware of the inability of the industry to help me in my situation because it was so personality driven and the mechanisms that were more objective were not in place for me to actually facilitate the problem I had.*

## RESULTS

Several interviewees commented on the difficulties they had seen others experience when not provided with performance feedback during a production. A crew member's contract may be terminated without warning because of broken trust, so they had limited potential to rectify their behaviour. This was likely to be emotionally challenging for them and if they were unable to find new work quickly, the ensuing financial strain could affect many other aspects of their lives. Anna discussed the latter situation:

*So that person never gets to know what you think, the reasons why you're not going to want to work with them and they get really surprised when they don't get another job which I think is not right because a lot of people are hung out there going "hey why am I not getting work?" but if we actually said to them half way through the reasons why, because you're doing this, is making it difficult for us to do the production and therefore we don't want to be using you again it would be a lot easier for them.*

First experiences of the breakdown of trust had come as quite a shock for most respondents. In retrospect, many felt they had been naïve in their early days about how this swift trust environment really operated in the industry. This was specifically with regard to the permanence of trust and connection to others. Whether the breakdown occurred on a production or during the periods between jobs, the personal impact could be substantial. All the interviewees had experienced or observed significant anxiety, depression or burnout in others. Experiences still occurred now despite the fact that respondents had been in the industry for some time. They tended to be restricted to particularly challenging situations inside a production.

## 4.5 Coping or Thriving

All respondents in this study were very aware of the mechanisms and norms enabling the swift trust film environment to operate effectively. Interviewees had developed skills to help them thrive in this swift trust environment but also to aid them in coping when trust broke down. This was essential to their longevity in film and television production. The skills they had developed included evaluating the trustworthiness of others and creating their own trustworthiness, coping with the pressure environment, creating boundaries and self-awareness, problem solving and building their own confidence. All felt that these skills had spilled over into other aspects of their lives.

### TRUST SKILLS

The ability to evaluate the trustworthiness of others was seen as fundamental to flourishing in the industry. It enabled interviewees to work more effectively in their roles and was described as vital to making sense of this often fluid environment. Several used the terms “intuition” and “instinct” to describe these particular skills, suggesting that intuition enabled them to navigate the trust environment more effectively. Without exception, all interviewees felt that they had considerably developed their skills of perception. Caroline discussed the importance of this skill, observing that the ability to work others out was particularly important with those she didn’t know:

*I think you definitely have to be quite intuitive. You have to be working and reading a situation at the same time... I’ve probably got a lot quicker at it. You have to be operating and working with quite a high level of intuition when you don’t know people.*

The stakes did appear to be higher with new colleagues. Analysis of a newcomer’s capabilities needed to be carried out quickly to minimise the potential harm that might be caused if an individual did not behave as required.

## RESULTS

Interviewees had developed a range of mechanisms to assist them in ascertaining the trustworthiness of others. These strategies depended partly on individual personality preferences but also the level of influence the respondent had. Bridget did not fully engage with a new colleague until she had observed them. She really enjoyed this evaluation. It enabled her to minimise her exposure and vulnerability to new colleagues:

*I do have an initial gut instinct but I lay low and I don't think I give myself away until I've decided whether I can trust people... I quite like the puzzle of working people out in the film industry as long as I don't feel emotionally vulnerable.*

For Hannah others now needed to prove their capability and trustworthiness before she began trusting them. She had learnt this through trusting newcomers more than she should have, which had led to negative consequences. She compensated for lack of trust by, what she referred to as, micromanaging:

*For my own personal sanity it's better to assume that people coming in don't know entirely what they're doing and so it leads me to sometimes micromanage the department until I know that I can trust people because otherwise it'll end up coming back and putting egg on your face.*

This comment is in contrast with how interviewees felt when they first entered the industry, observing high trust and lack of micromanagement, in comparison to their previous experiences. This initial view by newcomers could be mistaken, leaving them considerably more vulnerable than they realise. All now discussed their initial naivety regarding how the industry operated and most learnt this the hard way. However, it could also be that even with those more established crew being wary of those that are new, the industry environment may still be comparatively high in trust compared to other workplaces.

Caroline felt that she sized up individuals from her first encounter with them, creating a fast and fixed opinion on their trustworthiness that may take some time for her to alter:



## RESULTS

*It's not a conscious decision but I always, any time, work or whatever, I meet someone and I have an instant, by the time the meeting's over, I have an instant like/don't like.*

Providing an example of how strong these trust perceptiveness skills could become, Bruce described a game that he and his team workmates played when a new person started working on set. They would decide whether or not they would succeed in the industry. He felt that they could ascertain this as early as the first day. They evaluated their level of competence, willingness to learn, organisational citizen behaviour, adaptability, problem solving skills and intuition. Bruce compared an individual who quickly went onto become highly successful in film and television production with a new entrant who did not display the behaviours required to integrate into a production:

*You'd really quickly ascertain if someone had it in them or not, instantly, straight away... This guy turns up and we instantly knew he was good...he just knew what he was doing... You need so much adaptability and you just need to solve problems really quickly and so when someone couldn't do that, there was just no point having them round because you just know you couldn't leave them with anything or you'd come back and they'd still be struggling with something. There was this guy I knew who was a camera trainee and I watched him struggling to get a set of legs through a doorway and I had to go and show him a simple way of getting through the doorway. And he was like ah and I knew I was showing him something I shouldn't need to be showing him and I just knew you're not actually going to make it. Stuff like this is a given. If you can't work it out or watch someone do it one time and you can do it too then it's not going to happen.*

Another way of exploring a new individual's worthiness was through gathering views of the new or prospective crew member via industry networks. These outside opinions strongly influenced interviewee's opinions. Those in the network could be trusted as they were already known but this could not yet be said for a newcomer. Here an individual's reputation in the wider industry became so important. Consequently, interviewees felt greater comfort working with those they knew.

## RESULTS

They understood their colleagues' trustworthiness, for better or worse. Bridget commented:

*You've already to a certain degree developed trust with people on other jobs because there's always that past history that, the more jobs you work on the easier.*

The next step in evaluating the trustworthiness of others appeared to be refining how they could be trusted or, conversely, not trusted. Even knowing that work colleagues could not be trusted in certain ways was acceptable so long as this was known. This fits with descriptions of motive-based trust where trust increases for an individual when their motives are understood. Melanie discussed this:

*There are some people I still don't even trust. But I'm happy because I've got a mark on them. I don't need to trust them; I just need to know who they are.*

Jane had worked in the industry overseas on a number of occasions and one facet she found particularly challenging was the lack of familiarity with others and their lack of familiarity with her. Building trust from scratch was the most challenging aspect of her role when she worked outside of New Zealand:

*And it's amazing how much that makes your job easier, I've worked overseas and the hardest thing was getting to know them and them not innately knowing you from the beginning.*

### **TRUSTWORTHINESS SKILLS**

The substantial development in skills in evaluating the trustworthiness of others appeared to be matched by interviewees' skills in developing their own trustworthiness. This seemed to occur via both changes in attitude and behaviour. Interviewees inherently understood that they needed to get on with everyone they worked with, if possible. This was a fundamental first step to gaining the trust of others and therefore to succeeding in the industry. Sarah commented:

*I think that's a big part of whether you can survive in the industry or not. You've got to be able to get along with everybody.*

## RESULTS

This meant accepting behaviour even if it may seem eccentric or irrational. The outcome of this attitude is strongly linked to high psychological safety which, as discussed, is closely associated with collaboration and creativity. Sarah linked these two together:

*There's quite a lot of creative talents and lot of people that are quite out there so you've got to be quite an accepting kind of person and easy to get along with.*

Bridget, Paul and Hannah all discussed the importance of developing interpersonal communication skills to gain an understanding of how colleagues may operate, but also to build their own reputations on this front. They could then achieve their task-related needs whilst still maintaining, if not, their own trustworthiness. This was accomplished through perceptiveness but also empathy. Bridget took the time to understand the behavioural preferences of her fellow crew and developed strategies to effectively communicate. They would then trust her enough to collaborate with her and follow through with the tasks she depended on them for. This appeared to involve sensitivity, persuasion and influence skills:

*You know how people work and what they're sensitive to and whether you need to tip-toe around them or not, saying that's the best way of doing things, but you kind need to build an idea of how to approach people.*

Hannah emphasised the need to find a balance between task focus and being sensitive to the needs of others. She emphasised maintaining others' well-being, treating them with kindness and empathy and consequently maintaining trust. This also aided her in persuading others to successfully complete the tasks she needed them to:

*I think that you develop really fast communication skills where you have to read all the different levels of the people that come into your department but to get something done quickly and efficiently, how to communicate without a lot of fuss and still kindly and, for me, it's still important to try and maintain a positive sense of well-being.*

Paul reflected on the interpersonal communication skills that he had gained in his time in the film industry. He noted how these would have made a challenging environment he experienced early in his career so much easier to cope with:

*If I went back to that job now, knowing what I know now, I could have played that game beautifully... not in an underhanded way, just knowing how to say the right things to the right people in the right way. It would have been a completely different experience for me. I still would have been completely exhausted and it still would have been awful but I wouldn't have made the mistakes I did and left myself just completely open to pecking and I've just learnt that. Luckily I learnt that really quickly and after that I was fine.*

### **COPING WITH THE HIGH PRESSURE FILM ENVIRONMENT**

Several discussed the mechanisms they had developed to help them cope better in the high pressure environment of a production. Both Dan and Bruce were strongly against complaining about conditions or tasks while on set. They saw it as counterproductive for two reasons. Firstly, remaining positive enabled them to fit in with their team and feel accepted. Secondly, because of the often extreme conditions and challenging tasks, remaining positive was a coping mechanism. It helped retain high social identity and, particularly, provide a buffer against stress. Dan discussed how he and others often coped through using humour. This built and maintained trust but also contributed to individual and collective resilience. Dan commented:

*It's not so much having fun but about having people that can make light of the situation, that can stand out in the pissing rain and the freezing cold and snow and sleet for 17 hours and still be able to laugh at the end of the day and have a resilience... Well you can joke at the end of a hard day when you're crying on the inside but you need to manage yourself. You need to feign enjoyment just so that you and the team morale, the collective morale around you, doesn't suffer for you pointing out the bleeding obvious; like this sucks, we're freezing here. We've been up on this cliff face for 17 hours and it's a risky business.*

## RESULTS

At this point he also pondered that crew needed to perform in a similar way to actors as part of their job. Performance not only related to appearing positive and using humour but also to promising to do something in a way that belied the challenge of it. Dan felt that even if he was very daunted by undertaking a task he would not display this. It took the pressure off others and maintained the positive collective environment. He also did this from the perspective of convincing himself he could undertake certain tasks, a necessary coping skill in this industry of high task ambiguity. He goes on to provide evidence of emotional work in this environment which appeared to have a generally positive outcome:

*I think we're all performance based, and not performance as in output ,but performance as our performance in the collective, you've all got a role to play and I think performance is actually quite a bit of it. There's actually a theatrics in what is expected of us. Of course you can do that and you play the part, of course we can, meaning holy fuck I have no idea how to do that! But that definitely leads over to not theatrical but there is an element of that, we're all performing a role.*

Caroline's comments illustrated a similar theme. She said that when she worked with new people now, her way of coping and building trust with others was in feigning confidence in her own competence and then hoping she was able to carry out what she had promised. Thus a differentiation can be seen between emotional work, where there is a sense of contributing to the collective and helping others, versus emotional labour where behaviours and tasks are undertaken that run counter to personal identity. Emotional labour is connected to lack of trust and psychological safety (Kahn, 1990; Carmelli & Gittel, 2009).

The strong desire to fit in and be accepted early in their careers appeared to have altered for several respondents, now that they were experienced in the industry. Despite most feeling such a strong affinity with their environment, there were likely to be elements of emotional labour when people first began working in the industry. They were keen to belong, needed to maintain relations in order to gain contracts and also to belong. For Melanie, others now needed to earn her trust first. This change in attitude appeared to be as a result of increased confidence that

## RESULTS

her career was now well established as was her network of contacts. She had consequently developed a solid reputation:

*I consider that I'm the person; they've got to pass my test.*

Being less concerned about gaining the trust and acceptance of others also appeared to have developed as a coping mechanism and way of building resilience. Sarah found that consciously training herself to not be concerned about being accepted enabled her to navigate jobs more successfully:

*The best times I've had have been when I go I don't care, I'm here to do a job I don't care, I'll just do it... I don't care about how I come across. I care about the work I'm doing but I don't care about the game and it seems to have worked rather well.*

By not feeling that she needed to alter her behaviour to feel accepted, this minimised the negative impact of these efforts for her plus she enhanced her resilience. This may have been particularly useful for Sarah who spoke of more negative experiences than the others and appeared to have less intrinsic resilience.

Another coping mechanism relating to resilience building was maintaining perspective. This included keeping a level head when things appeared to be out of control. Anna felt she did not often observe this behaviour in others. Both Anna and Paul maintained perspective by remembering that it was only a business. Anna commented:

*Yea level head. That is the one thing that I find on the whole is missing for a whole lot of people, that level thinking of just thinking process through without going, but what about, but what about, but no, no, no – we're going this way everybody.*

Most had built interests outside of work. This led to the development of multiple social identities beyond that of the film industry. Multiple social identities have been shown to be particularly valuable buffers to stress (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For some, their families provided them with an excellent alternative viewpoint. Several commented about their own and others' interests, whether hobbies or side businesses. These included jewellery making, script writing, making short films,

## RESULTS

house renovation, inventing new products, education, and furniture and clothing design. As well as gaining additional identities, respondents developed projects with which to occupy themselves between jobs. This broadened their sense of meaning and purpose as well as their general enjoyment of the space between work projects, which contributed to both eudaemonic and hedonic happiness (Amiot et al., 2012). Anna discussed her own experiences:

*The kids thing is fantastic. It's perspective setting. It's literally about what's important in life and what isn't... what happens now is I have the children, so when I finish a job I get to spend a lot more time with the children and I have to relate again to the fact that I'm a mother and how much am I going to get involved again because what's going to happen in another few weeks... now I've got the children they've taken up all that slack so there's no time to wallow in my own self-pity in the corner because I've got them to be concerned about.*

Some wanted to transform their view of their time between jobs into an enjoyable and productive experience to assist them in minimising the feeling of being on an emotional rollercoaster. Hannah had managed to successfully achieve this:

*I currently don't have a job. I don't have any bookings, I don't have anything lined up so and I'm sitting here feeling quite comfortable and happy with myself. Maybe there's a time where I'll start panicking but there is a point where you start getting used to that down time as well and personally look forward to it as well and learn to manage it.*

### **DEVELOPING BOUNDARIES**

Many interviewees discussed creating parameters in a range of areas to aid them in coping better with working in the industry. In a sense the development of identities beyond film and television production fits in this category as does maintaining a perspective. Respondents appeared to have developed parameters, particularly with regard to dealing with work colleagues. This seemed to be a response to the shock of discovering acceptance by and connection to others could be fleeting. Developing boundaries became a way of limiting their vulnerability to this on an ongoing basis. Some described this new approach as “friendliness” where earlier in

## RESULTS

their career it would have been “friendship”. Bruce discussed how his earlier willingness to trust and be friends with others had led to negative consequences. Upon reflection, he now saw these earlier behaviours as naive. Now he would ensure that he created boundaries for his ‘safety’:

*Just a consciousness of work and self separation and to be more choosy about the people because it's a highly social situation and you can just naively let anybody because everyone is quite friendly on the outside and so you can be quite naïve and let anybody in. That probably sounds like some burnt out damaged individual! But you can be and I guess I did through naivety and I acknowledge my own role in bringing that about so if I went back into it I'd certainly be a lot more aware of establishing safety, knowing those boundaries, which is probably a lesson of age anyway.*

The navigation between friendliness and friendship appeared to be taken with caution once interviewees had been operating in the industry for a long time and these self-protective boundaries took longer to break down. Melanie now felt that professional trust or friendliness was a must to be successful whereas friendship was not:

*I don't know how you cross that bridge between; that takes age, just personally, that's a trust that takes a long time. I will trust people professionally because I have to but I wouldn't push them into a friendship group. Well that's not important for the job for them to be close friends.*

Interviewees were now also cautious about work friendships becoming deep friendships that extended outside of work. Several appeared to have work friends with whom they shared more than just trust but this friendship was limited to work. Jane described this:

*Like I know their characters, I know their fun, I know a few things but I wouldn't know what street they live on except for the people that do become friends but there's a lot of people that I have very friendly relationships with that are work friends but I don't necessarily catch up with them outside of work.*



## RESULTS

Anna discussed where work relationships had endured for some time and had expanded outside of work but she still retained parameters around them becoming close personal friends. Having said this, there did appear to be strong, deep relationships that had formed and remained for several interviewees. John learnt who his 'true' friends were as a result of serious interpersonal conflict he was involved in and felt scapegoated by. These friends had been highly supportive of him:

*But what got me through that was real friendships that I'd made inside that community that were real friendships. Whether or not I would have had those friendships otherwise, I don't know.*

Hannah made a clear distinction regarding boundaries with intimacy and vulnerability. She felt that she could share intimate personal aspects of her life with most people but was very discerning regarding whom she showed her vulnerabilities to. She was quite reticent revealing her vulnerabilities partly for the collective good:

*You trust people and you show yourself and you'll talk about intimate parts of your life possibly or your family or whatever but you can't really show your vulnerability in the film industry. You can't show your weaknesses unless you have a really deep friendship with your HOD or someone in your own department but especially on set because they're like, it's like a machine, you just can't afford to have wonky cogs, not that being vulnerable is wonky.*

For Hannah having a personal relationship with a team member was a real advantage as she gained greater social support when working with her good friends. Here she felt safe that she could reveal her personal issues and vulnerabilities.

The need for boundaries also appeared to grow significantly when interviewees moved into supervisory roles. Here the parameters between friendship and leadership could become murky until individuals realised that interpersonal communication and relationships with others needed to change. Anna commented about the need to have greater discernment around trust just from the perspective of information sharing and confidentiality:

## RESULTS

*The boundaries and as you move further up into positions where you just need to be a lot more careful about the trust and who you talk to about things or what information you keep to yourself.*

Hannah and John both made comments touching on emotional labour regarding authenticity and psychological safety when in a supervisory role. Both felt that now they were supervisors, and communicated differently with others, they could not be their authentic selves in the way that they used to and this did not sit comfortably with them. Hannah discussed this:

*Yea and you have to switch into a different personality I don't know whether I like that about myself, I don't know whether I like being that person.*

Another area where interviewees appeared to have developed boundaries was that of spending time with those they did not trust for their own emotional safety. Now that they had established their reputation and had built confidence and security in their place in the industry, they could risk not maintaining connections with those they did not trust. Paul discussed this and how it significantly benefited his well-being:

*I was trying to make everybody happy and it's exhausting. I started distancing myself from people that exhausted me. And this all started at X. Enough is enough and there were certain people in my life who made me feel yuck and they sapped me. And that's kind of what I've done; relationships with people are now easy for me.*

Sarah discussed gaining confidence in her skills and understanding her strengths, which in turn gave her the confidence to build boundaries and not be as concerned about the views of others. This appeared to create an upward spiral where others treated her with greater respect which in turn instilled greater self-confidence:

*It was only after X for me that I felt confident about my work, that I was able to go, well I don't really care what you think about me. Push back. And then through that, of course, if you're more confident then other people believe in you as well.*

Jane extended this discernment to whom she now chose to work with, describing how this is one piece of advice that she passes on to her team. This may be

## RESULTS

particularly pertinent with her onset role which requires an intense level of energy. Therefore working with those that can be trusted is particularly important:

*I learnt very quickly don't stick around with or work with people that you don't gel with, like don't go there and that was my most, that's what I tell people coming up, find someone you've been told is good at their job and you meet them if you get on with them, stick with that and if you get the feeling that they're not, just don't go there because it actually is detrimental to your own career.*

Some interviewees also discussed developing discernment with respect to choosing what jobs to accept. In particular, Dan discussed the type of productions he preferred to work on. He now avoided working on long-running television productions as he did not enjoy this environment. He felt that there was too much "drama" on drama productions and that these issues could create a toxic environment which he would rather steer clear of. He felt one predominant reason was the physical environment of working long hours under pressure in a small space:

*The whole politics thing, that's a drama thing which is why I don't do drama... That's my experience of it and the easiest solution is to remove yourself from that arena which is what I've done... Any job that runs too long to start to get into personal dynamics and that's something that I'm not really interested in... You put that many people into a room and you make them stand that closely together and you make them work 12 hours a day you're going to see humanity see it present itself... You're literally sweating beside each other, grafting hard and they are too in whatever cog they're doing and people will fray under pressure. It's inevitable, it will happen, the more you increase the people, work with, work against and with that comes the drama.*

## TEAM MANAGEMENT

Skill in hiring teams to ensure continuity of trust had also developed considerably over the course of interviewees' film careers. Many hiring decisions were based around team fit rather than individual competence alone and revolved around building, fine tuning and protecting trust, and taking into account how the team

## RESULTS

would work together. Anna discussed this from the perspective of knowing the flaws of her team and accepting that by hiring certain individuals she knew how they may behave under pressure. She also assumed that this was unlikely to change, although this may have been partly because of the lack of skill in performance management:

*I see it all the time and they repeat that same behaviour on each production you're on but when you know it you go: "now instead of pulling it up I just go, I'm just going to get such and such, you're going to get that line. How many times have I heard that line?" That's what you buy into. You get that person, that's what you're buying into.*

Anna discussed an executive producer that only hired those he knew because he understood how he could trust them. This also meant that his team were likely to have worked successfully together before and thus he could depend on them doing so again. It appeared that he rarely made exceptions to this, which meant that newcomers to senior roles would find it very challenging to get work on his productions:

*The people that he wants around him are the people that he has worked with before. He does not want change, if he doesn't know them, he does not want them in the team... it has to be about trust and the more experience he has with them, the more he wants them to be part of that creative team for him because he wants to get what he wants and he knows that those people can deliver that for him and he's not willing at all to look elsewhere. You can totally understand why. Why would you try someone new with your... million dollar project. So it's very much that implicit trust between them all. And they often will double guess what they want.*

Paul discussed hiring people that he felt he could trust and that he liked. This made the hiring process short and easy for him. It does support the bias for hiring based on familiarity within the industry:

*That makes it relatively quick to be able to hire a team if you need to get a bunch of people together you instinctively pick people that you like and people that you trust.*

## RESULTS

Bridget touched on hiring a team to ensure that they would work well together. Her perspective was that picking those that had strong interpersonal skills and were likely to fit with the team was more important than technical skill itself:

*Harmonious dynamic is more important than skill... Quite often you don't need to hire the best anyway so it's not even relevant. It's whether they make a good team as a whole.*

Jane indicated that she hired based on how well she thought an individual could support her and the team, particularly when the pressure was on. She found this social support pivotal, in her being able to effectively undertake her own job as well as manage those around her:

*That's also interesting because now that I'm middle rung I would employ people that I trust will help me manage myself as well to take breaks and I see a lot of crew do that... I see how that trust team works is that the underlings are looking after their boss in some way or at different times and that's how I feel more at ease now when I go to jobs... and I hope that then I at least give that to them too. To them I'm giving them an opportunity of a job and with my boss I look after him because he's given me the opportunity of a job. We all try to manage stress levels but at times there's just so much. You see that in all departments. When something happens everyone jumps in and helps.*

As discussed previously, the industry skill base regarding conflict management appears low, with formal and informal processes to support this relatively absent. Despite this, there does appear to be some development in skills at supervisory level for a few. Both Bridget and Paul, supervisors in creative departments, had developed ways of preventing issues from occurring. Bridget was aware of the importance of retaining harmony in her team and how detrimental interpersonal conflict could be to performance. She undertook short informal daily catch ups with her team to encourage them to air concerns:

*I always used to talk to everyone one-on-one. Just having a daily how's it going, just having a brief chat with how everyone's going, where everyone's at, could be work could be whatever, and then often if something was on people's minds that would be*

## RESULTS

*a safe time for them to say...I just saw it as oiling the wheels because you've got a team of people and you need to make sure they're moving in the right direction and if you've got someone stuck, everything's going to [not work].*

Paul now leaned on his intuition to pick up on potential issues as they began building in his team. He would then explore this with the team member concerned. He discussed how it requires effort but is preferable to issues escalating to a level where he did not feel comfortable communicating:

*I've learnt ways to be able to recognise it happening before it's actually happened and go in and calm it down before it escalates into something it doesn't need to be even if it's going "Hey you look pretty f...d off do you want to have a conversation about it?" Trying to dissipate it before it happens which is just as tiring but I find that it's a better way of doing it because you get to it before it gets to that point.*

Hannah appeared to have developed a highly consultative leadership style where she shared information with her team, providing them with clarity regarding her expectations. This enabled her to create parameters to use as a reference point to manage their performance:

*As far as the team I'm responsible for, I always try to make sure the team is fully up to the mark on all the information they need, what's expected of them and a really good stern flick of the whip if things aren't happening.*

She was also one of only two interviewees that had examples of providing a team member with ongoing constructive performance feedback followed by ending their contract and explaining why she was doing so. Hannah rationalised this as a development opportunity for this individual, where it was best for them as well as the production, and to help herself feel better about the conversation. She found this extremely challenging but felt she gained considerable skill and confidence as a result:

*Yea I felt, particularly at that time, feeling a little bit personally distraught about it and the person was a really nice person and I just thought about it in my own time before I talked to him and I just felt that it was the most positive learning curve for*

## RESULTS

*him to lose the job because he was bringing into the work environment a really high level of complacency and I didn't really feel like there was time for him to be counselled through it and to grow and he had had warnings prior to that. I reckon it probably was a good thing for him to learn that that attitude was why he wasn't invited back and so it was a really hard thing for me to do to someone I'd worked with a lot over the years so it's definitely toughened up my skills.*

Paul was the other individual who had provided a team member with feedback on why he was not re-employing him. As with Hannah, this experience had been a key point of development and confidence building for Paul. Paul and Hannah's comments do provide additional insight as to why it may be so challenging to provide such feedback. Relatedness, and its key to satisfaction in working in the industry, may also contribute to the slow development of performance management and feedback skills. Both Hannah and Paul found it highly challenging because of the close connection they had developed with their staff even though in Paul's case the team member was not particularly respected.

### **SKILLS GAINED**

Most interviewees felt they had gained a range of highly beneficial skills as a result of working in the industry. This was particularly with regard to interpersonal skills. It appeared that the need to effectively navigate social environments, to build and sustain trust, as well as develop parameters had significant positive benefits that spilled into other realms. These included self-awareness, self-sufficiency, creative problem solving and confidence that a solution could be found to most problems. This appeared to lead to increased self-confidence for most interviewees. It reinforced findings regarding the benefits at a personal level of operating in a high trust, high social identity environment. For Hannah developing self-awareness was of prime importance in successfully coping and continuing to perform in this industry:

*I think so much of the learning is a personal thing that you have to be really aware of what your own shortcomings are and how to get up to scratch.*

## RESULTS

This appeared to be connected to developing a keen awareness of the social environment and quickly picking up behavioural norms. This development of emotional intelligence about how one operated with others, how others appeared to behave, and how to deal with these behaviours, has been closely associated with high social identity (Barczak et al., 2010). Jane commented that she needed to continue learning from those that she respected and how necessary this was to success:

*That's what I've found as I've been in the industry longer... I think it was instinctively learning things from certain people and taking that on to the next one and that quality of a person to learn quickly is part of that trust thing because if they've been there for a day and haven't learnt anything or aren't trying to learn something new they may not get the next job.*

Paul felt that his capacity to work with and manage often quite complex and difficult people built his confidence in managing a range of personalities outside the industry:

*I find relationships with people far easier now personally through having to deal with really difficult people in the film industry. I will never have to meet people as difficult as film people again and so it doesn't matter who I come across in day-to-day life now because I've had to handle far worse in the film industry so I think it's invaluable. I'm really glad for it.*

Paul has set up his own business outside of the film industry. He felt the skills he had learnt in the industry had enabled him to be successful outside it. The skills he discussed centred on interpersonal communication skills, particularly those of influence and persuasion:

*I tell you what; it's making this business so easy. Meeting commercially minded business people, selling them a concept, it's an absolute piece of piss. Completely from the film industry, it's propelled me in leaps of bounds to what I'm doing now... Being able to talk with designers and to clearly articulate concepts with designers and chucking in a certain amount of bullshit in there as well. So easy and it's all*



## RESULTS

*through dealing with difficult costume designers that don't know what they want and trying to sell them an idea that they want and you can do.*

Dan discussed how he had also gained skills in effectively managing his time and finances through being a contractor and living with constant job insecurity. This also fed into early discussions around having second occupations or interests between contracts:

*Don't spend money you don't have. Have a budget 101 basically was how I did it because I'm very happy not working because I'm always busy. I don't stop because I'm not at the office. I've got jobs that just keep stacking up and stacking up... and I break it down into what needs capital... I just work like it's a normal day and keep on trucking and that is something that not everyone has the mindset to do. When I'm not earning I just stop spending money but that's years of being a contractor, knowing the peak and the trough and when you are earning money, squirrel it away for the winter.*

Dan felt he had learnt to be self-sufficient and to be able to cope with change and lack of job security as a result of working in the film industry. He saw this as particularly advantageous in current economic and social times but also felt his capabilities and financial stability were judged based on the norms of traditional industries. Dan discussed this with regard to the difficulty of obtaining a mortgage. He appeared to find this ironic but also frustrating. From his point of view his coping mechanisms for managing a mortgage were likely to be better than those who may turn him down for a mortgage because of his insecure earnings:

*To have these bureaucratic office workers that had only ever worked for one company in their entire life talking to me about job security when I'm unemployed or employed 5 times a day from completely different income sources. And they're saying no that's not good enough because they're sitting in a bank that they've been working in their whole life. So it's like you've got no idea. I could phone 50 people and get work from them at any one time. What are you going to have when your bank sells your job overseas? They've got no mechanism for being self-sufficient because they've never done it.*

## RESULTS

Another theme regarding increased skills was that of creative problem solving. This was where Sarah and Bruce had gained considerable confidence in particular. They had developed faith that they could find a solution to most problems that came their way. Bruce felt he could now work with substantial ambiguity and had considerable confidence in problem solving and innovation in unknown territory. Bruce felt this was a key factor in his success since leaving the industry to start his own business:

*The work was hard, it was quite unforgiving and I think ultimately I've had a real sense of what is possible because we worked in this realm of impossible, stuff that people just wouldn't imagine you could do. We were just in it all the time... And I think that's really flavoured me up for where I'm at now. I've got a real sense of confidence around the unknown I suppose... I think it would be so weird to come out, and do what I've done from a career in some normal old thing. It's such an extraordinary leap. But when you actually think about what I've been involved in it's not such an extraordinary leap for me to create a product that's never existed because that's something we used to do in the film industry all the time.*

Sarah discussed the increased confidence she felt as a result of working in the industry. She felt that she now tried things that she would have been afraid to do previously:

*I learnt to have a go at anything, to get stuck in even if it seems a little hairy, just get stuck in and get on with it. Maybe I always had it before the industry. It can happen, you have that mentality of it can happen, you can make it work. We can get it, we can sort it out. It's not surmountable.*

Interviewees provided considerable evidence of a swift trust environment operating in the film and television production industry. Clear informal guidelines ensured behaviours supported cognitive, relational and motive-based trust mechanisms. This facilitated collaboration, creativity and problem solving. The environment was one of organisational citizen behaviour and reflexive learning.

All interviewees identified strongly with their teams, productions they worked on and the industry as a whole. They described it as fun and exciting. They felt they

## RESULTS

belonged and had a clearer sense of purpose as a result of working in this environment. However, all had experienced occasions where there was a breakdown in trust. This was simple if untrustworthy individuals were newcomers but became increasingly complex as individuals gained more seniority and power. Breakdowns in trust appeared to be aided by the deficit in conflict and performance management skills. The outcomes of experiencing this breakdown at a personal level could be substantial with all observing anxiety, depression and burnout. This occurred as a result of the breakdown of trust in the workplace, or because of the emotional rollercoaster of oscillating between working in such a highly stimulating and enjoyable environment, and unemployment, particularly early in careers.

All interviewees had developed their own coping skills to survive and thrive in this environment. Commonality lay around increased skills in perceiving the trust of others and maximising their own trustworthiness. Most had developed multiple social identities to enable them to cope with the sudden transition between work and unemployment. Several discussed their increased self-awareness and self-sufficiency, the development of boundaries in many areas of their work, as well as skills to build their resilience. They also discussed how this range of skills had added to their lives outside the industry.

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis was to further investigate the concept of swift trust in the film industry. Meyerson et al. (1996) explored the ways swift trust works as a mechanism for organising labour processes within project based film work. This thesis explored the psychological consequences of working in a swift trust environment. It examined the interpersonal mechanisms which enable swift trust to develop, and the positive and negative personal consequences for people working within a swift trust organisational environment. In this chapter, key themes from the results chapter, relating to this, will be examined in more depth and the theoretical and practical implications of these findings will be considered.

This chapter is ordered into seven sections. The first three sections expand on positive outcomes discovered in the findings and how these interplay with current research literature on contingent work, particularly in the film industry. These include the apparent satisfaction interviewees experienced through working contingently, the high level of psychological safety described within the industry and the particular life skills gained as a result of operating in the industry for some time. The next two sections delve further into negative findings from this research and their implications. This includes, firstly, the deficit in performance and relational conflict management skills and, secondly excessive working hours and the consequent potential loss of key talent. The sixth section provides suggestions and recommendations for the film and television industry based on the findings of this study. The final section explores possible implications for other industries from the potential benefits of operating in this swift trust environment and how easily this could be replicated.

### 5.1 The contractual environment

Many respondents in this study had negative experiences early in their career as a result of working contingently. All had observed the negative effects of the sudden transition from working on a production to being at home unemployed, lonely and

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

financially stretched. However, for the majority the shock of sudden transition did not continue to be such a significant issue as their time in the industry wore on. These findings contrast with most current research into the film and television industry internationally where workers are seen to be exploited and often unhappy about the lack of job continuity (Coe, 2000; Paterson, 2001).

If anything, interviewees appeared to enjoy working contingently in the industry. When they were working on a project they were highly committed, as they felt their colleagues were. However, the ability to sustain this high commitment partly related to there being an end point to their involvement. Also they did not feel pressured to continue working with their supervisor or production leaders on the next production.

Because of the length of time all interviewees had spent in the industry, they seemed well established, having built robust networks of colleagues and friends and a strong reputation in the industry. They had a sense of stability of work because of these connections. This fits with Blair's view of the industry working in a similar way to pre-industrialised craft groups and the form of semi-security this created (Blair, 2003; Blair, 2001). There appeared to be a strong sense of community or even family in the industry, that bolstered comfort in working in this contingency based industry which also aided feelings of security.

Additionally, apart from one interviewee who had a particularly specialised role, all were able to work on a range of types of productions and several worked in different roles. Some respondents moved between supervisor and worker roles. There seemed to be little resentment around taking on a lower level role out of financial necessity or wanting less responsibility for a time. Neither did there seem to be a stigma attached to this from an industry perspective. These crew appeared to be buffered to some extent from the stigma of working in these lesser roles by choosing to work for those they had a close bond with or whose working style they respected.

This study was focused on the industry in Auckland, where there is considerably more work available than in Wellington, and in a range of different formats

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

including commercials, television series and films, both local and international in origin. Work by Rowlands and Handy (2012) discussing the negative aspects of working conditions in the New Zealand film industry focused on the Wellington market, where there is scarcity of work and one main employer. One interviewee in this study who had worked in this industry overseas commented that it was less competitive here than internationally as there were fewer people trying to enter the industry. Also, individual ambitions appeared to be less intense and obvious in the New Zealand industry. Consequently, respondents felt secure in their ability to gain work despite the highly contingent nature of employment within the industry.

Beyond the availability of work, and the established nature of their positions in the industry, respondents had personal and social identities outside of their jobs. These multiple identities combined with the conscious building of coping skills to enhance resilience. This increased their ability to cope with the downside of operating contractually, which all had discussed experiencing earlier in their careers. They all had other interests, which two were now making a living from. Respondents appeared to enjoy time between contracts, disciplining themselves to use their time and money wisely but also training their thinking so they could enjoy the space.

They enjoyed having the freedom to choose when and how they worked and time to indulge their own specific interests when they did not have paid work.. It seemed to be something they now cherished. Most respondents provided examples of turning down or leaving jobs they were not happy with as evidence of their freedom to choose their working conditions.

This finding differs from most recent literature on conditions in the industry where workers were found to be conflicted participants who felt exploited in some way by the contractual work structure (Coe, 2000; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2008; Paterson, 2001). Those interviewed in this study took the positive perspective that working in film and television production provided them with freedom to choose when and how they worked. Such a lifestyle appeared to be aided by the relatively high income they gained when they were working.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

When four interviewees were asked, following their interview, if they would prefer to work in permanent roles in the industry rather than contracting, all stated that they did not wish to. They now enjoyed the movement between immersion in a production and having time to themselves and for their other pastimes. Comments were also made that most people operating in the industry did not fit into the mainstream. They would not work well in a permanent role as they felt this may take on some of the features of a 'normal' job. A 'normal' job took on the connotations of restrictions in expressing their 'real' selves and was thus seen as unattractive. Most had discussed their enjoyment of operating in the film industry as they had the freedom to be themselves. They were surrounded by fellow "freaks" and were accepted in this environment of high psychological safety. One commented that at the point they wanted job security they would exit the industry rather than have it be altered in this way. The contractual aspect of work was a feature adding to the attractiveness of the industry.

When asked their thoughts about the impact of permanent working conditions on the structure of the industry, interviewees wondered whether it could then operate in the same way. They suggested that the swift trust environment, its related mechanisms and the environment it created, may not continue to operate if crew worked in permanent roles.

This connects to discussions regarding how long-running, ongoing television series tended to differ in their culture to other production formats in the industry. They seem to operate more similarly way to a permanent working environment. Television series productions are often up to a year in duration with further series produced by the same production company being common place. The same crew may be working together over a period of years, albeit with breaks between each season. Consequently, a stronger sense of familiarity and family appeared to develop. This engendered a feeling of job security not seen in other production formats in the industry. This environment was, however, often described as somewhat dysfunctional, to the point where two interviewees chose to no longer work on these productions and a third was very particular about which of them she would work on.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Two key themes regarding the perceived dysfunction of these long-running television series emerged in interviews. The first relates to poor performance management skills and unresolved interpersonal conflict. Issues remained and, at times, escalated over the long period of a production and could return the next season. Rather than dealing with these issues directly, crew tended to broach them indirectly and often destructively. This undercurrent of unresolved conflict and politics could have an impact on the harmony of the production. Consequently, the usual high engagement and therefore productivity of crew may lower over time because of lowered relational trust.

The second key theme that emerged was that of a perceived lowered work ethic of crew on these kinds of productions. One interviewee commented that poor performers often ended up on these productions as no one else would employ them. Others commented that the stronger feeling of job security meant that some crew may not engage themselves as much as they did in other types of productions where their employability and reputation were a more immediate concern.

A sense of complacency, that was rare in the industry, was seen to develop as a result. Thus a lower level of overall cognitive and relational trust resulted in lower productivity. This created a downward rather than upward spiral as was usually described by interviewees when discussing the film industry environment.

Despite these being reasons some crew found long-running television series challenging to work on, some crew who had families enjoyed working on these types of productions. It enabled more of a work/life balance with the lowered pressure of this less intense environment.

The implication for those interviewed was that creating an environment based on crew working in permanent roles may exacerbate the patterns observed on long run productions. In these types of productions the usual mechanisms that created and supported swift trust did not work as effectively. However, none of the formal processes used in permanent organisations regarding behaviour and performance (including performance development management systems and conflict resolution protocols) were introduced either. Making roles permanent could thereby



potentially damage the delicate ecosystem of a film industry production and perhaps diminish the joy that all interviewees described experiencing from operating in it. It had the potential to stifle the freedom many respondents felt they gained from working in this environment.

These findings appear to run counter to that of some existing research into the industry, and the sense of potential victimhood as a result of the employment conditions. Here this feeling was relatively absent, replaced predominantly by positive affirmations about their work and the industry in general.

One caveat on these particular findings is that interviews were undertaken in the first half of 2012 when the industry in Auckland had been buoyant for the last two to three years. Hence contracts were plentiful. The first six months of 2013 do not look to be as abundant and consequently views could differ if respondents were interviewed in this current period.

The second caveat is that all interviewed were veterans of the industry, with well established track records and reputations. They may not have had some of these views at certain earlier points in their careers.

## **5.2 High psychological safety**

Another area where the findings from this study differed from most of the research literature was regarding psychological safety. Previous research has found there to be a substantial level of emotional labour in the industry, which is attributed to the highly contingent working conditions (Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Diefendorff et al., 2005). Studies like these suggest that film crew can be uncomfortable speaking their minds for fear of this impacting negatively on their reputation and therefore their potential to gain further employment within highly competitive labour markets.

In contrast to previous research, respondents in this study reported feeling high psychological safety where there was perceived freedom of expression and the freedom to behave in ways that did not compromise self-identity. These freedoms

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

were held in place by a clear set of behavioural norms. These norms were strongly and proudly conformed to, and did restrict behaviour, but in a way that minimised destructive situations. Thus this perceived freedom did have restrictions.

The feeling from all interviewed was that they were generally accepted for who they were and that they needed to do the same for their colleagues, both of which were strongly normed. Respondents took pleasure in being unusual and not fitting within mainstream culture, proudly comparing themselves to gypsies and circus workers. This sense of being able to be oneself, no matter how odd, did have parameters. In order to be accepted one needed to be cognitively trustworthy and thus acceptance was contingent upon competence.

Harmony and good citizenship were expected from crew whilst balancing the freedom to be oneself. It was expected that people spoke up if they needed help or had a potential issue with their work. It was also expected that crew offer to help their co-workers. Although, as discussed, dealing with interpersonal and relational conflict was an area of skill deficit in the industry, operational conflict was seen as acceptable and necessary. It ensured that most potential operational issues were resolved before they significantly hindered the project.

Authenticity or at least 'no bullshit' was expected of crew which reinforced honest communication. Insincerity or unpleasant behaviour was not tolerated for long, apart from in some circumstances at the most senior level. These behavioural norms added to the sense of psychological safety for participants in the industry.

Consequently, there appeared to be an openness and trust towards others, which in turn lead to an enhanced sense of confidence, and personal as well as social identity. This finding differs from views by some researchers of the sense of exploitation and fear of speaking up in the film industry (Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Coe, 2000; Paterson, 2001).

For those interviewed for this study, the key was to work hard and to work well with others to obtain ongoing work. These appear to be demonstrating emotional work rather than emotional labour (Strazdins, 2000; Pisaniello et al., 2012).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Emotional work is seen as less destructive than emotional labour, as emotional effort is undertaken for the greater good rather than out of fear.

Some emotional labour was evidenced by those in the most senior roles in the industry, particularly with regard to performance discussions. There was a fear of loss of one's reputation for speaking one's mind with regard to performance or relationship feedback. This combined with a deficit of skills in undertaking challenging conversations. However, even these interviewees felt that they would not fit into other industry cultures as they were "too weird" implying that these other cultures would be less psychologically safe for them. When first working in the industry emotional work appears to be higher, at times crossing over into emotional labour territory. At this point in their careers, individuals are building their reputation and have a greater fear of loss of future work opportunities if they behave inappropriately. The behaviours expected and willingly conformed to by crew were what leaders of many organisations in other industries strive to engender (via informal processes, and enforce, via formal processes) in their own workforces. Many in the film industry can be denigrating of those that work in mainstream industries. They perceive them as compromising in ways those in the film industry do not. There appears to be some truth in this from a psychological safety and acceptance of eccentricity perspective. However, film industry workers appear to strongly conform to the behavioural norms supporting swift trust, many of which result in comparatively hard work.

Many interviewed were still forming their own identities when they joined this industry and felt a keen sense of belonging from doing so. As discussed, over time strong, clear social identities influence personal identities. It is possible that working in this environment with often strict informal rules around behaviour moulded these personal identities. This newly moulded personal identity could provide a blueprint for how to behave, which may then feed into feelings of increased psychological safety.

### 5.3 Enhanced life skills

All respondents had worked in the film and television production industry for many years and had developed a number of skills to aid them in navigating its particular environment successfully. Some of these skills appeared unusual compared to those gained from working in other industries. Firstly, they developed their social perceptiveness skills considerably, feeling that they could quickly work out whether and how they could trust new colleagues. This appeared to enable them to let down their guard and to trust others much more swiftly.

Many discussed how this spilled over in a positive way to other aspects of their lives. Some stated explicitly that they could trust people more easily as a result of their time in the industry, and that they had increased their skills at ascertaining trustworthiness.

Alongside social perceptiveness, interviewees had developed their political skills significantly, particularly working effectively with and managing a range of different personalities. Political skill is defined as “the ability to effectively understand others at work and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one’s personal and/or organisational objectives” (p. 127, Ferris et al., 2005). Those that are politically skilled are described by Blickle et al. (2011) as possessing social awareness combined with an ability to adjust behaviour to different situations, whilst maintaining a perception of sincerity and genuineness. This in turn has been found to encourage trust and support from others. This concept has a strong fit with the development of skills, discussed by interviewees, as a result of operating in the highly collective and interdependent environment of the film industry. Political skills appeared to enable them to operate more effectively in their roles but also to build and sustain their careers within the industry. All interviewees discussed, directly and indirectly, that they had developed their political skills substantially during their time in film and television production. Those that had worked outside the industry since, felt that this particular set of skills had facilitated their effectiveness in building and sustaining of their reputation in their new sphere.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Film and television production is highly networked (Blair, 2001) and interviewees all discussed the importance of reputation, both theirs and that of others, in securing ongoing work. By reputation, this appeared to include cognitive, relational and motive-based trustworthiness where technical competence played a minor role. It seemed to be assumed that most successful participants had already gained the required technical skills to survive in the industry. The stronger a reputation was, the more buffering one had against threats to it, and therefore the greater the work security in the industry. Interestingly, reputation has also recently been found to be closely connected to political skills (Blickle, Liu et al., 2011). Although the definition in their research related more to reputation within an organisation and in permanent roles, it does fit well with the results of this study into a contract based industry.

Interviewees had developed a range of parameters to limit their vulnerability while still remaining open to others. This latter skill appeared to have grown as a result of experiencing the breakdown of trust. In retrospect interviewees saw themselves as naively open and keen to trust in their early days in the industry, thereby leaving themselves exposed to being hurt. Over time, they had learnt to balance openness with caution so that they remained open whilst also quickly discerning the trustworthiness of others and therefore where to create boundaries.

The development of boundaries was adopted in other ways to facilitate trust and openness whilst creating some form of protection from the excesses of this approach. Those in leadership roles discussed how they had developed parameters with their staff in order to be more effective in managing their teams, particularly regarding how much of their own vulnerability they revealed. Another key area appeared to be the level of immersion of interviewees when working on a production. They remained fully committed but endeavoured to keep a connection to their lives outside of a production. These strategies appeared to facilitate high involvement while minimising the feeling of being on an emotional roller coaster, that many had experienced in their early years in the industry.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The development of boundaries also extended to changes in social identification. All had developed multiple social identities beyond that of a specific production. This included the creation of a superordinate film identity but also involvement in occupational interests outside of the industry. Additionally, most appeared to strongly identify with groups of friends outside of a production. Often interviewees had met these groups of friends through the industry but had developed deeper bonds with them over the years. As a result most had developed personal identities associated with several social identities not just that of the particular production they were working on. The development of multiple social identities is seen as a key to resilience and capacity in coping with change and stress (Haslam et al., 2009). The development of a superordinate identity in particular was likely to buffer against the emotional rollercoaster of moving from job to job.

Coping with uncertainty appeared to be a distinct area of skill gain for those interviewed. It enabled them to continue to work in this highly contingent and unpredictable industry. The implementation of a film or television project was dependent on a range of variables, often it could come close to production only to be cancelled at the last minute. Even productions already in operation had been known to be cancelled with no notice. The skills developed to cope with the unpredictability of work, also appeared to apply to coping with the uncertainty within a production, which is comprised of so many complex interdependent parts. It was accepted that no matter how well planned, organised, inspired or creative a production was, things would always go wrong and/or plans would change at the last minute. This was not viewed as an issue but rather part of the workings of a production, and that a solution could always be found.

Interviewees now had confidence that whatever job, task or problem they took on, they could reach a successful outcome as long as they conformed to the behavioural norms. They had also developed the skills to be able to achieve this. One interviewee described the skills he developed in this area as “trust in the flow”. For many this was seen as one of the key areas of gain from working in the industry. Problem solving skills also appeared to be one of the key differentiators individuals noticed, when they worked outside the industry after working in film. Frustration

was communicated, that those working in other industries often seemed to come to a halt when an unpredictable issue occurred. They did not keep working on this issue until it was resolved, utilising their colleagues resources, as was the norm in film and television production.

Much of the increased expertise described, is connected to the trust skills that interviewees developed and the consequent collaboration, psychological safety and engagement that it facilitated.

## **5.4 Performance and relational conflict management skills deficit**

As discussed, there was universal agreement amongst those interviewed that the industry operated in a high trust way and that this occurred from very early on in the set up of a production. There were clear informal behavioural norms that supported this including speaking up with regard to potential or actual issues of a technical or operational nature. Several interviewees discussed how these kinds of issues were aired and that conflict may occur as a part of this. Crew members at times raised their voices and became what was described as “passionate” or a “diva”, depending on the perspective of the interviewee. This was seen as an inherent part of the culture of the industry.

However, conflict of an interpersonal and relational nature or feedback regarding performance was a different story. There were no formal processes or procedures nor were there informal behavioural norms set in place to guide crew through these situations. The one exception appears to be on some big budget international film shoots where, if there were interpersonal issues, the heads of the relevant departments took responsibility for resolving these. The explanation for this anomaly was that the level of professionalism and expectation of performance was higher on this kind of production. Because of the relatively long duration and inevitable interpersonal issues that arose there needed to be a forum to expedite their resolution and thus ensure continued high productivity. Nevertheless this

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

appeared to have limited application to the most obvious issues and did not expand to performance feedback and management.

The deficit of skills in this area often appeared to result in the breakdown in both cognitive and relational trust, which in turn had a significant personal impact for those working in this industry. Because of its effect on engagement, and willingness to conform to the behavioural norms, this then led to lowered productivity.

Those interviewed for this study, most of whom were now employed in supervisory or senior roles, appeared to have little understanding of or the skills to assist them in effectively navigating these kinds of situations. It appeared to be somewhat of a 'Catch 22' situation where there were few guidelines to assist in these scenarios and few individuals effectively managing performance and interpersonal conflict management. The primary source of skills development in film and television production is via on-the-job informal learning and through modelling the behaviour of others. Therefore there were few opportunities to increase overall skills for crew.

Most respondents regarded the deficit in relational conflict management skills within the film industry as was a significant problem, reporting they had personally been negatively impacted or had observed its impact on others. It was a key issue not only on a personal basis but also because of the impact on productivity and performance. There were, however, differing attitudes towards these issues. Some felt that most interpersonal issues were preventable and were the fault of the individuals concerned. This was connected to the kind of person who was often attracted to this industry and described as 'dramatic'. This view tended to be taken by those in production roles who undertook much of the operational management of a production. However, those in creative roles tended to feel that it was more of a structural issue that was often avoided by those working in senior roles, particularly leaders of productions.

There does appear to be some limited development of skill in this area. Two interviewees provided examples of conflict prevention with their teams where they held discussions with staff before issues escalated. Two also provided examples of



## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

providing performance feedback to team members to explain their firing or not rehiring them. When discussing the latter situation, both commented on how personally challenging they found it but also how significantly it had contributed to their own self-development.

It appears that challenging discussions could potentially conflict with other behavioural norms existing in the industry regarding trust and collaboration. Having difficult interpersonal or performance discussions may result in disharmony or exacerbate conflict. Not only could this impact on trust and collaboration but it could have an effect at a personal level. Connectedness to others and feeling respected and accepted by others could also be impacted.

Because of the deficit in skill in negotiating challenging interpersonal discussions dysfunctional patterns had become ingrained industry practices and these issues were often dealt with in an indirect way. Even those in senior roles appeared to have a fear of broaching difficult subjects with their colleagues. They feared the likelihood of indirect destructive behaviours by them if they felt unfairly treated. These senior players felt their own reputation, and their career in such a networked industry, may in some way be affected as a result. Ironically, several examples were also provided where interpersonal or performance issues were not dealt with directly by those in senior roles. These situations escalated and became dysfunctional anyway. In these situations interviewees felt that individuals were unjustly impacted and in some cases reputations were significantly affected as a result. However, those in senior roles reflected that it would have been more beneficial if they had provided feedback or terminated a crew contract because of the resulting issues that occurred from their avoidance.

Several interviewees discussed that the industry would significantly benefit from some form of training on performance management and feedback, as well as interpersonal conflict management and resolution. One interviewee advocating this discussed a head of department he had worked with and whose leadership skills he felt stood out in the industry. When he approached her about this, she told him that she had decided to undertake formal leadership training after completing a

long and stressful job. She felt she did not have the skills she needed to run a department effectively. This formal leadership development example appears to be an anomaly in the industry, where many have worked most of their careers and have not been exposed to alternative ways of operating. Also, few have previous business qualifications or mainstream corporate leadership experience or training. However, this form of leadership training does not appear to be discussed as an option or necessity by those in senior roles.

## **5.5 Excessive working hours and potential loss of key talent**

As with other research into the industry, interviewees in this study felt that it becomes harder to operate in film and television production as one gets older and/or has a family. The length of the working day was seen as the primary reason for this rather than work insecurity. This was described as a significant downside to working in film and television production as time wore on. Indeed, two respondents commented that working a 45 hour week would be all that they would like to change about their jobs, with one commenting their job would then be perfect.

Ironically, what may draw people into the industry early in their careers is the total immersion in a production. This is partly as a result of the long hours worked and what has been referred to as a “total institution” environment (Bechky, 2006). This total immersion environment seemed to fast track high social identity and, in time, clarity of personal identity

Despite its contribution to their enjoyment earlier in their careers, the length of the working day appears to have become an increasing issue the longer people worked in the industry. On its own it was seen as significant enough for crew to seriously contemplate exiting the industry as they aged and/or had families. This is a particularly significant risk to the industry, as film and television production is relatively new in New Zealand with workers only being able to sustain a full-time career in the last 20-25 years. As several commented over the course of interviews,

they have seen the industry develop considerably in the last 10-15 years, particularly around areas of professionalism. There is a risk of loss of substantial intellectual and institutional capital hard won over this short period of the existence of the industry. This is at a time when film and television production has reached critical mass increased its professionalism and is developing an international reputation for the quality of its crew and product. Also, the international market is highly competitive so, as with individual workers in the New Zealand industry, global reputation is highly important for obtaining new projects and work. Therefore, those that are contemplating the industry because of the hours have substantial skill vital to the continuing growth of film.

Lowering hours is also likely to be Beneficial in overall well-being. Despite the satisfaction that many gain from working in this industry, the long hours do appear to exacerbate some of the downsides. It was described as contributing to relational issues and to exhaustion at the end of a job, even when workers are experienced in the industry. It is also likely to contribute to anxiety and depression between jobs as a result.

### **5.6 Suggestions for dealing with the negatives for the industry**

The film and television production industry in New Zealand would gain significantly from increasing the overall level of skill in performance management and relational conflict management. However, formal training and development is not currently provided on these topics within this industry. Because of their project specific structure, productions do not fund or sponsor training and development. Some industry bodies, such as the film commission, SPADA and the Technicians Guild, do offer some training and development to individuals but this tends to be technically related. Also, educational institutions provide courses and qualifications but specific training in these areas is not provided either.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Additionally, as the majority of participants in this industry work contractually and for long hours, it is difficult for them to commit specific time to training. Currently it is something they would need to wholly fund themselves.

Recommendations from this study are to provide short duration mini-training courses in performance management and feedback, as well as relational conflict management and resolution. These would be available to all participants in the industry with differing course levels being provided. It is imagined that these be one day weekend classes and that they be facilitated through industry associations. This would enable film crew to attend even whilst working. It is also likely to be more appealing because of its short, sharp format. It is recommended that training courses be designed to suit the learning style of many operating in the industry, that is active, intense, practically based and with significant time devoted to practising these new skills.

Additionally, those in senior or head of department roles, or aspiring to be, could be encouraged to undertake non-industry leadership training. Specific courses or qualifications could be recommended by industry associations that would fit more effectively with their requirements and likely learning style.

It is also recommended that this training and development be partly sponsored financially by both industry and government. The current National government has been clear that this industry is a priority for growth with significant funding and tax subsidies provided to produce films and television series in this country. This would contribute to increased performance of the New Zealand industry and therefore enhance its international reputation further, resulting in industry growth.

A small levy could also be placed on production companies in order to fund industry training. Again they are likely to gain in the long run by subsidising the increase of leadership skills of the industry. Industry associations may also be able to part sponsor these kinds of courses through the contributions they gain from members.

However, the current government has recently removed protections for those working in film and could view funding for development of skills as connected to

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

increasing the power of workers in the industry. Therefore there may be some reticence in supporting such moves. Production companies are also likely to resist contributing to a fund unless regulated to do so or unless they can see clear Benefits to productivity.

A trial could be undertaken with an established production company such as Wingnut Productions or Weta Workshops (Peter Jackson's companies) or South Pacific Pictures, who are prolific producers of successful New Zealand drama series and films. Senior leaders and heads of department could attend the trial. If the pilot was successful then changes in participants' behaviours around performance and relational conflict management would be witnessed. If successful, the Benefits would be likely to multiply as the participants would model new behaviours which would influence other crew members. The Benefits could then easily be promoted and buy-in to this kind of training likely to increase significantly.

Finding a solution to the long hours worked on productions could also benefit the industry considerably in the long run. This could be through increases in day-to-day productivity but also from preventing the loss of those with substantial intellectual and institutional capital. It is therefore advantageous for shooting hours to be shortened in some way, to facilitate the retention of experienced and skilled crew. There was a short period historically where 12-hour shoot days were introduced for some overseas productions, shot locally. This has since been successfully negotiated down for many productions, with comments from interviewees that as much is completed in 10-hour as 12-hour shooting days.

Unfortunately though, it appears the standard industry shooting hours are the same in most other English speaking countries as they are currently in New Zealand. Consequently, it is likely to be a challenge to shorten the shooting day here. Also, although crew wages are a significant contributor to the overall cost of a production, equipment hireage is also expensive and is charged out at a flat daily or weekly rate. This is usually given as the primary reason for the length of the shooting day.

Another challenge would be negotiating pay rates as a result of working shorter hours. One of the draw cards of the industry is the relatively high pay crew receive when they do work. Although hours worked is seen as an issue, there is likely to be some resistance to lowered pay. This is unlikely to be a compromise that crew would be willing to make. There could be some compromise where crew are paid 15 minutes less a day and the production pays for a 9.75 hour day.

One interviewee, in a senior role, discussed the potential for shooting days to be shortened by half an hour, and lunch breaks shortened from 45 minutes to 30 minutes. They felt that this could be explored to see if overall productivity remained the same. A trial is likely to be the best way to implement such changes to hours. However, wholesale implementation would require high level support, for example from the film commission or government via regulation. Currently it appears unlikely in light of legislation by the National government in 2010 removing some industry regulations to gain favour with Hollywood studios.

### **5.7 Insights for other industries**

Many of the positive mechanisms observed operating in this industry appear to be what leaders of many permanent organisations are endeavouring to engender within their own culture and people. High trust, cognitive, relational and motive-based, trust in the competence of others, feeling that one has the support of others and feeling that others' motives are understood was observed by all participants in this study. The high trust environment was facilitated by a coherent set of norms which were generally well respected and conformed to by industry participants. These norms created a strong work ethic which in turn reinforced reliability, commitment and initiative. Clearly defined norms facilitated collaborative behaviour and acceptance of others, in turn supporting both trust and psychological safety. This encouraged effective problem solving, innovation, creativity and reflexive double loop learning (Argyris, 1978), a close fit with descriptions of a learning organisation culture. Despite research supporting contrary views, interviewees' discussions described an environment of high psychological safety

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

and a general love of working in this industry, even with its pitfalls. They felt that they could be themselves, with evidence indicating they were normed to do so. There also appeared to be norms reinforcing honest communication, which facilitated problem solving thereby preventing operational issues reaching points where they became particularly challenging. High social identity, self-confidence, and a clear sense of purpose, were all observed in discussions with interviewees. Having said this, many insights had been hard won as a result of experiencing the fallout of the breakdown of trust.

Most participants in the film and television production industry described themselves as mavericks of some form, unwilling to conform to the norms of mainstream society. And yet, ironically, they happily complied with a range of norms when working on a production, showing pride in doing so. The many leaders of 'mainstream' organisations aspire to have employees behave in these ways to enhance profits.

Creating an environment with such clear behavioural norms that were willingly conformed to even by rule-breakers, could be highly Beneficial for many industries. The question is whether this would be as achievable in different environments. Many features of film and television production could not be so easily emulated elsewhere, particularly the sense of freedom participants often felt. Interviewees felt they could pick and choose what jobs they undertook. High commitment on a production appeared to be partly as crew knew there was an exit point. Once a job finished they were not beholden to work with those colleagues again. This sense of freedom of work appears to be directly associated with working contractually and is therefore not as easily transferable elsewhere.

There has been some debate with regard to emotional labour and the contractual nature of work in the industry. Some researchers found there was the need to maintain relations in order to obtain continuing contracts. In this study, although there was evidence of emotional labour in specific situations and areas, this did not appear to be widespread. If anything, all described the freedom they felt to be themselves in the industry. Acceptance of others to the point of eccentricity was

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

expected as long as these individuals conformed to the other trust norms. This describes an environment of generally high psychological safety particularly comparative to respondents' experiences outside the industry. A 'no bullshit' culture also supported this. Because of the high level of motive-based trust, if others' intentions clashed with integrity, respect and a very strong work ethic, they were likely to be quickly sanctioned for this.

Another aspect, facilitating this high trust environment, not so easily emulated elsewhere, is that all crew were working towards a common goal of making a high quality, complex creative product. The only way this goal could be successfully achieved was if all worked effectively together, hence the importance of trust. Competition was mentioned only a few times and appeared to be restricted to executive level around dominance over creative vision. It also emerged in early experiences of the industry, where there was a feeling of competition between friends over obtaining upcoming roles.

Although cost containment was important in many roles, profit maximisation was not the central goal at any level of a production. No mention was made to this at any point in the interviews. The focus on this remained with those that funded a production and profit could only be maximised with a high level of creativity, quality and cohesiveness in the end product. If profit maximisation was the key focus of a production there was a high risk that this would stifle the capacity to create this sought after end product.

The other aspect, which may not be easily replicated, is the highly creative nature of the work, which requires a specific environment to flow effectively. This level of creativity, whether idea generation, design, innovation or problem solving, has not traditionally been necessary in many industries. However, requirements appear to be changing quickly with the pace of technological innovation, combined with recent economic upheaval and uncertainty, environment issues and human inequality challenges. This level of creativity, as seen in the film industry, may be particularly important now.



## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

These aspects appeared to combine to create a highly satisfying environment that was described as fun, exciting and stimulating at a personal level. Well-being appeared high as a result of being part of this high trust creative environment. Even for those who had experienced damaging situations, the joy gained from being part of this industry was clear. All had gained skills and confidence they didn't think they would have gained elsewhere.

Further research could be undertaken in other industries with some similar conditions, such as those that are project based, creative or where profit maximisation is not the key purpose. It could highlight what aspects are replicated elsewhere and whether the underlying reasons, for creating the environment of a film and television production, are what have been suggested here. This will enable a better understanding of how effectively these positive conditions could also be developed elsewhere.

However even before undertaking comparative research, creating a perception of honest communication and psychological safety, particularly from those in most senior roles, would be the ideal features to focus on in other industries, to begin replicating these good citizenship behaviours.

It would be highly advantageous for many of the positive features of this industry to be replicated elsewhere, particularly from a productivity and performance perspective. However, the environment of the film and television production industry is unique in many ways and replication does not appear easy for this reason. If this was achieved however, the outcome would likely be a satisfied and stimulated workforce as well as a higher performing organisation.

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## Appendix 1

*An explorative study of trust on film productions.*

### INFORMATION SHEET

#### Introduction

My name is Georgina Ellis and I am undertaking research into the film and television industry to understand how trust operates on productions and how people find working in this environment. This research is being carried out as partial fulfilment of the requirements of a Masters Degree with Massey University.

#### *Researcher's information:*

Name: Georgina Ellis

Address: 22 Parawai Crescent, Ponsonby, Auckland

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#### *Supervisor's information:*

Name: Jocelyn Handy BSc(Hons) Lanc., MSc Birm., PhD Lanc.

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#### Participants

Workers on production work in a range of areas including production, accounts, art, costume, make-up, locations, lighting, grip, camera, assistant-directors. For this study I wish to work with individuals who have worked in the industry in any of these or other related roles for over 10 years.

I would like to hear from people who have worked for this length of time and are interested in discussing with me their experiences of trust in the film industry environment.

#### Project procedures

If you agree to take part in this research I will interview you, asking you about working in the film industry environment and your experiences of trust. I will be asking you questions such as how you find trust works on a production, how important it is, how you feel about it and how this environment has influenced you personally, if at all. The interview will be taped and is likely to take about an hour.

### **Protecting your confidentiality**

I will transcribe the tapes myself and will use pseudonyms will be used in the finished report so that individuals will not be recognised from this information. I will not state the roles or specific department that individuals work in. Instead the technical, production and creative department categories will be used. Again this is to protect the anonymity of those participating in this research. In the event that the research results are published I will take care to ensure that individual participants cannot be identified from this report.

### **Participants' rights**

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question.
- Withdraw from the study.
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation.
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher.
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- Ask for the audio/video tape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

### **Project contacts**

“This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University’s Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named above is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

*If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher, please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Ethics & Equity), telephone 06 350 5249, email [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)”.*



## Appendix 2

*An explorative study of trust on film productions.*

### **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years.

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I wish/do not wish to have my tapes returned to me.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

**Signature:**

**Date:**

**Full name (printed):**

## Appendix 3

### INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

#### ***How quickly trust develops on a production.***

When you begin work on a new production how quickly do you need to work collaboratively with others to do your work? How do you do this?

What do you think about trusting others quickly at the beginning of a production? How true does this sound to you?

#### ***How trust is built, and the trustworthiness of others is ascertained, at a personal level.***

If this is true can you discuss how you think this works? How do you build trust so quickly?

Do you quickly trust everyone or only specific individuals or teams?

How do you work out who you can and can't trust?

#### ***Early experiences of working in the industry and the trust environment.***

Can you think back to when you first started working in the industry? How quickly did people trust each other in comparison to other work environments you had worked in? How quickly or how much did they trust you? How did you gain the trust of your workmates? What kinds of relationships engender faster trust? Who did you build trust with more quickly? Why?

#### ***Experiences of lack of trust.***

What kinds of people do you take longer to trust? What kinds of people don't you trust? What happened for these different outcomes to occur?

How can people lose your trust? Have you lost the trust of others? How did this happen?

Why do you think you trust people quickly?

#### ***Dealing with conflict.***

Often when there is a high level of trust it can be harder to discuss difficult issues or to deal with conflict. What are your thoughts on this with regard to working on a production?

In what areas is conflict avoided? Think about a time this happened. Please describe the situation. What did this lead to?

How does this avoiding conflict impact on trust with others? What are the ramifications?

***Building connections and friendships with colleagues.***

How much do you stay in touch with your workmates after a production finishes? What do you like about these interactions? How much of a social network do you have? How stable is this from production to production? How quickly can you become friends with your colleagues? How much trust is there with these relationships?

How similar are your interactions with previous colleagues and work networks outside of a production to when you are working with them on a production?

***Comparison of work connections and friendships between film and other industries.***

How similar are these to friendships and networks outside of the industry? How do these compare to those networks that you had with work colleagues in previous jobs before you worked in film and television?

***Advantages and disadvantages of fast connections in the film industry.***

What are the advantages of this? What are the disadvantages of this?

***Changes in perspective & development of skills from working in a swift trust environment.***

Has working in a “swift trust” environment changed your perspective in any way? How?

In what ways do you interact differently with and build relationships with others in general? How differently do you build and maintain trust with others? How open to others are you now in comparison to before you worked in this industry? Why do you think this has changed? What about your self-confidence? Social confidence?

In what other areas do you think this may have had an affect on the way you view and interact with the world? What has changed? Why do you think this has changed?

***Differences between the film industry environment and other industries.***

What was different about the culture of the industry to where you had worked elsewhere? How did you feel about this? Did you experience the world any differently as a result? How so?

***Current satisfaction in working in the film industry.***

What is your current satisfaction in working in the industry? How different is it to when you first started? Why do you think this is different? What keeps you there? OR Tell me your reasons for leaving.

## Appendix 4

*An explorative study of trust on film productions.*

### SUMMARY FOR RESPONDENTS

I would like to thank everyone who gave their valuable time to participate in this research. This includes those who were interviewed for this study as well as all those others who provided support and advice. Your openness and willingness to share your experiences and views has been fantastic.

#### THE AIM

The purpose of this thesis was to further understand trust in the film industry, to explore personal experiences of this environment and how this influences individuals.

#### SUMMARY FINDINGS

##### ***Trust as a Mechanism for Facilitating Organisational Performance***

Those that were interviewed provided considerable evidence of a swift trust environment operating in the film and television production industry. Clear informal guidelines ensured behaviours supported cognitive, relational and motive-based trust mechanisms. This facilitated collaboration, creativity and problem solving. The environment was one of organisational citizen behaviour and reflexive learning.

##### ***Personal Impact of the High Trust Environment***

All interviewees identified strongly with their teams, productions they worked on and the industry as a whole. They described it as fun and exciting. They felt they belonged and had a clearer sense of purpose as a result of working in this environment.

##### ***Breakdown of Trust***

However, all had experienced occasions where there was a breakdown in trust. This was simple if untrustworthy individuals were newcomers but became increasingly complex as individuals gained more seniority and power. Breakdowns in trust appeared to be aided by the deficit in conflict and performance management skills.

***Personal Impact of the Breakdown of Trust***

The outcomes of experiencing this breakdown at a personal level could be substantial. All that were interviewed observed anxiety, depression and burnout. This occurred as a result of the breakdown of trust in the workplace, or because of the emotional rollercoaster of oscillating between working in such a highly stimulating and enjoyable environment, and unemployment, particularly early in careers.

***Coping or Thriving***

All interviewed had developed their own coping skills to survive and thrive in this environment. Commonality lay around increased skills in perceiving the trust of others and maximising their own trustworthiness. Most had developed multiple social identities to enable them to cope with the sudden transition between work and unemployment. Several discussed their increased self-awareness and self-sufficiency, the development of boundaries in many areas of their work, as well as skills to build their resilience. They also discussed how this range of skills had added to their lives outside the industry.

***Further Information***

If you would like to have your interview tapes returned or copies of your interview transcripts then please to not hesitate to get in touch and I will ensure that they are provided.

If you have any comments on this research, would like to further delve into the findings, or would like to discuss any aspects please feel free to call or email me.

Thank you very much.

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## Appendix 5: Typical Film Organisation Chart

