The Sociomaterial Negotiation of Social Entrepreneurs' Meaningful Work

Gillian Symon[a] and Rebecca Whiting[b]

[a]*Digital Organization and Society Research Centre, School of Management, Royal Holloway, University of London;* [b]*Department of Organizational Psychology, Birkbeck, University of London*

ABSTRACT   This research examines the role of digital technology in the constitution of meaningful work. Adopting a sociomaterial perspective, we argue that meaningful work emerges as an outcome of a complex negotiation between individuals and their digital devices. This process was explored through video diaries and interviews with social entrepreneurs, capturing moments of their everyday meaning-making and encouraging reflexivity. Accounting for their sociomaterial practice led participants to reaffirm their work as uniquely meaningful, produce more nuanced accounts of meaningfulness and/or make pragmatic adjustments to their meaning making. Whilst authenticity was a key meta-narrative in these accounts, it also produced tensional knots which, in their unravelling, required the adoption of more practicable meanings of work. The paper concludes by urging scholars to de-centre the human from their analysis to provide a more complete account of meaningful work.

Keywords: digital technology, meaningful work, narrative, social entrepreneurs, sociomateriality, tensions

INTRODUCTION

Meaningful work has been defined as 'when an individual perceives an authentic connection between their work and a broader transcendent life purpose beyond the self' (Bailey and Madden, 2016, p. 55), and has largely been conceptualised as a positive individual subjective evaluation (e.g., Rosso et al., 2010). However, recent research has sought to re-position our understanding of meaningfulness as an interactive and dynamic negotiation of tensions in meaning-making (e.g., Mitra and Buzzanell, 2017). We apply this approach to explore meaningful work amongst social entrepreneurs (SEs) in the UK. SEs' work is often culturally positioned as particularly meaningful (Mort et al., 2003), but is also a site of contested meanings (Choi and Majumdar, 2014) and

thus fertile ground for a tensional exploration of meaningful work. We extend this perspective by incorporating an explicit consideration of the role of materiality (specifically digital technologies) within this negotiation.

We provide three main contributions to research on meaningful work: exploring the role of digital technology in the everyday practice of meaningful work at an individual and micro-analytical level; identifying the narrative tensions which follow from work being positioned as 'meaningful'; and demonstrating a (digital) methodological mechanism for amplifying reflexivity in the practice of meaningful work. Below, we first provide a critique of academic studies of meaningful work, before outlining our own tensional (Mitra and Buzzanell, 2017) and sociomaterial (Pickering, 1995) perspective. We briefly summarise contemporary research on the nature of social enterprise and the work of SEs, highlighting underlying tensions in this practice before outlining our own research focus. Our qualitative narrative methodology is described, emphasising the reflexive and abductive reasoning (Tavory and Timmermans, 2014) behind our analysis. We present our detailed exploration of our SEs' narratives of meaningful work and the role materiality (specifically digital technology) plays in their constitution. Our findings show how meaningful work is constituted through a process of negotiation and justification of meaning which includes negotiation with material objects (digital technologies). In this process, existing interpretations and practices of meaningful work may be confirmed and justified, but more nuanced understandings of meaningful work may also emerge as SEs accommodate to material agency.

MEANINGFUL WORK, TENSIONS AND (DIGITAL) MATERIALITY

A number of commentators assert that humans have an inherent desire or need to find meaning in their activities, especially work, as a central activity for many (Lips-Wiersma and Morris, 2018). In the management literature, meaning making is predominantly said to be an individual process of sense-making based on our experience of work (Rosso et al., 2010). Meaningful work is the significance of that meaning to the self, which is positioned as 'positive in valence' (Steger et al., 2012) and related to personal development and growth rather than simple enjoyment. Rosso et al. (2010) differentiate four possible sources of meaning in work: the self (personal values and beliefs); others (providing cues to the meaningfulness of work); the content of work (its design); and spirituality (including pursuing a 'calling'). However, meaningful work also encompasses negative experiences and struggle (Bunderson and Thompson, 2009) and it is in the struggle that individuals sometimes experience the greatest meaningfulness (Bailey and Madden, 2016).

However, the meaning of work has also been argued to be 'communicatively constituted' (Broadfoot et al., 2008, p. 155) arising from 'complex negotiations of meaning-making' (Mitra and Buzzanell, 2017, p. 597). From this perspective, meaning-making is construed as an inter-subjective and situated process. In this case, work may come to be regarded as meaningful through the active negotiation of meaning in particular contexts and in particular times (Zorn and Townsley, 2008). Indeed, Lepisto and Pratt (2017) suggest that 'meaningful work involves account-making, where individuals seek to justify their work as possessing positive worth' (p. 109), within a complex context of competing accounts and accepted norms and practices.

In particular, meaningful work has recently been interpreted as requiring the dynamic negotiation of various 'tensions of meaning' (Broadfoot et al., 2008; Lips-Wiersma and Morris, 2018; Mitra and Buzzanell, 2017). This perspective fits within a current orientation to the contradictory and paradoxical within management and organization studies (Smith et al., 2017). Tensions have been defined as inescapable 'practical dilemmas' (Trethewey and Ashcraft, 2004, p. 32) and 'contradictory or contravening poles tugging in opposite directions' (Sheep et al., 2017, p. 465). While an umbrella term, tensions can be distinguished from both paradoxes and contradictions: paradoxes are generally positioned as non-resolvable (Sheep et al., 2017) whereas tensions may be temporarily resolved; and contradictions as mutually exclusive opposites (Putnam et al., 2016) whereas tensions may also cover opposites that are not antagonistic. Recently Sheep et al. (2017) have argued for greater attention to how tensions may be inter-related (e.g. resolving one tension may resolve, strengthen or create others), resulting in what they describe as 'tensional knots'.

Within the meaningful work literature specifically, tensions tend to be conceptualised as 'relational dialectics' (Putnam et al., 2016) such that meaningfulness emerges from the dynamic interplay of opposing tensional poles. For example, Lips-Wiersma and Morris (2018)'s 'development framework' positions various sources and purposes of meaningful work around two central (and universal) axes of tension: being/doing and self/others. Meaningfulness is derived from acknowledging and articulating those tensions, recognising that either end of the axes may dominate at particular times, but seeking an appropriate 'balance' for the individual. Mitra and Buzzanell (2017, recognising the tensions inherent in the practice of meaningful work, highlight the contested socio-political context within which this meaning-making takes place. Both sets of commentators agree that 'workers must negotiate both poles of the tension constantly to make meaning of their everyday work' (Mitra and Buzzanell, 2017, p. 597).

This complex and dynamic context of tensional meaning-making has generally focused on inter-subjectivity and human agency, paying less attention to the materiality of work. Early work emphasised the negative implications of 'mechanization' for meaningful work particularly in relation to skill use (e.g., Braverman, 1976). Conversely, and from a psychodynamic perspective, Dejours (2006) describes the value and meaningfulness of work produced through 'forming one body' with the machine (p. 47). Dejours explains the incorporation of the material in meaningful work as a dialogue through the haptic senses engendering an intimacy that produces a symbiotic relationship between the individual and the material.

Materiality in these accounts is, rightly, broadly interpreted and brings attention to the need to accommodate the 'non-human' even in the apparently (inter-)subjective world of meaningful work: a 'decentring of the human subject' (Pickering, 1993, p. 559). In this paper we specifically focus on digital technologies in order to understand contemporary meaningful work, given their ubiquity in 21st Century work (Cascio and Montealegre, 2016). In current cultural commentary, digital technology is often positioned in a dualistic (antagonistic) relationship with meaningfulness, for example, Lips-Wiersma and Morris (2018) bemoan the 'endless time [that] can sink into pervasive modern technology' (p. 63) as an example of detracting from the meaningfulness of human life and we are often exhorted to 'detox' from our digital devices (Brabazon, 2014). Outside the meaningful work literature, use of digital technology has been said to create 'paradoxical' effects

(Leonardi et al., 2010). For example, Mazmanian et al. (2013) identify the autonomy paradox of professionals' use of mobile phones: the freedom to work flexibly is accompanied by increased engagement and loss of control over working practices. This echoes the emergence of a tensional approach in the study of meaningful work. In a rare review of meaningful work that focuses on information and communication technologies, Cheney et al. (2008) suggest that where such technologies enhance skill they may increase experienced meaningfulness, but where they decrease or substitute human skills, or enable increased surveillance, they are likely to be detrimental to experienced meaningfulness. Such theorising focuses on the effects of technology on the nature of the work itself, which presumes a particular determinist perspective based on a realist ontology, an approach challenged in recent management theorising (e.g., Orlikowski and Scott, 2008).

Studies of materiality at work have become increasingly sophisticated in their conceptualisation of the relationship between work, organization and materiality (e.g., Leonardi et al., 2012), giving rise to several perspectives on how the material should be positioned in our studies (Putnam, 2015). The material has been theorised as a discursive construction (the material is brought into being through the ways it is positioned in discourse, Hardy and Thomas, 2015), an independent object subject to human interpretation (as in an affordances perspective, Faraj and Azad, 2012) and as entangled with human agency to produce particular practices (as in a sociomaterial perspective, Orlikowski and Scott, 2008). This latter approach is based on a relational ontology, such that 'material and human agencies are mutually and emergently productive of one another' (Pickering, 1993, p. 567). This fits well with current conceptualisations of meaningful work as based on the interdependence of mutually constructing poles (Mitra and Buzzanell, 2017). Within this genre, Pickering's (1995) conceptualisation of 'the mangle of practice' has been previously applied to understanding the use of digital technologies in contemporary work practices (Symon and Pritchard, 2015). Pickering (1993) argues that human and material agency are independent but 'constitutively enmeshed in practice by means of a dialectic of resistance and accommodation' (p. 567). Humans may intend to use the material in particular ways but only in use do the contours of material agency become apparent. Materiality may resist human intentions, requiring some accommodation in human agency, including revising their intentions, and/or the material form of the machine, and/or the surrounding social relations (Pickering, 1995). The outcomes of this 'mangle of practice' – this enmeshing of human and material agency – are therefore unpredictable. In the same way that the interplay of tensions brings meaningful work into being, the complex interplay of resistance and accommodation between human and material agency brings particular sociomaterial practices into being. While these arguments are couched in terms of materiality in general (a range of non-human elements of working life), the focus within management literatures has largely been on the technologies of work (Leonardi, 2012). It is this focus we take here, using the term material to indicate digital technologies throughout.

In sum, our position on meaningfulness is that it is neither an objective facet of certain work nor entirely an individual internal psychological experience, but rather that work is constituted as meaningful within complex social and material interactions in context. We apply this perspective to a study of UK social entrepreneurs' narratives of work. Such work, as we argue below, is a fruitful context for this examination given its positioning as particularly meaningful, riven with tensions and dependent on digital technologies.

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS

Defining social entrepreneurship is a rather fraught exercise with little conceptual agreement in the academic community (see Dacin et al., 2010 for 37 definitions). Consequently, Choi and Majumdar (2014) argue that social entrepreneurship should be regarded as an 'essentially contested concept' (p. 363); 'an appraisive concept leading to [unresolveable] value laden debates about its proper meaning' (p. 372). However, they also argue that social value creation should be considered a 'prerequisite' of social entrepreneurship, distinguishing it from commercial entrepreneurship. Indeed, Berglund (2018) argues that social entrepreneurship is 'a process through which conventional entrepreneurship is criticised for its shortcomings' (p. 186).

A continuing subject of contestation in the social enterprise literature is the potential tension lying at its heart – between providing social value and achieving an effective business. While SEs are exhorted to eschew grants and subsidies in favour of independent revenue generation (Anderson et al., 2002), others oppose the 'marketisation' of non-profit organizations and argue that this orientation draws attention away from providing public good (Eikenberry, 2009). From this more critical perspective, social enterprises are positioned not as radical new forms of organizing but the continuance of (UK) Government-driven projects of neo-liberalism (Dart, 2004). Indeed, Wheeler (2017) argues that the business agenda of social enterprises may, over time, erode any initial radical ideals as 'neo-institutional pressures tend to drive the organisation towards conformity with similar more mainstream rivals' (p. 163).

Much research into social entrepreneurship is on the motivations, skills and behaviours of successful individual SEs (Dacin et al., 2010). Given the social goals of the enterprise, and the difficulties of successfully pursuing their ends, such SEs are often positioned as 'heroes' (Dey and Steyaert, 2016). They are said to be driven by compassion (Miller et al., 2012) with an intense commitment to valued goals that drives them to overcome all adversity (Dempsey and Sanders, 2010). Indeed Berglund (2018) suggests compassion is part of the discursive practice of social entrepreneurship – producing the 'moral entrepreneurial self' (p. 186) and undermining attempts at critical reflection. Recently, Impact Hubs have been identified as promoting the view of social entrepreneurship 'as an "ideal subject"', which signals to others what it takes to lead a meaningful (working) life" (Dey and Lehner, 2017, p. 753), and successful case studies dominate both the academic and practitioner SE literature (Dacin et al., 2010). Social enterprise is thus positioned as a contemporary form of working practice culturally constructed as meaningful work. It may have its critics, as seen above, but as Berglund (2018) has argued, reflexivity, internal criticism and dissent may be disempowered through a moral and emotional discourse of meaningfulness.

SEs therefore represent an interesting case through which to explore meaningful work. Their work is meaningful 'par excellence' (e.g., Mort et al., 2003; Dey and Lehner, 2017) but also riven with tensions (Wheeler, 2017). 'Success stories' normalise expectations of individual self-sacrifice (Dempsey and Sanders, 2010) through discursive acts of 'responsibilization' (Dey and Teasdale, 2013, p. 256). However, these obscure 'the complex realities of people acting under its umbrella' (Mauksch, 2018, p. 138). Detailed observation and discussion of SE's everyday practices will glean insights into the 'messiness' of their

meaningful work (Mitra and Buzzanell, 2017) including how SEs justify (or fail to justify) their own work as meaningful to themselves and others.

   Few contemporary occupations are untouched by digital tools and social enterprise is no exception. Indeed, the ready availability and connective functions of mobile technologies, together with the proliferation of 'free' networking sites on the internet, can provide cost-effective support for enterprises operating on tight budgets and as a consequence are often pressed into service by SEs (Richardson, 2015). Few studies focus on the significance of this for social entrepreneurial practice, and particularly for its standing as 'meaningful work', though a recent study has encouraged looking beyond the human-centred nature of social enterprise by exploring sociomaterial 'assemblages' (Calás et al., 2018).

   In this paper, we examine SEs' legitimation and (re)production of their work as meaningful through a complex intermingling of narrative argument, interactions with others and material artefacts (here, digital technologies). More specifically, we focus on identifying and analysing the tensions that emerge as SEs seek to employ digital technologies in the pursuit of their meaningful work, addressing the question: *In practice, what implications does the enmeshing of human and material agency have for constituting work as meaningful?*

RESEARCH PROJECT AND METHOD

The work reported here is part of a larger qualitative research study entitled the 'Digital Brain Switch Project'. As in Bunderson and Thompson's (2009) study of work as a calling, our initial focus was not on meaningful work. The overall project set out to explore the implications of digital technologies for the management of work-life boundaries. However, the purpose of qualitative research is to gather a wide spectrum of information around a specific focus and explore within that how participants construct their own stories, allowing a 'logic of discovery rather than only a logic of validation' (Van Maanen et al., 2007), p. 1146). Qualitative research has consequently been effective at revealing hitherto unappreciated facets of meaningful work (e.g., Bailey and Madden, 2016).

   Our research therefore adopted an abductive approach to data collection and analysis (Locke et al., 2008), which positions the research process 'as recursively moving back and forth between a set of observations and a theoretical generalisation' (Tavory and Timmermans, 2014, p. 4). Our research followed an abductive design in that our exploration of our initial topic (work-life boundaries and digital technologies) unearthed an unanticipated focus from our SE participants (meaningful work) that influenced our continuing data collection and the process of data analysis. Our emerging research design is outlined in more detail below, following a description of the research participants.

   In this paper, we focus on the 15 SEs who formed one group within our larger sample which included office-based workers and students. As above, SEs provide a 'extreme case' (Saunders, 2012) for analysis as their work is culturally positioned as meaningful in the UK. SEs were contacted mainly through direct mailing of either individuals known to the research team or members of SE groups in geographical areas close to the research team. All the individuals who contacted us self-identified as SEs, whether they were individual operators, owner/managers of social enterprises or employees of such organizations. Details of each of the 15 SE participants are outlined in Table I.

Table I. Background to SEs Participants

Participant	Personal Background	Social Enterprise Role	Other and/or previous work (where applicable)
Allan	25-34 Lives in shared house No dependents	In early start-up phase, co-founder of a social enterprise in the food sector	Works part time in call centre while developing social enterprise as financially viable
Anna	25-34 Lives alone Some caring responsibility for nephews	Co-founder and now manager in an established social enterprise that provides youth services	n/a
Cressida	55-64 Divorced with one grown-up son at home and with parent care responsibilities	One of five co-founders (the only one working full-time) of an established social enterprise that translates science findings into educational art installations	Previously worked in a commercial arts-oriented organization
David	35-44 Lives with partner and two young school age children	Co-founder, works four days a week as Chair of an established social enterprise in the IT sector including digital inclusion work and open data projects	One day a week full-time childcare
Denise	45-54 Lives with partner. Two grown up children who live elsewhere	Co-founder of an established social enterprise that provides youth services, assisted by a mix of paid and volunteer staff	Previously worked in the public sector in youth services
Fiona	45-54 Lives with partner and one young school age child	Founder of recent social enterprise in the food sector, encouraging sustainable food management; assisted by volunteers	Previously ran her own single operator management consultancy. Currently also working at a training centre for SEs
Jane	45-54 Lives alone with one teenage child	Founder and single operator of recent social enterprise providing subsidised IT training	Has also written a children's book
Jez	45-54 Lives in own house with two lodgers. Two teenage children who live away from him	Co-founder of established social enterprise consultancy which supports community based organisations and Director of a local social enterprise network	Two other part-time jobs: working for a company that connects voluntary organisations; working on a specific short-term project for a university

(Continued)

Table I. (*Continued*)

Participant	Personal Background	Social Enterprise Role	Other and/or previous work (where applicable)
Mark	25-34 Lives alone with no dependents	Founder and single operator providing coaching support for SEs, has authored a book on social enterprise	Full-time job as manager of mental health charity
Michael	55-64 Lives in shared house in town, spends weekends with partner and her children in countryside. Has grown up children who do not live with him	Founder and co-founder of several social enterprises around ethical trading and sustainability, some established and some recent. Some are collaborative ownership and some single operator. Also provides mentoring and support to local community of SEs	Teaches dance classes some evenings
Rachel	35-54 Lives with partner and two young school age children.	Founder of recent social enterprise in the area of sustainable food management; assisted by volunteers	Employed one day a week in a charity, and has own home-based baked goods business. In addition is currently enrolled as a university student
Sally	45-54 Lives with partner and teenage children	Founder and single operator of recent social enterprise providing subsidised web-design	Previously worked for an energy company
Sam	25-34 Lives alone, no dependents	Employed full-time by an established US social enterprise in the IT sector to set-up a base in the UK, specialising in recycling computers	Previously worked in management consultancy
Simon	45-54 Lives with partner and school age children	Co-founder of an established social enterprise that provides art projects for local communities and schools	Previously had various jobs in retail
Stephen	45-54 Lives with partner, grown-up children live away from home; some childcare responsibilities for grandchildren	Founder of an established social enterprise in the social care sector	Runs his own consultancy in the social care sector as a sole operator, mostly involving advisory services based on previous experience in the public sector. Additionally, sits on various boards as an advisor on social care in the UK

From this we can see most of our SEs were self-employed owners of a social enterprise (13 out of 15, with two employed in social enterprises in a managerial capacity). They ranged in age from early 20s to over 60, however around half are in the age range 45–54, which is typical in the UK; Social Enterprise UK found 60% of social enterprise leaders were aged between 44 and 65 (Villeneuve-Smith and Temple, 2015, p. 36). While reporting their primary occupational identity as SE, around half were also employed in other work. This is not uncommon in the current precarious economic context in the UK as many make insufficient money to live on from their social enterprises alone. For example, Villeneuve-Smith and Temple (2015) reported that only '50 per cent of social enterprises reported a profit' and 44 per cent had 'sought funding and finance' in the previous year (p. 48). Because the declared focus of our research was on their role as SEs, our participants made this the focus of their discussions rather than other work with which they were contemporaneously involved.

Our original objective was to capture our participants' use of digital technologies/ work-life boundary management in some detail, while enabling them to have some control over this process. Consequently, we adopted a participatory video methodology where the aim is to 'reduce the gap between the concepts and models of researchers and those of individuals and communities by giving participants control of the camera and the process of making their experiences visible' (Jewitt, 2012, p. 3). Research participants were issued with a portable camcorder and asked to keep a video diary for seven days focusing on work/life boundary transitions. They were encouraged to narrate the videos as they filmed. Once this period was over they returned the equipment and took part in a short debriefing session. A more detailed analysis of our video method can be found at Whiting et al. (2018). We note here that this observational technique allowed our participants (and the researchers) to capture sociomaterial practices as they unfolded: the 'temporally emergent' nature of human and material agency (Pickering, 2015, p. 566).

Our SEs related to the camcorder in a range of different ways within their accounts of their daily activities (e.g., as proxy for the researchers or as imaginary friend). While we explore this more fully in a related paper (Whiting et al., 2018), of particular relevance here is their orientation to the camcorder as 'reflexive artefact' (Toraldo et al., 2018). In other words, observing themselves through the lens of the camcorder gave rise to a critical appraisal of their own activities. As one participant said 'So I did become genuinely more insightful about what I was doing because I had to articulate stuff which normally would just stay like an internal unstated process' (Michael, interview). For SEs this was a prompt to observe and ruminate on the everyday practice of their social entrepreneurial work, encouraging the reflexivity Mauksch (2018) argues to be missing from social entrepreneurial accounts.

Following the video diaries and debriefs, we conducted hour long interviews with each participant to situate the video diary material in more in-depth discussions of their work and personal lives. We had already planned to cover general issues on: background on the participants' life histories and current work circumstances;

implications of the use of digital technologies for their current work-life balance; and their transitions across different work/life boundaries. However, emerging depictions of SE work from the video diaries encouraged us to add a question specifically asking about the meaning of being a SE for them; this was followed up with related questions as the conversation indicated. Considerations of the meaning of SE work were also triggered in other parts of the interview where we discussed work-life boundaries and technology. The data discussed in this paper were therefore prompted by both participants and researchers having observed the video diaries, reflected on these and then come together in the interview to elaborate and deepen their understanding of social entrepreneurial work.

We pursued a narrative analysis strategy for this part of our study. It is suggested that individuals make sense of their experiences (or events) though reconstructing them in narrative form (Bruner, 1990), and indeed Polkingthorne (1988) describes narrative as a particular kind of knowing that encompasses both understanding and explanation. In management studies, narrative has been positioned as a specific form of symbolic communication (Gabriel, 2000) and is often associated with sensemaking perspectives (e.g., Maitlis, 2012). However, whilst narrative is therefore a useful way of approaching the understanding of meaningful work, 'people cannot simply create any preferred reality by telling a story' (Maitlis, 2012, p. 493). The narrative is constrained by, for example, social and material structures, and 'what it is acceptable to say and do in [narrators'] local and national cultures' (Phoenix, 2012, p. 73). Thus, within each narrative, we were interested in how our participants justified (or struggled to justify) their work as meaningful in the local context of our interview and 'evidence' of the videos they had already produced, within a wider context of material and social structures.

Czarniawska (1998) argues that at base 'a narrative … requires at least three elements: an original state of affairs, an action or an event, and the consequent state of affairs' (p. 2). It is in this structuring quality of narrative that we find rapprochement with both the tensional approach to understanding meaningful work and Pickering's formulation of sociomateriality. Addressing tensions as dilemmas in meaningful work are said to create new meanings of work (established meaning, dilemma, new meaning) and the mangle of material/human agency creates practices which are resisted or accommodated (human intentions, sociomaterial mangle of practice, resistance/accommodation to practice). Note we do not mean to imply by this that new meanings or accommodations are stabilised; outcomes are temporary and the processes recursive. Overall, however, the narrative form is a useful device for bringing together our two theoretical frameworks in the analysis.

The process of analysing the resulting data followed quite closely that described by Maitlis (2012). Each individual SE interview transcript was read several times by the first author and then summarised as a one page 'work/life narrative' of the individual's SE experience, organised into two inter-related sets of meanings: their SE work practices and accounting for technology use. Each narrative was reviewed by the second author and related to video data from an emergent SE code. The resulting narratives were iteratively developed between us. Thus the interview data were used

to construct an over-arching individual narrative, supplemented by the videos to add specific practices.

We consequently read across our analysis of individual accounts to construct three composite narratives (Currie and Brown, 2003) of the meaningfulness of SE work, composed of 'narrative fragments' (Boje, 2001, p. 5) from individuals built up into a researcher-led interpretation. Each narrative is structured following the classic narrative framework outlined earlier. Here this is specifically translated as: sociomaterial constitution of meaningful work; apprehended tensions (through reflexivity); and accommodation (justification of work as meaningful). Additionally, feedback from our community of inquiry (reviewers and others) encouraged us to identify a meta-narrative of 'authenticity' as linking our three narratives. We discuss this further below and in the Discussion section.

What adds plausibility to our data-induced orientation to meaningful work is that work-life boundaries, our original focus, is argued by many commentators to be closely related to the meaning and meaningfulness of work (e.g., Rosso et al., 2010). Moreover, it is likely that our research focus on work-life boundaries already set up work-life as a dualism which is in some ways antagonistic to the concept of meaningful work i.e. meaningful work may be conceived as not requiring boundaries between work and life. As we discover in the next section, SEs often positioned engaging in social entrepreneurship as a solution to work-life tension. This may explain why they often referred to their own roles as explanation in the videos, but also illustrates the inter-related and ongoing nature of the tensions of meaningful work, as one tension resolution strategy (becoming a SE resolves a work-life tension) begets a whole series of other tensions.

HUMAN AND MATERIAL CONSTITUTION OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AS MEANINGFUL WORK

In this section we describe and analyse three composite (Currie and Brown, 2003) narratives of the human and material constitution of social enterprise as meaningful work. While in the text we provide detailed analysis of individual extracts, Table A1 in the Appendix provides additional (not exhaustive) illustrative extracts from across our sample. Table II is a summary of the structure of the narratives.

While we have presented these as three separate narratives, this is largely an analytical heuristic to draw attention to the detail of meaning-making. In fact, there is overlap between the narratives for two reasons. Firstly, just as Bailey and Madden's (2016) definition of meaningful work positions 'authenticity' as a core concept authenticity was a key meta-narrative linking many aspects of meaningful work together for our SEs. We explore this further in the Discussion section. Secondly, the tensions were also inter-related, as in Sheep et al.'s (2017) 'tensional knots' presented earlier: one tension may be a duality for another or accommodation may produce further tensions. We use such inter-relationships to provide links between the different narratives of meaningfulness.

Table II. Summary of Structure of Narratives

	Authentic engagement	*Authentic business model*	*Authentic identity*
Meaningful Work	*My work is meaningful because it is intensely engaging* .... Meaningfulness is inter-subjectively and materially constructed and performed as intense and sincere engagement with work. Digital connectivity supports intense engagement with clients and general community (through on-line responsiveness)	*My work is meaningful because it follows an anti-corporate /community-based model of business* Meaningfulness is inter-subjectively and materially constructed as performed through rejecting normative commercial 'exploitative' business practices and pursuing 'alternative' business practices which are anti-capitalist and community-oriented. Digital connectivity and mobility support these alternative models through providing the potential to work in a way that supports these alternative goals and a 'cost-effective' method of doing business	*My work is meaningful because it allows me to live holistically ....* Meaningfulness is inter-subjectively and materially constructed as eschewing fragmentation to live life 'holistically' because SE concerns are also personal concerns. Social media supports enmeshing of identities on-line but also can support fragmentation
Tensions	*... but that engagement can be overwhelming ....* • intense engagement also incorporates negative emotional experiences (anger, worry, stress) and an inability to 'let go' as technology performs over-engagement • worth of 'meaningful work narrative' challenged by 'good parenting' and 'work-life balance' cultural narratives (providing tensional knots, as such narratives already subsumed within the narrative of holistic meaningful work) • technology resists claims to authenticity of engagement through performing only a simulation of engagement or as a distraction	*... however that can mean ethical dilemmas and engaging with or adopting traditional organizational and work practices....* • orientation to social good conflicts with profit making, and financial precarity and ethical dilemmas result • dependence on 'free' social media provided by organizations which are traditional businesses leading to ethical dilemmas • the open nature of such technologies conflict with organisational objectives leading to adoption of corporate control mechanisms	*... however having no boundaries can make me appear unprofessional and expose private areas of my life inappropriately ...* • SE concerns spill over into others' lives inappropriately (e.g., friends or family) through indiscriminate use of social media • authentic self-conflicts with professional self on-line • social openness compromises personal privacy

Table II. (*Continued*)

	Authentic engagement	Authentic business model	Authentic identity
Accommodation	*… however I am still clear that my work is meaningful.* • SE work is presented as unique commitment which justifies over-engagement • blaming agency of technology or combined agencies of self/technology for the tension	*… … so exceptions have to be made and pragmatism wins out.* • justify practices on moral or pragmatic grounds, referencing a 'greater good' (pragmatism vs personal ethics) • position organizational coherence as superior to personal authenticity thus creating a tensional knot with other constitutions of work as meaningful	*… but it helps me avoid other negative outcomes so I manage this fusing of identities in a more temperate way.* • positioning identity management as necessary for effective professional life and therefore separating performance of conflicted identities, often through the use of separate social media accounts or constructing boundaries between types of social media use • distinguishing between personal/public or personal/private to produce 'managed authenticity'

My work is meaningful because it is intensely engaging

For SEs, meaningfulness was partly constituted through their intense engagement with their work, the authenticity of which is evidenced for them by the elicitation of strong emotional responses:

> you're talking about social entrepreneurs, not just entrepreneurs. Social entrepreneurs feel deeply passionate ... about what they do, because they really believe that the work that they are doing will make a difference (Mark, interview).

Meaningfulness through intense engagement is produced through the coming together of material connectivity and personal availability into a practice of constant presence and responsiveness (e.g., see extracts from Fiona, Mark, Allan and Denise in Row 1, Table A1, Appendix).

However, this practice gives rise to tensions as positive passion for and engagement with work is weighed against its intrusiveness. We hear from Fiona who has given up a previous consultancy career to pursue the (supposedly) more meaningful work of social enterprise:

> this is meant to be a time for me to, you know, be trying to do something that I really love and really, really enjoying it, but as it grows and as people get more interested in it, it's on my mind… If I didn't respond to those emails, I'll be lying in bed worrying about it, not sleeping, thinking, oh, 'is it something I really need to get back to?' [Fiona, interview]

The apprehended tension here for Fiona is ironical: 'a time for me to do something that I really love' also seems to be a time when 'I'll be lying in bed worrying about it'. Her videos have already captured many moments of apparent anxiety in Fiona's life and the interview is an opportunity to account for these. Here, an intention to perform meaningful work through the fusion of inter-subjective (responsive) and sociomaterial (connected) meaning-making has, through the mangle of practice, emerged as an unpredicted requirement for constant vigilance. The arrival of emails is a constant reminder of the people she is trying to help and to whom she should respond and the positive emotions elicited by her meaningful work have been transformed into worry and guilt.

David evokes the same sort of tension as he explains checking his emails while looking after his children:

> occasionally I'll look at emails in the middle of that period with the kids … it's something I'm trying to stop doing … I think 'oh well, you know, the chips are going to be another five minutes in the oven and they're quite happy … so I'll just check the emails'… And then, before you know it, the chips are burning [and] the kids are shouting … [but] it comes back to being a social entrepreneur … it's stuff that I'm quite, you know, passionate about … I think if I was turning around insurance claims

all day or something like that then … I wouldn't … look at this stuff [emails]. [David, interview]

Like Fiona, the constant arrival of emails on his mobile device provides an opportunity to engage with his social enterprise (and see also Mark in Row 1, Table A1, Appendix, where the technology 'calls' out this opportunity regularly). However, in the mangle of practice this intention is transformed into distraction, at odds with a commitment to a wider cultural expectation of 'good parenting' which also requires his responsiveness to his children (and requires some explanation of his behaviour to the researchers as observers from that wider cultural context). David accommodates to (or works though the tension of) this sociomaterial outcome as a product of his 'uniquely' meaningful work (not like 'turning around insurance claims'). A line is drawn between interrupting childcare in order to pursue mundane work and doing so for meaningful work that you are 'passionate about'. Fiona's accommodation is quite different:

> What's reflective of my life is really loving what I do on a day to day basis … But it's perhaps that technology sort of interruptions that distract me or detract me from what I'm trying to do. [Fiona, video]

Fiona also takes up the narrative of the sociomaterial production of distraction but outside the boundary of meaningful work: 'what I do on day to day basis'. Materiality has no jurisdiction in this preserved human space of emotionally engaging work.

The act of videoing himself led Jez to reflect on his apparent practice of intense engagement:

> … looking at myself and my expressions [in the videos], made me look more stressed than I felt, sometimes. It made me appreciate how I can do very long hours sitting in front of a computer, thinking that I am being engaged with the world, but really just sitting statically in a space … So [the videoing] gave me a perception … [of] how punishing my digital life is sometimes … I came away with a good impression, of the fact that I care a lot, but sometimes I get too enwrapped in it … [Jez, interview]

In this example, Jez wants to assert that in the sociomaterial mangle, his 'caring a lot' and 'very long hours at the computer' have produced a proactive 'engagement with the world' as meaningful work. However, the distancing lens of the camcorder has suggested that this intermingling of agencies may have instead produced meaningless inactivity ('really just sitting statically in a space'); material agency has resisted his goal of meaningful interaction. Like Fiona, his positive caring has been transformed, such that a meaningful life of sociomaterial engagement is rather a 'punishing digital life'. Jez accommodates to this particular tension to preserve the meaningfulness of his work in a number of ways. Firstly, repudiating this interpretation of the visual evidence ('made me look more stressed than I felt') as the researchers watching the video are not privy to his internal emotions. Secondly, (re-)emphasising this sociomaterial practice as reproducing

the intensity of the engagement (he cares 'a lot'), and, thirdly, by suggesting that the apparent tension of meaning-making produced in this intermingling of agencies is something temporary ('sometimes').

In summary, becoming a SE was for some a resolution of a tension between work that did not inspire passionate engagement and work that 'they really love' (Fiona). Such engagement could be sociomaterially accomplished as responsiveness and availability but in the mangle of practice could emerge as distraction and meaninglessness, creating tensions of meaning in our SEs' narrative accounts. Accommodating to (or working through) this tension could mean accepting distraction and over-work as inevitable (or perhaps temporary) outputs of engaging in deeply meaningful work or re-siting meaningfulness of work outside human-digital interaction. Either way, the meaningfulness of SE work is re-asserted and justified through reflexively working through the tension.

My work is meaningful because it follows an anti-corporate/community-based model of business

SEs specifically rejected traditional commercial enterprise as a model of working, particularly some notion of 'exploitative' business that is purely oriented to profit-making and satisfying shareholder requirements. Instead they strive for a more authentic way of engaging with their local communities. As Simon said in interview:

> Money is not my motivation for doing things. My motivation for doing things is because I want to do it, and I think also if you're part of a community, you should be able to give to a community, because you will get back from the community.

For SEs, a fusing of their community-orientation with the networking (and apparently cost free) capabilities of social media could create the more meaningful form of business practice they sought (see Table A1).

However, capturing material agency to deliver a more meaningful way of working in this way also seemed to incur some tensions, including casting doubt on the very meaning of the services SEs are trying to establish. Sam's social enterprise involved the refurbishment of computers for use in schools in developing countries (see Table I). Reflecting on his own experiences of technology use (as triggered by the research project), he stated:

> I'm still undecided on whether technology … is good for productivity or does it waste a lot of time? …. And even from like what [name of social enterprise] does, providing technology to people in schooling, like it's still completely unknown whether that's good, whether it makes people … increase their awareness ... is it good, having all this access? [Sam, interview]

In his discussions with us, Sam suggested that he found his work engagement overwhelming "'it's not really improving my life but hopefully when everything gets done it's helping other people'). Having then already discovered for himself the mangling effects of human and material agency, Sam is now concerned about the overall objective of his

social enterprise. Is the object of the enterprise (the computer) a social good or perhaps a meaningless distraction? In this way, we see some intermingling of tensions as dilemmas about over-engagement create dilemmas about the moral worthiness of the social enterprise.

Michael's reliance on the material agency of 'free' communication networks is in tension with his business values because the networks his social enterprise rely on – and indeed contribute to – adopt a more capitalist model of profit-making:

> I'm working with somebody, we will be working from somewhere in town ... [and we] need to be online which unfortunately means going to an evil coffee shop… there's one chain in particular that's got excellent wi-fi. … Oh well at least I'm benefiting from their resources even if they're not paying taxes [Michael, interview]

Here, the material agency of network connections supports Michael's goal of the mobility of social enterprise work. However, the unpredictability of that connection requires Michael to visit particular establishments to fulfil its potential. Consequently, Michael faces the ironic situation of spurning 'corporate business' only to find himself supporting such businesses. Mark and David (in Table A1), similarly argue that commercially-provided social networks (e.g., Facebook) are not as 'free' as social enterprises may hope; not in monetary terms but because they necessitate ceding some control over their performance of meaningful work to social media, which is already produced as a sociomaterial amalgamation of capitalism, social networks and material agency. Michael accommodates to this unlooked for outcome of the mangle of practice by (re-)asserting his own human agency (and by extension his social enterprise) as making this choice in an informed way, and justifying his actions to himself and the researchers as also getting something out of the relationship – a pragmatic victory if not a moral one.

Anna is a manager within a larger social enterprise which employs young adults as paid and voluntary staff (see Table I). Here we see how the everyday running of a social enterprise may raise other ethical dilemmas, introduced through the organization's use of social media:

> There are some people that work for us who maybe do have some things which we don't want reflected on the organisation… I work with them to train [them] about that separation … Because if you're going to share an image of a gig we've got coming up next week, and say you work for [the social enterprise], then the next post can't be of you sharing a photo of a scantily clad woman. [Anna, interview]

In the mangle of practice, the organization's requirement for cheap marketing and public broadcast delivered by social media also has the unintended effect of enabling indiscriminate information distribution which may undermine the authenticity of the social enterprise as an organization oriented to social good. Anna accommodates to this unwanted outcome through the exercise of corporate control, policing the personal lives of her employees, for the greater good of the social enterprise and their public relations.

This accommodation however raises another tension as, not only is employee regulation being deployed (much like a traditional corporate organization) but this is accomplished by Anna through training employees to have separation between their work and home lives. This may resolve tensions around corporate authenticity but is in conflict with another narrative of meaningful SE work – living a holistic life – as we explore further in the next section.

In summary becoming a social entrepreneur was for some a resolution of a tension between corporate practices that they found distasteful and a new kind of business model predicated on community and sharing. This kind of alternative working practice could be sociomaterially achieved but, with imperfect human control over material agency, this gave rise to tensions as the material (re)introduces capitalist organizations (through the backdoor, as it were) and a requirement for managerialism. Involvement in meaningful work is retained as the pursuit of a greater good (the ongoing existence of the social enterprise) but in a somewhat compromised form.

My work is meaningful because it allows me to live holistically

Meaningfulness was also constituted by SEs as being able to 'be themselves', not having to 'put on an act' in their work life that was inconsistent with how they would behave in their personal life (see Table A1): as Sharon put it in interview 'I am my business, I identify with my business, so I'm not sure I want to manage that switch [between work and life]'. Social media is often positioned (and marketed) as an opportunity for self-expression and personal connection (van Dijck, 2013) and therefore may be thought of as the perfect communication vehicle for our SEs as they construct the authentic holistic lives that make their work meaningful. Indeed, on video, we see Stephen watching the rugby while using his smartphone and commenting:

> I've just replied to a tweet about the rugby and it happens to be from a guy who I know and who we're also looking to do business with. So it's another example of the way in which you know your social life's just kind of like fused very much in with your work life. And you know this is just a little bit of banter about the rugby that's on at the moment. And you know that's good, good all round. [Stephen, video]

Mobile technology that can be used during other activities and social media as a social structuring of electronic connections colludes with Stephen's goal to avoid the fragmented self. Thus, here, human intention and material agency have come together to produce a sociomaterial practice which is 'good, good all round'. Sharing a social activity over social media with individuals who are both friends and business colleagues deepens that fusing of connections.

Jez, while also wanting to 'be himself', finds it difficult to align his personal identity with his community-oriented social enterprise activities:

> I'm white, middle class, I'm well-educated, I'm male, I'm part of the dominant culture … [but] I spend a lot of time in my community work talking to very poor people,

who are from the white working class, who feel very threatened by my accent … (Jez, interview).

Jez's identity is problematic for the SE role when it embodies the 'dominant culture' and he references this as getting in the way of pursuing his meaningful work. However, he also draws on this 'dual identity' to position himself as particularly skilled at identity management: 'I can talk to real people, living in poverty. And then, half an hour later, I can talk to the head of the city council'. Jez argues that this positioning can be advantageous but he also reflexively acknowledges tensions: 'So, there's a danger, I suppose, of satisfying everybody, and therefore not actually being honest'. Digital technologies can be the solution to these difficult identity management issues in meaningful work:

> So I created a fake Facebook profile, and I tried to separate [work and life] … But I've actually abandoned that, and I think well, actually, I am me. And so, on Facebook, I have my face there – I won't hide behind another thing – and I protect my Facebook profile. I don't show every behaviour to the public world, I don't show my friends, if I'm to try to manage the privacy of it. But within the space of Facebook, I think we should integrate our life and our work. And be honest. (Jez, interview)

Jez's intention is to live the holistic meaningful life on-line as well as off-line. However, when this intention comes together with the simultaneous intimate connection and public broadcast of social media, the mangle of practice creates a tension between the holistic self and, not just personal privacy, but the privacy of friends and family too. Solving one tension (work self vs real self) creates another tension (public vs private) in a knot of identity tensions (Sheep et al., 2017). Accommodating to this tension here involves human modification of the material. In this case, Jez's accommodation is to separate out aspects of his identity: his cultural identity (as white male) is visible (resolving that initial tension with which he had struggled) but using privacy settings etc to protect other aspects of his identity performance. The meaningfulness of the holistic life is here preserved but within particular materially-defined spaces.

Cressida faced similar tensions. At the start of the research project, she was antagonistic to the idea of interacting with social media. For Cressida, rather than delivering the personal connections she finds meaningful, the mangle of practice delivers something rather inauthentic:

> It's … a terrible pressure to use [Twitter] all the time … to say, look at me, look at how clever I am – and I struggle with that. I'd rather meet somebody or connect with somebody on a personal basis. (Cressida, interview)

As with Jez above, individuals have adapted to the simultaneous intimate connection and public broadcast of social media by engaging in identity management. However, this created a tension for Cressida because, like many of our SEs, she firmly identified with her social enterprise: 'I live by my ideas, the ideas of me and what I'm saying' and this

is what makes her work meaningful to her. The tension for Cressida is that if you 'live by your ideas' then people have to hear these ideas and digital technologies can widen connections with others and allow Cressida's work to achieve its validation as meaningful through exposure to a larger audience. She grappled with the tension of wanting to be private but being persuaded she needed to be public:

> people have been saying to me, 'it's better if you're on the videos, it's better if your voice is heard', and I said, 'but I'm not ready'. So it was interesting last week [when keeping the video diary], that I suddenly ... thought, 'this is just ridiculous', so I just signed onto Twitter, and I'm going on a social media course in January ... You've started a process in me which is more about sane engagement with technology rather than insane engagement with technology (Cressida, interview)

Keeping the video diary (itself a sociomaterial mangle, Whiting et al., 2018) has encouraged Cressida to engage with technology as she concluded that finding her voice did not necessarily mean giving up on privacy. However, while exploiting the broadcasting materiality of social media, she will seek to resist the material agency of exposure. She asserts her agency in determining what kind of relations she will have with technology – 'sane' as opposed to 'insane' – where technology avoidance is as insane as constant interaction. To accommodate to this, the boundary between life and work (constituted as fused in the authenticity of SE's meaningful work) has been re-imagined as between personal/private and personal/public.

In summary, becoming a SE was for some a resolution of a tension between work and private selves. Such a holistic life could be sociomaterially accomplished through mangling work and social contacts with mobile technologies and electronic connectivity. However, for some SEs, this incurs further tensions (Sheep et al., 2017), largely because of the potential for compromising private lives. Considering this tension allowed SEs to think through their own relationship with technology and come to a position where meaningful work could be accomplished in a more circumspect and nuanced way. Indeed meaningfulness could be said to be enhanced through paying attention to how the material produces the self (Symon and Pritchard, 2015).

DISCUSSION

Our research addresses the under-explored issue of the interaction between human actors and materiality in the practice of meaningful work. We approached this task through theorising a rapprochement between recent tensional accounts of meaning-making at work (Mitra and Buzzanell, 2017) and the interplay of resistance and accommodation between human and material agency in the sociomaterial mangle of practice (Pickering, 1995). Our findings extend our understanding of the role of materiality (specifically digital technologies) in the everyday practice of meaningful work at an individual and micro-analytical level. Our work also develops tensional accounts of meaning-making through identifying the inter-related narrative tensions which follow from one's work

being positioned as 'meaningful'. Additionally, our video methodology was useful in encouraging individual reflexivity concerning the sociomaterial practice of meaningful work as it was performed on a daily basis. Each of these contributions is further explored below.

The role of materiality in the pursuit of meaningful work

In line with recent calls to address materiality in our studies of work, management and organization (The Editors, Journal of Management Studies, 2015), we have here sought to extend current accounts of meaningful work by highlighting the role of materiality in its practice. Materiality was deeply implicated in both the achievement and problema-tisation of meaningful work. Sometimes our participants were able to capture material agency to pursue their goal of engaging in meaningful work (e.g., responsiveness), but as materiality is not totally within their control, sometimes this mangling of agencies (responsiveness and immediate connectivity) produced unanticipated outcomes (e.g., constant vigilance), and these manifested themselves as tensions of meaning-making for our research participants. Thus, while we certainly argue from our data that humans are not entirely in charge of the everyday practice of meaningful work, we suggest a more complex effect than technology determining job content (Cheney et al., 2008). Additionally, our research supports studies that have positioned the use of technology as paradoxical (Mazmanian et al., 2013), but here reaches beyond the autonomy/control dialectic. Indeed, we argue for the importance of understanding the situated constitution of meaningful work.

Interactions with the material provoke tensions that provide opportunities for meaning-making. Here, this tended to take different forms depending on the specific facet of meaningfulness under consideration. Most problematic to participant attempts to jus-tify their work as meaningful was the transformation through the mangle of practice of the processes and products of social enterprise into something less obviously wor-thy. Participants' accommodation to this generally centred around a pragmatic goal of eventual 'greater good' rather than immediate meaningfulness. We explore some of the possible effects of this in the next section. However, transformation through the mangle of practice of intense engagement into constant vigilance, distraction, and over-work tended to lead to re-affirmations of SE work as uniquely meaningful. Lastly, transforma-tions of holistic lives into a lack of professionalism or invasion of privacy tended to lead to more nuanced conceptions of meaningful work as a more tempered kind of identity management. Consequently, we argue that interaction with the material does not have uniform effects on the construction of work as meaningful.

Interestingly, while Pickering (1995) specifically identifies a tensional relationship be-tween the resistance of materiality and the accommodation of human agency, material resistance was not hugely evident in these practices (only highlighted on one occasion). Indeed, the issue seemed to be more about the material over-delivering on human in-tentions. Thus, for example, opportunities for responsiveness were delivered continually and open communication became public broadcast. Such findings encourage us to re-consider Pickering's conceptualisation which is based largely on scientific tools and the

emergent information technologies of the 1990s. Now the consumerisation of digital technologies may over-deliver whatever is required.

Tensional knots of authenticity in the meaningful work of SEs

The analysis of meaningful work presented here was provoked partly by our SE's reaction to our research on work-life boundaries and partly by the cultural positioning of social entrepreneurship as a 'special' case of meaningful work (Dey and Lehner, 2017; Mauksch, 2018). Both encouraged us to investigate how individual SEs negotiate their positioning as involved in particularly meaningful work. For our SEs, engaging in social entrepreneurship was a solution to the tension created by an antagonistic pairing of 'work' and 'life'. However, this initial 'solution' produced further tensions: the positioning of social entrepreneurship as meaningful work has to be constantly re-produced and re-asserted. Indeed, the nature of this meaningfulness may, through the negotiation of tensions, change over time. The nature of the meaningfulness of SEs' work is not therefore in their own hands, even if they turned to social enterprise specifically to increase their autonomy. Indeed, SEs' commitment to various aspects of meaningful work may themselves be in a tensional relationship (e.g., passionate engagement may compromise the holistic life by drawing attention away from family, friends etc.).

Reflexive consideration of the tensions that arise from adopting an alternative business model spoke directly to the underlying tension within social entrepreneurship more generally (see research review). Our paper examines these larger tensions on a smaller stage, played out in the everyday practices of SEs. Considering their social enterprise as a business (with the accompanying concerns of people management and financial stability) required compromises. These were constructed as pragmatic and necessary responses to a 'greater good', namely keeping the social enterprise going in an economic context already structured as competitive markets and resulting in their own financial precarity. This supports Wheeler (2017)'s assertion that the radical commitments of social enterprises may be eroded due to neo-institutional processes; this may also result from this strategy of pragmatic acceptance. Thus, further research in the social enterprise field which focuses on understanding the potential (stabilising or de-stabilising) role of technologies in this process is important and timely.

In our analysis, authenticity emerged as an overarching narrative in relation to constructing SEs' work as meaningful. Indeed, SEs' narratives of meaningfulness can be interpreted as a constant struggle to resist the inauthentic. This reflects existing definitions and conceptions of meaningful work which are largely based on ideas of 'consistency' and 'genuine' connections between self and work and of performing work of 'real' value (Rosso et al., 2010). However, we saw that 'being real' (authentic) was in some ways troublesome for our SEs: tensions emerged as SEs struggled to formulate consistent narratives about being authentically present, authentically entrepreneurial and authentically personal. Authenticity as 'independent reality' or moral touchstone is thus another cultural expectation to be negotiated, and materiality is not outside this process. Researchers have highlighted the paradoxes of being authentic at work (Guthey and Jackson, 2005), arguing for more precise definitions of authenticity that disassociates the concept from consistency, for example, recognising we can have many identities and be authentic in

all of them (Caza et al. 2017). This conceptualisation supports some of our SEs' accommodations – prompted by unwanted effects of the mangle of practice – which re-framed the tensions in their meaningful work as a 'managed authenticity' of the self. Further research could examine whether, in the longer term, the existence of such tensions helps in keeping social enterprises continually aware of different possibilities for action and consequently making more informed choices.

Methodological mechanism for amplifying reflexivity in the practice of meaningful work

The methodology described here contributes to the field of meaningful work in two ways: by offering opportunities to capture moments of meaning making as they happen in situ; and by encouraging the reflexivity argued to be essential to the continual production of meaningfulness (Lips-Wiersma and Morris, 2018). Firstly, the study of meaningful work is enhanced and deepened if we can gain insight into the ongoing and everyday (re-)constitution of meaningful work. Interview interactions allow us to capture inter-subjective meaning-making as it unfolds, as interviewees and interviewer co-construct accounts of meaningfulness. However, video diaries also capture interactions with important others (e.g., partners, children and objects) who may contribute to, or contest, constitutions of meaningfulness. It also provides access to other contexts as opportunities for meaning-making. Video diaries are particularly advantageous with respect to capturing the materiality of meaningfulness because of their visual nature. This is significant for a broader interpretation of the material (e.g., spaces of work and interaction) and embodiment. Secondly, video diaries encouraged reflexivity in our participants. An orientation to reflecting on their own lives was already evidenced by their volunteering as participants. However, the video diaries focused that reflexivity on their everyday actions unfolding over time. Moments of reflexivity were captured on camera but the main advantage was that they came to the interview already engaged in a reflexive process. It could be argued that this capturing of images - which the researchers viewed prior to interview – in some way forced participants to account for their activities to the researcher. However, this was a useful part of the research design allowing us to examine how meaningful work would be justified.

Limitations

This research is not, of course without its limitations, and consideration of these indicates avenues for further research. Firstly, we did not set out to investigate meaningful work in our larger research project (although the central topic of work-life boundaries is closely related). As an emergent issue from the first stage of our research, we adjusted to this in the second stage, but our initial video diaries were not specifically oriented to capturing meaningful work. Although the video diaries had inadvertently provided some insights on this, a more focused application might have produced deeper material – although this is not a straightforward assumption in a participant-led video diary study which rightly leaves considerable autonomy in the hands of the participant. Secondly, our sample might be considered small by some. In fact, both video diaries and in-depth

narrative interviews generate a lot of rich and insightful data. We appreciated the ability to get 'close' to a small group of SEs and understand their work in detail and in context. However, future research, perhaps utilising larger research teams, may find by expanding the size of their sample that more variety in the tensions of meaningful work could be explored.

CONCLUSION

Our study has begun to explore a more complex consideration of the material into our understandings of meaningful work through a focus on the use of digital technologies within the work of social entrepreneurs. We propose the adoption of a sociomaterial perspective which positions technology neither as wholly deterministic of human action nor human action as wholly unconstrained. Through Pickering's mangle of practice lens we depict meaningful work as a complex negotiation of meanings between SEs and their digital devices. Human intentions to engage in meaningful work are entangled with materiality to produce unpredictable results which require accommodation to maintain the justification of work as meaningful. Here, this may involve making a distinction between human and material agency in the constitution of work as meaningful, re-interpreting meaningful work or utilising the technology in different ways. Such outcomes do not necessarily undermine meaningful work and can indeed encourage more nuanced and practicable meanings (e.g., a more temperate approach to identity performance). We encourage meaningful work scholars to continue this trajectory, de-centring the human from our analysis, and exploring a wider field of sociomaterial meaningful work.

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APPENDIX

Table A1. Narratives of Meaningful Work

My work is meaning-ful because it is intensely engaging	Sociomaterial constitution of meaningful work	… There's quite a lot of emotional stuff that goes with it, and also because it's a social enterprise, it's very community focussed, so, you know, I get phone calls, emails, at all times of the day … [that] I need to reply to… (Fiona, interview)
		I was cooking in the kitchen, and I could hear my emails pinging from here, on my laptop … and I thought, 'Shit, I need to go back to work', so I was running back to my laptop … that kind of 'I need to show that I'm responsive, and I can reply quickly' (Mark, video)
		I don't want to miss out on something that happens to the website … I don't want somebody coming to the website and not getting a response — or sending me an email — I want them to get the response as quickly as possible (Allan, interview)
		I think it's, especially about Twitter, it's about the immediacy. So if somebody has tweeted the work account at, I don't know, 11 o'clock at night, I would expect one of us to have been back and responded to that… (Denise, interview)
	Apprehended tensions	I've got the sort of nervous system into Facebook and Twitter … and just emails and stuff, so I'm fairly well connected in that respect. There's a constant feed [but] that is the hardest thing to do. That's like wrestling all the time. It's like it just comes in relentlessly (Michael, interview)
		sometimes I get very frustrated, because I cannot leave the computer, because there's always another email that's just come in, or another Facebook message, or something like that (Jez, interview)
		OK, we're at 11 o'clock. So much for going through emails for an hour. I suppose if you asked my wife she'd say 'this always happens'. So [she's] been down, up and down and she's gone up to bed now. (Stephen, video)
	Accommodation	There's a little bit of that 'oh, I'm so put upon, because I'm [answering emails on day off]' And some of some of my friends go 'why are you doing that?'. But they don't understand … you're just more important than a job. Of course it pays my bills, but it's got bigger aims than just paying my mortgage off (Anna, interview)
		I'm the main guy running the operation here so … having the constant access [to online communication] is a comfort; as well it's a bit of a hindrance, but it's a comfort being connected and seeing that everything is okay (Sam, interview)
		I'm also trying to just switch off in the Tube and just think so I don't even connect anymore … because I thought give yourself some time to think because when you continuously are connected you're reacting only, it's hard to be very proactive and create. (Allan, interview)

(Continued)

Table A1. (*Continued*)

My work is meaning-ful because it follows an anti-corporate/community-based model of business	Sociomaterial constitution of meaningful work	How could we create a company that is for the long term really acting in the benefit of society? ... so we opened up our own company to being actually transparent and run democratically through an online platform (Allan, interview)
		I work with individuals and organisations on their relationships online, with the theory that it is by building those relationships that we will get people to buy from us rather than anonymous big companies out there (Jane, interview)
		The visions in my head are visions for ... living our lives in a way that we might want to socially ... instead of going to an institution ... and I think that would regenerate communities in a different way [and] technology over the last decade or so has increasingly allowed us to work wherever we want ... (Stephen, interview)
		I'm on about 25 Facebook groups ... there are people [on there] – what I call the 'local angries' – people who want to change the world and are outraged by how terribly things are going ... That's where I get most of my news from ... (Michael, interview)
	Apprehended tensions	Watching other social media forms take off like Twitter and Facebook ... there's a real ... sort of tension amongst, you know, people like the government [who] want to work with it on their terms but dealing with communities of people that want to do their own things and come up with, you know, views that are quite different ... it's really challenging (David, interview)
		We've never had so much access to technology in terms of democratising media. I mean it no longer belongs to a few, we've now made access to millions. We've got free emails, free social media. Everything is free and accessible, but at the same time it becomes you know, who owns who? ... are you in charge? I mean you can let social media get in charge of you. (Mark, interview)
		I've actually been spending about 50 minutes on just one email ... I care about what I do, but then sometimes, if you have to be the boss and caring about it, it gets all a bit wrapped up (Jez, video)
	Accommodation	[Twitter] gives me a certain amount of anxiety when I look at it and think 'why are we not doing that?' ... you see organisations that you're competing with doing different things and ... you think 'well we're not doing that?'. And then you think 'well we're not doing it because we're a very small organisation and we've got ... a hundred and one other things to do' ... (David, interview)
		[There] might be things that we don't like [that] the government's doing ... but they're not things that as an organisation I'd be encouraging anyone to tweet about ... Because ... generally as an organisation we try to keep our feet in both [Political] camps (Denise, interview)

(*Continued*)

Table A1. (*Continued*)

My work is meaningful because it allows me to live holistically	Sociomaterial constitution of meaningful work	Up until this year I had two Facebook accounts … I had four Twitter accounts … Talk about identity crisis … so then I stopped all that … I kept one Facebook account, one Twitter account … consolidating them is hopefully going in the right direction that I can just be one. You know, one with my business, one with myself and one with my tribal community (Mark, interview)
		It's very blended so everyone who's connected with me knows that I'm doing this, that's why there's really no difference between I'm going on Facebook for the business or going on Facebook for myself … (Allan, interview)
		I have my profile up [on LinkedIn] … after the confusion with having two different profiles, I've just recently added my … social enterprise. And it gives a legitimate excuse for many of my [ex-] consultancy clients that I'm, you know, now doing social enterprise stuff (Fiona, interview)
	Apprehended tensions	Some people say 'no you should have one [Twitter account] because of, you know, it's your personality and every-thing,' and like yes, but my friends don't want to see me tweeting about the latest business things, you know, and I don't necessarily want to bore my business people with 'oh gosh, I've got the latest comic' … (Sally, interview)
		When I set up <my social enterprise> … it was quite an eye opener to see how things … that you put into the open can be wilfully misinterpreted … And because of that I think it made me think twice about stuff that I posted online … I don't like the thought of putting out a lot of personal information about my family and what I'm having for tea and everything … just in case it is used by someone against me at some point in the future. (David, interview)
		Twitter is all about how clever you are in a public forum, and I've realised how private I am about my use of technology and sharing (Cressida, interview)
		I'm sending messages that come in to me [in one] role to myself under my other persona to follow up later … So I'm forwarding it on from this location to my other self. So again trying to integrate life and work and community activity into one whole, but sometimes feeling a bit schizophrenic or not quite sure who I am or who I'm talking to in that process (Jez, video)
	Accommodation	It's about forming a relationship to your customers and prospective customers … So there's an element of personali-sation happening at a business level, but it's only a certain aspect of your personal [life] which you are sharing [on line] … because you're just setting yourself up for somebody to either be jealous or not respect you anymore (Michael, interview)
		I'm very conscious that for Twitter it's a bit work-ey, I've got friends on Facebook and … the language and the conversation will be the conversation that you would want to have with friends; Twitter, yes, but I'm much more mindful that actually it's my public persona, so … you know, you don't say anything you'd regret on Twitter. (Stephen, interview)

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