Campaign to EndLoneliness

Report: Summary of academic perspectives on loneliness for the Film and TV Charity

Dr. John Ratcliffe, *Sheffield Hallam University*

Prof. Andrea Wigfield, *Sheffield Hallam University*

Dr. Anna Topakas, *University of Sheffield*

Acknowledgements: *David Steele, Rupert Jones-Lee, Yahya Barry, Nicky Davidson, Lucy Maxwell*

Sheffield Hallam University | Centre for Loneliness Studies

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS FILM + TV CHARITY

Executive Summary

The Film and TV Charity's 2022 Mind-Craft Report outlined evidence to suggest that loneliness is the biggest influence on poor mental health for people working behind-the-scenes in the sector.

In response, and as part of the Charity's ongoing work to address the film and TV industry's mental health crisis, it is conducting further research to try and understand why experiences of loneliness in the industry are so pervasive and what the possible remedies might be.

As part of this research the Film and TV Charity commissioned the Centre for Loneliness Studies at Sheffield Hallam University to produce this report. It is a summary of academic perspectives providing an overview of loneliness in terms of definitions, scholarly approaches, potential risk factors and remedies, and their relevance to the film and TV industry.

The report comes at a time when there is growing global concern around the impacts of loneliness on public health. The World Health Organisation recently declared that loneliness was a pressing global health threat and launched a new commission on social connection to scale up solutions in countries of all incomes. [1]

Despite this growing concern, relatively little research has been conducted in the field of 'workplace loneliness.' However, the evidence that does exist suggests loneliness can reduce workers' creativity, performance and work engagement, suggesting there are negative impacts for businesses too. The Co-op and New Economics Foundation estimate the cost of loneliness to UK employers at £2.5 billion a year (Co-Op and New Economics Foundation 2017.)

Within this growing field of study, sectors such as the film and TV industry that are characterised by precarious employment and reliance on a freelance workforce have been largely overlooked. This report aims to contribute to this body of research by highlighting the specific characteristics of the film and TV industry that may exacerbate loneliness. It suggests that temporary work, excessive workloads and long working hours, are among the factors that may pose barriers to forming and maintaining relationships.

[1] WHO launches commission to foster social connection

The report proposes that the competition inherent in freelance work (on which the industry relies heavily) may also create barriers to forming positive relationships. Informal recruitment practices are additionally commonplace in film and TV. This means that people network for reasons of professional advancement and even professional survival, in a manner which is potentially in conflict with forming meaningful relationships.

Not everyone is impacted equally. The report suggests that opportunities for meaningful interactions and social support could be less common for people who face identity-related barriers and marginalisation in the sector. Ethnicity, social class and wealth, age, sexual orientation, sex/gender, and physical ability are highlighted and discussed in this report as characteristics that may result in individuals experiencing different causes and levels of loneliness, as well as different outcomes.

The report also explores the idea that industry workers' creative roles might be strongly linked to their identity. This raises the possibility that career progress (or lack of) may undermine a person's sense of identity or self-worth, which can be an experience linked to loneliness.

The report concludes that The Film and TV Charity's existing wellbeing offer could be adapted to be more effective at tackling loneliness – by addressing stigma, providing networking opportunities, enabling peer support and social prescribing (i.e. connecting people with non-clinical community initiatives that promote social connections), and creating a sense of 'belonging'. Numerous additional recommendations are also made throughout and summarised in the concluding section.

As noted above the concept of 'workplace loneliness' is still relatively new and there is little research to date examining loneliness in the film and TV sector. Therefore, there are inherent limitations to this report and its conclusions. The Film and TV Charity intends to address some of these limitations by conducting further qualitative research into industry workers' experiences of loneliness to help inform future policy.

1. Introduction

This report provides a narrative summary of academic perspectives on loneliness and explores the implications for the industry by addressing seven questions:

1. What is the 'state of play' in terms of understanding loneliness in a whole-of-life, social and psychological sense?
2. Why are people of certain demographics (e.g., young people, minoritised racial/ethnic groups) at heightened risk of loneliness?
3. What is the relationship between the psychological and social causes of loneliness, and are there ways of addressing both at the same time?
4. Does loneliness have workplace-related causes, and what do these look like in the film and TV industry?
5. How do social capital, community identification and social support (including peer support) impact on loneliness?
6. How important is removing the stigma around loneliness?
7. What best practice interventions could be applied to the film and TV industry?

The remainder of the report is structured as follows: Section 2 summarises academic differences and debates on how to understand loneliness. In doing so, it provides a foundation for understanding the 'state of play', the 'difference between psychological and social causes of loneliness', and relays how social capital, community identification, and social support, can matter to loneliness. Section 3 considers and discusses why people from particular groups may be more (or less) lonely, and further highlights how social capital, community identification, and inequalities may impact on loneliness. Section 4 narrows down the debates to focus on loneliness in the workplace, with a specific discussion of the film and TV industry. Section 5 presents and discuss ideas for what the Film and TV Charity could do about loneliness, then finally section 6 concludes by offering specific answers to the seven questions.

2. What is loneliness and why do we feel it?

This section explores loneliness from four different but interconnected perspectives: as a subjective lack of social relationships; from an evolutionary standpoint; from a philosophical perspective; and as a sociological interpretation. An additional sub-section warns that universal definitions of loneliness may not apply in real-life contexts. The section then concludes with a discussion of some common ground among the four perspectives, and a brief consideration of how the different perspectives help to answer the questions asked at the beginning of this report.

2.1 Loneliness as a subjective lack of social relationships

The most influential approach to defining loneliness over the last few decades has been placing it as a negative feeling resulting from a lack, or loss, of meaningful social relationships (Townsend 1957; Perlman and Peplau 1987; Cattan et al. 2005). It can be experienced when there is an imbalance between *actual* and *desired* relationships (Maes et al 2019), or when people perceive their relationships to be poorer (in quality or quantity) than their peers (Perlman and Peplau (1981). These writers contrast loneliness with 'social isolation', an objective count of the number of social contacts a person has. Within this approach people can be surrounded by others (i.e., not socially isolated) but still feel lonely, or can be socially isolated (i.e., have a low number of social contacts) but not feel lonely.

This perspective has also resulted in the identification of different 'types' of loneliness, which usually refer to different kinds of relationships an individual feels they lack. The most widely recognised are 'social' and 'emotional' loneliness, the former being the 'absence of an engaging social network', and the latter the 'absence of a close emotional attachment' (Weiss 1973, p18-19). Statistical measures have been developed to measure loneliness, with those most widely used including measurements of both social and emotional loneliness. The most common validated measures include: the De Jong-Gierveld scale (De Jong-Gierveld and Tilburg 2010); the UCLA scale (Russel et al 1984); and the social-emotional loneliness scale (DiTommaso and Spinner 1993).

2.2 Evolutionary perspectives

This perspective frames loneliness as a neurological reaction rooted in an evolved human need to work collectively (Cacioppo et al. 2003; Cacioppo and Patrick 2008; Cacioppo and Cacioppo 2018). It views loneliness as a signal to people to fix their social situation and to seek out people to connect with, and so not as a problem in the short term. However, if left unresolved it can result in serious mental and physical health problems. Numerous authors have linked this to negative spirals. Cacioppo and

Hawkley (2005) describe how socially isolated individuals can become lonely, and develop negative perceptions of themselves and others, rendering loneliness worse. Other mental health issues may also lead to loneliness. According to Kawachi and Berkman (2001), a depressed person is more likely to isolate themselves, thus increase the likeliness of becoming lonely.

2.3 Philosophical perspectives

The key tenet of philosophical approaches is that loneliness is an inherent feature of our own nature as individuals (Mijuskovic 1979; Moustakas 2016). It is a 'universal human characteristic, inborn in all persons and not related to object loss or lack of intimate relationships' (Bekhet et al. 2008, p208). This approach contrasts the word loneliness which has negative connotations, to the word 'solitude' which can be a neutral or positive experience (Nilsson et al. 2008). For Arednt (1973), solitude is space for introspection and critical thought, therefore vital for a functioning society. Loneliness, on the other hand, is the loss of trust in both oneself and others, thus can lead to or result from conspiracy theories and totalitarianism. More recently, a government White paper also separated the concept of 'solitude' as a positive term, from 'loneliness' as a negative concept (Jones et al. 2023). Many authors taking this philosophical perspective suggest that though loneliness can be painful, it can also be vital for intellectual growth and creative pursuits (Moustakas 1961; 2016; Bekhet et al. 2008; Nilsson et al. 2008).

2.4 Sociological perspectives

Sociological perspectives emphasise the social conditions that facilitate loneliness. Franklin et al. (2019) define non-loneliness as 'belongingness' and emphasise that belonging can depend on what is normal and expected in an individual's environment. Wilkinson (2022, p31) goes further, and criticises many current approaches for presenting an overly biomedical approach that cannot account for the 'wider mechanisms that condemn people to lonely lives'. Ratcliffe (2022) attempts to integrate sociological approaches with more 'biomedical' approaches by arguing that loneliness represents a mental state negotiated via the social world. This can be understood as a person's sense of 'social worth' (Ratcliffe et al 2021). Though these writers vary somewhat, the crux is that they emphasise loneliness is often determined by wider societal issues (Wigfield et al. 2022).

2.5 A warning on interpretation

As the differences in these perspectives suggest, 'loneliness' may not mean the same thing to everyone, and certainly cannot be tackled in the same way for all. For instance, despite the negative connotations of loneliness, a large BBC survey found that 41% of 55,000 respondents stated that

loneliness can be positive (BBC Radio 4 2018). Furthermore, people may attribute different types of emotions to 'loneliness'. For example, Rokach (2001) concluded that, compared to North Americans, Croatians were relatively unlikely to say they are lonely because they attributed negative emotions to the war (which they had recently experienced), rather than to loneliness. These different interpretations of the term loneliness often become apparent when carrying out surveys of loneliness and when using the loneliness scales (previously referred to) as a quantitative measurement. Some of the terms relating to belonging and feeling left out which are used in the De Jong-Gierveld and UCLA scales, for example, have different meanings to people from different cultures and BAME backgrounds (British Red Cross 2018). Jylhä and Saarenheimo (2010) make similar points about the use of such scales to measure loneliness, arguing that they force respondents to answer according to the researcher's definition of loneliness. They suggest that simply asking whether the respondent is lonely is preferable. However, asking 'directly' in this way can underestimate loneliness in some groups due to the associated stigma, for example in men (Ratcliffe et al. 2020). This is why the UK Government's recommendation is to use the UCLA scale plus an additional question about how often people feel lonely (HM Government 2018).

2.6 Which perspective best helps us understand loneliness?

Defining loneliness as a subjective lack of social relationships is effective at understanding how a person can be socially isolated but not lonely, and vice-versa. Evolutionary perspectives offer insight on the neurology of loneliness and show how social isolation can be a pathway to loneliness. Philosophical perspectives have been useful for understanding the positive or neutral components of loneliness, particularly for creative and intellectual pursuits. Sociological perspectives show how loneliness is deeply bound in a person's interactions with the social world, and how it is impacted by cultural and political factors. Nevertheless, there are four consistent features across all four perspectives:

1. Loneliness is a personal experience borne from the social world.
2. Meaningful interactions, and social connections, are important to its prevention.
3. Cultural and political context can frame whether and why people may feel lonely.
4. Loneliness is strongly linked to other forms of poor mental health (such that it can both lead to, and result from, other mental health problems).

The sociological perspectives are particularly useful for answering how 'social capital' and 'community identification' can impact loneliness. Social capital can provide opportunities for building

and maintaining positive relationships and may facilitate self-confidence that can further such opportunities (Ratcliffe 2023). 'Community identification' can help a person to feel they 'belong' in their environment. 'Social support' and 'peer support' both imply situations in which an individual is benefiting from social interactions, thus suggest a person who does not feel they lack meaningful social relationships. Contrasting evolutionary perspectives with the sociological can help understand differences between psychological and social causes of loneliness. The latter emphasises cultural and political conditions giving rise to loneliness, and the former indicates a neurological condition linked to poor social relationships (or at least the perception of them). Vitally, though, as Ratcliffe (2023) explicitly argues, and most authors imply, the two are not separate. Rather, the psychological state of an individual is negotiated within the social world.

3. Why might some demographic groups be lonelier?

This section looks at why people of certain demographics seem to be at heightened risk of loneliness. As loneliness is a feeling borne out of a person's interactions with their social world, factors such as cultural norms, values, contexts, economies, inequalities, and social capital can all determine how individuals perceive and experience it. Furthermore, people regardless of their demographic characteristics tend to be at heighted risk of loneliness at certain life transition points (Wigfield et al, 2022), including retirement, bereavement (Alpass and Nevill 2003), starting University (Vasileiou et al. 2019). Changing contexts can impact people differently too. In recent times, the Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on people's social interactions. This section briefly discusses how loneliness can differ according to ethnicity, age, social class, sexual orientation, sex/gender, and physical ability, before discussing the impact of Covid-19. Where possible, each sub-section briefly considers the demographic group within the Film and TV industry. However, it is vital to recognise that this is not a systematic review, and what is written here should not be taken to mean that specific groups are definitively lonelier, that these are deterministic situations where everyone of a group is lonely, or as comprehensive guides on risk factors for loneliness according to demographics.

3.1 Ethnicity and loneliness

Recent statistics on which UK ethnic groups are lonelier are not consistent. A government report (HM Government 2022) found that ethnicity did not predict loneliness, Khan et al. (2022) found African-Caribbean and Asian groups to be much lonelier during Covid, and the Mind-Craft report (2022) found White-British respondents were loneliest. This variability cannot be fully discussed here, but some contextual factors can be identified. In Ratcliffe et al (2022), British-Asian men relayed that they had

better community and family ties than White British populations, which prevented loneliness. Others writing on the subject have argued the opposite, that the extended family culture amongst some ethnicity groups can lead to greater loneliness as individuals can be surrounded by family that they do not have meaningful relationships with (British Red Cross 2018). Galdas et al. (2007) also found less stigma towards help-seeking behaviour amongst some minoritised groups, which could theoretically aid social support. However, racism can itself be a cause of loneliness (Gillard et al 2020), and a British Red Cross report (2018) found people from minoritised communities often feel less able to access community activities and support. Furthermore, in a white-dominated sphere like the film and TV industry, it may be difficult for minoritised groups to feel they belong.

3.2 Age and loneliness

This report focuses on people of working age, who, in many studies, are the least lonely age group (Victor and Yang 2012; Barreto et al. 2021). The loneliest age groups are reported to be young adults aged 18-24 and older people (65+) (Victor and Yang 2012). Though it is currently unclear whether the increase in loneliness amongst young adults following Covid-19 will remain throughout their life-course, evidence suggests that proportions of people who feel lonely has remained fairly constant over time (Victor and Bowling 2012). Reasons for greater loneliness in younger age groups may be due to greater rejection anxiety (Watson and Nesdale 2012) and, particularly in young males, reduced likeliness of being in a romantic relationship (Knox et al. 2007). Research on age and loneliness in workplaces is limited, but Firoz et al. (2021), albeit in India, found that that the older a working person is, the less loneliness they display, and theorise this is due to greater job security and networks.

3.3 Social class, wealth, and loneliness

Recent studies have generally placed poorer people, and people of lower social class, as more likely to be lonely (Niedzwiedz et al. 2016; HM Government 2022). Reasons could be that money can bring opportunities for meaningful interaction (Wigfield et al. 2022), that building and maintaining relationships is harmed by financial anxiety (Zaleskiewicz and Gasiorowska 2016), and that living in higher crime areas can harm trust in other people (Wigfield et al 2022). Aust (2020) argues that the film and TV industry is predominantly middle class, with a high number of Oxbridge graduates, and that this can facilitate a sense of uncertainty and exclusion both psychologically and in terms of career development for workers with lower socioeconomic status.

3.4 Sexual orientation and loneliness

Numerous studies have found that LGBTQ+ people are lonelier than the general population (Elmer et al. 2020). McAndrew and Warne's (2010) notion of a 'loneliness of outsiderness' in predominantly heterosexual spheres encapsulates a key theoretical reason for this. Rejection from families may be a particularly strong driver of loneliness in LGBTQ+ people (DeChants et al. 2022).

3.5 Sex/gender and loneliness

A review by Ratcliffe et al. (2020) suggested differences according to sex vary according to marital status and the type of measurement tool used. Generally, single men are lonelier than single women, whereas married women are more lonely than married men, suggesting men benefit more from marriage, and struggle more without it. When examining measurement tools, men tend to be less lonely when responding to 'direct' survey questions (such as 'how often are you lonely?'), have similar levels of loneliness to women when using the UCLA scale, and score as slightly lonelier when using the De Jong-Gierveld scale. This may be due to a masculine disinclination to state loneliness directly, and a greater male tendency to show 'social' loneliness. Different cultures, however, may not show the same context. A report for Unilever (Wigfield et al. 2021) highlighted a high prevalence of loneliness in women in India, Indonesia and Mexico, and a need for public education against 'toxic positivity' that facilitated a barrier to meaningful connections.

Job insecurity and demanding, yet inconsistent, hours in the Film and TV industry may result in greater difficulties for women. Cannizzo and Strong (2020) interviewed Australian screen composers and found women had to work harder to succeed, therefore higher-level women had a sometimes-problematic reliance on work to fulfil emotional and social needs. They also suggest the precariousness of the work could have negative impact on women who take time off for child-rearing and caring purposes. This precariousness may also prevent 'whistleblowing' (Van Raalte et al. 2023), which may be a problem for people's social relationships in an industry that has seen numerous high-profile cases of sexual abuse.

3.6 Physical ability and loneliness

Studies into loneliness and physical ability tend to find people with reduced physical abilities are at greater risk of loneliness (MacDonald et al. 2018). Reasons for this include reduced mobility and ability for social participation (Rokach 2006), social attitudes and expectations, opportunities and experiences, and social skill deficits (Gilmore and Cuskelly 2014), and structural barriers such as

difficulties finding employment (MacDonald et al. 2018). These barriers are all likely to be similarly applicable to people in the Film and TV industry.

3.7 Covid

Many studies showed an increase in loneliness during the Covid-19 pandemic (Bu et al. 2020). Women (Jones et al. 2021; Wickens et al. 2021), Black-British (Gillard et al. 2021), and 'extroverted' people (Folk et al. 2020) were found to be more at risk. Reasons for loneliness during Covid may be a result of a loss of in-person interaction and freedoms (McKenna-Plumley et al. 2021). Conversely, some studies found evidence people who were at risk of health complications from Covid-19, or who supported the purpose of the restrictions, were not as negatively impacted (Kremers et al. 2021; Ratcliffe et al. 2022). In the film and TV industry, the 'Go West' report (Spicer et al. 2022) showed that in Bristol, the animation sector was much less impacted than the natural history, with freelancers and exhibition workers hit the hardest. Though this report did not show the impact on loneliness, the loss of reliable work and lack of financial protection for people in these sectors is likely to have had a proportionately greater impact on wellbeing.

4. Loneliness, workplaces, and the film and TV industry

This section primarily aims to answer question 4 - does loneliness have workplace-related causes, especially where conditions such as in the film and TV industries prevail? Wider studies of mental health overwhelmingly suggest poor in-work economic and social conditions have a serious negative effect on mental health (Richards and Sang 2019; Klug et al. 2021). However, the impact of the workplace on loneliness is, thus far, sparsely evidenced. Section 4.1 discusses the relatively recent concept of 'workplace loneliness', and workplace relationships in general, to introduce whether and how workplaces can play a role in people's feelings of loneliness. Section 4.2 looks at literature relating to the film and TV industry specifically and summarises the key challenges the industry faces in this context.

4.1 Workplace loneliness and relationships

The concept of 'workplace loneliness' refers to situations in which an employee feels alienated, isolated, or disconnected from other employees at work (Firoz et al 2020). Wright and Silard (2021) argue that it can be driven by three factors: a desire for relationships at work that is greater than a person's actual relationships; individual factors such as poor social skills and introverted personality;

and contextual factors such as whether there is a positive or toxic atmosphere, whether a person is marginalised, and/or whether a person is actively treated negatively. Ozcelik and Barsade (2018) also emphasise the negative impact of workplace loneliness on job performance, suggesting that tackling loneliness is as important for employers as it is for employees. Of particular relevance to the Film and TV industry, Firoz and Chaudhary (2021) found evidence that loneliness at work can result in negative creative performance. Encouraging evidence comes from research by Gabriel et al (2020), who show that when people respond with problem-focused cognitions, as opposed to emotion-focused contemplation, they are more likely to engage in behaviours such as helping and be more engaged with their work, which subsequently reduces their level of loneliness. They report that such positive thought patterns are more likely among people who have confidence in their own ability to perform in their work role.

Importantly, Pillemer and Rothbard (2018) note that four of the defining features of friendship are informality, voluntariness, supportiveness, and that they exist to foster emotional wellbeing. Workplace relationships, however, are formal, with involuntary constraints, give support alongside 'exchange' norms (i.e., require a form of trade), and ultimately exist within the parameters of the organisation. One way to facilitate workplace relations, according to Reina et al (2022) is to facilitate relationships that are more 'resource-giving' than 'resource-depleting'.

4.2 Loneliness in the film and TV industry

The film and TV industry is notable for its precarity, with freelancing, extreme disparities in weekly working hours, social injustice, and bullying relatively commonplace (Looking Glass 2021). In line with this, Zarate et al. (2022) found evidence of disproportionately high levels of poor psychological wellbeing and even suicidal behaviours in the entertainment industry. May et al. (2020) note that, for freelancers in the industry, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in employment loss, financial instability, and work conflict, leading to even worse psychological wellbeing. In the following sub-sections, two overarching features of the industry are linked to loneliness: difficulties maintaining meaningful social bonds, primarily due to the uneven workloads and precarious nature of the work; and identity and alienation, which refers to the extent of attachment and achievement to the work conducted.

4.2.1 Difficulties maintaining meaningful social bonds

One of the most obvious difficulties for workers in an industry with precarious work, that can also be intense and demanding, is that it is simply difficult to build and maintain relationships. Rowlands and Handy (2012, p669) attribute the following quote to a line producer in the New Zealand film industry:

'It can be quite hard when the job is finished, you do feel kind of let down . . . you've had these intense relationships . . . then suddenly you are ripped apart and when you haven't got the common bond of the job'

Aust (2020) emphasises a slightly different feature of freelancing – that it inherently includes a competitive component, which she suggests is also a barrier to positive relationships. Furthermore, though not referring specifically to the film and TV industry, Lain et al.'s (2020) notion of 'ontological precarity' argues that such working conditions result in a state of anxiety that is not conducive to building positive social relationships. Overall, as Rowlands and Handy (2012, p661) put it, 'global free-market economies undermine and fragment the complex social bonds that enable healthy human life, replacing them with increasingly competitive and individualized social structures'.

Potts et al. (2008) define creative industries as 'social network markets', i.e., industries where networking is key not just to success, but to survival. The 'Creative Majority' report (2021, p105) suggests that this means 'those who do not have connections to the industry, and those who cannot afford to work for free…are not only disadvantaged, but also can be read as not committed'. Though not explicitly discussed in the above papers, this means that social interactions are likely to be distorted by networking needs. For individuals with forms of social anxiety, who are neurodivergent, or who are simply struggling with their financial situation, this may result in social interaction, or a need to interact more, that is not focused on forming positive relationships, thus may facilitate further difficulties in forming the kind of relationships that can prevent loneliness.

4.2.2 Identity and alienation

In a report about the creative industry and local government, Gross et al (2021) note that the label 'creative' implies self-expression, imagination, and human connection. In reality, though, they argue it is often about economy, global competition, and developing urban spaces. Duarte (2020) notes that creative expression is a key motive for many artists, and it is reasonable to assume many in the film and TV industry feel this way. Indeed, he suggests that many individuals socially integrate most effectively by finding an occupation that fulfils both material and 'identity consolidation' needs. However, he suggests many artists are constrained by social conventions and profit motives, whilst expected to produce original and innovative work. In the film and TV industry, then, loneliness may ensue when a person does not feel sufficiently attached to their creative output, where 'creativity' becomes distorted by economic and political needs, or even when reviews or feedback are poor, because this undermines their identity. Carter and West (1998) looked at the mental health of BBC workers and found evidence in support of these theoretical stances. Specifically, they found the

presence of a number of factors associated with good mental health in a workplace environment, where: a team climate has a clear vision; it feels safe to contribute; tasks are clear; and innovation is supported.

5. What can be done about loneliness in the film and TV industry?

A review of existing literature demonstrates an absence of evaluations of interventions aimed at tackling loneliness in the industry, other than those conducted by the Film and TV Charity. However, many intervention studies on loneliness in a more general context have been conducted, including a number of systematic reviews (studies that systematically collate and combine the work of different authors). Nevertheless, there are some caveats associated with these studies. Until recently, a high percentage of work on loneliness has been focused on older people (Kantar Public 2017), rendering much work relatively inapplicable to the film and TV industry. Furthermore, Cacioppo et al. (2015) noted that more academically rigorous statistical evaluations tend to display smaller positive effects, suggesting some caution may need to be applied when examining loneliness interventions.

Perhaps most importantly, though, conclusive patterns on what is required for interventions to be effective are yet to be identified. Additionally, intervention studies tend to review the efficacy of a specific service, therefore have not explored the impact of job security, working hours, social injustice, work dissonance, etc (May et al. 2020; Looking Glass 2021; Zarate et al. 2022). Nevertheless, there are a wealth of interventions and ideas out there which the Film and TV Charity may be able to learn from. Section 5.1 relays and discusses broader loneliness interventions, looking at what has worked in other contexts, and discussing the possible application to the film and TV industry. Section 5.2 turns to some recommendations that have a more direct relevance to the film and TV industry, but which may not specifically refer to loneliness, or which may not have been evaluated. Lastly, section 5.3 reviews existing interventions in the film and TV industry.

5.1 What has worked in other contexts

This section explores six broad categories of interventions that have been reviewed and found to have some degree of success. These are not definitive or exhaustive – a larger more systematic review would be required to get closer to that – but they should provide inspiration for the film and TV industry based on other contexts. In addition to this report, the Campaign to End Loneliness[2] and What Works

[2] Home New | Campaign to End Loneliness

Wellbeing[3] websites include regularly updated and accessible news on loneliness related interventions. The six categories, explored in turn include: social prescribing - a form of service which signposts individuals to relevant groups and services; psychological approaches - services which aim to adapt an individual's thoughts and perceptions; group based approaches (i.e., groups people can attend; one-to-one services - where an individual meets with one other person; technology focused interventions; skills and training approaches. Lastly, 5.1.7 discusses the importance of tackling stigma in any interventions which are developed, and how that can be achieved.

5.1.1 Social prescribing

Social prescribing is a major component of the UK governments strategy and action plan for loneliness (HM Government 2018; HM Government 2021). Reinhardt et al (2021) conducted a systematic review of social prescribing and concluded that both individuals and service providers tend to view it as a helpful tool. Liebmann et al (2022) conducted a review in which they created themes describing what was helpful and unhelpful about social prescribing. They found that most people relay an increased sense of wellbeing, and that many did not realise the importance of social connections until after they had been 'socially prescribed' to a place where this was possible.

Though negative experiences are uncommon, Liebmann et al (2022) also identified five situations in which social prescribing can be ineffective: i) when prescribed groups do not share similar interests to the individual; ii) when people's social needs are not being met (i.e., a different kind of assistance is needed); iii) when people do not manage to connect with people at the places they attended; iv) when people are not interested in longer-term connections; and v) in situations where people do not like or get on well with the social prescribing link worker. Given the relative success of social prescribing elsewhere, a social prescribing link worker at the Film and TV Charity could be a useful tool, particularly if they had a large selection of diverse groups and services they could signpost people to. This could also serve to raise awareness of the Charity to the 30% in the industry who said that they had not heard of it according to the Freelance Connector Grants (FCG) pilot evaluation (FCG 2023). In Scotland, the British Red Cross 'Connecting With You' service[4], where a worker spends 12 weeks supporting an individual to access community groups and services, may be a useful service that goes a step further than social prescribing.

[3] Homepage - What Works Wellbeing
[4] Get help with loneliness | British Red Cross

5.1.2 Psychological approaches

Forms of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), counselling interventions that aim to overcome unduly negative social perceptions and thoughts, have been particularly well supported in academic literature (Cacioppo et al. 2015). Masi et al. (2011) conducted a review of loneliness interventions that used statistical methods and concluded that interventions addressing 'maladaptive social cognition' were more likely to be effective than those offering social support, social skills training, and opportunities for social interaction. Similarly, Mann et al. (2017) found interventions classed as 'changing cognitions' to be the most effective, whereas those classed as 'social skills training', 'supported socialisation', and 'community approaches' were less so. Further supporting this in workplace situations, Mäkiniemi et al. (2021) found stress and exhaustion led to loneliness, but that 'personal resilience' significantly reduced this link. Overall, interventions of this kind appear helpful, particularly where loneliness originates from a perceived lack of quality relationships. However, such psychological approaches are perhaps limited in their ability to overcome political and economic barriers to forming relationships (Wilkinson 2022), and require a level of buy-in from a lonely person that may not be forthcoming (Cacioppo et al. 2015).

Cacioppo et al (2015) argue that alleviating loneliness is not only about getting support, but also about giving support back, and facilitating mutual beneficial relationships. In theory, then, improvements in social skills should be beneficial to loneliness. In practice, though, the evidence has been limited. The reviews above by Masi et al. (2011) and Mann et al. (2017) found social skills training interventions were among the least effective (though did still show some beneficial effects), and Bessaha et al. (2020), in a review focused on adults aged under 65, found just two evaluations of social skills training approaches, both of which were ineffective. Hawkley and Cacioppo (2011) and Cacioppo et al. (2015) also cite some work indicating that a pharmacological approach to loneliness can work.

5.1.3 Group approaches

Group based approaches are the most common forms of interventions for loneliness. For the purposes of this report, they are split into three categories: shared interest groups, where a specific activity or interest is the uniting factor; shared identity groups, where a demographic feature or political interest is shared by members; and peer support groups, which are groups specifically designed to provide a form of social support for a mental or physical health reason. Nevertheless, all these approaches aim to tackle loneliness by facilitating a greater number of social relationships, and usually aim to ensure that they are meaningful to participants. Social prescribing usually involves signposting people to groups such as these, and possibly aiding the individual to attend.

5.1.3.1 Shared interest groups

Groups based on shared interests are widespread, and often exist externally of loneliness interventions, for example local birdwatching groups, community sports activities, amateur theatre. The types of groups that work best are difficult to pin down, not least because people have different interests, although Poscia et al. (2018) noted community arts programmes were particularly effective. Nevertheless, two important factors can be highlighted. Firstly, the 'shared interests' facilitate meaningful connections, rather than simply acting as a route to new people (Wigfield et al 2022). Secondly, some authors highlight that 'productive forms of engagement', i.e., those that have a purpose or outcome, can be particularly beneficial (Gardiner et al. 2018). This has been particularly highlighted in studies with older men, and through the success of 'men's sheds', a scheme in which men attend a shed and build products for use in the community (Milligan et al. 2016). Ratcliffe et al. (2021) argue such projects can bestow a sense of 'social worth' that is vital for combatting loneliness, suggesting any groups or interventions that the Charity decides to form should perhaps consider how this 'social worth' can be promoted.

5.1.3.2 Shared identity groups

Shared identities ensure common ground among those who attend, rendering meaningful connections more likely. Bessaha et al. (2020), in their review of adults aged less than 65, report evidence that such groups have been effective for people who are disabled, chronically ill, immigrants, and military veterans. They can be very useful for minoritised populations, particularly LGBTQ+ people (Wilkens 2015; Kneale et al. 2021), as they provide a solidarity of experience not found in other spaces. Studies have also emphasised that racism can be barrier to tackling loneliness, and to joining community projects (British Red Cross 2019; Baskin et al. 2020). As the film and TV industry is predominantly cisgender, white-British, and middle/upper class, and with male-dominated cultures (Aust 2020; O'Brien et al. 2022), groups based on those who are not of these identities could be particularly useful (projects such as those formed via the FCG, are discussed in section 5.3).

5.1.3.3 Peer support groups

Evidence in favour of peer support approaches have largely been favourable, but with some caveats. Shalaby and Agyapong (2020) conducted a review of peer support approaches for mental health issues and found little evidence to suggest they are useful for serious mental health problems, but that for addiction, lonely students, and subgroups of people who are both medically and socially disadvantaged (e.g., low-income people with poor physical health), they were much more effective. Bessaha et al.'s (2020) review found that peer support groups were generally positive, particularly

among groups with physical health issues, but that telephone peer support was much less likely to be effective than all other intervention delivery types (including face-to-face and computer based support). Velloze et al. (2022) reviewed interventions to tackle loneliness in caregivers and found that peer support is widespread and effective as the other members can empathise with their situation. In the film and TV industry, then, peer support groups may be particularly beneficial for people who have a specific need, or a physical or mental health condition, that others can empathise with. More general professional group memberships can also provide a suitable platform to alleviate loneliness by providing opportunities for workers to connect with and enact their professional identities (see Section 4.2.2), and improve their confidence in their professional capacity, which has been evidenced as helpful in overcoming negative thinking in response to loneliness (Gabriel et al. 2020)

5.1.4 One-to-one exchanges

The most cited one-to-one intervention are befriending services. These have largely been employed for older people, and even then, the evidence in favour is limited. Cattan et al (2005) and Poscia et al (2018) both conducted reviews in which they concluded that befriending services tend to show small overall benefits. Masi et al.'s (2011) review looked at broader one-to-one individual therapies, and still found little favourable evidence compared to group therapies. Nevertheless, one-to-one 'random coffees' may be an effective method of fostering good relationships in workplaces[5] and has the potential to be applied in Film and TV industry. This involves willing participants to be paired with another participant via email to arrange to meet up for a coffee.

5.1.5 Technology focused approaches

Approaches utilising technology have often been found to be useful. In reviews of older age groups, Hagan et al. (2014) found interventions using games consoles and video-calls effective, and Poscia et al. (2018) found interventions using companion robots, the internet, and Care TV effective. In their review of adults aged less than 65, Bessaha et al. (2020) found interventions using online support and text messaging useful as they were physically accessible. Wider research into social media has been mixed, with some studies highlighting its positive effects (Pittman and Reich 2016), but significantly more studies emphasising its negative impacts (O'Day and Heimberg 2021). Project intimacy[6], which was developed within the theatre industry, may be worth considering. This is a text messaging service where a person signs up via an app, and fills out a personality programme. They are then paired with an anonymous stranger, and complete a number of stages of messaging each other related to their

[5] Randomised coffee trials – Mental Health At Work
[6] Project Intimacy — Riptide - Immersive, Interactive & Digital Experiences (theriptide.co.uk)

personality and interests, which gradually involves less anonymity, until the final stage where they are asked to share more intimate information.

5.1.6 Education/training approaches

This refers to any intervention that aims to use learning, via a group, service, or app, as a route to engagement and social connection. A report evaluating 'The Ageing Better Programme', which consisted of hundreds of small interventions nationwide, found that such approaches were more effective than average (Campbell-Jack et al. 2021). However, a review into tackling loneliness in younger people (Eccles and Qualter 2021) did not find any evidence that interventions focused on learning a hobby or skill were more effective than other interventions. Overall, this seems unlikely to be an avenue of use to the Film and TV Charity unless specific learning requests are received and/or required.

5.1.7 Tackling stigma

Many researchers have commented on how the problem of loneliness has been stigmatised, trivialised, or ignored (Cacioppo and Patrick 2008; Barreto et al. 2022). Exploring the nature and variation of the stigma associated with loneliness, Kerr and Stanley (2021) found college students held negative perceptions of hypothetical people described as 'lonely', particularly when the people were described as reclusive. However, the perceptions of such hypothetical people were less apparent in a more diverse sample of U.S. adults. In a series of influential studies in the 1980s and 1990s, lonely men were perceived particularly negatively (Borys and Perlman 1985; Lau and Gruen 1992; Lau and Kong 1999).

Logically, seeking help for loneliness is unlikely if it is stigmatised. Indeed, it may be worsened by a negative spiral of shame and continued loneliness (Ratcliffe et al. 2021). Offering some additional evidence for this, the evaluation of the Ageing Better Programme (previously mentioned) (Campbell-Jack et al. 2021) found that services aiming to 'empower older people' were more effective than other intervention types. The recent government White Paper (Jones et al. 2023) includes three recommendations for combatting stigma and loneliness: emphasising the positive features of being alone by using the phrase 'solitude'; encouraging individuals to recognise and accept environmental barriers to forming relationships; and ensuring physical spaces feel safe and welcoming. The Film and TV Charity may be able to incorporate these themes, whilst raising awareness of loneliness amongst the industry's workforce.

5.2 Recommendations with direct relevance to the film and TV industry

This section considers recommendations in the literature which directly relates to film and TV industry. Although it must be noted that these studies tend not to originate from evaluations of actual interventions. Carter and West's (1998) research into the mental health of BBC workers found that small teams were associated with less loneliness than larger teams. Zarate et al. (2022) found stable and secure social support networks buffer the risks of poor mental health in the Australian entertainment industry, suggesting social support networks which are not tied to specific projects may be particularly beneficial to film and TV workers (as projects are temporary). Duarte (2020) notes that work precarity in the industry could be tackled via subsidy programmes, but argues that, when these have been attempted, they attract more people to the industry, and discourage engagement with the 'market', i.e., customers. Such policies, then, may have negative long-term financial implications. At policy and/or management level, it may be necessary to balance the mental health difficulties associated with work precarity against potentially negative financial repercussions associated with subsidies or other interventions aimed at ending job precarity.

Workplace loneliness studies offer some broader recommendations that could be employed in the industry. Chen et al. (2019) found lonely people in leadership positions at work can also negatively affect other people in their workplace. In a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) influenced approach, Gabriel et al. (2020) recommend management training to escape negative thoughts of one's relationships with others, and to transform this into a problem-solving approach to workplace relationships, which they found leads to behaviours that alleviate loneliness. They also suggest that people with higher confidence in their ability to perform their roles are more likely to engage in positive problem-solving thinking about their workplace relationships. Thus they recommend training and support to improve people's capacity to perform their roles, as well as to build their confidence and sense of self-worth. Firoz and Chaudhary (2021) also draw on CBT approaches to recommend training programmes that aim to provide people with the resilience to overcome loneliness. They also recommend regular informal meetings and interactions, shared meals, encouraging employees to share their ideas over tea and lunch, and a 'compassion over command' approach to management that genuinely takes an interest in employees' lives. However, these recommendations have not been evaluated, and it should be noted that employees may not wish to take part in such activities, particularly if they encroach on non-work periods. Selenko et al (2020) find volunteering can enhance the benefits of work even while job insecurity causes negative effects, a notion that may fit with the idea of groups that are not project-based and which can facilitate 'social worth'. Chen et al. (2019) also suggest that a focus on 'empowerment' of the workforce, which facilitates greater self-confidence and

ensures individual input is valued, can be an effective way to increase team communication and decrease loneliness.

5.3 Existing approaches in the film and TV industry

The Film and TV Charity have facilitated the creation of numerous projects and services. These include a 24-hour support line, counselling, the 'whole picture toolkit', and numerous groups funded by the FCG have been developed. The 24-hour support line and counselling constitute 'psychological' interventions. As forms of CBT have regularly been found to be useful for loneliness, it may be worth considering whether this could form part of these interventions. Both, but particularly the support line, could also act as a route to social prescribing, by either having a list of potentially appropriate services to direct people to, or by directing people to a link worker. The 'Whole Picture Toolkit', on the other hand, aims to change production methods in a manner that aims to challenge structural causes of poor mental health. By highlighting the mental health of workers on a project, and offering tangible recommendations, it may be useful for all aspects of mental health, including loneliness if pro-social working conditions are highlighted. The more difficult task may be convincing projects leaders and management to buy in to the recommendations, so the importance of the impact of poor mental health and loneliness on productivity and profit may need to be emphasised.

These may constitute particularly meaningful interactions as they are geared towards facilitating opportunities in the industry, thus can help to promote a sense of social worth. Many of the projects funded by the Freelancer Connector Grants tend to focus on creating peer support opportunities for minoritised or marginalised groups (e.g., British Arab Writers, trans+ on screen, Wonder Women Mentoring, British East Asians in Media, We Are Doc Women, Black Costume Network). By providing a consistent localised service, where people have a common identity beyond the immediate projects they are involved with, these may be particularly beneficial.

Peer support training groups may be useful as they provide a constructive goal for attendees that may enable them to better negotiate the networking requirements of the industry. As future financing for these projects may be a barrier, it is worth noting that voluntary groups of these kinds can be successfully maintained, with or without funding, but tend to require highly invested local leaders.

6. Conclusions

This report was framed by seven questions and so to conclude, we directly address each in turn.

1. *What is the 'state of play' in terms of understanding loneliness in a whole-of-life, social and psychological sense?*

   The starting point for understanding loneliness is often to place it as a feeling of a lack of meaningful social relationships. However, it is also important to recognise political and economic causes of loneliness, and situations in which a person may suffer negative effects without desiring more or improved social relationships. After reviewing academic debates, section 2 concluded:

   - loneliness is a personal experience borne from the social world
   - meaningful interactions, and social connections, are important to prevent loneliness
   - cultural and political context can frame whether and why people may feel lonely
   - loneliness is strongly linked to other forms of poor mental health, in such a way that it can either cause them or result from them.

2. *Why are people of certain demographics (e.g., young people, minoritised racial/ethnic groups) at heightened risk of loneliness?*

   Forming meaningful social connections, feeling a sense of belonging, experiencing social worth – all these ways of defining loneliness require some level of acceptance and respect from other people. Minoritised groups, and women, are structurally disadvantaged, and are more likely to face discrimination, thus have a greater likeliness of not experiencing these.

3. *What is the relationship between the psychological and social causes of loneliness, and are there ways of addressing both at the same time?*

   Section 2 discusses how theoretical approaches diverge on the relationship between psychological and social causes of loneliness, but most agree that the two are interconnected. The social impacts the psychological, and vice versa. For Instance, the psychological responses to loneliness, discussed in section 5.1.2, can build resilience against loneliness where economic and political conditions are unfavourable, and improvements to such conditions are likely to improve the psychological/neurological condition of the individual.

4. *Does loneliness have workplace-related causes, especially where conditions such as in the film and TV industries prevail (project-based working, freelancing, long hours of work, prevalence of bullying, harassment, racism, etc)*

   The research presented in section 4 strongly suggests that loneliness challenges can have workplace-related causes, including those mentioned in this question plus a broader alienation related to a lack of meaningful connection to, and pride of, the work conducted. The notion of 'workplace loneliness' has recently become more prominent. This highlights the problem and aims to understand and prevent loneliness arising in and from workplaces.

5. *How do social capital, community identification and social support (including peer support) impact loneliness?*

   Social capital refers to social relationships and assets that can be used to gain advantages and meet goals. A person with greater social capital will have more opportunities to form social connections, and meet their life goals, both of which are likely to prevent loneliness. Community identification is likely to be vital to a sense of 'belonging', therefore can be integral to loneliness. Social support, and peer support, are important elements of meaningful relationships, that may alleviate loneliness by aiding a sense of social worth.

6. *How important is removing the stigma around loneliness?*

   Though difficult to quantify, there is sufficient evidence to suggest a stigma relating to loneliness exists. It is an important component of tackling loneliness as stigma is likely to decrease help-seeking and increase other negative effects such as shame. To tackle stigma, awareness of loneliness can be raised, terminology can be adjusted, for example 'solitude' can be emphasised as positive, and the socio-economic and political causes of loneliness can be recognised.

7. *What best practice interventions could we apply to our work in the film and TV industry?*

   The current services offered by the Film and TV Charity can be beneficial as they highlight the importance of mental health and loneliness to both workers and management, offer more accessible networking opportunities, and provide settings for peer support and 'belonging'. It

may also be useful to consider adding aspects of social prescribing and CBT to existing services. In addition to the services currently offered, random coffees, mental or physical health groups, technology-based friendship services like ‘project intimacy’, and management loneliness training may be services that can be offered or linked with. Overall, it is worth noting that most interventions tend to be beneficial. The difficulties, though, are threefold: setting them up and maintaining them; attempting to ensure maximum coverage whilst aiding those most in need; and, most difficult of all, overcoming the social, political, and economic factors that render some people more like to feel lonely. Finally in implementing any interventions, evaluations of the outcomes are essential.

References

Alpass, F.M. and Neville, S., 2003. Loneliness, health and depression in older males. Aging & mental health, 7(3), pp.212-216.

Arendt, H., 1973. The origins of totalitarianism [1951]. New York.

Aust, R. (2020) "Reflexive Practice, the "Turn to Care" and Accounting for Feeling: The Things We Talk About with Our Friends." Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media, no. 20, pp. 119–134, https://doi.org/10.33178/alpha.20.09.

Barreto, M., van Breen, J., Victor, C., Hammond, C., Eccles, A., Richins, M.T. and Qualter, P., 2022. Exploring the nature and variation of the stigma associated with loneliness. Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 39(9), pp.2658-2679.

Barreto, M., Victor, C., Hammond, C., Eccles, A., Richins, M.T. and Qualter, P., (2021). Loneliness around the world: Age, gender, and cultural differences in loneliness. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 169, doi: org/10.1016/j.paid.2020.110066

Baskin, C., Zijlstra, G., McGrath, M., Lee, C., Duncan, F.H., Oliver, E.J., Osborn, D., Dykxhoorn, J., Kaner, E.F., LaFortune, L. and Walters, K.R., 2021. Community-centred interventions for improving public mental health among adults from ethnic minority populations in the UK: a scoping review. BMJ Open, 11(4), p.e041102.

BBC Radio 4 (2018). *The Anatomy of Loneliness*. BBC radio 4, Tuesday 2nd October.

Bekhet, A.K., Zauszniewski, J.A. and Nakhla, W.E. (2008). Loneliness: a concept analysis. *Nursing forum*, 43 (4), 207-213

Bessaha, M.L., Sabbath, E.L., Morris, Z., Malik, S., Scheinfeld, L. and Saragossi, J., 2020. A systematic review of loneliness interventions among non-elderly adults. Clinical Social Work Journal, 48, pp.110-125.

Borys, S. and Perlman, D. (1985) Gender differences in loneliness, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin,* 11 (1),63-74.

Brodeur, A., Clark, A.E., Fleche, S. and Powdthavee, N., (2021). COVID-19, lockdowns and well-being: Evidence from Google Trends. Journal of public economics, 193, doi: 10.1016/j.jpubeco.2020.104346

British Red Cross (2019). Barriers to belonging An exploration of loneliness among people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. Available at: barrier-to-belonging.pdf (redcross.org.uk)

Bu, F., Steptoe, A., & Fancourt, D. (2020). Loneliness during a strict lockdown: Trajectories and predictors during the COVID-19 pandemic in 38,217 United Kingdom adults. *Social Science & Medicine.* 265, doi: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2020.113521

Cacioppo, J.T., Hawkley, L.C. and Berntson, G.G., (2003). The anatomy of loneliness. *Current directions in psychological science,* 12(3), 71-74.

Cacioppo, JT & Patrick, W (2008), *Loneliness: human nature and the need for social connection*. W. W. Norton & Company, New York.

Cacioppo, S., Grippo, A.J., London, S., Goossens, L. and Cacioppo, J.T., 2015. Loneliness: Clinical import and interventions. Perspectives on Psychological Science, 10(2), pp.238-249.

Cacioppo, J.T. and Cacioppo, S. (2018). Loneliness in the modern age: an evolutionary theory of loneliness (ETL). *Advances in experimental social psychology*. 58, 127-197.

Carter, S.M. and West, M.A., 1998. Reflexivity, effectiveness, and mental health in BBC-TV production teams. Small group research, 29(5), pp.583-601.

Cattan, M, White, M, Bond, J, Learmouth, A. (2005) 'Preventing social isolation and loneliness among older people: a systematic review of health promotion interventions', *Ageing & Society,* 25, 41–67.

Chen, X., Peng, J., Lei, X. and Zou, Y., 2021. Leave or stay with a lonely leader? An investigation into whether, why, and when leader workplace loneliness increases team turnover intentions. Asian Business & Management, 20, pp.280-303.

Comunian, R. and England, L., 2020. Creative and cultural work without filters: Covid-19 and exposed precarity in the creative economy. Cultural Trends, 29(2), pp.112-128.Townsend, P. (1957). *The family life of old people; an inquiry in East London*. London: Routledge & K. Paul.

Co-Op and New Economics Foundation (2017) The Cost Of Loneliness to UK Employers. Available at: Cost Of Loneliness.pdf (neweconomics.org)

Creative Majority (2021) O'Brien, D. and Dent, T., 2021. CREATIVE MAJORITY. Available at: Creative Majority (culturehive.co.uk)

DeChants, J.P., Shelton, J., Anyon, Y. and Bender, K., 2022. "I just want to move forward": Themes of resilience among LGBTQ young adults experiencing family rejection and housing insecurity. Children and Youth Services Review, 139, p.106552.

De Jong Gierveld, J. and Van Tilburg, T., 2010. The De Jong Gierveld short scales for emotional and social loneliness: tested on data from 7 countries in the UN generations and gender surveys. European journal of ageing, 7, pp.121-130.

DiTommaso, E., & Spinner, B. (1993). The development and initial validation of the Social and Emotional Loneliness Scale for Adults (SELSA). *Personality and Individual Differences*, 14(1), 127-134. doi:10.1016/0191-8869(93)90182-3

Diarmid Campbell-Jack, Amy Humphreys, James Whitley, Jenny Williams and Korina Cox (2021) Ageing Better: Impact Evaluation Report. Available at: TNLCF: Impact Evaluation Report (tnlcommunityfund.org.uk)

Duarte, A.M., 2020. Artists' precarity in the context of their social integration. Precarious Places: Social, Cultural and Economic Aspects of Uncertainty and Anxiety in Everyday Life, pp.19-39.

Eccles, A.M. and Qualter, P., 2021. Alleviating loneliness in young people–a meta-analysis of interventions. Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 26(1), pp.17-33.

Elmer, E.M., van Tilburg, T. and Fokkema, T., 2022. Minority stress and loneliness in a global sample of sexual minority adults: The roles of social anxiety, social inhibition, and community involvement. Archives of Sexual Behavior, 51(4), pp.2269-2298.

FCG (2023). Freelancer Connector Grants Pilot Evaluation Report. Internal report Film and TV Charity.

Film and TV Charity (2022). *Mind-Craft: What shapes the mental health of UK film and television workers?* Available at Mind-Craft Report - Challenge of Loneliness (filmtvcharity.org.uk)

Firoz, M. and Chaudhary, R., 2022. The impact of workplace loneliness on employee outcomes: what role does psychological capital play?. Personnel Review, 51(4), pp.1221-1247.

Firoz, M., Chaudhary, R. and Khan, A., 2021. Desolated milieu: exploring the trajectory of workplace loneliness (2006-2019). Management Research Review, 44(5), pp.757-780.

Firoz, M., Chaudhary, R. and Lata, M., 2022, February. The socio-demographic determinants of workplace loneliness in India. In Evidence-Based HRM: a Global Forum for Empirical Scholarship (Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 17-34). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Folk, D., Okabe-Miyamoto, K., Dunn, E. and Lyubomirsky, S., (2020). Did social connection decline during the first wave of COVID-19?: the role of extraversion. *Collabra: Psychology*, 6(1).

Franklin, A., Barbosa Neves, B., Hookway, N., Patulny, R., Tranter, B., & Jaworski, K. (2019). Towards an understanding of loneliness among Australian men: Gender cultures, embodied expression and the social bases of belonging. *Journal of sociology*, 55(1), 124-143.

Gabriel, A.S., Lanaj, K. and Jennings, R.E., 2021. Is one the loneliest number? A within-person examination of the adaptive and maladaptive consequences of leader loneliness at work. Journal of Applied Psychology, 106(10), p.1517.

Galdas, P., Cheater, F. and Marshall, P., (2007). What is the role of masculinity in white and South Asian men's decisions to seek medical help for cardiac chest pain?. *Journal of health services research & policy*, 12(4), 223-229.

Gardiner, C., Geldenhuys, G., & Gott, M. (2018). Interventions to reduce social isolation and loneliness among older people: an integrative review. *Health & social care in the community, 26*(2), 147-157.

Gillard, S., Dare, C., Hardy, J., Nyikavaranda, P., Olive, R.R., Shah, P., Birken, M., Foye, U., Ocloo, J., Pearce, E. and Stefanidou, T., (2021). Experiences of living with mental health problems during the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK: a coproduced, participatory qualitative interview study. *Social psychiatry and psychiatric epidemiology.* 1-11.

Gilmore, L. and Cuskelly, M., 2014. Vulnerability to loneliness in people with intellectual disability: An explanatory model. Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities, 11(3), pp.192-199.

Gross, J, Dent, T & Comunian, R 2021, Covid-19 and The Creative City: Lessons from the UK. in B Doucet, R van Melik & P Filion (eds), Global Reflections on Covid-19 and Urban Inequalities. Policy Press, Bristol. 179-188

Hagan, R., Manktelow, R., Taylor, B. J., & Mallett, J. (2014). Reducing loneliness amongst older people: a systematic search and narrative review. *Aging & Mental Health, 18*(6), 683-693.

Hawkley, L.C. and Cacioppo, J.T., 2010. Loneliness matters: A theoretical and empirical review of consequences and mechanisms. Annals of behavioral medicine, 40(2), pp.218-227.

Heylen, L., (2010). The older, the lonelier? Risk factors for social loneliness in old age. *Ageing & Society,* 30(7), 1177-1196.

HM Government (2018). *A connected society: a strategy for tackling loneliness–laying the foundations for change.* Her Majesty's Government, London. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-connected-society-a-strategy-for-tackling-loneliness [accessed 27th July 2022]

HM Government (2021). *Emerging Together: the Tackling Loneliness Network Action Plan. Policy paper.* Her Majesty's Government, London. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emerging-together-the-tackling-loneliness-network-action-plan/emerging-together-the-tackling-loneliness-network-action-plan [accessed 27th July 2022]

HM Government (2022) Investigating factors associated with loneliness in adults in England. Available at: Investigating factors associated with loneliness in adults in England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Jones, L., Hewings, R., Nguyen, T.V., Thomas, V., Weinstein, N. and Qualter, P., 2023. Positive Connections and Solitude: Contribution to Loneliness Interventions and Policy Development.

Jones, D.L., Rodriguez, V.J., Salazar, A.S., Montgomerie, E., Raccamarich, P.D., Uribe Starita, C., Barreto Ojeda, I.T., Beauchamps, L., Vazquez, A., Martinez, T. and Alcaide, M.L., (2021). Sex differences in the association between stress, loneliness, and COVID-19 burden among people with HIV in the United States. *AIDS research and human retroviruses*. 37(4), 314-321.

Jylhä, M. and Saarenheimo, M. (2010). Loneliness and ageing: Comparative perspectives. *The SAGE handbook of social gerontology,* 317-328.

Kantar Public. (2017) *Trapped in a bubble: An investigation into triggers for loneliness in the UK*. United Kingdom, Co-operative/British Red Cross. Available at: https://www.co-operative.coop/campaigning/loneliness [accessed 20th July 2022].

Kerr, N.A. and Stanley, T.B., 2021. Revisiting the social stigma of loneliness. Personality and Individual Differences, 171, p.110482.

Khan, Z., Israel-McLeish, K., Ballard, C., Da Silva, M.V., Nunez, K.M., Kitas, F. and Aarsland, D., 2023. Levels of loneliness and mental health in older adults across ethnic groups during the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK. Journal of the American Medical Directors Association, 24(5), pp.710-711.

Klug, K, Selenko, E, Gerlitz, J-Y (2021) Working, but not for a living: a longitudinal study on the psychological consequences of economic vulnerability among German employees, European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 30(6), pp.790-807, ISSN: 1359-432X. DOI: 10.1080/1359432X.2020.1843533.

Kneale, D., Henley, J., Thomas, J. and French, R., 2021. Inequalities in older LGBT people's health and care needs in the United Kingdom: a systematic scoping review. Ageing & Society, 41(3), pp.493-515.

Knox, D., Vail-Smith, K., & Zusman, M. (2007). The lonely college male. *International Journal of Men's Health*, 6(3), 273-279.

Kremers, E.M., Janssen, J.H., Nieuwboer, M.S., Olde Rikkert, M.G. and Peeters, G.M.E.E., 2021. The psychosocial adaptability of independently living older adults to COVID-19 related social isolation in the Netherlands: A qualitative study. Health & Social Care in the Community. 10.1111/hsc.13436

Lain, D., Airey, L., Loretto, W. and Vickerstaff, S., 2020. Older workers and ontological precarity: between precarious employment, precarious welfare and precarious households. In Precarity and Ageing (pp. 91-114). Policy Press.

Lau, S., & Gruen, G. E. (1992). The social stigma of loneliness: Effect of target person's and perceiver's sex. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 18(2), 182-189.

Lau, S., & Kong, C. K. (1999). The acceptance of lonely others: Effects of loneliness and gender of the target person and loneliness of the perceiver. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 139(2), 229-241. doi:10.1080/00224549909598377

Liebmann, M., Pitman, A., Hsueh, Y.C., Bertotti, M. and Pearce, E., 2022. Do people perceive benefits in the use of social prescribing to address loneliness and/or social isolation? A qualitative meta-synthesis of the literature. BMC health services research, 22(1), p.1264.

Looking Glass: Mental Health in the Film and TV Industry after Covid (2021). Available at: LookingGlassReport_2021_Final.pdf (filmtvcharity.org.uk)

Macdonald, S.J., Deacon, L., Nixon, J., Akintola, A., Gillingham, A., Kent, J., Ellis, G., Mathews, D., Ismail, A., Sullivan, S. and Dore, S., 2018. 'The invisible enemy': disability, loneliness and isolation. Disability & Society, 33(7), pp.1138-1159.

Maes, M., Qualter, P., Vanhalst, J., Van den Noortgate, W. and Goossens, L., (2019). Gender differences in loneliness across the lifespan: A meta–analysis. *European Journal of Personality*, 33(6), 642-654.

Mann, F., Bone, J. K., Lloyd-Evans, B., Frerichs, J., Pinfold, V., Ma, R., Johnson, S. (2017). A life less lonely: the state of the art in interventions to reduce loneliness in people with mental health problems. Social psychiatry and psychiatric epidemiology, 52(6), 627-638.

Masi, C. M., Chen, H. Y., Hawkley, L. C., & Cacioppo, J. T. (2011). A meta-analysis of interventions to reduce loneliness. *Personality and social psychology review*, *15*(3), 219-266.

Mäkiniemi, J.P., Oksanen, A. and Mäkikangas, A., 2021. Loneliness and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic: the moderating roles of personal, social and organizational resources on perceived stress and exhaustion among Finnish university employees. International journal of environmental research and public health, 18(13), p.7146.

May, T., Warran, K., Burton, A. and Fancourt, D., 2022. Socioeconomic and Psychosocial Adversities Experienced by Freelancers Working in the UK Cultural Sector During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Qualitative Study. Frontiers in Psychology, 12, p.6297.

McAndrew, S., & Warne, T. (2010). Coming out to talk about suicide: Gay men and suicidality. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 19(2), 92-101. doi:10.1111/j.1447-0349.2009.00644.x

McKenna-Plumley, P.E., Graham-Wisener, L., Berry, E. and Groarke, J.M., (2021). Connection, constraint, and coping: A qualitative study of experiences of loneliness during the COVID-19 lockdown in the UK. PloS one. 16(10), e0258344.

Mijuskovic, B., (1977). Types of loneliness. *Psychology: A Journal of Human Behavior*. 14, 24–29.

Moustakas, C.E., 1961. *Loneliness and love*. Prentice Hall.

Moustakas, C.E., 2016. *Loneliness*. Pickle Partners Publishing.

Niedzwiedz, C.L., Richardson, E.A., Tunstall, H., Shortt, N.K., Mitchell, R.J. and Pearce, J.R., 2016. The relationship between wealth and loneliness among older people across Europe: Is social participation protective?. Preventive medicine, 91, pp.24-31.

Nilsson, B., Nåden, D. and Lindström, U.Å., (2008). The tune of want in the loneliness melody–loneliness experienced by people with serious mental suffering. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences,* 22(2), 161-169.

O'Day, E.B. and Heimberg, R.G., 2021. Social media use, social anxiety, and loneliness: A systematic review. Computers in Human Behavior Reports, 3, p.100070.

O'Brien, A., Kerrigan, P. and Liddy, S., 2023. Conceptualising change in equality, diversity and inclusion: A case study of the Irish film and television sector. European Journal of Cultural Studies, 26(3), pp.336-353.

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 06 September 2022, ONS website, statistical bulletin, Suicides in England and Wales: 2021 registrations. Available at: Suicides in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

Ozcelik, H. and Barsade, S.G., 2018. No employee an island: Workplace loneliness and job performance. Academy of Management Journal, 61(6), pp.2343-2366.

Perlman, D., & Peplau, L. A. (1981). Toward a social psychology of loneliness. *Personal relationships*, 3, 31-56.

Pillemer, J. and Rothbard, N.P., 2018. Friends without benefits: Understanding the dark sides of workplace friendship. Academy of Management Review, 43(4), pp.635-660.

Pittman, M. and Reich, B., 2016. Social media and loneliness: Why an Instagram picture may be worth more than a thousand Twitter words. Computers in Human Behavior, 62, pp.155-167.

Poscia, A., Stojanovic, J., La Milia, D. I., Duplaga, M., Grysztar, M., Moscato, U., Magnavita, N. (2018). Interventions targeting loneliness and social isolation among the older people: an update systematic review. *Experimental gerontology, 102*, 133-144.

Potts, J., Cunningham, S., Hartley, J. and Ormerod, P., 2008. Social network markets: a new definition of the creative industries. Journal of cultural economics, 32, pp.167-185.

Ratcliffe, J., 2022. Men, Masculinities, and Loneliness: a mixed-methods study of men's perspectives in a wider context (Doctoral dissertation, University of York).

Ratcliffe, J., Wigfield, A., & Alden, S. (2021). 'A lonely old man': empirical investigations of older men and loneliness, and the ramifications for policy and practice. *Ageing & Society*. 41(4), 794-814.

Ratcliffe, J., Galdas, P. and Kanaan, M. (2020) Men and loneliness in the 'west': A critical interpretive synthesis. Preprint. doi: 10.21203/rs.3.rs-17584/v1

Ratcliffe, J., Kanaan, M. and Galdas, P. (2022) Men and loneliness in the Covid-19 pandemic: Insights from an interview study with UK-based men. *Health & Social Care in the Community*. doi: 10.1111/hsc.13746

Reina, C.S., Mills, M.J. and Sumpter, D.M., 2022. A mindful relating framework for understanding the trajectory of work relationships. Personnel Psychology.

Reinhardt, G.Y., Vidovic, D. and Hammerton, C., 2021. Understanding loneliness: a systematic review of the impact of social prescribing initiatives on loneliness. Perspectives in public health, 141(4), pp.204-213.

Richards, J. and Sang, K., 2019. The intersection of disability and in-work poverty in an advanced industrial nation: The lived experience of multiple disadvantage in a post-financial crisis UK. Economic and Industrial Democracy, 40(3), pp.636-659.

Rokach, A., Lechcier-Kimel, R. and Safarov, A., 2006. Loneliness of people with physical disabilities. Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal, 34(6), pp.681-700.

Rokach, A., Orzeck, T., Cripps, J., Lackovic-Grgin, K. and Penezic, Z., (2001). The effects of culture on the meaning of loneliness. *Social Indicators Research*, 53(1), 17-31.

Rowlands, L. and Handy, J., 2012. An addictive environment: New Zealand film production workers' subjective experiences of project-based labour. Human Relations, 65(5), pp.657-680.

Russell, D., Cutrona, C.E., Rose, J. and Yurko, K., 1984. Social and emotional loneliness: an examination of Weiss's typology of loneliness. Journal of personality and social psychology, 46(6), p.1313.

Selenko, E, Stiglbauer, B, Batinic, B (2020) More evidence on the latent benefits of work: bolstered by volunteering while threatened by job insecurity, European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 29(3), pp.364-376, ISSN: 1359-432X. DOI: 10.1080/1359432X.2019.1706487.

Shalaby, R.A.H. and Agyapong, V.I., 2020. Peer support in mental health: literature review. JMIR mental health, 7(6), p.e15572.

Spicer, A., Presence, S. and Frymus, A., 2022. GO WEST! 2 Bristol's Film and Television Industries.

Strong, C. and Cannizzo, F., 2020. Understanding challenges to the Victorian music industry during COVID-19. Victorian Office for Women, Victorian Music Development Office.

Van Raalte, C., Wallis, R. and Pekalski, D., 2023. More than just a few 'bad apples': the need for a risk management approach to the problem of workplace bullying in the UK's television industry. Creative Industries Journal, pp.1-18.

Vasileiou, K., Barnett, J., Barreto, M., Vines, J., Atkinson, M., Long, K., Bakewell, L., Lawson, S. and Wilson, M., 2019. Coping with loneliness at university: A qualitative interview study with students in the UK. Mental Health & Prevention, 13, pp.21-30.

Velloze, I.G., Jester, D.J., Jeste, D.V. and Mausbach, B.T., 2022. Interventions to reduce loneliness in caregivers: An integrative review of the literature. Psychiatry Research, p.114508.

Victor, C.R. and Bowling, A., 2012. A longitudinal analysis of loneliness among older people in Great Britain. The Journal of psychology, 146(3), pp.313-331.

Victor, C. and Yang, K. (2012) 'The prevalence of loneliness among adults: a case study of the United Kingdom', *The Journal of psychology*, 146 (1-2),85-104.

Watson, J. and Nesdale, D., 2012. Rejection sensitivity, social withdrawal, and loneliness in young adults. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 42(8), pp.1984-2005.

Wickens, C.M., McDonald, A.J., Elton-Marshall, T., Wells, S., Nigatu, Y.T., Jankowicz, D. and Hamilton, H.A., (2021). Loneliness in the COVID-19 pandemic: associations with age, gender and their interaction. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*. 136, 103-108.

Weiss, R. S. (1973). *Loneliness: The Experience of Emotional and Social Isolation*. Cambridge, USA. The mit Press.

Wigfield, A., Turner, R., Alden, S., Green, M. and Karania, V.K., 2022. Developing a new conceptual framework of meaningful interaction for understanding social isolation and loneliness. Social Policy and Society, 21(2), pp.172-193.

Wigfield, A., Sirois, F., Balazs, A., and Lemmouchi, M. (2021) Loneliness amongst young women in India, Indonesia and Mexico. Unilever.

Wilkens, J., 2015. Loneliness and belongingness in older lesbians: The role of social groups as "community". Journal of Lesbian Studies, 19(1), pp.90-101.

Wilkinson, E., 2022. Loneliness is a feminist issue. Feminist Theory, 23(1), pp.23-38.

Wright, S. and Silard, A., 2021. Unravelling the antecedents of loneliness in the workplace. Human Relations, 74(7), pp.1060-1081.

Zaleskiewicz, T. and Gasiorowska, A., 2016. The psychological consequences of money for economic and social relationships. In Routledge international handbook of consumer psychology (pp. 330-344). Routledge.

Zarate, D., Sonn, C., Fisher, A. and Stavropoulos, V., 2022. Suicidal behaviors in the entertainment industry: a preliminary exploration of the interplay between work scheduling, social support, and wellbeing in Australia. BMC psychiatry, 22(1), pp.1-10.