Title: “Shut up for five years”: locating narratives of cultural workers in Scotland’s islands.

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Abstract

Recent research and active promotion suggests that islands and remote rural locations in Scotland do offer “attractive places to live and work”. The purpose of this paper is to explore the narratives of cultural workers, and to derive from this a further nuanced appreciation of what in-migrants to islands might express as meaningful in reference to an idea of ‘locating narratives’. We look at how the narratives vary depending upon the connection and identity the cultural workers articulate. These narratives, or social stories, the participants tell contribute to our understanding of in-migrants’ experiences on remote islands and offer a timely contribution to debates on how we might better understand “good work” in terms of decisions to locate on islands, as nuanced through cultural work identities.

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1. Introduction

In-migrants to Scotland's islands, like many who move to rural and remote areas, must negotiate a claim to place. Moving to an island often requires a figuring out where you fit in and how to define your identity in relation to the island space and to 'islandness'. Considerable public dialogues on community, migration and inclusion at Scottish national and local levels [1] have broadly shifted beyond reified narratives of belonging, or not belonging informed not least by research within Scotland (Cohen, 1982, 1985; McKinlay and McVittie 2007). Our interest lies in the particular experience of island in-migrants as cultural workers (Banks 2007) including artists, craftworkers and those working in the creative and cultural industries (Hesmondhalgh 2012) within a remote island setting. Ongoing evaluation of the in-migrant as cultural worker and of incomer experiences suggests that it is not only a 'good life' that can be had on Scotland islands but that 'good work' can be done there too (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2010; Ikonen 2013; Luckman 2012; Roberts and Townsend 2015). This has been recognised and promoted as a key growth policy from within the

highlands and islands of Scotland (Highlands and Islands Enterprise 2014), including the Outer Hebrides (DC Research 2012), Orkney (Orkney Island Council 2012) and Shetland (Ekos 2008) and maps to the broader Scottish Government agenda on creative economies and cultural industries (Creative Scotland 2014; Dunlop *et al.* 2004; Scottish Executive 2000).

In this paper we examine how in-migrant cultural workers account for going about “finding their place” on an island; including understanding to variously “speak up”, and to “shut up” within a small island context. Halfacree and Rivera (2012) suggest a focus on pro-rural migration as a coalition between sociocultural constructions and more material priorities of quality of life and to appreciate more fully the historical and process qualities to both the migration event itself but also to the account – the representative context – of a migrant’s own biography (narrative). With this in mind we offer analysis based on narratives from cultural workers on Scottish islands. Our analysis is informed by Thorndike’s (2005) colloquially informed categorisation of island in-migrants as variously ‘transplants’, ‘implants’ or ‘replants’. Our observation is that the narratives, or social stories, of cultural working on islands is shaped and informed by an awareness of the complex interplay of pro-rural and pro-island locating and re-locating decisions. Our discussion illustrates island in-migrants’ stories of success as nuanced through their identity as cultural workers, and informed by local rural realities and broader national discourse and policy. This paper is offered as a compliment to remote rural identity and remote island migration research work elsewhere (Baldacchino 2008); including an island studies focus on critiquing the particularity of remote island experience and practice (Hay 2013), and an invitation to continually interrogate remote rural identity research categories more generally.

2. Scotland islands: theorising identity, migration and cultural work

Epistemologically, the incomer to an island offers a “different lens” from which we might undertake island studies, and it is certainly a well-established trope of rural studies research. Baldacchino (2008, p.39) suggests that the incomer will “disturb the distinction between the global and the local.” The complexity of the identity category of incomer requires ongoing appraisal. Within rural studies the in-migrant offers both a conceptual terrain and a category for empirical examination. Within Scottish rural migration research several identity categories might be used to articulate a person’s in-migration status (incomer, white settler, sojourner, migrant worker, for example); furthermore the identity category of local is also variously experienced and expressed (Burnett 1996, 1998; Jedrej and Nuttall 1996).

Hybridity has positioned identity as processes of construction and negotiation yet we would assert that defining differences do still operate. Identity positions are contingent on both material and cultural capital such as being able to afford housing locally, one’s education and work histories, and/or claims to island ‘roots’ via family (genealogical) links. The capacity to respond to an island’s socio-cultural expectations, including voicing one’s own narratives of engagement with ‘islandness’, is often a central pivot upon which in-migrants lay claim to having successfully located. Our research explores this idea and the good identity work of getting to ‘know’ the island space and relationships. Our interest in cultural workers and their narratives illustrates that this knowing ‘islandness’ is itself contingent on practices and expressions of work and mobility and merits ongoing analysis (Hay 2013). Before moving to detail this some theoretical context is required in terms of Scotland’s remote rural development policy, including migration; and the key role that cultural work plays in Scotland’s offshore island economies.

Scottish development policy seeks to engender sustainable communities, not least within remote island settings (Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) 2014, 2015). Scotland's rural areas are increasingly positioned as spaces for co-existence and collaborative practice with in-migrants (incomers but also returning locals) integral to community sustainability and 'future-proofing' not least the island economies (Scottish Office, 2015). The shift to a more inclusive narrative is one that encourages a diverse coexistence of all rural residents.

Enterprise may celebrate traditional cultural references but new migrants may well look to innovate beyond the traditional, whilst still referencing ideas of islandness such as its physical environments and remoteness. How migrants variously express a sense of islandness (Conkling 2007), and we note this term is usefully critiqued most especially by Hay (2013), is something we recognise in our participants' accounts of their migration stories (locating narratives) and their cultural work activity. We also recognise how the island place as a natural realm and its social aspects can inform this.

The broader historical account of in-migration to rural Scotland most especially as reflective of counter-urbanisation (Stockdale *et al*, 2000; Stockdale 2015) is one of problematic tensions (Jedrej and Nuttall, 1996) and we again note Halfacree and Rivera's (2011) preference for the term 'pro-rural' migration as reflective of the multi-layered 'entangled' aspects to rural migration. Remote and fragile communities of Scotland share experiences of rural areas elsewhere in the UK and Europe where communities face considerable challenges attributed to in-migration such as house price inflation (Shucksmith 1990), gentrification (Phillips 2005; Stockdale 2010) and minority language decline (Nic Craith 2006). Previous rural development and social policy, as well as media discourse, often perpetuated ideas that in-migrants are alien to an existing and stable culture and that in-migrants and their impact must be absorbed by an indigenous community and traditional culture. Research on rural social relations, not least in Scotland, highlights the fact that such assumptions, and historical

discourses, are questionable in their simplicity and potentially misleading in terms of long-term sustainability initiatives. Categories of distinction that inform rural migrant experiences such as community, local or indeed traditional culture are not easily defined (Burnett, 1998; Cohen 1985; Findlay *et al.* 1999; Jedrej and Nuttall, 1996) but rather historically complex and often locally nuanced. Currently rural policy in Scotland contends with shifting community mobilities (de Lima and Wright 2009; McKinley and McVittie 2007), underpinned by encouraging developments on cultural and social enterprise yet shaped by remote rural realities (Danson and Burnett 2014; Halfacree and Rivera, 2012). 'New' people are strongly identified as a force for good, with policy makers using encouraging discourse inviting migrants to embrace the opportunities that remote rural spaces offer (HIE, 2014). This mirrors broader UK trends and related projections of the positive impacts of rural in-migration (Bosworth, 2010; Bosworth and Atterton 2012; Bosworth and Willett 2011) emblematic of new rural economies and mobilities (Ilbery 1998; Milbourne 2007; Murdoch 2006; Murdoch and Marsden 1994). Cultural work, including education, craft, food, art, media and tourism, coupled with a creative economy focus are noted as integral to the future success of the peripheral spaces of rural Scotland, not least in the islands (Danson and Burnett 2014; HIE 2014, 2015). Cultural work might be recognised as symbolic in form yet its material conditions should not be negated. Class, gender and expressions of embodied capital shape and inform the nature of a cultural product, its value attribution and commodification as an expression of a rural place, a rural identity and or indeed as rural enterprise practice (Herslund 2012; Luckman 2012; Lysgård 2016; Shucksmith 2012). In examining the narratives of island cultural workers we can ascertain more fully the complexity of locating within the island setting and the role that cultural work plays in this process.

Island and Incomer Identities

Through our interviews of island cultural workers who self-define as in-migrants and more particularly 'incomer' we have sought to re-appraise the value of the incomer category in relation to both the general island contexts and to the particularity of cultural work. Our focus on the locating narratives offers an insight to contemporary understanding of in-migrant experience in island settings within broader socio-economic trends of remote-rural community change and development. The possibilities for incomers to be considered in local terms within an everyday reality of rural community living remains at best negotiated and at worse limited. As Jedrej and Nuttall (1996, p, 173) point out:

... the definitions of 'local' and 'incomer' are often contested precisely because it is far from easy to reach agreement on who is a local and who is an incomer and this may even extend to ethnic identity [...] if 'local' and 'incomer' are paired opposites then we must consider that there are intermediate categories of people between these two extremes whose status is ambiguous. As a result their status in the community and their rights over and access to resources are also ambiguous, uncertain and disputed.

The mobility of people and information, while not new in and of itself, has destabilised many established collective identities and 'islanders' is no exception. The incomer, particularly to small islands, is emblematic of a potentially destabilising or disruptive force; however, as island residents question who and what makes up an islander, or indeed when does someone become an islander, it becomes clear that such an identity position is 'slippery' and contingent.

Tom Baum (1997) suggests that one of the most central notions to 'islanders' identity is the "fact of difference;" they are not like anyone else. This difference is largely articulated as coming from their island's insularity. As Robbins (2005) points out, there are two main

foundational points upon which a collective identity is created. First, there needs to be a sense of a cohesive body, where the prevailing image is tied to something like a common homeland. Often, the island as a conceptual frame becomes central to how islanders as a collective deem who is in and who is out (belonging). In particular, the notion of being born and bred on the island is often part of the island identity discourse. Second, the group needs to be actively engaged in preserving and maintaining their culture. Tradition becomes a positive value. It becomes a way to ensure the uniqueness or difference of the group. Ronström (2008) suggests that tradition becomes the way islanders come to mark out the exclusiveness of their identity. We argue, however, that with increased mobility collective identities have been disrupted and questioned; so too has tradition.

Islands and islanders are often expected to be the refuge and the guardians of cultural tradition in the face of modernity's maelstrom. In actuality, islands are often the conduits of modernity, complexly situated as both implicated and complicit in history of modern geographies and economies (Baldacchino 2013). In Scotland, islanders must contend with ideas as to how 'their' culture and traditions are managed as well as claimed and cultural work is at the heart of this exchange. Island culture claims cannot be limited to just one identity group; rather claims are made by various kinds of islanders living on and off the island, by locals and incomers, temporary workers, holiday home owners or indeed other consumers such as tourists and consumers of island products. Islands are places made and remade, thick with layered meanings and materiality. Furthermore, they are places that bridge actual and symbolic flows of ideas and practices and our short interview extracts invite reflection on the complexity of narratives of locating, as well as the inflections around what are offered as 'good' island and 'good' cultural work decisions.

As discussed earlier, incomers are not all alike. Thorndike (2005), in her descriptions of people who move to small islands off coastal Maine, develops a typology to understand the

incomers, at least in a heuristic way. The incomers come to be seen as a transplant, an implant or a replant. A transplant is someone who moves to the island without any prior connection to the island. An implant is someone who moves to the island with a previous connection. Thorndike argues that this is usually accomplished through marriage, but arguably the person needs to feel or experience some kind of connection that propels them to quickly establish roots. Lastly, is the replant; someone who moves back to the island that they grew up on. More generally, we could argue that this is someone who has long standing family connections. As Nadel-Klein (2003) notes, in rural Scottish communities someone may be 'from a community' if they have a well-known genealogy, without ever having lived in that community. The sense in which our participants are able to position themselves as resident on the island, while alternating between narratives of being both 'from' and 'away' was interesting to us. What follows is an account of our approach to our interviews and then a selection of thematic frames of analysis derived from our island cultural workers' narratives. Our deployment of Thorndike's typology highlights how complex the categorisation of identity as story is. Each of our individuals each articulate aspects of all three of Thorndike's typology [2] within their non-linear narratives as recounted to us. Yet at any given point their account particularly positions in-migrant identity (metaphorically as Thorndike's transplanted, implanted and replanted) and is suggestive of their shifting (transitioning) sense of embodied islandness and cultural working informed by time, space (place) and connectivity (knowing).

3. Methodology: Locating narratives

In order to see how incomers are finding their place on islands we employed a narrative methodology. In our analysis we have sought to generate a set of thematic frames derived

from our three in-migrants' stories; their experiences, as told to us, offer insight to the contingencies of island living. Stories and narratives are the way people come to make sense of their experiences, and the world around them. This means that epistemologically we may not know the actual experience but we can know how people communicate and make sense of their experiences (Doucet 2006). Narratives, or social stories (Plummer 2013), are an exercise in the sociological imagination whereby biography and history become connected (Riessman 2008). They tell more than just the individual's experience, but are also about shared experiences at a variety of levels: culture, occupation, relationships, status and organisation (Gubrium and Holstein 2009). Narratives of place (Schnell 2003) are critical to understanding conceptual categories of island life. Place is more than a setting. It comes to shape the action, and becomes a filter through which those on islands (and off) tell their narratives. Therefore, Mishler's (1999) use of artists' narratives to explore identities provides a solid methodological base. Narratives are seen as praxis where the research can grasp the dialectical relationship between the narrator's position as both subject and object. As such, narratives are socially situated actions, identity performances, and come to fuse form and content. This approach highlights both the subjective story the individual tells and the objective narrative that connects the person's experience to their social and material surroundings, their culture, their work and their island.

In this article we focus on the narratives of three craft workers (Mark, Molly and Jennifer) [3]. These accounts are drawn in turn from a small study undertaken of nine island craftworkers living and working as cultural workers on remote off-shore Scottish islands. All nine of our participants articulated various island identity positions highlighting the complex, nuanced and shifting nature of Thorndike's typology in practice. The three narratives detailed here were chosen as illustrative of how individual in-migrants variously articulate aspects of

transplanting, implanting, and replanting in their narrative accounts highlighting the negotiations, transitions and articulations of both cultural worker and islander identity positions. Furthermore, the three were selected as emblematic of different stages of cultural work cycles: one well-established, one recently established, and the third moving beyond an island cultural work status [2]. This case-based inquiry will arguably allow for context-rich knowledge and narrative detail that can generate critical insights into “the many-sided, complex, and sometimes conflicting stories” (Flyvberg 2004, p. 403) told about cultural work on islands. In doing so, the case-based narrative inquiry means that we respect participants as “subjects with both histories and intentions” (Mishler 1996, p. 80). As Riessman (2008) highlights, case-based narrative inquiry allows us to see how attentions to small details can not only inform us about the individual but also the connection between that individual and the place they live.

Mark, Molly and Jennifer were selected from a larger group of nine participants (interviewees) in total. Each of these interviewees were solicited from either the membership list on the Scottish Craft Council website, from word of mouth or from tour-guide entries [3]. In each interview, both researchers were present. This was important as each researcher brought slightly different knowledge bases that permitted for a more holistic and rounded narrative to be produced through probing questions. The interviews were conducted in or near the spaces where the craftwork was being produced. This allowed for further contextualisation of the narratives.

Here is a brief synopsis of our three selected participants illustrating their initial mapping to Thondike’s typology:

Mark: He is the oldest of our participants. He grew up in England. During his 20s, while serving with the British Army, he became unwell. This required him to re-examine his life

and “what to do” with his life. He says he came to craftwork quite by accident, just “fooling around” with wood. He has been doing this woodcraft work ever since. Currently, he is working on an island in the Hebrides, his second island home having moved from Orkney. He owns his own studio space and home, and lives with his partner of over 20 years. He has very much implanted himself within the island.

Jennifer: Jennifer is in her late 30s – early 40s. She describes herself as a “Researcher, Writer, and Basketweaver.” She lives on the island on her own, in rented accommodation, and at the time of the interview did not have separate studio space. Ten years previously, Jennifer had ‘transplanted’ herself to the Hebrides from Glasgow (where she had undertaken a university degree) using work and friends networks as her connection to the island.

Molly: Molly was born and raised on Scotland’s mainland. She is a potter on the Hebrides. She lives on croft land that has been in her family for generations. Molly ‘replanted’ herself near her grandmother’s home. She has other employment, but at the time we talked with her she was making a more comprehensive business plan to sell her pottery and was looking to transition to full-time cultural work.

4. Narratives: themes of locating and of good work

Epistemologically, cultural workers can be understood as those who perform symbolic, aesthetic or creative labour (Banks 2007; Banks et al. 2013). They work with a set of recognisable practices, symbols, methods and materials from which they select, modify and generate their products. As such, their job is to communicate experience to others (Williams 2001). Analysis suggests that cultural work and its terminology (including an emphasis on the

cultural implication of the work, the articulation of agency as specialism through the use of terms such as *creatives*, or the heightened discourse around both the *autonomy* and *self-actualising* potential of being an artist or craft worker, for example) can obscure the materiality of class and labour conditions. Ongoing critique is required of this complex interplay between the cult of the artist - the romanticised genius - (Toynbee 2013) and today's creative economies. The reality is that cultural workers will often find that they are in precarious positions as neoliberalism's push for individualisation and marketisation means that risk is carried by the individual worker (Gill and Pratt 2008). Despite high education levels, cultural workers will continue to have low incomes and low access to benefits (Hill Strategies 2009). Our participants' narratives exemplify the negotiated status of an island cultural worker identity as one of variously embracing and reviewing *islandness* as endemic to the creation and aesthetic materiality of their work. Simultaneously our interviewees evidenced the management of remote location rewards and challenges with the precarious nature of sustaining employment and securing income through their cultural work.

Mark's, Molly's and Jennifer's narratives not only tell us about the individual but allow us to understand the social, historical and cultural context within which they live. As Riessman (2014, p. 697) points out narratives, not least as people account for personal troubles, are located in "particular times and places, and individuals' narratives about their troubles are works of history as much as they are about individuals, the social spaces they inhabit, and the societies they live." Narratives therefore are social and cultural constructions. They provide us with rich data that illuminates an individual's attempt to make sense of their social place.

Arriving on an island. Locating to an island is not necessarily articulated in reference to the preconceived romantic ideas an in-migrant might have of the place. A move to a new remote locality is often precipitated by pragmatic reasons. When Mark tells us about arriving on the

island, and on deciding to live and work there the rationale for a relocate - a move from one island to another - was largely defined by commercial opportunities. As he tells us:

So I was commissioned to do something ... I spent about a month. I went back to Orkney and said “we’re moving down here”. Orkney was great but it [the relocation] was for business.

For each of the offshore Scottish islands both transport links and ‘distance’ including the physical proximity to main urban conurbations (most especially around the central belt of Scotland) are key factors in working life success for many islanders where ‘off-island’ connectivity remains a crucial aspect of ‘on-island’ sustainability. We’ll return to this point momentarily, but for now suffice it to say that a re-location to a different island offered Mark business opportunities that could not be had in his earlier island home in Orkney.

Molly similarly located to the Hebrides for pragmatic reasons but with a slightly different angle. When Molly got married she and her husband were looking to build a home in the highlands on the Scottish mainland. They discovered that property prices were ‘too high’ and a decision to relocate arose when an opportunity to access land was presented to them:

When Gran passed away there was the house here and the croft, well we both, well it was ‘James’ who came up with the idea, that why don’t we go and see and we did and we never looked back.

It was the affordability of housing (being able to access and build on a croft site) but crucially family ties enabled Molly to replant to the Hebrides. She was able to claim the croft that had skipped a generation.

Jennifer also first arrived in an island work setting via a series of clear ‘push factors’ but her account articulates that networks and alternative work were ‘transplanting’ strategies that

might facilitate a change in her life to 'get away', and the Hebrides became her re-location destination through a sense of 'rooting' in various island connections. As she said:

I was living in Glasgow. I had this job in conservation work and I was posted here doing foot path building and I was over here a lot. I also visited here a lot because I have a friend who's a ranger ... And then I just decided to move here. I was fed up with my boss. And I just split up with my boyfriend. So, lots of reasons. I just wanted to get away.

Jennifer expresses a common held view of island in-migrants seeking a place of escape and refuge. Circumstances, such as social networks, proximity and an existing familiarity with the island's potential to offer her an opportunity to undertake certain kinds of work, led Jennifer to locate herself, transplanting herself, as a cultural worker but also as we shall see later further 'transplanting' herself within the island. Not unusually Jennifer had already made a series of rural location and relocation choices previously and her life narrative exemplifies the complexity, or 'messiness' of migrant location choices to and within rural places (Bosworth and Willett 2011; Milbourne 2007; Stockdale 2015).

Luckman's (2012) work on cultural workers in the Lake District, England, and in Darwin Australia noted similar reasons for settling in rural areas. It was not so much the romantic beauty of the place that drove many cultural workers to the rural settings it was often the financial benefits of employment that made it possible.

Why an island? What was notable about the narrative our participants shared with us about 'why islands?' was primarily the idea of community. This is exemplified by Mark:

Islands they're safe. They're ... um ... the communities are much closer. You know everyone. It's very easy to get to know them all. And, um, they're friendly. I can't see any bad points.

While Mark may be positioning his story here for our 'research focus' sake, that is *motivated* by (Plummer 2013) a decision to express a good islander identity, (later on we do hear of some *not good* points), the notion of safety and being known and knowing others is important. Moving to a small island invariably negates anonymity. It is something you must be willing to deal with. You do not go to an island to hide as Mark points out you go to an island to belong. Molly concurs when she says:

I like the sort of community network you have in a rural area that you don't get as much in a town.

There is a clear pro-rural sentiment in Molly's answer (Halfacree and Rivera 2011). The image, representation and experience of islands life is rooted in the idea of community, more specifically, a community of place and this is thematically strong in all three accounts. There is a grounding in who you are in relation to others. Place facilitates connection and this seems to be particular so for the implant and replant incomer narratives, but so too for the transplant. Yet the tone of each account suggests a self-awareness of the degrees of locational success within each place where each has laboured to locate within material and social realities; and for cultural workers the accommodation by an island place (physically, socially, economically, emotionally) of one's cultural work and identity as being understood (shared, authenticated, and/or validated) of value, and 'of this place' is particularly interesting to reflect on (see Ikonen 2013 for a Finnish example).

While the social reasons are paramount, the natural and geographical space is important to the decision to live on an island. Molly talks not just about the island as the community or network of place, but also of the 'space' that living on the islands of the Hebrides offers her:

We have space and I thrive in it. Just having this, we got big skies. It's more the space. It's just such a nice place to be.

Her narrative is filled with references to the sky, as seen again shortly, but fundamentally the all-encompassing presence of a clear sky acts as the antithesis to being in an urban environment. The urban area is polluted with lights, smog, and people are "everywhere". Our interviews each recognised that for some this type of urban experience is desirable; but not for those who decide to stay on an island. The island location decision is articulated as a clear and active lifestyle choice and as each of our participants talked and reflected within the interview, this further permeated and informed several aspects of their cultural work narrative.

Why this island? When selecting an island to live on, its location was very important. Molly had strong family generational ties to the island (historically, culturally) and this was clearly a pull or pro-rural factor. But the physical environment offered by the Hebrides was critical for her. It provided space "to breathe" and be "a part of nature" in a way that "you may find more difficult" elsewhere. Molly lists a set of attributes of the particular islandness that she experiences. These aspects range from the practical to the ethereal. There are ferries and regular air flights that link the island to the mainland. There are not too many tourists. And because of the few street lights, not least in relation to her own home site, she can do one of her most favourite things:

Sitting on the step with hot chocolate watching Auroras in January is pretty good.

Jennifer shares with us an account of her move to the Hebrides. Her narrative starts with the somewhat predictable statement about why you would come to an island (the well-known tropes of Scottish islandness as a “good place to live” of community and natural environment both figure large in her account) but then the narrative moves into something a little different where the island is said to offer a good place for her to undertake her craft work:

The scenery obviously but just to get away from the city, I think. Slower pace of life; and I could do the basket-making. It was a lot easier here.

Mark had moved from Orkney to an island in the Hebrides. In Orkney, Mark explained how he had “extra” costs for his business, particularly transportation costs. Material had to be shipped in and completed pieces had to be shipped out so economic principles necessitated successful business relocation elsewhere yet Mark did not want “to lose that island lifestyle”.

Here is his assessment of why the Hebrides became his home:

This [island] is probably the most ideal place to live if you like islands because you’re just a stone’s throw from the mainland. Where up north there; it’s a long journey.

Proximity to transport for business costs while occupying an island location was important for Mark (rather than a family or other prior link) and an particular island in the Hebrides offered a ‘good fit’ where both cultural work and business success could be coupled with an island lifestyle.

Incomer as lifelong islander. Mark and Molly, each in their narratives express a desire to be perceived as an islander, as someone who belongs on an island; crucially both lay claim to this identity. Narrative analysis is particularly helpful here to see the framing of what they are telling us. Mark - who did not grow up on an island, a piece of land surrounded by water

- wants to make sure we know that he has always thought of himself as someone from an island:

I grew up in what you could call an island 'cause it was a village in the middle of Derbyshire. Back then all villages were islands because nobody moved from one place to another. People married in the same communities. You know, in one village or the next. Going to the next village is the biggest adventure you get in our life.

Derbyshire in England is not a geographical island. What we see here is Mark framing his narrative as a validation of location success and has had a connection with a sense of 'islandness' in his mind throughout his life. Throughout his army and post-army career, Mark has lived on islands. He lists them off: Singapore, Cayman Islands, Orkneys and now the Hebrides. He includes Derbyshire on that list. Mark is adamant that he is the "sort of person" that not only likes islands but belongs on islands. Through this piece of narrative we see Mark implanting himself in the island identity but the shift around the in-plant, transplant and replant is clear. Mark suggests a degree of good 'knowing islandness' identity work had already been done prior to him actually making his long-term home one. Furthermore, Mark's craftwork strongly articulates an 'island lifestyle'. The location of his home and studio on an island and drawing inspiration from the islandness 'around him' informs his cultural worker self and in turn reinforces his confidence to an islander claim.

With family connections to the crofting community of her mother's family in the Hebrides, Molly arguably does not have to work so hard to claim that she belongs. Molly, like Mark, was born and raised on the mainland, but the commonplace annual experience of diaspora holidaying 'back in the islands' - 'visiting home' - was clearly influential on her own sense of self as linked with the community of the island. She explains her 'replanting' claim to the Hebrides thus:

The croft had always been in Mum's side of the family and the house that's just down here [pointing out the window] is where Mum was brought up and Gran stayed. So when my sister and I were girls we were taken to the Inverness station, popped onto the bus, deposited at the [...] hotel and we would wait for the bus. We would come over here and spend the summers and holidays with Gran. So we've always been in the Hebrides from an early age, the two of us [Molly and her sister].

Family, in any small area, like a Hebridean island, precipitates degrees of access into communities. Undoubtedly those replanting in-migrants who have genealogical ties can lay claim to places in certain ways. This is not without its complexity and contingency, however. Each island's communities own genealogical shifts take place in terms of degrees of collective appreciation of who or what is 'family', attribution of more or less 'localness' claims, and community status but this will change over time. By going back to the Hebrides, Molly has replanted herself through a claim to a crofting heritage, and a childhood narrative of knowing the place. Molly establishes herself as belonging, as being an islander but qualifies this through her narrative of having also experienced and 'come from' elsewhere.

This distancing strategy allows her to articulate both a highly expressive and situated appreciation of what she has got 'now'. Furthermore, her cultural work as a potter maps her to the very physicality of the island (using gathered materials from shoreline and moor) but it also positions her as actively and individually entrepreneurial; offering others (consumers but also friends and family) an opportunity to share in her 'good life as good work'; not least through visiting her at home in her studio, like Mark, in an attractive, island space.

Molly and Mark both argue that to be an islander, and to locate successfully fulltime, requires some unique characteristics. For them, to live on an island, individuals need to have something innate within, 'pre-conditioned', as Mark points out:

I think people who live on islands just are made for islands ‘cause quite a few people come and go. They buy a house. They stay here and they’ve left within two or three years, more so in Orkney, they were coming and going.

Mark’s narrative continues in the vein that you cannot come to an island just for its beauty or because it is the ‘trendy thing to do.’ Rather, he suggests that people need to be pulled to islands; you cannot be pushed, “you have to really want to be there”. It has to almost “be in your blood”.

All three interviewees spoke of how islands are “not easy places” to live on. It takes work to live on an island as Molly explains:

I think if you arrive and get involved, which we did ... and you’re helping out with things and you’re getting to know people, then that is what makes you part of an active community rather than arriving and complaining there’s not this, there’s not that, there’s not the next thing. That ... I can see with people I know who are struggling to live here.

As we stated earlier broader discourses of rural growth and development talk of making Scotland’s island places welcoming to in-migrants. Mark and Molly offer an insight widely shared by in-migrants themselves that incomers (even as replants) need to realise that they are coming to a place with established networks and communities: “you can’t just expect to be instantly a part of that network”. Each must work at it – get involved, be active, avoid comparing the island location to where you came from. In short, if in-migrants do not reach this realisation about being involved they will “struggle to live here”.

The question begs to be asked then is ‘how do you fit in’; how do you become involved’? As we see with this title to the paper, as Mark so aptly put it, “you shut up for five years!”. Molly offers a further guide to the fitting in whilst being involved:

I think it’s about attitude and not being too outrageous about changing everything. I think that can create problems if there is a sense that someone has arrived and they sort of want to rewrite everything.

In order to fit in, you need to be active and visible to a community and a cultural worker is most especially charged with expressing their work to others, and often their role is to facilitate shared cultural experiences (Williams 2001). This is perhaps of marked importance for small remote islands, where culture and traditions are often portrayed as what makes them distinct from other locations (Ronström 2008). From what Mark and Molly narrate, incomers should get involved in a variety of facets of island community life in order to help facilitate an identity of belonging. This must be done with some cautiousness until you have found your place, being aware of the cultural and social terrain you negotiate. However, that said, the incomer experience illustrates that “islandness” is not a static category but one that is itself continuously negotiated not least by in-migrants themselves. Furthermore, in response to Ronström (2008), the work that cultural workers come to do on islands challenges the notion that tradition is an unchanging entity, fossilised in an imagined past. Yet, cultural workers arguably must tread a complex line between conserving island cultural heritage whilst facilitating creative expression and new interpretations of islandness as place, people and practice.

Why the island doesn’t become home. As mentioned before, Jennifer was living ‘alone’ in the Hebrides and her move was an expression of rejecting city life. As her narrative states,

things went well for her to begin with. After a few years things started to change, or maybe more accurately she started to notice things about the community she did not like:

I suppose it's really a tight community; everyone knowing everyone. It was great when I first was there. But you know you were around each other's houses all year round. Barbecues on the beach; it got to be a bit much after six years. It was a bit like school playground stuff. You realise that people are really your best friends when they are bitching about you behind your back. You hear them bitching about other people so it's probably happening to you as well.

Networks of both close and loose ties are a singularly defining aspect of island life.

Realisation emerges in Jennifer's account as a 'thematic' in itself; a coming to terms with island place and one's locating history. Here it is suggestive of a negotiated shift in her 'island identity' as someone who had become 'known' and consequently integrated within social networks to a greater or lesser degree only to seek a new location where one could be 'less known'. Jennifer moved from one to another community on the island. Yet in tandem with a need to relocate 'away' she clearly accounts for her cultural work as driver to pull her towards a new place (the opportunity to work and live with 'better' craft worker space nearby). Although overall the relocation to a new studio space might be read as a social retreating (into a workshop with just herself, the radio and an occasional visitor dropping by) it also signifies recognition of agency to 'make good' on the islandness available. 'Escaping' one increasingly unfulfilling location for a new place and cultural work space facilitated a different phase of 'fitting in' perhaps less so in terms of 'others' but rather more in terms of herself where a 'testing' of the success measures of island place and cultural work identity underpin much of the narrative account. This period of testing and trial (metaphors that echo in the accounts from both Mark and Molly) is marked out as an active demonstration of a survival instinct, a resistance of sorts, and exercising of control over her material

circumstances but also island realities. Establishing a new cultural enterprise where her actual locational knowledge, derived from a reflective sense of getting to 'know the place' over time, and an expanding confidence in her own cultural assets (craft skills and symbolic capital) presented her with an opportunity to assert a new cultural worker identity within the island. Jennifer's narrative is suggestive of a successful transitioning between one island identity status to another (less to more established in terms of 'knowing the island'). This period in her island narrative appears to have been both rewarding yet challenging; Jennifer speaks of isolation and the demands of a self-employment status, compounded by what appears to be a perception of shrinking networks and social ties further evidencing both economic precarity as well as social isolation. She spent the five years previous to our interview trying to find "another place". She went to university for a year, and worked in mental health care off the island for a couple of years. In short, Jennifer displays the interplay between locating and dis-locating. At the time of the interview Jennifer was feeling that she was being pulled away from the island but so too was a sense of her confidently applying her now informed and *situated* island knowledge - not least of the vagaries of remote island economies - to underpin any future decision:

My dad's quite ill at the moment [...] I would like something more vibrant; something more going on. I think it's got worse [on the island] in the last few years. I think there's less money coming in, less tourists, less work. It's a knock on effect.

Without island family connections, fewer economic opportunities, and an increasing feeling of isolation Jennifer was contemplating leaving: her sense of testing out pathways to 'location success' was 'done'. About six months after sharing her narrative with us, Jennifer did leave the Hebrides to move to a coastal community in England not least to replant to a degree by being closer to family there.

5. Discussion

In-migrants must negotiate a paradoxical position of being often excluded from the 'local' frame of reference by virtue of their label on the one hand, whilst expected to accommodate ('fit in') and engage with local island culture. Furthermore, in-migrants are often more complexly entangled with local policy and the practices of cultural work than might be first assumed from some counter-urbanisation accounts (Halfacree and Rivera 2011), and indeed policy and media representation should respond with increasingly nuanced accounts accordingly. Cultural development increasingly makes a great deal of harnessing all available resources and assets of a local community, not least in remote and rural settings such as Scotland's islands. Furthermore, who defines something as an asset and in what terms is an area for further exploration in terms of the cultural work in-migrant narratives we have cited here. In-migrants - incomers, 'returnees', transient workers, and second-home owners - are variously recognised as key players in rural community development, especially in respect of Scotland's rural cultural enterprise initiatives. Consequently, in-migrants in general, but perhaps those most especially working in cultural fields, recognise a demand to negotiate their place on the island, and to successfully account for their location on the island and the work they do there. This account validates a claim to 'know' the island place both to others but also crucially to their current and past selves. Decisions to locate and to relocate in our participants' narratives (the telling of stories) illustrate an ability to figure out how to fit into their island communities via their cultural and creative self. Key to this appears to be that if our in-migrants can offer stories of doing good locating work then the island is good for them. Our in-migrants certainly suggest their craftwork can be 'good for islands' by making use of local materials and cultural references as well as providing a quality product for consumers more widely. In adopting Thorndike's (2005) tripartite schema of island in-

migrants as transplant, implant and replant we sought to revisit ideas of island belonging narratives from elsewhere and employ them as a tool for exploration in reference to Scotland.

Our narratives exemplify common accounts of how individuals may successfully lay claim to fitting in; but so too we recognise in the narratives' expressions of an expectation that the island may have to 'fit around them'. Cultural workers clearly seek to build a deep relationship to the islands, yet the integrity to select, reject and indeed reshape what island place can mean to an individual should not be underestimated. Furthermore, as broader policy dialogues and consumer trends offer increasingly complex and varied opportunities to live, value and express 'islands' and 'islandness', cultural work offers a key site for further analysis in rural Scotland not least in terms of 'good work', ideas of island success, but also the complexities and complicities around precarious work. By looking at the nature of cultural workers in particular our study invites further contribution to the broader research on the complex nature of remote rural community and its account. Cultural work is typified by a capacity to create and circulate symbolic, aesthetic or creative goods and services (Banks 2007; Banks et al. 2013). The valuing of such work is complex, however and often predicated on both precarious labour conditions and shifting value attribution. Yet, what is also clear is that islands are deeply significant as places that inform work experiences. The material conditions of island living as well as the symbolic referencing of environments and cultural resource inform the locating of one's self on to a small offshore island. Locating is a form of cultural work in itself. Where the connection manifests itself strongly and variously our interviewees appeared to evidence a highly reflective appreciation of their own migration identities as mapping to certain established in-migrant tropes whilst simultaneously expressed as particular and nuanced to their own local and situated conditions.

Island living, the reasons to seek it out, and the capacity to 'survive it' continues to fascinate within media (Parr, 2013) and popular discourse, as well as offering a continuing focus for

research studies. Net in-migration figures for a number of the Scottish rural areas and certainly for the highland region generally suggest people continue to move to (and within) these areas; locating in the rural and remote places of Scotland to live and to work. Following the 2011 Census and with some notable exceptions the Scottish islands depopulation concerns remain [4]. There is a slowing down of a modern historical trend of mass net out-migration and rural-urban drift but it remains a complex and shifting picture of 'fragility' (Copus and Hopkins 2015; RSE 2007; Stockdale *et al.* 2000). Despite social development and economic growth the area's fragile economic and social status continues. Demography and other sustainability challenges remain for most of the small island communities of Europe's northern margins (Danson and De Souza 2012) and Scotland's experiences offer comparison with small island challenges elsewhere (Stratford 2003).

6. Conclusion

Mark, Molly and Jennifer demonstrate that in-migration is a negotiated process that is not done simply through residency. It is a complex undertaking that challenges static ideas of identity, cultural work and migration to islands. Research such as this invites further examination of rural worker narratives. Not all in-migrants perhaps need to 'shut up'. Rather each migrant may find various ways to express themselves as successfully 'here'. Examining narratives of both work and migration identities, the shifting between locations, and the articulating of cultural worker status, is open to further critique. We hope future work with cultural workers in Scotland's rural and remote places can be usefully developed to inform how and why such places are made, and remade, as culturally and economically meaningful. Further analysis drawing on different individual experiences could contribute more fully to

ideas of islandness, the experiences of migration, and offer insight on how cultural work and tradition as policy and as personal narratives each inform the 'good work' of island living.

[1] See for example The Highland Community Planning Partnership project Supporting Inward Migration Available online: http://highlandlife.net/supporting_inward_migration. Accessed 2 September 2015

[2] The narratives are representative of the transitioning nature of migrant identity and indeed of cultural worker status. The three narratives selected for focus here are illustrative of stages (start-up, maturity and transition) of rural entrepreneurial cycles, not least for cultural work. It should be noted that the paper is not concerned with examining in any detail the aspects of what might be argued as stages of entrepreneurship *per se* but the selection of these three narratives do offer some insight to how such stages are lived and accounted for in island settings.

[3] All participants have been given pseudonyms. It should also be noted that the approaching of potential participants was deliberately diffuse such that no single island community; or indeed one single source of 'cultural work membership' defined the participants. Some significant identity markers have also been sensitively reworked to ensure a reasonable degree of anonymity and this includes aspects of naming actual islands.

[4] BBC News Residents rolling out the isles Author: Steven McKenzie 9 August 2009

Available online: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/highlands_and_islands/8176210.stm

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