Perpetually Searching for Eudaemonia:

A Conversation About Object Wearing

Volume Two:
Atlas of Practice

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Master of Research

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Figure 1: Ailsa Morrant, 2018, Photo of precious metal cast of a handshake space

Introduction

Volume Two: Atlas of Practice documents and maps how, as a reflective practitioner, I have travelled my research journey. It contextualises, describes and documents the decisions, design process and choices I made along the way.

To conduct this research I embedded grounded theory within my reflective practice. Adopting this methodology had the effect of heightening my awareness of being an integral element within the research process. This feeling perpetuated when writing up, therefore I acknowledged it by writing this thesis in the first person.

Although Volume Two does have a self-contained narrative, it is intended to be read as a companion to Volume One. Its purpose is to enable the reader to not only scrutinize my process but also share my moments of discovery and transition as I followed, and finally grasped, the conceptual thread that strung together the beads of perceptive understanding which progressively emerged and I discovered were common to the experience of jewellery and personal alarm wearing.

The narrative of Volume Two is organised into numbered sections which have been cross-referenced in Volume One at the appropriate points in that text.

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cast in precious and non-precious metals and plaster

Chapter One:

My Point of Departure

1 My Point of Departure

This research arose from the confluence of vocational and personal experiences.

1.1 Being a Jeweller

Through my practice I investigate how the qualities of materiality are, or could be, used within the everyday to enhance connection with self and others. My aim is to contribute to wellbeing by making a transient moment, the gap between being and becoming, perceptible and tangible so its vitality and preciousness can be mindfully savoured and celebrated. Such moments usually pass before there is even awareness that they are happening and trying to capture such fleeting moments of subconscious connection has become my obsession. I constantly chase that moment when the relative and subjective changed status of being is occurring - as in my body of work, which casts the unique space that exists between palms in handshakes – that moment when the hands touch for a split second enabling the essence of another to be sensed (Figures 1- 4). And in my 'Under the Covers' series where I consider the texture and weight of the bedcovers when they become part of the moment you are in. 'Duvet Days' (Figure 5) explores the feeling of being cocooned whilst you regain consciousness and move from sleep to awareness, and 'Brief Encounters' considers the sensual qualities of bedcovers (Figure 6).

Figure 4: Ailsa Morrant, 2018, 'Handshake' locket, oxidised silver casing for gold enrobed plaster cast of a handshake space

Figure 5: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, 'Duvet Days', neckpiece, unbleached calico, wool, and thread

Figure 6: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, 'Brief Encounters', neckpiece, satin, wadding and thread

1.2 Being a Daughter

I was bereft at the change in my Dad (Figure 7) that occurred once he started to wear a personal alarm. One day he was living a contented and relaxed life in his own home at 90 years of age, albeit becoming progressively frailer, unsteady on his feet and breathless, but managing with the support and social interaction of family and friends. Then the next, following the introduction of a worn personal alarm, he was agitated, distressed, insecure, feeling constantly on edge and unhappy. I was relieved once he eventually stopped wearing his alarm, but even then, he did not revert to his previous countenance.
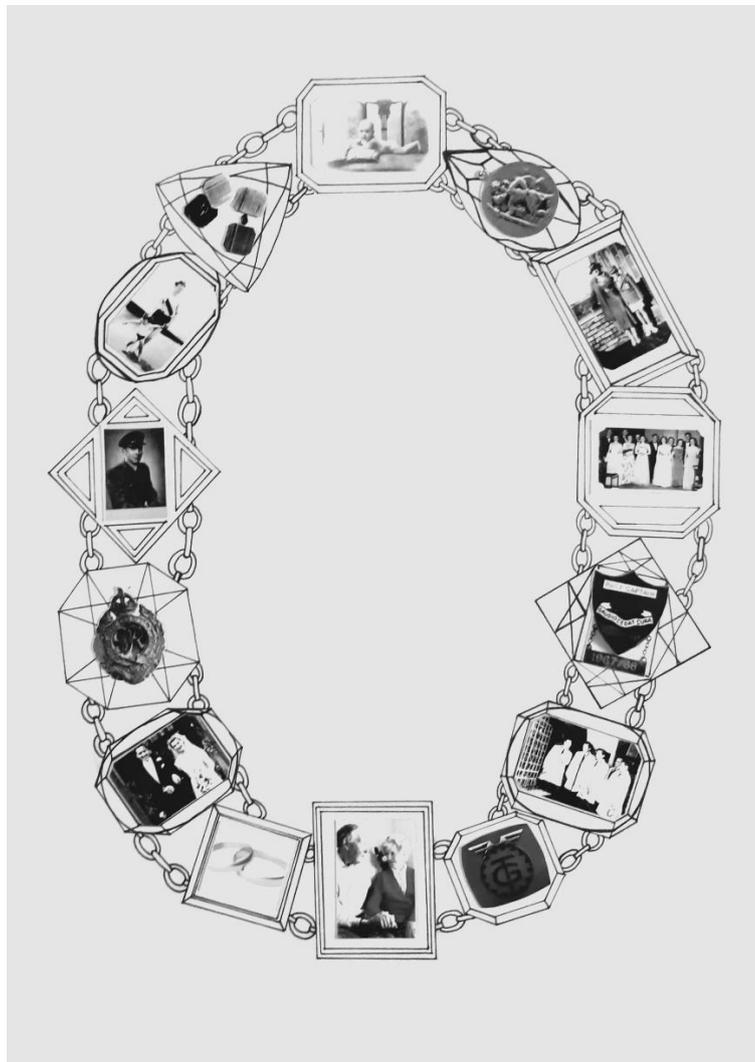
Figure 7: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, ' Dad', collage, ink and photos

1.3 Being Both

I realised that to be able to support Dad's ongoing needs I required an understanding of why and how his life had dramatically changed when he started wearing a personal alarm. Perhaps it was a co-incidence – maybe something else happen at the same time? I had to unravel what Dad was experiencing to find out.

I therefore began researching, instinctively using my reflective process as a jeweller, thankful that I had vocational insight, knowledge and skill to help me create a purposeful space between me and my Dad's distress.

I soon realised from initial research that Dad's experience of alarm wearing was not unique. I found that whilst his and other's similar experiences of alarm wearing were recognised, they were accepted as the norm and relatively undiscussed in both social and care communities, as well as in published research. It was at this point in my journey I realised that to do this research I needed support and scrutiny to ensure the work I was about to undertake was robust enough to not only help Dad but also to share publicly. I therefore successfully applied to the Scottish Digital Health and Care Institute for funding to conduct the research through this Masters of Research.

Chapter Two:

Stage 1 Mapping the Terrain

2 Stage 1 Mapping the Terrain

2.1 The Elements

Many people, in many ways, helped me to generate and gather the information that I used to map the world of jewellery and worn alarms as experienced by wearers.

These people people helped me by

- discussing jewellery and worn alarms; they include

  – Master of Research students, supervisors and staff volunteers
  – A jewellery expert, Mah Rana
  – A Representative of Scottish Care
  – Representatives of an organisation for retired people
  – Members of an art group for retired people
  – Wearable alarm provider representatives
  – Members of the public
  – Worn alarm wearers

- producing work that I could experience; they include
  – Pitts River Museum, Oxford, 2020, permanent collections of jewellery, sacred objects and amulets (in person)
  – Wellcome Collection, 2019, 'Minds and Bodies' exhibition (on line) https://wellcomecollection.org/events/Xa7QdhAAANlKv5rE
  – Anima Mundi, 2019, 'Protected by Alarms' exhibition (on line) https://www.animamundigallery.com/exhibition-protected-by-alarms
  – Archaeologist Prof N Finlay's, 2022, ' Archaeological Housework' lecture (in person)

- providing the opportunity to exhibit and discuss relevant work at Ernst & Young GSA Innovation Showcase, February 2020

- helping me identify key aspects of experiences that I could reflectively dissect and distil through the materiality of making in my studio

2.2 Key Insights on Stage 1 of the Journey

2.2.1 Have a Nice Day

Figure 8: Ailsa Morrant 2020, Photo of Master of Research seminar presentation board

At the initial Master of Research seminar at Forres, January 2020, I used the topic presentation slot as my first structured scoping opportunity. I facilitated a participative round table discussion about jewellery and personal alarm wearing (Figures 8, 9 & 10).

Figure 9: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of round table discussion group at Master of Research winter seminar, GSA, Forres, January 2020

Figure 10: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of tutor discussing her jewellery at Master of Research winter seminar, GSA, Forres, January 2020

I found that the staff and students really liked their jewellery being noticed and willingly discussed why they wore it and what it meant to them, but were much more hesitant and cautious about discussing worn alarms. Nobody wanted to wear a social care alarm themselves, although they felt that they were a good idea for older people.

I experienced how easily jewellery prompted disclosure of personal experiences and opened up an intimate conversation space. Therefore, from that seminar onwards, I wore my 'Have a nice day' badge (Figure 11) as much as possible since I had previously found that it initiated conversations with strangers. I used it as an everyday scoping tool and talked about jewellery and worn alarms to anyone who engaged, enabling me to gather insights and also explore and practice interview technique through spontaneous conversations.

Figure 11: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of 'Have a nice day' vintage badge being worn by me at the bus stop in Forres, January 2020

2.2.2 Physically Holding a Wearable Alarm

I took a wearable personal alarm to a tutorial sessions with my supervisors. They were curious as they had never held one before. They said handling it made them feel nervous, even though they knew it was over fifty miles from the receiving hub so they could not accidentally activate it.

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 12: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of 'Yes!No!' game box

They said the wearable device made them feel on edge, like playing the game 'Pass the Bomb' or 'Yes/No' (Figure 12) and they felt that the incorporation of a red push button, although logical, was very provocative. They were reluctant to put the alarm on.

Several insights arose from this handling session

- the worn alarm device looks and feels like a component of a toddler's game as it has a simplistic, solid, plastic, robust form (Figure 13)
- even just holding it created a feeling of unease and uncertainty
- it felt that it could easily be inadvertantly triggered
- it provoked the feeling of fast action gaming which uses push buttons
- push buttons are universal and publicly understood, especially red buttons in emergency situations
- the use of a red button has particular significance
- push buttons only offer a binary, dichotmous choice – to push or not to push

Figure 13: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of Dad's wearable emergency alarm bracelet

These insights prompted me to make in my studio. I chose Lego as my medium. As a toy, aesthetically it has the same colours, plasticky feel and some rounded forms like the worn alarm. As I 'played' with the Lego pieces I realised that although a toy, it did not have push buttons, therefore I used it to make some push button like forms (Figure 14).
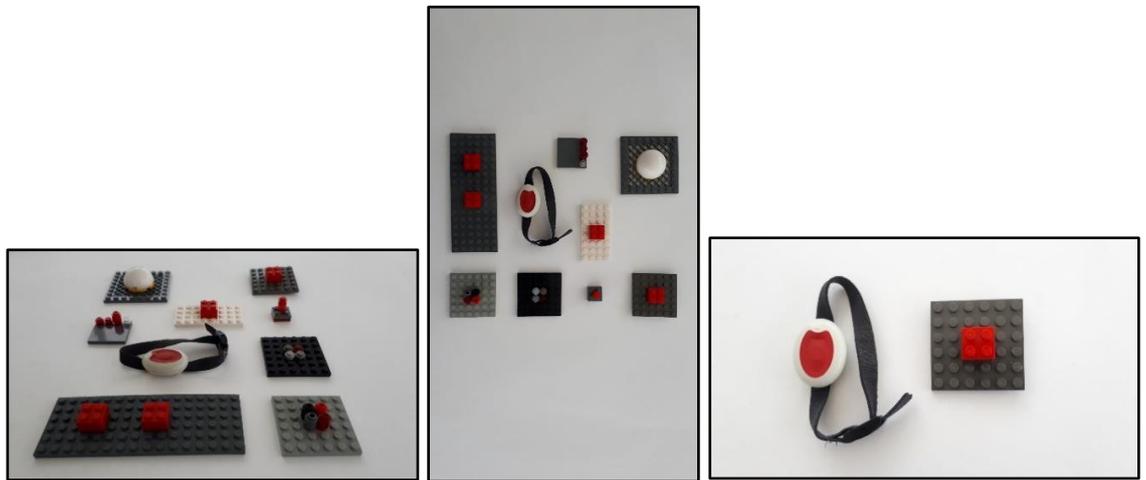
Figure 14: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photos from Lego push button form making

Processing, while I handled Lego, I concluded that although the worn alarm design was pragmatic, its design could be perceived by wearers as infantilizing and aesthetically insensitive to their social and emotional needs, given its purpose and potentially life changing role for them when they needed reassurance and safety. This made me consider whether it was the aesthetics of the design that precipitated its effect on the life of wearers (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, 'Play the Game' brooch, Lego pieces and stainless steel

I needed to explore this further from different perspectives with alarm wearers.

2.2.3 Discussing Wearable Alarms and Jewellery with Older People

I contacted the leader of an art group for retired people in a local town. They were interested in my research and invited me to visit the group and discuss it with the members, which I did. During the visit I sensed reticence when discussing worn alarms but an opening up and eagerness to share when discussing jewellery. The group and its leader were interested in exploring further how they could contribute. Therefore, as the group was part of an organisation that facilitates activities for retired people, I approached the chairperson. However, they did not want to discuss any involvement of the organisation, nor its groups, on the grounds that they did not want to be associated with worn alarm research since they felt it conflicted with their aim to promote positive ageing.

This response was echoed when I approached similar older people's organisations and individuals and I began to realise that, even with sensitivity and empathy, accessing personal experience of worn alarms would be difficult. Given Dad's experience, I could understand why, and the last thing I wanted to do was compound the trauma of a wearer's experience, therefore I began to wonder whether it was ethically appropriate to pursue direct fieldwork interventions with alarm wearers.

To consider and process my insights and thoughts I returned to my studio where I studied the form, physical materiality and aesthetics of wearable alarms, just simply as objects. I tried to replicate them in other materials using a variety of processes. I made metal ones, firstly a heavy, solid sandcast one and then a pressed, light, hollow one (Figure 16).

Figure 16: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photos of the process creating worn wrist alarm forms

I also made a mould of a neck fall alarm and cast it in wax, and in plaster too (Figure 17).

Figure 17: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photos of the process creating fall alarm forms

Making and handling these objects I realised that changing their weight, colour and texture did change my perception of them and made them feel and look like different objects. It also made me realise that, although the aesthetics altered my perception of them, I was not a wearer and that what had emerged in the scoping conversations was

that people's perception of alarms was subjective. The meaning of a worn alarm depended on who was considering it.

I therefore needed to gain another's thoughts on this, as well as the practicality and ethics of recruiting older people for fieldwork, so I approached a manager in the worn alarm provider service. They felt that, irrespective of route or approach style, it would be difficult to find alarm wearers who would be willing to participate in sharing their experiences. They explained that conversationally, worn alarms were 'an elephant in the room.' Providers were aware that many people did not like wearing alarms and that many either infrequently or never wore their alarms. However, the provider struggled to express why this was the case.

Several insights arose from these conversations

- it was not just the aesthetics but also subjective meaning that contributed to a wearer's experience of an alarm
- publicly, worn alarms did not promote positive ageing
- directly discussing personal alarm wearing experience with wearers, or potentially imminent wearers, was intrusive therefore must be sensitively and cautiously approached during fieldwork
- others, such as family, carers and service providers, although from a different perspective, also had insight and knowledge into an alarm wearer's experience that could be valuable to explore

I therefore concluded that, in addition to wearers' experiences of worn alarms, I would also consider investigating others' experiences of them in my fieldwork design since this potentially could be a less intrusive approach.

2.2.4 Discussing Jewellery with Men

When Dad's alarm wearing difficulties arose, at first I wondered whether it was a 'man thing' about wearing something too like jewellery, although he did have what he considered jewellery, kept in a leather, flip lid box (Figure 18). I was also concerned that, as a researcher, being female and a jeweller, might distance men from participation.

Figure 18: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of Dad's jewellery
and the leather box he stored it in

Therefore, when I visited the local art group of retired people and found that half were men, I took the opportunity to discuss the term jewellery with the men. I did this again when I subsequently exhibited work at at an Ernst and Young Showcase event.

The men at both events were not reticent about approaching me nor me approaching them. They discussed the term jewellery and all felt that it was a descriptor for the objects they and other men wore, not limited to objects that women wore.

It also transpired that the men I talk too did not have jewellery boxes but instead stored their jewellery in a variety of ways. They had specific corners of drawers or reused containers such as biscuit tins. During the discussions about how they stored their jewellery, I felt that, in the same way as the jewellery conversation did, these discussions were also opening up intimate conversation spaces that the participants were enjoying to freely discuss themselves.

Afterwards, I reflected on my own jewellery box (Figure 19), inherited from Granny. I sought it out to hold and explore. It is old leather and has a little key. When I opened it, it felt like opening a diary and as I emptied it, the tray sections felt like paragraphs with their text removed.

Figure 19: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photos of Granny's jewellery box emptied of contents

I realised that a jewellery box and its contents tell a story.

I then began to wonder whether investigating or using the process of jewellery storage could somehow help provide insights into the perceptions of worn alarms (Figure 20).

Figure 20: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of Granny's jewellery box with contents that maybe could include a worn alarm

I concluded that using the term jewellery was not likely to exclude men's participation in the research or cause a gender difference in alarm wearing experience. However, exploring a collaborative approach with an organisation whose focus was on supporting men, such as Men's Sheds (2017), to discuss a talking and making approach to investigate their experiences of wearing and also storing jewellery, and potentially any worn alarm experiences that they may have had as a family member or carer, was a technique for fieldwork that I should consider as it may be perceived as a less intrusive and personally focused approach.

Unfortunately though this approach could not be explored due to the Covid pandemic.

2.2.5 How Does Wearing an Object Provide Protection?

Whilst considering what aspect of existance worn alarms were protecting, the title of an Anima Mundi Gallery (2019) exhibition 'Protected by Alarms' (Figure 21) attracted me. The exhibition explored human existance in times of uncertainty and transition. While viewing and considering the online exhibits I realised that alarm wearing does not protect, for example, through preventing emergency incidents occuring.

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 21: Anima Mundi Gallery, 2019, Poster for 'Protected by Alarms' exhibition, screenshot

https://www.animamundigallery.com/exhibition-protected-by-alarms Accessed April 2020

Rather, what worn alarms do is enable the wearer to summon help after an incident has occurred, if they are able to push the button.

Therefore it was a feeling of uncertainty that was the motivation for wearing an alarm. A wearer feels vulnerable, insecure and fears harm. These are the same reasons for wearing amulets.

To investigate amulet wearing I therefore visited the Pitts River Museum's extensive amulet collection (Figures 22, 23 & 24).

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 22: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of a description about why and how amulets are worn, in a cabinet in the Pitts River Museum, Oxford

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 23: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of a metal amulet worn to protect love, in a cabinet in the Pitts River Museum, Oxford

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 24: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of rowan tree amulets worn to protect against witches, in a cabinet in the Pitts River Museum, Oxford

This consideration of worn alarms and amulets gave me several insights

- wearing an object is motivated by perceived need
- if a person feels vulnerable then it could motivate them to wear anything if they believed it would protect them. Like amulets, if the belief that a worn alarm has the potency and effectiveness to provide a sense of reassurance and safety, then, as long as the wearer has this need, the aesthetics are irrelevant, the wearing is being driven by belief and symbolism

I therefore concluded that for some people, like my Dad, there appears to be a disconnect somewhere between their motivation to wear an alarm and their belief in the device's potency and its effectiveness.

2.2.6 Exploring the Perceived Need for a Worn Alarm

Another set of questions had also begun to emerge through contextual scoping that I felt needed explored; who decides whether someone 'needs' a worn alarm? Whose needs are being fullfilled by their distribution? How does this approach affect the wearer? Who are the alarms being worn for? (Figure 25).
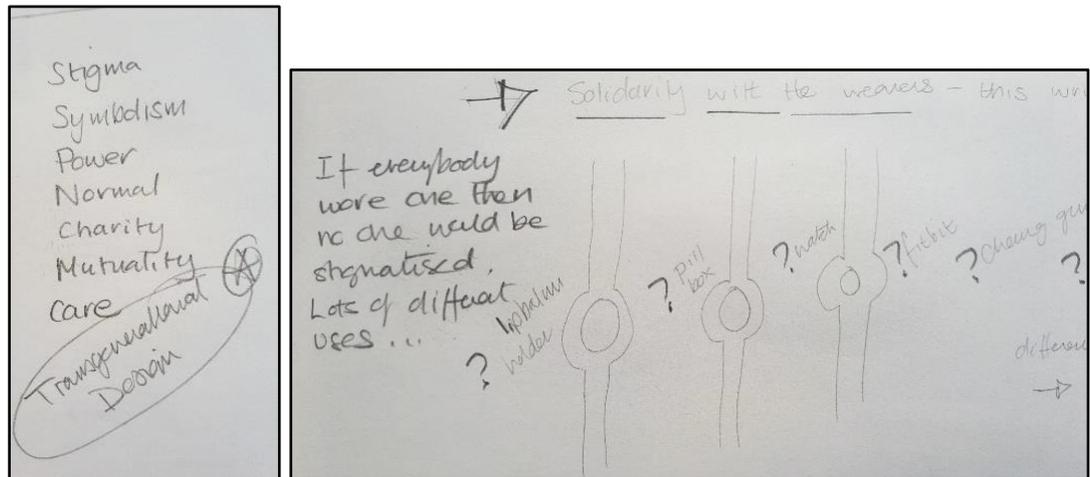
Figure 25: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of sketchbook notes

During the first Covid lockdown it was difficult to contextually explore through direct discussion, therefore I turned to work conducted by others for insight. The 'Dignity' and 'Help the Normals' work of Dolly Sen (2019) (Figure 26) were featured as part of 'Minds and Bodies' during the festival of events associated with the 'Being Human' exhibition at the Wellcome Collection (2019). The work provoked consideration of the stigmatisation that can become ingrained through well intentioned acts of caring. It also questions the transactional power and control balance that exists in care provision and questions whose need these acts are actually fulfilling, what motivates them and the attitudes and perceptions of 'self' as the norm, and the assumptive labelling of 'others'.

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 26: Dolly Sen, 2019, Dignity' and 'Help the Normals', in 'Minds and Bodies', part of 'Being Human', Wellcome Collection, screenshot
https://wellcomecollection.org/events/Xa7QdhAAANlKv5rE   Accessed April 2020

I concluded from these insights that the factors identified through Sen's (2019) work did resonate within the world of worn alarm experience and the production of unintentional effects could play a role in the diconnect between need and effect.

2.2.7 A Serendipidously Convergent Conversation

Just before the March 2020 Covid lockdown, I had my last face to face scoping conversation. It was with Scottish Care, a body that represents independent social care organisations. It was to discuss their perceptions and perspective on worn alarms. However, the meeting plan took a different tack on two levels. Instead of meeting the Chief Executive as arranged, due to the pressures of their Covid commitments, their unbriefed Deputy CEO stood in at the last minute. The conversation kept veering uncontrollably towards jewellery instead of worn alarms, so eventually I just went with the flow and the conversation turned to famous older people with a love of jewellery wearing. My favourite was Queen Victoria and theirs was Iris Apfel. The Deputy CEO was wearing a layered, perspex cut out brooch of Iris Apfel (Figure 27) that they said frequently prompted public discussions about ageing when they wore it. They had bought it because they viewed Apfel as a positive icon in an ageist world and they admired her style and famous jewellery accessorisation skills. As we concluded the conversation they surmized that Apfel would never wear nor be associated with a worn alarm as the devices stigmatised wearers as old and infirm.

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 27: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of layered perspex brooch creating an image of Iris Apfel's face, maker unknown

This unexpected conversation gave me many serendipitous insights.

- wearing an object turns it into a tool that not only expresses and displays the wearer's philosophy on life but also, as depicted in the Hierocles Circle used by Langley (2018) (Figure 28), this situational wearing of jewellery is using it like a language, and just like words, worn objects can have a variety of meanings depending how they are used and who is the perceiver
- how lives are lived and connected is illustrated through worn objects, they are part of the act and process of connecting
- how someone wears an object is confidential to them but they have no control on how others interpret it, or may be affected when viewing it

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 28: Michelle Langley, 2018, Diagram depicting how we use our 'bling' to send messages, screenshot
https://theconversation.com/how-bling-makes-us-human-101094 Accessed June 2020

The conversation also made me consider what motivates a person to choose and wear jewellery?

I felt that although Queen Victoria and Iris Apfel were both famous people who loved wearing jewellery, they both used it differently during their lifetime.

I needed to consider this so I investigated and compared their use of jewellery.

I began by watching the film 'Iris' (Figure 29) about Apfel's life story.

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 29: , Albert Maysles, 2014, 'Iris', film opening title screen,

screenshot https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4157220 Accessed July 2020

And also researched the exhibition 'Iris Apfel: Rare Bird of Fashion' at New York Metropolitan Museum curated by Houy-Towner and Koda (Boman 2007) during which Apfel shared her philosophy and approach to life;

'It's always best to be yourself. For me, it's a tough balancing act. You have to care deeply and at the same time not give a damn. True style implies attitude, attitude, attitude. It's elusive, exclusive, ephemeral: therein lies its magic'

Boman, 2007, p. 31.

I then researched Queen Victoria's use of jewellery using multiple sources. She had both state and personal jewellery and, unusually for royal formal portraits, throughout her reign, she always wore both (Figure 30).

Images removed due to copyright

Figure 30: Portraits of Queen Victoria, screenshot

Queen Victoria's personal jewellery was mostly designed by her husband Albert, including her engagement ring. He often included rocks he had found on the estate at Balmoral or locks of their children's hair or baby teeth.

I used my sketchbook (Figure 31, 32 & 33) to consider and compare Apfel and Queen Victoria's use of jewellery.
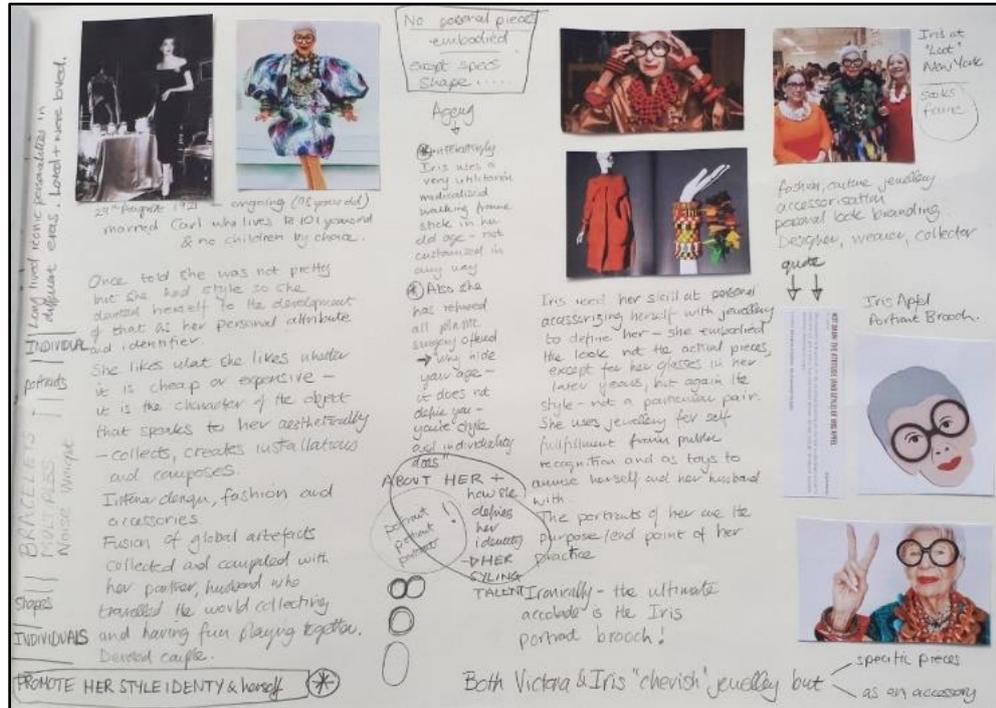
Figure 31: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of sketchbook page
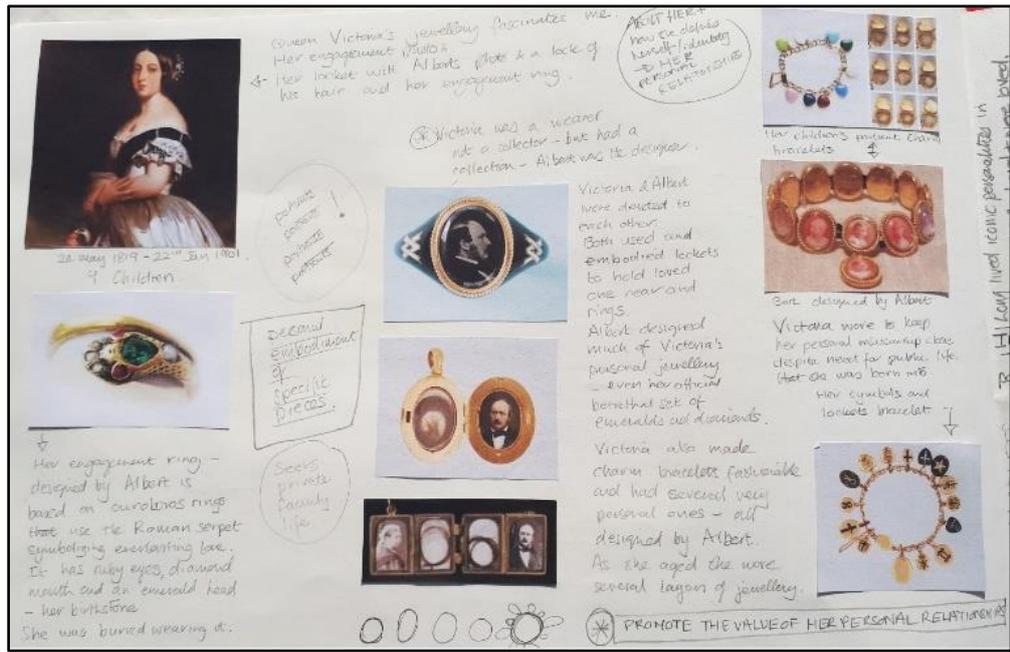
Figure 32: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of sketchbook page
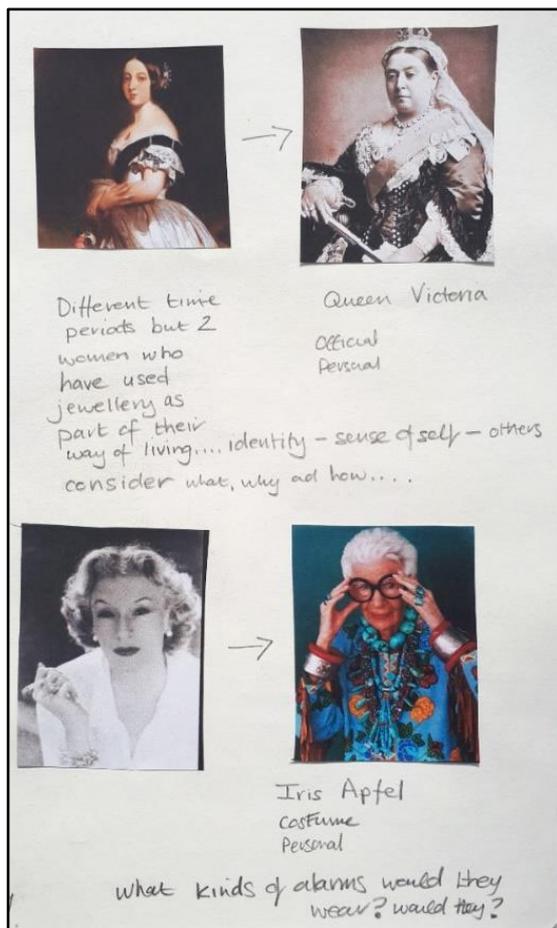
Figure 33: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of sketchbook page

This comparison gave me insight into how the two women's sense of self and emotional needs differed and influenced their use of jewellery

- Apfel's use of jewellery seems to be driven by her need for self fulfilment through fame. She uses her ability to iconically style herself to achieve this. As an artist she has become her own palette. The pieces of jewellery that she iconically wears are not personally precious pieces. For Apfel the personal value of jewellery wearing is the collective effect of it that she creates to exhibit her skills and create her persona

- Queen Victoria's use of jewellery seems to be driven by her need to be loved as a person, not just as a queen. She appears to have chosen to wear her personal pieces in portraits for two reasons; to both publically declare this and for ongoing personal connection to those she loved. Her personal pieces were precious to her and she wore them for solace and comfort to remind her of romantic and familial love until she died

From this comparison I concluded that

- the wearer's needs drive why and how they wear jewellery
- jewellery is deemed valuable if it fulfils a need
- wearing jewellery is a dynamic process which is where the similarities and relationship exists between jewellery and worn alarms

I therefore needed to dissect and understand this dynamic process to support a comparison. To achieve this I required a more comprehensive and in depth understanding of why and how people wear jewellery.

2.2.8. Discussing Jewellery with Mah Rana

'Meaning and Attachments', the ongoing work of Mah Rana (2001) intrigues me and during this research I realised why. I collect portraits of people wearing jewellery and try to analyse the wearers curated representation of themselves. Why did they choose to wear that piece of jewellery for that portrait? What does it say about them? (Figure 34).

Figure 34: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of vintage photographic portraits of jewellery wearing people from my collection

In 'Meaning and Attachments' Rana (2001) is doing the opposite; she takes a photographic portrait after the wearer has told her the story of their chosen piece of jewellery (Figure 35 & 36).

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 35: Rana, 2001, 'Meanings and Attachments', example 1 of participant's jewellery wearing portrait photo and testimonial, screenshot, https://meaningsandattachments.com Accessed April 2020

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 36: Rana, 2001, 'Meanings and Attachments', example 2 of participant's jewellery wearing portrait photo and testimonial, screenshot, https://meaningsandattachments.com Accessed April 2020

I felt that I needed to discuss Rana's work with her as it held 'contextual beads' that I sensed I needed to grasp to help me understand and also incorporate in my research design and methodology. I therefore made contact with her. We discussed our research and focused on her motivation, methodology and techniques. I discovered that she had never qualitatively analysed and never edits what she gathers, she just exhibits it. She does not want to interfere with the wearer's own words because it is about the wearers and the viewers, not her. The tag line for 'Meanings and Attachments,' is 'Jewellery is Life', which is captured in a button badge she has produced (Figure 37). This badge is the only form of analysis and conclusion about her body of work that she has produced.

Figure 37: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of button badge, exhibition tag line, Rana, 2001, 'Meanings and Attachments'

The potency of jewellery and how wearers embody meaning and preciousness is what motivates and fascinates Rana and drives her to collect and archive people's portraits and testimonials. She does this by putting out an open public invitation to jewellery sharing events held in public spaces and people always come, which still amazes her. She meets them, they show her their piece, discuss it, then she photographs them with it (Figure 38).

Image removed due to copyright

Then she gives them an A4 sheet of paper with one request and a few prompts (Figure 39)

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 39: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of sample testimonial question sheet used by Rana in 'Meanings and Attachments' 2001 onwards

Then, as an event progresses, Rana prints off portraits and displays them alongside the wearers A4 text (Figure 40).

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 40: Rana 2001, 'Meanings and Attachments' pop-up exhibition
https://meaningsandattachments.com Accessed April 2020

After events she archives all participant's data on the 'Meaning and Attachments' website,
where the portraits and statements are able to be publicly viewed.

Given her expertise and experience in discussing stranger's jewellery with them I asked her for advice and tips. Her reply was that she was always present in a conversation with someone about their jewellery and was respectful since, although the participants chose to and loved discussing their jewellery, it is a privilege to be chosen and trusted by them.

Considering Rana's work and discussing it with her gave me multiple insights into the process and technique of collecting data on jewellery wearing experiences, but the most significant insight was the realisation that her work captured multiple examples of the dynamic process that creates an experience of jewellery wearing. Therefore, I could dissect her data on the website to help me understand this process further, which would enable me to consolidate emerging objectives and the design for my field work methodology.

2.2.9 Where is the Boundary between Functionally Worn Objects and Jewellery?

Since I began this research, the question 'where is the boundary between functionally worn objects and jewellery?' had re-emerged intermittently, along with 'why and how does a worn object get labelled and used by a wearer as jeweller?'

During Luminate, a festival of art about ageing in Glasgow, I attended a lecture and exhibition by a professor of archaeology (Finlay, 2022). The presentation was about her archaeological mapping of a collection of labelled and stored artifacts laid out within a studio in the home of an artist who was also an archaeologist, after the owner's death following dementia (Figure 41).

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 41: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of archaelogical, table top mapped artefacts by Nyree Finlay (2022), 'Archaeological Housework'

Finlay's (2022) process revealed that, as the person's dementia had progressed, they had continued their skillful application of archaeological procedure to sort, classify and group what was a mixed collection of their archeological and domestic artefacts. It was, in effect, a collection of objects that only the person who created it could explain. To the archeologist though, the way these objects were laid out demonstrated both a process and objects that the deceased had cherished.

This lecture led me to reflect that any object can become precious if there is a process that creates emotional value. I therefore wondered, could a worn functional object become described as jewellery? And if so, then what is the term jewellery actually describing?

The lecture also made me think of a old biscuit tin at home, full of odd functional bits and bobs that my Mum had collected over the years because they were potentially too useful to throw away and now, as time had progressed, have also become precious (Figure 42).

Figure 42: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of Mum's biscuit tin full of collected functional household objects

I needed to investigate both the process and materiality of creating preciousness and the boundary between worn functional objects and jewellery. Therefore, inspired by the items in the biscuit tin I created a small collection of precious metal-based objects entitled 'Precious Pocket Objects' (Figure 43)

Figure 43: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, 'Precious Pocket Objects', collection of wearable objects, precious metal and mixed media

I then exhibited the collection at an Ernst & Young, GSA Innovation Showcase Event (Figure 44) which created an opportunity for me to explore using jewellery to provoke

discussions with the public and to investigate materiality, preciousness and functional/jewellery boundaries.
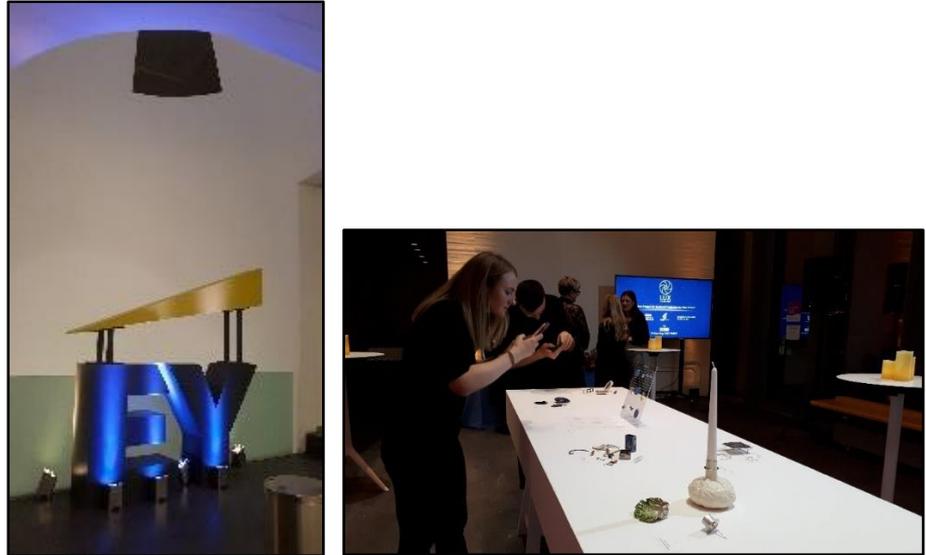
Figure 44: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photos taken at Ernst & Young, GSA Innovation Showcase Event, Reid Building, The Glasgow School of Art

The 'Precious Pocket Debris' objects enabled me to rapidly open up intimate, confidential conversation spaces that empowered people to discuss and share deeply personal and moving experiences with me about their most precious, personal pieces of jewellery, even though I was a complete stranger. One object in particular, 'Alan's Pencil' (Figure 45) instigated a particularly moving conversation, shared in confidence, about an object that an attendee was prominantly wearing, which looked at odds with their atire and the context of the event. It was an everyday wearable functional object which had been gifted many years before by a now deceased loved one and had since become cherished and symbolical, worn daily. It was now regarded as a more valuable wearable than all other precious metal or bejewelled wearable objects they owned. This encounter reinforced several previous insights I had gathered about jewellery wearing but, it significantly highlighted for me that

- meaning and preciousness is created and curated by the wearer
- aesthetics, types of materiality and financial value are irrelevant in terms of preciousness

- both the value and how worn objects are labelled is confidential to the wearer

Figure 45: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, 'Alan's Pencil', lapel buttonhole,

precious metal, wood and graphite

I was aware that other jewellers, including Su-san Cohn (1989) in 'Security Pass, Access all Areas' (Figure 46), have explored the concept of preciousness and functionality through their work. But Cohn's work 'Meaningless' (2019), which explored Danish legislation that proved to be unenforceable, as it authorised border authorities to confiscate 'non-sentimental' meaningless jewellery from asylum seekers to subsidize the cost of their upkeep in the country, provided an illuminating applied example of this concept.

Image removed due to copyright

Figure 46: Su-san Cohn, 1989, 'Security Pass', brooch, mixed media, National Gallery of Victoria, screenshot

https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/work/77233/   Accessed April 2020

From my exploration of where the boundary lies between functional objects and jewellery I concluded firstly, that any worn object can become labelled as either/both precious or jewellery, irrespective of whether it has a functional purpose or not; labelling an object's role is within the wearer's jurusdiction. Secondly, I realised during the Ernst & Young, GSA Innovation Showcase Event, that in this research, jewellery was not only acting as a comparator for worn alarms but also, methodologically, it was conceptually assuming a boundary object like role.

2.2.10 Summary of Contextual Scoping Insights

Although the relevance of many aspects of pre-field work scoping continually emerged as the research progressed, at the stage of designing my methodology I was guided by the following contextual insights that had already emerged

- wearing jewellery and personal alarms is situational and relational
- both men and women perceive that they wear jewellery
- the perception is that the act of wearing jewellery produces feelings of contentment whilst that of wearing a personal alarm induces feelings of discontentment for some
- the feeling induced and associated with wearing an object influences the frequency, when, how and if it is worn
- those who possessed a worn personal alarm, and those who felt they could soon be perceived as needing one, were reluctant to discuss alarm wearing experiences, but, during the same conversations, would often openly discuss wearing of a piece of jewellery that was related to illness, incapacity and loss
- even though a piece of jewellery was associated with difficult times such as loss, separation and illness, it was still cherished and worn, used as a portal to selectively reveal and discuss feelings

- in the case of a personal alarm, the response of some is either not to wear it or to hide it so it cannot be seen or discussed

- wearers used emotionally 'difficult' pieces of jewellery to contribute to the creation of their resilience; the ability to function despite the presence of adversity, loss or trauma

- jewellery acts as a conduit to create an intimate, emotional conversation space that people like and use to discuss personal experiences, whereas worn personal alarms have the opposite effect

- the emotional experiences of wearing jewellery and personal alarms have similarities and differences therefore their comparison could produce insight and understanding into why and how wearing an object affects emotional being

The research question that arose from these insights was 'why and how does wearing an object affect the emotional state of being?'.

Chapter Three:

Stage 2 Analysing Semi-structured Interviews

3 Stage 2 Analysing Semi-structured Interviews

Figure 47: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of data immersion,
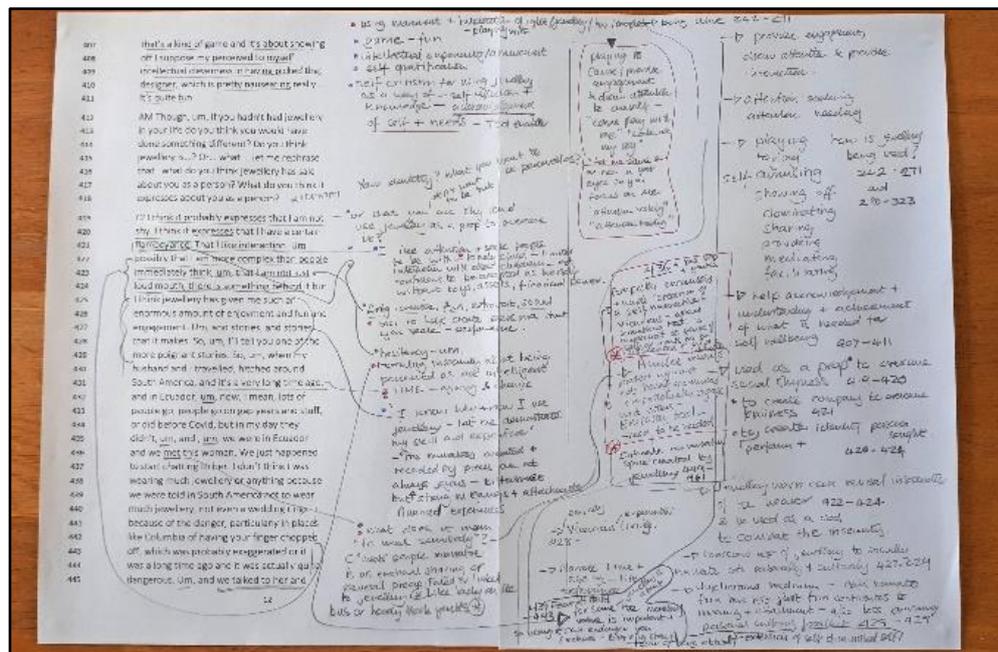
familiarisation and transcription process

Figure 48: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of process creating data fragments

and open coding
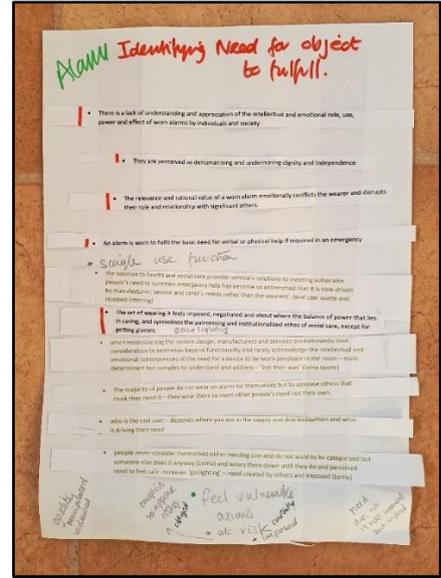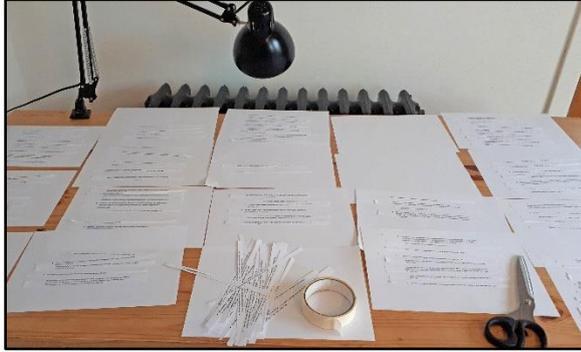
Figure 49: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of process creating axial codes

Chapter Four:

Stage 2 Semi-structured Interview Results

4 Stage 2 Semi-structured Interview Results

4.1 Jewellery Expert's (P1) Data Fragment Open Codes

A) Jewellery

- the relevance and value of a piece of jewellery arises from why and how it 'locates' them
- jewellery is
    - a personal device used to locate 'self' relative to place, time, events, relationships, mood
    - worn to fulfil a need
    - a friend and ally; portable, accessible and always on your side
- jewellery can be
    - used as a social facilitator
    - create situations
    - can affect a viewer's state of being
- the wearer can perceive it as a secret physical, emotional and social tool in multiple everyday situations that only they know exists and what its abilities and powers are, as well as how and when to use it
- it has a fairy tale quality; escape and transiently experience other worlds
- meaning is inherent in the act of wearing a piece of jewellery and is relative, situational and fluid
- jewellery has the potential to make new stories
- you can feel happy or conflicted whilst wearing jewellery but the feeling that lingers afterwards can best be described as contentment or fulfilment
- the wearing of jewellery is a process which ceases when the effect of wearing it is achieved or it ceases to contribute to contentment
- the frequency and length of a wearing cycle depends on the need and effect of the experience on the wearers state of being
- the piece of jewellery selected depends on the need that provoked engagement with it, the intrinsic meaning embedded in the piece and the situation that it will be used in
- wearing or engaging with an object perceived as jewellery positively contributes to emotional resilience and wellbeing

- jewellery can be used expressively to share needs, thoughts, emotions, values and stories
- a jewellery viewer can use jewellery to stereotype wearers and some wearers use jewellery for this purpose
- jewellery can become an extension of 'self'
- there is a lack of understanding and appreciation of the intellectual and emotional role, use, power and benefits of jewellery for and by individuals and society
- jewellery is like emotional currency; shareable and transferable
- the emotional value of jewellery to the wearer is related to the 'locational' meaning not material value
- understanding the medium of jewellery and how to use it can benefit wellbeing and improve the quality of life

B) Worn Alarm Experience

- an alarm is worn to fulfil the basic need for verbal or physical help if required in an emergency
- a worn alarm has a single help function and is intended to provide a sense of security for the wearer
- you cannot make them unique or playful, the only meaning is depressing
- its ability to locate 'self' is limited and relative to home, stage of life, potential events and anonymous relationships
- the relevance and rational value of a worn alarm emotionally conflicts the wearer and disrupts their role and relationship with significant others
- they are perceived as dehumanising and undermining dignity and independence
- its omnipresence is exhausting, frightening and unsettling
- it has a prisoner like, subjugating quality that the wearer can't escape from
- the feeling that lingers after wearing it can best be described as discontentment, it is a relief to take it off
- meaning is inherent in the act of wearing; old age is feared and people resent becoming the symbol of incapacity and loss by wearing one
- they affect the viewer and are socially stigmatizing, emasculating, infantilizing and degrading

- the act of wearing it feels imposed, negotiated and about where the balance of power is in caring, and symbolises the patronising and institutionalized ethos of social care, except for getting glasses
- the perception of others that a worn alarm is needed combined with the experience of wearing one negatively, rather than positively, effects the wearer's state of being
- no alternative systems are offered
- it becomes an imposed extension of 'self'
- wearing an alarm does not promote/create positive opportunities for conversation nor facilitate a positive public discussion about old age and incapacity
- there is a lack of understanding and appreciation of the intellectual and emotional role, use, power and effect of worn alarms by individuals and society
- the emotional value of a worn alarm to the wearer is related to the 'locational' meaning not material value
- understanding the unintended consequences of worn alarms and redesigning the system could benefit wellbeing and improve the quality of life

4.2 Worn Alarm Expert (P2) Additional Data Fragment Open Codes

A) Jewellery

- not being able to wear a piece of jewellery to meet an emotional need can cause distress
- jewellery reminds you how precious life is
- some jewellery has bittersweet but positive symbolism of endurance and resilience
- loosing personal jewellery is traumatic

B) Worn Alarm Experience

- the binary functionality and use of a red button in the worn alarm system gamifies and dichotomises the complexity of summoning help
- people never consider themselves old or needing one and do not want to be categorized but someone else does it anyway and wears them down until they do and perceived need to feel safe increases 'gaslighting' – need created by others and imposed

- who is the end user – depends where you are in the supply and distribution chain and what is driving their need?

- despite not personally ever wanting one and knowing that someone does not want one, carers and professionals still encourage and promote the use of a worn alarm

- the majority of people do not wear an alarm for themselves but to appease others that think they need it – they wear it to meet other people's need not their own

- worn alarms are not generally perceived by wearers as improving their quality of everyday life except when they start to feel constantly vulnerable and the wearing could play a role in this

- when reconsidering the system design, manufacturers and services predominantly limit consideration to aesthetics beyond functionality, and rarely acknowledge the intellectual and emotional consequences of the need for a device to be worn (elephant in the room)

- alarm wearing is validated and promoted when wearer is visited – authority

- eventually people will stop accepting them because they already have a wearable piece of technology that they can use instead which does lots of other things for them too, like their watch or phone

- people tend to wear them more after a crisis so wearing it just continually reminds them of the crisis and makes them feel edgy not safe

- providers feel conflicted personally and professionally because they know the feelings of clients and family members about wearing an alarm and how it affects them. Plus they themselves would not want to wear one and yet they promote them to fulfil their own needs

- both the personal and public's perception of people's aspirations, functionality and social engagement and connectedness in the 'old age' has changed

- older peoples use of technology has increased

- with technological evolution person centred, wearable, interactive, multi-use, confidential electronic devices are commercially available in the form of watches and phones

- the solution to health and social care provider service's solutions to meeting vulnerable people's need to summon emergency help has become so entrenched that it is now driven by manufacturer, service and carer's needs rather than the wearers

Chapter Five:

Stage 2 Evolution of Axial Codes

Between Interviews 1 and 4

5 Stage 2 Evolution of Axial Codes Between Interviews 1 and 4

5.1 Axial Codes Interview 1

- state of being and wellbeing
- identification of a need that a worn object could fulfil
- selecting a worn object because it has meaning that has potential to meet need
- wearing a selected object in the appropriate setting to produce the effect needed
- wearing an object produced the desired feeling
- the feeling produced by wearing an object affected the state of being

5.2 Axial Codes Interview 2

- assessing what current state of being is relative to eudaemonia
- identifying the needs that require a worn object
- selecting a worn object that has potential to meet the need
- curating and engaging with the worn object in an appropriate event
- awareness of experiencing a feeling generated by the worn object
- acknowledging and evaluating the feeling generated by the worn object

5.3 Axial Codes Interview 3

- how am I feeling just now?
- would wearing any object make me feel any better?
- which object should I choose to wear?
- when, where and how should I wear the object?
- how do I feel wearing the object?
- did wearing the object make me feel better?

5.4 Axial Codes Interview 4

- emotional state
- need
- object's meaning
- engagement
- effect
- actualisation

Chapter Six:

Stage 2 Conceptual Principles Emerging from Semi-structured Interviews

6 Stage 2 Conceptual Principles Emerging from Semi-structured Interviews

From the interview analysis, a core statement was inductively developed

> 'An object is willingly worn when its wearing is initiated by the wearer and there is a positive confluence of the object's meaning to the wearer and their motivational need inherent in the action of selecting it. And this, in turn, results in an improved sense of wellbeing, which takes them closer to eudaemonia and perpetuates their continued wearing of the object.'

This statement felt like emerging conceptual principles therefore, using the coded data, the development of a model to describe them was explored.

Chapter Seven:

Stage 2 Development of a Model

7 Stage 2 Development of a Model

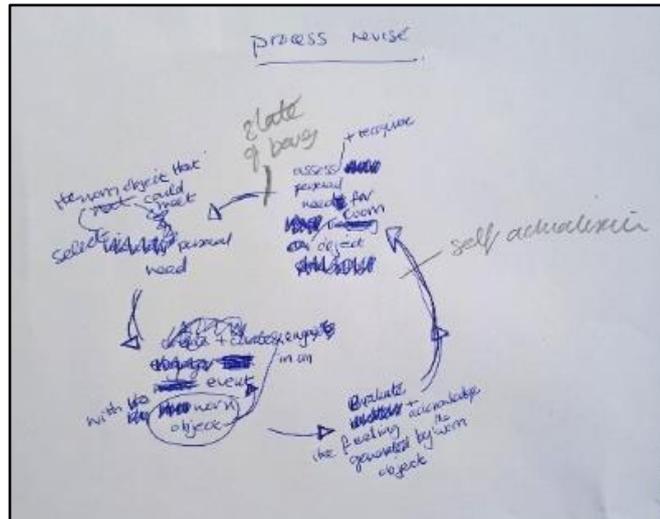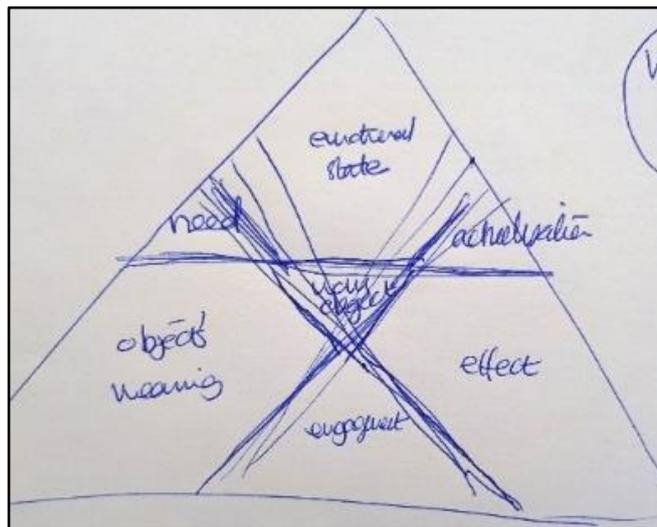Figure 50: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of starting the process of sketching out model

Figure 51: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of searching for form, layout and text for model
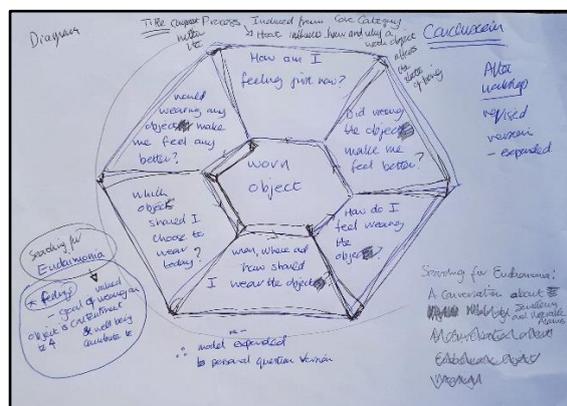

Figure 52: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Photo of finding form, layout and text for model
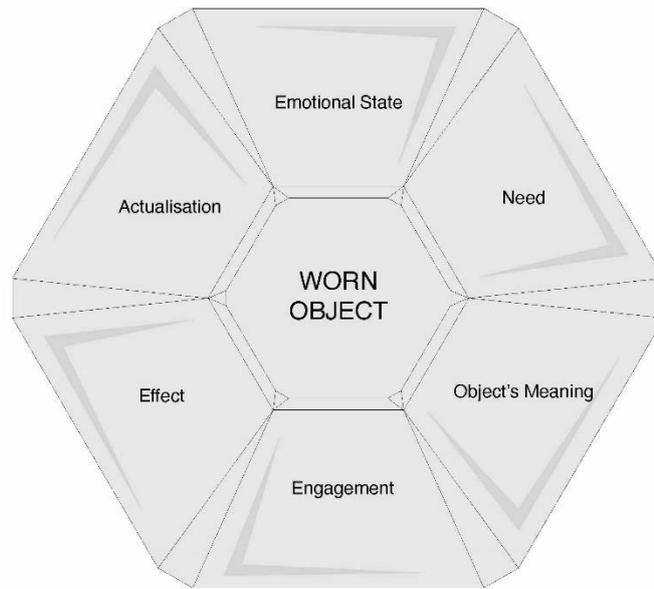
Figure 53: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, First resolution of the emerging model

Chapter Eight:

Using Jewellery Like a Boundary Object During a Pandemic

8 Using Jewellery like a Boundary Object During a Pandemic

During the pandemic I realised that to use jewellery like a boundary object in my methodology, I either had to use the participants' own jewellery shared and discussed on screen, or I had to devise a technique to physically share jewellery that did not pose any cross-infection risk.

8.1 Paper Replica Jewellery

While I had been creating a previous body of work, I had opportunistically observed how the effect of wearing a paper image of jewellery can provoke a strong emotional response, similar to an actual physical piece.

This observation had occurred when I was investigating handshake spaces (Figure 54). While I was creating this body of work my Dad asked if I would cast his handshake spaces with some of the guests at his 90th birthday party (Figure 55). I then cast these birthday handshakes in many different materials, planning to design a 'chain of office' styled neckpiece as a commemorative birthday gift. I selected the handshake spaces cast from bone-china clay (Figure 56) but I could not decide on a final neckpiece design. Therefore, I made various mock ups which I photographed, then selected and printed four real sized neckpieces pieces on paper and cut them out (Figure 56) for him to try on and choose which one he preferred.

Figure 54: Ailsa Morrant, 2017, Photo of creating a cast of a handshake space

Figure 55: Ailsa Morrant, 2017, Photos of creating a cast of a birthday party handshake

and bone china casts of handshake spaces

Figure 56: Ailsa Morrant, 2017, Photo of design option

for 'chain of office' neckpiece

Dad was looking forward to choosing a design, but as soon as he examined and put on the first mock up, he went very quiet and became rather sad. He remained thoughtful as he tried on and considered each mock up and I photographed them to help him choose afterwards. Then as he tried on the last one, he looked directly at me for the first time and smiled whilst saying 'It's been a good life'.

The photos taken had captured the changes in his expression during the session and I compiled a series for him. When we looked at them together and discussed the neckpieces and what had prompted them, we agreed on a different form of outcome.

The work instead became 'A Good Life' (Figure 57), a series of 4 photographs for him.

Figure 57: Ailsa Morrant, 2017, 'A Good Life', photo series

8.2. Replica Paper Worn Alarms

Sharing and discussing participant's own jewellery on screen during the interviews proved to be effective in terms of acting like a boundary object.

During the interviews though, only one participant had personal experience of alarm wearing and I wanted to gain more insight into this experience. However it proved difficult to acquire worn alarms to use with participants and investigate their experience. Even if I had acquired some, there was still the problem of physically sharing them during the pandemic. Therefore, using the effect observed in 8.1, I decided to pilot the wearing of a

paper replica alarm that could be cut out from a template emailed to participants (Figure 58) and used to investigate and share the affect of alarm wearing.

A pilot with Master of Research students and staff volunteers was successful. They found putting on the paper replica alarm was emotive. They said and demonstrated through discussion that it focused their imagination and thoughts on what it would personally mean and, emotionally as well as physically, feel like to wear an alarm.

Therefore, in my research fieldwork, when I conducted a workshop with worn alarm service providers, I successfully repeated this technique in one of the experiential sharing activity sessions.

Figure 58 : Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Emailed image of worn alarm to be cut-out and worn by workshop participants

Chapter Nine:

Reaching My Destination
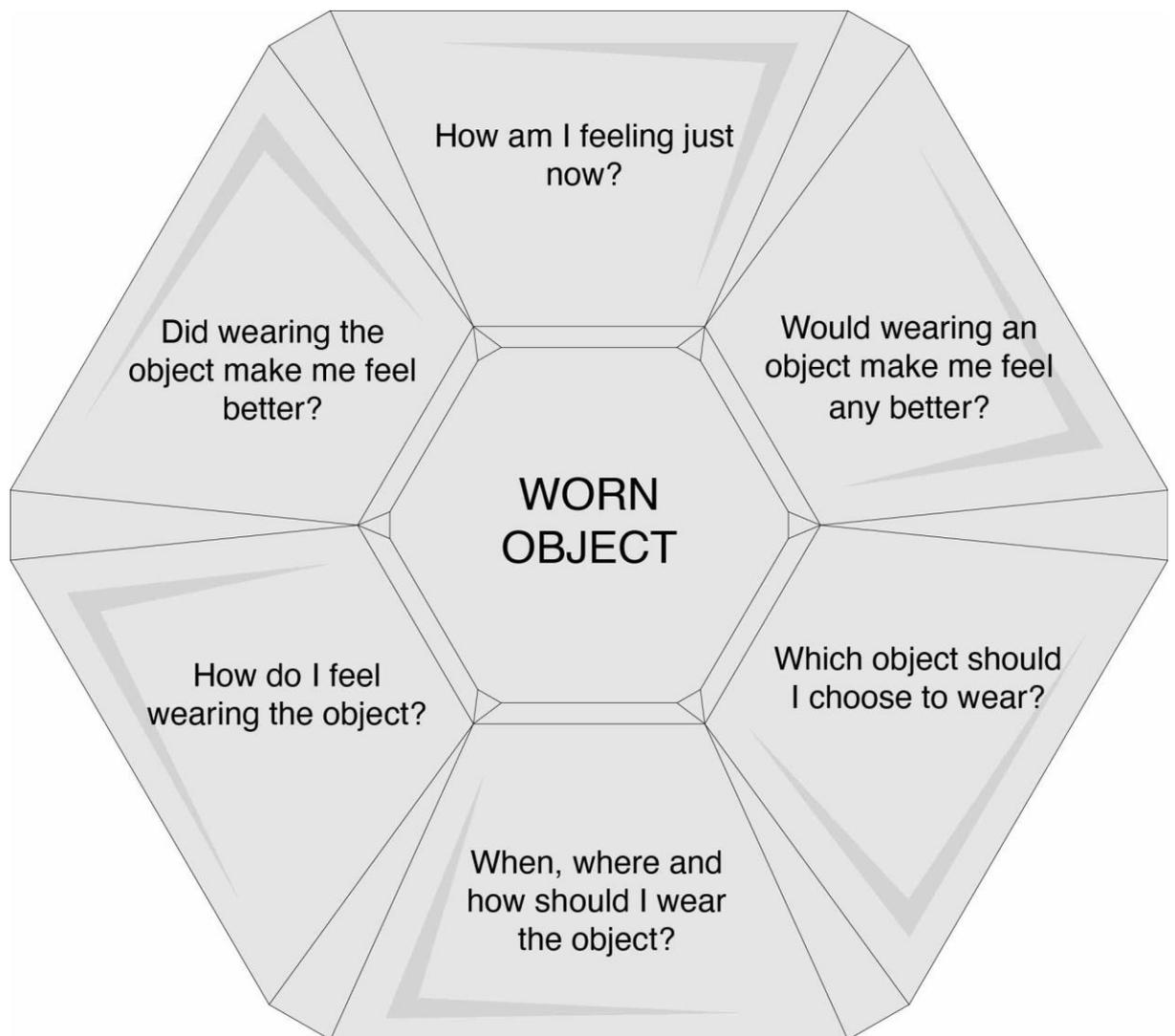
9 Reaching My Destination

Figure 59: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, Final model describing the dynamic, interactive parameters that influence why and how a worn object affects the emotional state of being.

I began my research journey with the instinctive notion that through a jeweller's lens I could somehow make sense of the emotional effect that my Dad had experienced when wearing an alarm and do so in a way that could help me understand, discuss and share the experience. Having completed the research, based on the emerging principles and

model proposed to describe why and how wearing an object affects the state of being, I am now able to do this and, in the process, describe two possible scenarios;

The first is that Dad did not emotionally need an alarm and it was the needs of others and the unintentional consequences of alarm wearing, identified in this research, that could have precipitated his emotional change through conflicting personal and social perceptions, as well as disruption or changes in existing relationships.

The second possible scenario is that Dad did have and acknowledged his emotional need to wear an alarm and the act of wearing it potentially precipitated a self-fulfilling state of perpetual, self-perceived vulnerability, where only transient relief occurred when the need for activating the worn alarm actually arose and help arrived. But then the cycle began again.

In both scenarios though, the wearing of an alarm had the potential to cause the effect he experienced. This effect was not due to aesthetics but the meaning inherent in the object and the act of wearing it.

This research has not only deepened my understanding and appreciation of the eudaemonic role that object wearing can have and the dynamic process that underpins it, but has also done so in a way that I can use and discuss with others, potentially in a range of settings, not just for jewellery or alarm wearing.

Figure 60: Ailsa Morrant, 2020, 'Eternal Connection', handshake space

cast in precious metal

Chapter Ten:

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