The Career-learning CAFÉ

new times – new thinking – new action

August 2012

Ruth Silver's UK report on the future of careers-work **professionalism** has established a unified **professional alliance.** It may yet prove to be a game changer. Our future cannot be like our past. Naturally enough, the alliance starts with gaining recognition for **qualifications**. But do people now believe that qualifications guarantee anything?

The **troubled**, **troublesome**, **poor** and **excluded** are entitled to such doubts. What counts as help to the givers doesn't always feel like help to the receivers. In a **shrinking economy** help for some **penalises** others. There are **conflicts of interest**, which make people **strangers** to each other. Yet now the poor are firmly on the **policy agenda** - which careers work follows. But the social sense of **mutual dependence** is shrivelling, and not everyone's **work-life** can thrive in such conditions. So, shouldn't **careers work** be taking a stronger **position** on all of this?

Much careers-work thinking has rested on the idea that having a **plan** improves your **expectations**. But life is increasingly **unpredictable** - some say **chaotic**. That doesn't mean that people can't find **meaning** in **experience**. Nor does it mean that they can't face it with ready-for-anything **flexibility**. But they realise it by sorting out a past-and-future **narrative**, rather than consulting **expert advice**. Careers work needs a grasp of both.

There is also **on-line** life - an hour-by-hour **finding** out of what's going on, and **figuring** out what can be done about it. And 'finding and figuring' is a not-bad one-liner for **career management**. But, with so many '**spivs-and-spies**' on-line, **digital literacy** needs to be based on off-line **critical thinking**. Careers work is well qualified to help with this, but it is in no **position** to deliver it. There's some **re-locating** to do.

If ever Ruth Silver's ambitions are to be realised, we need to think again about **what** we do, **why** we do it, and **who** we allow to influence us. We've already got plenty on **how**. The location of **where** is a big challenge. But the **when** is now.

all resources listed here are free to download

the blogs and magazine articles are interactive – awaiting your say

a: chances in life for the troubled and troublesome

The troubled, the troublesome, the poor and the marginalised are in the headlines on a daily basis. As are the agencies set up to do something for them – or about them. Warm words and empty claims are not good enough. Careers work needs a credible position from which to develop a basis for help that will lift the life chances of the people who need it most.

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1. if we mean to help we need to understand how the formation of aspiration, employability, motivation and achievement are influenced by the experience of upbringing, culture, economy, income and location   examine the blog >>>

**the workless on benefits
and careers work in the thick of it**
http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/6135

145+ visits

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2. the challenge is not just to understand but to make a difference – and that means knowing how those factors work differently for different groups – especially when they disturb and trouble us?
                              examine the blog >>>

**riots 2011
unspoken quotes
and thresholds of help**
http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/5681

500+ visits

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3. the wayward may well be acting in the only way that makes any sense in the marginal positions they occupy, they are disdained by strangers – people who can't really see them
                              examine the blog >>>

**why don't the poor
listen to us?**
http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/5322

565+ visits

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4. it's easy to defend people whose ambitions suit us – but what about the people whose experience has squeezed all such ambition out of them?
                              examine the blog >>>

**a fair chance
in life**
http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/2195

820+ visits

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b: place, space and social justice

Manchester Metropolitan University has launched this important project - energised by café-colleague Geoff Bright. It shows how geography impacts life chances. The café will keep you in touch with developments.

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5. we are becoming strangers to each other – we need each other's narrative
                    examine the monograph >>>

**enclaves, systems
and voice**
http://www.hihohiho.com/newthinking/cafspaceandplace.pdf

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6. there are conflicts of interest - which drive even neighbours apart – and which need a convincing voice   examine the blog >>>

**managing careers
convenient myths and local voices**
http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/6374

100+ visits

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7. a draft presentation for the MMU conference
                    examine the presentation >>>

**place, space and social justice in education
enclaves, systems and voice**
http://www.hihohiho.com/newthinking/cafspaceandplace.pptx

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c: a future for careers-work professionalism

Reinforcing professional qualifications for careers work is important. But there are more pressing contemporary issues. There is no future in giving 20th-century answers to 21st-century questions.

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8. an internet-linked account of the need for a stronger professionalism – responding to contemporary calls for credibility, how do we win trust? – and do we really know enough? – are we in touch as people need us to be? – and are we really as impartial as we claim?

examine the café article >>>

**strong on career
strong on the causes of career**
http://www.hihohiho.com/magazine/features/cafprofession.html

see also #13 below

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9. what did we come into careers work to do? – to increase national prosperity? – help recruiters select candidates? – facilitate better behaviour in students and clients? – all are claims made on our behalf – or did we hope for something we thought more important? – and can we explain it to others? - and to ourselves?

examine the blog >>>

**crunch time
for the professional alliance**
http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/5436

310+ visits

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10. careers-work professionalism is at a turning point – how it moves on now will have consequences for partnerships we forge, the stakeholders we serve, the research we engage, the methods and materials we develop, and how we gain funding - it will also influence the people we attract as members of our professions

examine the blog >>>

**the future
for careers-work professionalism?**
http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/5028

1225+ visits

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11. practitioners need to re-make the deal, because independence needs support – win credibility, because it is not claimed but earned – enlarge the role, because we know more than we use – sharpen the image, because we are in danger of being marginalised – push the boundary, because boundary-setting is a form of control

examine the blog >>>

**five propositions
in search of professionalism**
http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/5868

320+ views

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12. an animated and illustrated presentation setting out practical action for contemporary careers-work professionalism   examine the presentation >>>

**propositions
in search of professionalism**
http://www.hihohiho.com/magazine/features/cafprofessionalism.pptx

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13. this is the article *Strong on Career Strong on the Causes of Career*, but here set out as a fully-documented and referenced monograph – examining contemporary calls for convincing credibility, useful expertise, in-touch connectedness and genuine independence

examine the monograph >>>

**ten propositions
in search of professionalism**
http://www.hihohiho.com/magazine/features/cafprofessionalism.pdf

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d: storyboarding for seeking meaning in experience and purpose in action

Three-scene storyboarding develops an ability to learn from past experience, as a basis for future action. The EU Learning-for-living project demonstrates its usefulness in various national cultures and professional settings. It examines its use in a number of programmes and disciplines, and in all education sectors. It appears to be useful life-wide and life-long. The project completes in 2012, and the café will keep you in touch with further developments in more settings.

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14. an easily searchable monograph, setting out the practicalities of format and process – it also gives the cultural theory, brain functioning, and philosophy which inform storyboarding – and a running feature sets out the questions that a well-made story poses - fully referenced, identifying learning outcomes and suggesting implications for policy   examine the monograph >>>

**three-scene storyboarding
learning for living**
http://www.hihohiho.com/storyboarding/sbL4L.pdf

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15. a quick-start handbook, illustrating career workers and student-or-clients talking-and-listening to each other – worked examples show design features – and how storyboarding equips for both competitive positioning, and exploratory journeying   examine the handbook >>>

**examples of storyboards
narratives of learning-for-living**
http://www.hihohiho.com/storyboarding/sbtwelve.pdf

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16. a presentation for an up-to day-long participative workshop – sets out key features for guidance and curriculum – illustrates questioning of narratives and learning outcomes – builds a community of practice
                     examine the presentation >>>

**bill law's
three-scene storyboarding**
http://www.hihohiho.com/storyboarding/sbstrybrd.pptx

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e: how storyboarding improves cooperation between education and commerce

All stakeholder groups depend on the education of all their people – including other people's children. Shareholders are part of that stakeholder network. Any interest in staff recruitment and development depends on education's work in enabling sustainable, appropriate and fulfilling action in life. Although the interests of education and commerce are not identical, storyboarding can expand mutual understanding and cooperation between them.

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17. shows how quality-of-life and competitiveness feature in career management – storyboarding can narrate this, progressively building mutual understanding between employing and learning for living - storyboarding offers feedback to programme managers – develops an understanding of how people see working life – and the distinctive appreciations needed by employing organisation   examine the blog >>>

**learning and work
and three-scene storyboarding**
http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/6410

75+ visits

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f: digital literacy, on-line devices and off-line scrutiny?

It seems that dedicated professional careers-work websites are in the process of catching up with on-line social networking. The changing picture certainly needs the special skills of qualified careers workers. But it also needs those careers workers to be able to find the place and space to work in.

18. careers work needs a concept of digital literacy calling on what educators do best, asking useful questions – the monograph argues for the critical scrutiny of the relationship between on-line virtuality and off-line reality – digital literacy needs to be more than an on-line facility with devices, people need an off-line capacity for probing what the devices find – this positions educators as enabling questioning – on how an on-line self represents an embodied identity – on what links together on-line connections and wider realities – and on learning how anybody knows when on-line searching finds reliable learning – we need this kind of critical-thinking narrative for realising the full potential of on-line careers work

examine the monograph >>>

digital literacy
repositioning on-line careers work
http://www.hihohiho.com/newthinking/EVColonist.pdf

g: wider questions for underpinning thinking

Where conflicting interests inhabit chaotic conditions, professionals need more than technical efficacy, they also need ethical priorities - both expertise and commitment.

19. Canterbury Christ Church University has published, on-line, Bill's interactive exploration of the ethics of careers work – it ranges from post-modernism to pragmatism – and back

examine the on-line game >>>

philosophies for careers work
what do we mean by 'careers work'
and, anyway, who are 'we'
http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/education/career-and-personal-development/docs/Law-OccPaper2011Vocation.pdf

pdf – needs to be printed

20. career-learning theory shows how narrative is psychologically and socially constructed, but can be flexibly interpreted – this monograph adapts it to contemporary conditions and emerging purposes – it links to the case for critical thinking and mindfulness – and it locates careers-work in civil society – all highlights neglected questions for contemporary career management

examine the monograph >>>

career-learning thinking
for contemporary working life
http://www.hihohiho.com/newthinking/crlrnupdate.pdf

h: generic material for boundary-less careers

Some café blogs belong to all of the preceding seven themes.

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21. a fully-referenced account of how people relate to society – describing 'isolates', 'positioners', 'individualist' and 'enclaved' – the last turn out to be significant – the blog shows how all forms of social membership, including work-life, are less about top-down requirements and more about seeking recognition   examine the blog >>>

**post-coded
careers**

http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/6147

165+ visits

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22. career-learning calls on the 'learning verbs' – they are not about what we say, but about what our students and clients say – finding out, sorting out, checking out and figuring out – constructing that story can tell of impulse and intuition, of inner-life and other people, of chaos and plans
          examine the blog >>>

**careers work on the net
the future?**

http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/5559

335+ visits

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23. the dynamics of storyboarding are found in the sequence, its points-of-view, any turning-points and possible change-of-mind **–** all move things on – but they are anecdotes, and can be questioned – they can also be revisited, so that a there-and-then 'I am' can also be a here-and-now 'is that really me?' – such thinking reshapes conventional career theory   examine the blog >>>

**three-scene storyboarding
to live and learn and live**

http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/6218

115+ visits

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24. claims to creativity are not always creative – innovation that is not new, mere novelty, wobbly engineering, and headline-grabbing 'science' – we know we've got the real thing when we find that we need to look at ourselves again – and shift paradigm – that repositions us – then It's not just our students and clients who need a new narrative, it's us   examine the blog >>>

**change and careers work
a paradigm shuffle?**

http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/6313

115+ visits

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this is an occasional review of café activity - you can get frequent updates at...
http://twitter.com/billaw

we may be able to help each other with some of these developments
let me know if you're interested

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