



Change, innovation and energy demand reduction: community led initiatives as examined through the lens of “energy biographies”. Energy Biographies Working Paper 12-01. Cardiff, School of Social Sciences.

Professor Karen Henwood, Cardiff University School of Social Sciences, Paper for presentation at Constructing Narratives of Continuity and Change, Conference held at Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury, May 12th 2012. (henwoodk@cardiff.ac.uk)

The presentation will give an early stage report on aspects of a UK based research project “Energy biographies: Understanding the dynamics of energy use for demand reduction” that is part of the ESRC/EPSC “energy and communities” collaborative venture (2010-2015). The Energy biographies (EB’s) study brings together an interdisciplinary team of researchers led by myself in the Cardiff University School of Social Sciences, and is jointly based in the Cardiff University Understanding Risk Group (led by Professor Nick Pidgeon).

The background to the project is the widespread recognition – among policy makers, environmental organisations and academics alike – that innovative ways need to be found to foster transitions to low carbon living – not only through low carbon forms of energy production but through the efficient consumption of energy and reductions in its use. Local community level initiatives are developing to catalyse the necessary pathways to change, with some of these being featured in the paper. But efforts are needed to also develop a broader knowledge base and social research agenda in order to draw out the wider significance of these initiatives for knowledge and practice around issues such as energy transitions and sustainable futures. Our EB’s project is part of these efforts and, although at an early stage (core fieldwork started in December 2011), we see considerable value in communicating about our project to multiple audiences, such as at this conference on narrative continuities and changes, where we have shared interests and concerns. As a research team we adopt an interdisciplinary ethos which involves utilising the benefits of temporal, narrative and biographical research for studying continuities and changes within communities and for

generating awareness of personal/lifecourse dynamics. Such dynamics inevitably come to the fore when researching intractable problems, such as when public policy is seeking to effect change that will pose challenges to people's everyday living. In this case, change may be a source of personal inconvenience, discomfort and ambivalence, even while it is dealing with matters that are subject to considerable social and personal moral approval, such as efforts to afford protection against environmental risk, climate change mitigation and promote sustainable (in this case energy) futures.

Our study methodology involves building up *strong research-community partnerships* as the basis for conducting three comparative community case studies¹. In addition we take an *innovative biographical approach* to investigating people's own understandings of energy and particular life course trajectories: their "energy biographies". By this we mean that we will be investigating people's current energy use in terms of their own understandings of energy against the backdrop of their particular life-course trajectories. Currently very little is known about how life transitions are interpreted by individuals in terms of their impacts on energy use and how they are bound up with the different community contexts they inhabit, so our study will be filling these significant knowledge gaps. But there are also a number of more stretching goals associated with our project's embeddedness in the real world policy context that is posing questions at multiple (local, national and international) scales about how to achieve significant reductions in energy consumption. It is important in this regard that, as a research team, we fully recognise that achieving this will not be easy given how firmly our habitual, routinely expected ways of modern living lock us into energy intensive practices and lifestyles, and which means that we are already set to continue on increasingly unsustainable trajectories of energy demand and consumption. Nonetheless, our hope for this project is that, by creating the empirical and conceptual space for making visible people's everyday energy practices (what they use energy for), and for reflecting on their ways of interacting with demand reduction interventions at the local community level, we will arrive at innovative ways of enabling people to engage with transformations towards more sustainable futures.

Previous Narrative, Environmental Risk and Discursive/Temporal/Lifecourse Research

One of the main reasons why we were in a position to tackle the challenge of researching this set of problematics – the difficulties and dynamics involved when people and communities become involved in efforts to mitigate large scale environmental change and looming energy resource scarcity - was because we had previously gained experience of conducting investigations into how people living in the vicinity of major socio-technical hazard sites are able to live with nuclear risk. This work involved exploring the value of narrative methods – especially narrative elicitation

methods – for producing forms of biographical-narrative data that came to carry great significance in our analytical work for that project (Henwood et al, 2010; subsequently reprinted 2011). In the published analyses arising from this work we were able to study the way biographical experiences dynamically unfolding through time and space could be interrupted by risk events. This, in turn, led us to produce insights about the ebb and flow of forms of risk awareness and concern that became apparent when the power station became momentarily reframed as a risk issue (Parkhill et al, 2009). Subsequently, we took further exploration of why the meanings of risk also require investigation though attending to intangible meanings (humorous asides, ironic laughter) that we found to be a frequent feature of talk about everyday life in the locality, but that are often ignored and insufficiently theorised by risk researchers. Our reported research findings concerned how, by masking and revealing affectively charged states associated with living with risk, such humorously expressed meanings helped people and communities live with risk through suppressing vulnerabilities and enabling the negotiation of threat (among other important functions) (Parkhill et al, 2011).

In discussing the value of our narrative elicitation interview strategy, we have pointed to the way the narrative style of interview (where the interviewer relinquishes tight control of the conversation and instead sees the complex dynamics of risk framing as integral to the research process: see also Henwood et al, 2008) was particularly good at getting people to talk in ways that involve biographical and temporal extensions. Within the same interview format interviewees were able to look back to the past, link the present to the past and imagine what might happen in the future². Using this format the researcher was also able to encourage participants to speak about the nuclear power station from the many perspectives that became available to them as they took into account the changing circumstances and conditions of their lives: what Tulluch and Lupton (2003) presciently refer to as the “changing time and place coordinates of their lives”. This prompted reflexivity among interviewees about the role the power station had played previously in their lives/area, and allowed the researchers as analysts to explore the various kinds of narratives, meanings and framings, including biographical and place based ones, interviewees invoked to make their experiences and encounters with risk intelligible. We also asked questions designed to draw out shorter, more focussed, yet experientially relevant stories about living next to the power station (called episodic narratives) as another way of enabling study participants to talk about everyday feelings and concerns, in ways that might not otherwise have arisen as experientially relevant. Corinne Squire (2008) uses the term “personal event narratives” to depict the kinds of episodic narratives that have personal relevance to people’s lives, and has identified their uses in replaying

events that have become part of people's biography, as operating powerfully through revisiting and emotionally reliving key moments in talk, and as strategies "for explaining events that are partially represented or outside representation". We became particularly interested in our inquiries in the everyday affects that were brought to our attention given our participants' responses to both these and our other kinds of narrative elicitation questions. By exploring the everyday associations between such affects, risk, biography and place, what is usually intangible – or on the margins of awareness – became researchable.

Based in our own research experience then, we believe that there is much to be gained by seeking to understand the complexities revealed by contextualised, personal narratives when studying environmental and local community risk issues. Yet it is important to note that a narrative approach does not stand alone, and is best considered as one important element of interpretive, qualitative inquiries within the social sciences – with especially close ties to those that are attuned to the study of discursive, textual and temporal concerns. Attending to the *discursive or textual features* and organisation of talk enables the identification of specific narratives through their general structural features (in terms of plot development, characterisation etc). Other linguistic, discursive or textual features of data that are simultaneously of interest to discourse analysts (see e.g. Wetherell, Taylor and Yates, 2002) and narrative researchers include the repeated figures of speech (tropes), vivid images and metaphors (including those conveyed in humorous remarks), and subject positions that are either opened up by the structures of language or by the way people (as speaking subjects) imaginatively construct themselves through the way they are able to deploy the symbolic resources of linguistic and social signs. It is often within the closely related field of discourse studies that social scientists are intensively involved in studying issues that are central to our current work on energy demand reduction which is seeking to understand the challenges involved in undertaking significant social change – because it asks questions about the dynamics of social and cultural change (and inertia), and considers how the study of imagined futures gives a handle on how contested cultural ideas and social realities play out in the way people live out their lives (see e.g. Wetherell and Edley, 1999).

In our own work, as we began to think about what we needed to set in place to study change, innovation and energy demand reduction through the lens of energy biographies, we opted for investigating i) how people narrate their experiences relating to energy use in their everyday lives ii) the stories they tell about their personal investments in the kinds of services that use energy (travel, domestic appliances, technology more generally) and iii) how these personal investments are

established through the lifecourse. But in so doing we have drawn on conceptual and methodological tools from within a number of related fields such as narrative and discourse study.

As well as finding narrative (and discourse) research to be a rich resource for developing our own research ideas theoretically and practically, there are some further ways to go about augmenting it which involve drawing in ideas from temporal and lifecourse studies. We anticipate gaining rich insights from asking people to tell us at (initial) interview about their experiences of using energy (or rather the services energy provides), but our interest in questions about the personal investments people make in services that require using energy across the lifecourse makes us wary of merely taking a snapshot of people's views and energy practices at a single point in time. Of course, one of the virtues of narrative (as already mentioned) – and one of the reasons why they have been selected - is that they do make it possible to understand the (textual) means by which people link their experiences in and through biographical (also generational and historical) time. As narrative accounts are themselves temporally organised, they can be studied for the means through which the past is used to construct the present, how the past comes to be reworked in the present, and how imagined futures reconfigure biographical meanings past and present. We will be studying 'storied life' as a way of attending to the multiple perspectives that are bound up with people's varying orientations to the differing timescapes³ of 'then, now and next' (Finn and Henwood, 2009) in respect of energy use. We will also be particularly interested in whether adopting such different timescapes might radically alter the ways in which people engage with their life stories as part of an ongoing social process (Greene, 2003) of energy consumption and transformation of energy use.

Additionally, though, we are aware of the considerable potential value of conducting our inquiries longitudinally, in and through time, in order to conduct more temporally extended study into how our topics of study unfold and change dynamically in time (Neale and Flowerdew, 2003; Shirani and Henwood, 2010). Change can take time to occur, as can the appearance of (un)tended consequences of interventions and policies (Thomson, 2007). Allowing a period of time to elapse during the course of one's inquiries therefore allows a means by which continuities and changes can be tracked, or traced, over the course of time. Of course the period of time elapsed that will be available to us in our own study will not allow for tracking of significant life course change itself: the fieldwork component of the research is for 16-18 months whereas we wish to study people's views of energy and the formation of their personal investments in using energy against the backcloth of their own lifecourse and what it means to live out a life. Nonetheless, a 16-18 month QL design will allow us to examine people's reflections upon how their energy practices have altered or remained unchanged

while they are engaging with particular community interventions designed to create energy efficiencies or reduce energy consumption. In this way there is potential in using such methods to examine such things as the “agency of individuals in crafting (change) processes, the sensibilities and oral cultures that underpin the local cultures (social space, locality, artifacts, symbolic representations and so forth) through which they are given substance” (Neale and Flowerdew, 2003). According to Bren Neale, who is a leading advocate of QL study, what is valuable about QL study is the way it focuses in on the kinds of micro-level processes that rarely follow single or linear trajectories and that can be studied to illuminate “change in the making”. For the purpose of our own energy biographies study, we envisage that it will be possible through constructing QL case histories for some of the participants involved in our research to examine continuities and changes in their reflections upon how they view their personal investments in particular uses of energy to investigate what we might call their “energy practices in the making”.

Our Energy Biographies Study: Design and Progress to Date

The Energy Biographies project design involves two main empirical phases of fieldwork at a range of research locations where communities have initiated energy demand reduction initiatives of various kinds from three different parts of the UK (Cardiff, Pembrokeshire – West Wales, and London). Currently data collection is underway (although at early stages) and is set to continue over a 10-12 month period for each site. Community case sites have been selected to span a continuum from ‘mainstream’ social contexts, where existing demand reduction interventions are present but do not feature as central to participants’ current everyday activities, to ‘niche’, which involve substantial community sustainability and energy reduction innovations.

Lammas Low Impact Initiatives At one end of the spectrum is our niche site, Lammas Low Impact Initiatives in Pembrokeshire; the Tir y Gafel Eco-Hamlet was a winner of one of the Department of Energy and Climate Change Low Carbon Communities Challenge (LCCC) awards. The Lammas Tir y Gafel eco hamlet is under construction in Pembrokeshire, West Wales. The low impact design involves a combination of green technologies, permaculture cultivation methods and natural building techniques. Their proposal under the LCCC included developing eco-smallholdings for 9 families, a campsite and a community hub building. The community at Tir y Gafel is completely off-grid and residents need to demonstrate that they are able to meet 75% of their household needs directly from the land within 5 years as a condition of their planning permission. The aim is to

combine land-based livelihoods with carbon-neutral housing while also developing a replicable model of integrated rural sustainable development.

"I think the community on site is in a sense quite a strong community really and everyone feels they can get in touch with anyone else to ask for things and things like that." Tir y Gafel resident

City of Cardiff Another Another case site, Cardiff, sits closer to the middle of the niche–mainstream spectrum. For this case site we are sampling across two local community projects:

- the 'Futurespace' initiative in Ely and Caerau
- local community organisation 'Cyswllst Peterston Connect'

Ely and Caerau is a socially deprived inner-city area. Their Futurespace initiative is part of a wider organisation (ACE) created through the local Communities First programme, and is also focussed on installing solar panels in the local community, funded through a large company external to the community. Cyswllst Peterston Connect is a local organisation in an affluent village community on the outskirts of Cardiff. Established by local residents, Cyswllst Peterston Connect is a sustainable development group which has been running for around two years. One of their current initiatives is related to solar panels, which local residents are self-funding. Both Cardiff projects are undertaking substantial interventions in mainstream contexts, engaging their communities especially through their solar PV installation projects, home energy surveying and wider communications about saving energy.

"There's a park there, the air is nice, I can smell the wild garlic on a morning there's lots of shops, it's easy to the motorway, it's two miles into town, the bus service is amazing, it's every five minutes there's a bus. Originally I was brought up in an area that was not rough but it was ordinary working class people and I quite like being in working class ... I quite like this area because it's quite down to earth. And across the road it has a reputation for a lot of social issues but probably no more than anywhere else in a city or on a huge social estate anywhere to be honest." Ely and Caerau resident

"I think somebody once told me that there are more millionaires in the Peterston ward than any other ward in Wales, which may well be true, there's a lot of very big, very expensive estates and houses around. The village itself is...ordinary but, you know, it's largish expensive houses, with a little estate that is much more prosaic... So it is that kind of professional relatively wealthy area, quite a lot

of business people. It's very well endowed as a village, it has a very good quality school, primary school, and I think that's a major factor in the kind of dynamics of the village. Young people move out there with kids because there's a really good school. And it's got two pubs and a church and post office and shop, the bus service. So from that point of view it's fairly well served. " Peterston Super Ely resident

Royal Free Hospital Our mainstream site is London and staff sampled from the Royal Free Hospital (RFH). The RFH has made some interventions to reduce the energy demand of the hospital but on the whole the interventions are not beyond those that many of us experience across the UK. In addition, the staff we sample from the hospital will not (necessarily) have involvement with any energy related interventions in their home life.

The Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust has 900 beds and sees approximately 700,000 patients a year. It is one of the largest employers (4,600 people) in North West London, with an annual turnover of about £450 million. The UK Government is targeting such large organisations through initiatives like the CRC (Carbon Reduction Commitment) Energy Efficiency Scheme, which came into effect in April 2010. The hospital has already developed a carbon management and implementation plan, including activities to reduce energy consumption and “develop and promote a more ‘Green’ culture” (RFH, 2008, p5). This case site thus provides a unique opportunity to examine the wider impacts upon employees (across both their work and home practices) of interventions initiated within a large public sector organisation. The first round of interviews in our London case site is currently underway in May 2012.

"There are certainly sectors of the hospital that are more energy hungry than others.

So for example if you take places like imaging which covers CT scanners, linear accelerators, that sort of thing, MRI scanners, so the cost of, for just the electricity, for one of those pieces of kit is probably somewhere 10 to 15 thousand a year.

So you know this is the bit the general public don't pick up on – that all these super new technologies come with a cost" Employee, RFH

Fieldwork phases and methods

For the first empirical fieldwork phase individual interviews are being conducted to elicit peoples' narratives and stories regarding their use of energy and energy practices, and how this relates to the different communities with which they identify. The interviews involve carefully crafted questions to

encourage participants to revisit key moments of their life histories (e.g. transition to adulthood) and aspects of their everyday life (e.g. established routines) to prompt an awareness of their personal investments in energy use. A key focus is on the life-course transitions that have served to intensify people's energy use in the past, as well as potential routes for change in the future. The interviews also encourage participants to discuss their own evaluations of existing energy reduction interventions in their own particular location.

For the second fieldwork phase a subset of our participants is to be selected in each case location to engage in an extended period of more in-depth qualitative longitudinal research incorporating repeat interviews after a further 5-6 and 10-12 months. This will allow us to create more complex and realistic understandings of how and why individual's energy biographies develop as they do, as well as the unintended and intended consequences of energy demand reduction interventions. These repeat interviews will be supplemented by use of other methods, in particular cameras where participants will photograph their own ongoing engagement with and understandings of their everyday use of energy within the domains of home, leisure, work and transport.

Through using these methods the project will break new research ground by looking closely for the first time at how our use of energy is related to our understandings of our biographical past, as well as our hopes for the future. It is also novel in seeking to develop qualitative longitudinal methods of investigation in the area of energy demand and use.

For all of the sites we are studying, our collaborating community partners have representation on the project's advisory panel which meets periodically to ensure that it is possible for our communities to suggest ways in which they think the project should develop. In this way the project team is able to remain attuned and responsive to how communities understand and wish to present their varied current energy demand reduction schemes. The project team can also in this way be made aware of any impacts involvement in the research may be having upon the research participants.

Example Data Analysis: Can people make temporal connections across time and place?

It is not possible here to present any insights worked up from our EB's project data as we are still in the early stages and seeking to complete the first wave of interviews at the third community case site. But using data from another in depth qualitative energy locality study from the same research

unit, and conducted in the summer 2009, it is possible to convey how we have been able to generate an analytical project out of our methodological interests in studying time, narrative, and the dynamics of change in relation to people's relationship to energy consumption and community efforts to reduce it. The study making available the data⁴ for the analysis was an investigation into public perceptions of different energy production facilities and futures. The two study localities (Aberthaw in the Vale of Glamorgan, South Wales and Hinkley point in Somerset) rest on the Severn estuary which has long been the focus of debates about potential tidal energy developments (e.g. tidal barrage, tidal bar) making these two areas a nexus for past, present and future energy developments. One impetus for the analytical work (Shirani, Henwood, Butler, Parkhill and Pidgeon, forthcoming) was to create a working relationship among members of the originating project (Pidgeon, Parkhill, Butler) and the enlarged Energy Biographies team of researchers bringing specialist knowledge to the study of temporal dynamics and the lifecourse from previous work as part of the Timescapes Qualitative Longitudinal network (see e.g. Henwood and Shirani, in press).

At the heart of the analysis is an interest in questions about intergenerational equity. There is a relevant environmental justice literature which includes debate about whether current generations have the moral duty to protect natural resources (including energy resources) in the interests of future generations. Some (Baumann) argue that a new brand of ethics is required which takes into account this temporal responsibility. Others argue that it is difficult for people to deal with future concerns about environmental protection in this way because of the nature of global threats. Influential social science thinking (Beck's Risk Society thesis) suggests that, in the light of patterns of globalisation, risks have become increasingly difficult to calculate (partly as they cross socio-economic boundaries and affect rich and poor alike) creating difficulties for people in seeing the consequences of their actions for more distant other times and places (called glocal connections). Accounting for future generations is also said to be complicated (according to Giddens) because people's motivations to act are located in the here and now and it is therefore difficult to attribute anything like the same significance to the future consequences of their actions than they give to their lives and experiences in the present.

We knew at the outset that it would be possible to explore the issue of people's connections to other times and places using the public perceptions/energy locality study data (Parkhill) and wanted to explore the implications of this for understanding their perspectives on equity, justice and ethical issues related to energy production and consumption (Butler, Henwood, Pidgeon). Following early inspection of the data (Shirani), we decided that the most productive line of analysis to pursue using

the data related to the way family members occupying different positions within the life course (parents with babies, young or teenage children, no children, grandparents) made temporal and ethical extensions into the future and formed connections between their own daily practices and energy consumption. A question arising given this projected line of analysis was the extent to which such future connections would depend on making living connections to the future through attachments to children, given a steer from the published literature which suggested that there is a 200 year span of living memory within families⁵ (viz people are able to reflect back on their grandparents' lives and forward to their grandchildren's lives), raising the question of whether people with and without children and grandchildren make the same kinds of connections? There were differences within the research team about the extent to which such a proposed line of analysis could investigate the links made to future generations through other means which, in the literature, is encapsulated by the idea of an extended ethic of care (by which concern can extend to wider environmental issues and involve feelings of attachment and concern). However we all agreed that the proposed analysis was interesting given that it would be possible to follow up (contested) suggestions in the research literature that increases in energy usage are associated with childrearing and the importance of investigating emotional connections and the role of span of living memory in forming ethical connections to the future.

The paper reporting the findings of the analysis is structured around the lifecourse patterning of findings (mined by Fiona) and efforts to thicken interpretations of the basic pattern by the research team. The method of analysis we pursued followed that of the Men and fathers (Maf) team within the Timescapes network and summarised in that project's methodological writings (Henwood and Shirani, in press; Henwood and Coltart, 2012)⁶. Mainly the empirical pattern mined in the data is reported here, rather than the (of course all important) interpretive contextualisation.

Parents with small babies generally reported that they had concerns about energy use in relation to climate change while describing energy use as inevitably increasing because of the demands of parenting a young baby. Parents with children of primary school age, as with parents of babies, discussed how having children significantly increased a family's energy consumption but far less evident was the sense that the demanding nature of current life was too pressing to consider. These parents were more concerned with seeing ahead to a more positive future for their children and this manifested itself in reciprocal interests in environmental education (e.g. through their children's schooling). Unlike those with young children, discussion of school projects was somewhat muted in the accounts of those who were parents to teenagers, and parents of teenagers showed a distinct

tendency to talk about their children's lack of responsibility for energy use in the home – sometimes in terms of moral culpability but often slipping into a shared perception that high energy consumption is understandable and perhaps inevitable (“you have to be clean not just green”). For the grandparents in the study, the presence of grandchildren appeared to have an impact on levels of concern about issues such as climate change and energy security. However, unlike parents of young children, there was a greater sense among grandparents of feeling powerless or being unable to do anything to change or improve things and therefore being resigned to the potential challenges of the future, which they themselves would not have to face. For those study participants with no children they did not seem to be less likely to express concerns about future generations or discuss the future in a more abstract way due to lack of caring, however, they did raise issues about energy demand and environmental sustainability not raised by parents (such as overpopulation). Three main headline findings/questions arising from the analysis are:

- Ages of children are significant in perceptions of how energy is used and wider issues of environmental concern
- Participants did make longer-term connections but these often ‘gave way’ to current demands
- How can we keep the future in focus among these competing temporal pressures?

In relation to arguments about environmental justice and intergenerational equity, motivations for environmental responsibility did seem to arise out of living links to the future leading to making ethical links to future generations and involving the creation of empathy. However, from this study, the well being of families in the present takes precedence over that of potential futures because the challenges of everyday family life can be considerable and represent temporally immediate demands. It seems that when there are competing pressures and moral demands, something has to give; in order to understand what this is likely to mean paying attention to the different time horizons associated with such pressures. In the case of the pressures associated with parenting, these are located in the immediate (but socially patterned and formalised) routines involved in raising children. Moral pressures related to levels of energy consumption and concerns about future sustainability, by contrast, are located in the long term future, and the different temporalities go some way to explaining why certain actions and concerns take precedence.

Concluding Remarks

These comments are primed by the conference title “constructing narratives of continuity and change”. Although *about* continuity and changes in lifecourse perceptions (as reflected in the structure of the reported analysis), the exemplar of analytical work presented in this paper does not illustrate what some might expect of a “constructivist” narrative approach because, in key respects, it follows an empirical style of reporting. Nonetheless, the reported continuities and changes between family members who are differently positioned across the lifecourse certainly flow out of each person’s subjective perceptions, and the meaningfulness of the data resides in the way participants are telling their story to the researchers (not in the researchers’ story). We are able to make this claim because the style of interviewing does not stifle participants own narratives, meanings and frames or their efforts to make themselves intelligible to the researchers (and beyond).

From the perspective of hermeneutic philosophy more could be said on this point. We believe that there could be some merit in doing this, reflecting our interests in using textural and temporal research strategies for bringing out the vitality of storied lives (as opposed to giving potentially sterile accounts of ‘told stories’). Nonetheless, we believe that our analytical work has gone a long way to attending to temporal meanings, and that we have elucidated the point of narrative inquiry by successfully explicating the importance of grasping the storying of lives. In particular, our analytical work has addressed the point of temporal meanings for deepening understanding of the telling and living of lives (viz our argument about the way different temporalities go some way to explaining why certain actions and concerns take precedence in people’s everyday lives). That said, in terms of our own research narrative, we have not given an account that needlessly privileges issues of temporality; nor have we restated taken for granted ideas about the importance of temporal progression. In this way we would agree with arguments (for example by Squire, 2012) that narrative and temporal studies do need to have a point and that this relates to concerns about explanatory power and rigour in the social science.

Regarding the future directions of our energy biographies project, more analysis may be needed on questions of time and temporality. Everything people do is embedded and extended in time across the modalities of past, present and future, making time an inescapable aspect of our existence, yet one that often remains invisible. Equally, our practices operate in particular spaces which are interrelated in ways that connect us to others (e.g. people, places, times) and hold implications for many issues (including matters of ethics, equity and justice). Such connectivity and relationality is, however, often obfuscated in the everyday. The sample analysis presented in this paper represents a starting point on a journey that involves addressing such issues. We shall certainly be embarking on

work to explicate the role of everyday routines, people's moral sentiments and affective concerns, and the dynamics of change process in relation to energy demand reduction and sustainable transitions.

This presentation has brought to light people's connections or disconnections to other times and spaces, and we believe that it was useful to explore the implications of this for opening up perspectives on equity, justice and ethical issues in relation to energy production and consumption. We have taken a first step in exploring how people's temporal extensions through younger generations of their families (i.e. children and grandchildren) influence their views and practices around energy use in both the present and anticipated future. It is possible that we have shown one way in which research on families, generations and the lifecourse, and a concern with 'the everyday', can be brought together with efforts to achieve transitions towards more sustainable ways of living.

Footnotes

1. One of the community case sites (Cardiff) is made up of two different communities (Ely Caerau and Peterson Super Ely) so later on four different communities are depicted.
2. For a fuller list of methodological features of narrative inquiry pertinent to this study see Henwood et al, 2010
3. The term Timescapes derives from the work of the social theorist Barbara Adam and refers to the multiple temporal vistas for looking in and across time and that bring the world into view.
4. There are complex issues around secondary analysis, data reuse and data pooling that we do not address in this paper.
5. The notion of temporal horizons of individual comprehension.
6. "What is required is a strong empirical focus using QL designs so that it is possible to track both continuities and changes in people's lived experiences and life circumstances. Alongside this a range of analytics is needed, capable of mining the significance of the data and their relevance for inquiring into social and policy issues" (Henwood and Coltart, in press, 2012)

Acknowledgements. The work of the energy biographies team involves extensive collaboration between Karen Henwood, Nick Pidgeon, Karen Parkhill, Catherine Butler and Fiona Shirani. Any errors appearing in this paper are the author's responsibility.

References

See www.energybiographies.org for further details of the research reported in this paper.

Adam, B. (1900) Timescapes of Modernity London: Routledge.

Greene, S. (2003) The Psychological Development of Girls and Women: Rethinking Change in Time London: Routledge.

Finn, M. and Henwood, K. (2009). Exploring masculinities within men's identificatory imaginings of first time fatherhood". British Journal of Social Psychology, 48(3), 547-562.

Henwood, K.L. and Coltart, C. (2012) Researching lives through time: Analytics, narratives and the psychosocial Timescapes Series Guide No 10.

Henwood, K.L., Pidgeon, N.F., Sarre, S., Simmons, P. and Smith, N. (2008). Risk, framing and everyday life: methodological and ethical reflections from three sociocultural projects. Health, Risk and Society, 10, 421-438.

Henwood, Karen; Pidgeon, Nick; Parkhill, Karen & Simmons, Peter (2010). Researching Risk: Narrative, Biography, Subjectivity [43 paragraphs]. Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum:Qualitative Social Research, 11(1), Art. 20. Reprinted in Historical Social Research, 2011, 36 (4).

Henwood, K., and Shirani, F. (in press). "Researching the temporal." To appear in Harris Cooper, PhD (Editor in Chief) Handbook of Research Methods in Psychology, APA Publications.

Neale, B. and Flowerdew, J. (2003) Time, texture and childhood: the contours of longitudinal qualitative research. International Journal of Social Research Methodology 6 (3) pp189-199.

Parkhill, K., Henwood, K., Pidgeon, N. and Simmons, P. (2011) Laughing it off: Humour, affect and emotion work in communities living with nuclear risk, British Journal of Sociology, 62 (2) 324-346.

Shirani, F. and Henwood, K. (2010) Continuity and Change in a qualitative longitudinal study of fatherhood: Relevance without responsibility. International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 14 (1) 17-29.

Shirani, F., Henwood, K. Butler, C., Parkhill, K. and Pidgeon, N. (forthcoming) Disconnected futures: Exploring notions of ethical responsibility in energy practices, Local Environment.

Squire, C. (2012) What is narrative? Keynote address at the NCRM/NOVELLA seminar. TCRU 28th February.

Squire, C. (2008) Approaches to Narrative Research NCRM website <http://prints.ncrm.ac.uk/419> [accessed 27th November 2009].

Thomson, R. (2007) The qualitative longitudinal case history: Practical, methodological and ethical reflections. Social Policy and Society, 6, 571-582.

Tulloch, J. and Lupton, B. (2003) Risk and Everyday Life London: Sage.

Wetherell, Margaret & Edley, Nigel (1999). Negotiating hegemonic masculinity: Imaginary positions and psycho-discursive practices. Feminism and Psychology, 9(3), 335-356.

Wetherell, Margaret; Taylor, Stephanie & Yates, Simeon, J. (Eds.) (2002). Discourse as data. London: Sage.