Songs from a Resting Place: An Autoethnographic Score

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I certify that the research described in this dissertation has not previously been submitted for any other degree.

I certify that to the best of my knowledge all sources used and any help received in the preparation of this dissertation have been acknowledged.

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Signature:…….

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and Dave Cairns: 18th November, 1952 – 3rd July, 2010
who had an eye for the majesty of the misplaced,
and an ear for a good story.

Abstract

This thesis is *a* re-telling of a research story. It is a re-telling in which I am concerned with the politics of the representations made in research stories, and with the relationships between the stories we tell and what is (re)produced in our embodied (research and other) relationships. Initially conceived within a programme evaluation of an Aboriginal community-owned and managed drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre, the thesis was quickened by a music workshop that took place there and that constitutes a critical moment in the retelling of the research: a moment of turning back and looking towards what had gone before.

Before any story of the research is a story about historical relations between psychology and Indigenous Australians; about histories of and to existing fictions of *terra nullius*. How to tell a story of the research in ways that account for the pre-existing political relationships upon which the research depends? How to account for the position of dominant white cultural assumptions – the position traditionally privileged within research narratives and existing fictions of *terra nullius* more generally? In the context of this thesis I treat these questions as theoretical and methodological. Theoretical because their address requires a different conceptualisation of a subject to the humanist, materialist 'self' that dominates discourses of psychology. Methodological because the English language and prevailing narrative forms of research in psychology predispose towards a reproduction of that subject and a reproduction of privileged epistemologies in *terra nullius*.

Read through Positioning Theory, and drawing on work in other (including literary) fields, I develop Autoethnography as *textual strategy* through which I hope to enable different ways of talking/ways of talking that enable different modes of being. Adopting a polyphonic mode of representation (e.g. recorded songs, poetry, letters, and more traditional academic narratives) I interrupt the prevailing 'voice' of psychology and trace political relationships and the influences of positioning within those that a traditional monologue would obscure. From an epistemological standpoint that articulates a reciprocal relationship between discursive performance and embodied relationships, inasmuch as this thesis contributes to theoretical and methodological conversations in psychology, it therefore also constitutes an intervention into repeated citations of *terra nullius* in the stories we tell by reformulating the speaking position of the dominant white cultural assumptions in the telling.

Listening Guide

Periodically throughout this thesis I ask you to listen to songs as part of your reading. In the introductory material, the song title will appear next to the instruction: 'Listen to this song'. In *Chapter 10: Songs from a resting place* there is no such instruction – merely the title of the song, pseudonymous name of the singer and (in all but one instance) a transcript of the lyrics to cue you to listen. These songs are recorded on the attached CD in the same order they appear in the text, so you can pause the CD after each song until you reach the next section of the thesis where a song features. You may, of course, continue listening as long as you are able to find your way back to the next song as required by the text: this listening guide is not intended to prescribe your listening, but to enable you to incorporate that into your reading with greater ease.

All the songs are original works, and, aside from those credited to the artists within the text, were written and performed by men participating in the music programme that this story of the research unfolds around. The songs are roughly mastered and as such they feature some irregularities in recording but the content is otherwise as it appears in the finished version. Permission was granted for the songs to be used in this thesis, and the CD itself is in the public domain – it was not a private recording.

I have sought to maintain anonymity (via pseudonyms and sparsity of geographical detail) in the text itself and through editing the songs and lyrics for identifying detail. The limits of my success in doing so, the permission of the people involved: neither of these mitigates the responsibilities of the listener, who I encourage to reflect on the ethics of speculating about (or sleuthing for) the identities of singers/places. I also offer a reminder that irrespective of how convincing assumptions may feel, the conclusions drawn from such speculation may nevertheless be erroneous as a result of the deliberate attempts to obscure and mislead that I have made here.

Listen to this song:

***Not a white country* – Leroy Johnson**

Burden[1]

In which she[2] introduces the thesis in the context of the research project within which it unfolded.

This thesis was initially conceived within an evaluation project. The purpose of that project was to evaluate a residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre, which here I call 'The House'. The House was 'owned' and managed by an Aboriginal community in NSW, although reliant upon funding from two (state and federal) government bodies. In the project we privileged questions regarding the impact of The House and its programme on the lived experience and identities of clients, staff and community members. Over the course of the research however, the questions that became more pressing for me, and that I privilege in my approach to this thesis, were questions of representation: how, in re-telling research in psychology can The House, all of us as subjects, and our relationships be represented? How to account for the pre-existing political relationships upon which the research depends, especially in terms of the position of dominant white cultural assumptions (here, the 'Self' of the 'Self-Other' dyad)?

This became even more pressing when the relationship between the university and The House dissolved. Up until then I had maintained, and enjoyed a certain luxury of, a dialogic process in the research: the development of it, ideas about it, interpretations of certain aspects, these were all discussed with people at The House. In the context of the music workshop that I conferred particular significance on, this meant I was able to talk with people about the songs they wrote and sang, about where they had come from and what it meant for them to be performing them. I was able to share my experiences of their stories with them and notice when that fired something in our connection and when it muted it. But The House underwent significant restructuring and the relationship with the University became untenable. I maintained contact with a few individuals, of whom one was formally appointed as a consultant to my thesis for a short period of time. However there is no way in which individual relationships can replace or be commensurate with those between communities. The House as we knew it and worked with it no longer existed, and neither did our relationship. The pilot stages of the evaluation were completed and reported back to The House but the larger visions nurtured in that space were never realised.

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[1] A "small parlour of introduction…where the song had not yet begun" (from *The English Patient* by Michael Ondaatje, p109).

[2] I use 'she' throughout the thesis wherever a gendered pronoun is required and either (a) specifically referencing a woman or (b) ambiguously interchangeable – for example in discussing emergent subjects in more abstract terms (see 'Narrative', for example). I do this because in the context of this work the subject under question is the embodied (cis)woman writer and not interchangeable with any differently-gendered other.

In terms of the thesis this created a particular challenge. In the feminist and narrative traditions from which I write, it is common to seek comment and review from those positioned as participants. Historically this has been undertaken as a means of addressing inequality in the distribution of power across research relationships, as well as offering a kind of confirmation of the integrity between the knowledge produced and the lives of those on whom the knowledge is ostensibly centred (see Chapter 2: *Voice*). This is a significant research practice, if one that, at times, gets burdened with the uncritical assumption that it can and will deliver on that promise. In the absence of the relationship in which the story was generated, however, how to hold the responsibility for disrupting social power relations in the way that it is told?

The challenge that this generates is re-iterated throughout the thesis – one of being responsible to, and in relation with, an Other in the representations we make even when in other relationships, other discursive communities. The project of the thesis became, in a sense, one of storytelling in academic spaces. Before I can tell a story about that, however (or rather, as part of telling it), I first need to tell one about the project that preceded it, and is critical to it.

I joined the project with an assumption (guided by the parameters of the project) that appreciation of contemporary experiences of Indigenous people required an appreciation of Indigenous cultures and histories. Sustained critiques by Indigenous academics and community workers, as well as the enduring experiences disseminated through literature, art and music[3], emphasise that in the context of appreciating drug and alcohol use, let alone therapeutic interventions, historical awareness is equally critical (Swan, 1988; Vicary & Westerman, 2004). The beginnings of this project also unfolded in a social, political context of public debate about Reconciliation, and followed the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission (hereafter, HREOC; 1997) inquiry into what became known as 'the Stolen Generations'. Reports from both of these inquiries acknowledged the historical and ongoing traumas, losses, and abiding grief bequeathed by colonisation, and referenced continuing experiences of racism and hostility from non-Indigenous communities as characteristic of the daily lives of many

[3] See, for example, the musical *Bran Nue Dae*; Ruby Langford Ginibi's *Don't Take Your Love to Town* and her biography of her son *Haunted by the Past: Nobby's Story*; the music of Archie Roach; Tonchi McIntosh's *WeeWaa Woman*.

Aboriginal and Torres-Strait Islander people (Garvey, 2001). Despite this, there were still few public or, in terms of psychological and health services, professional connections made between these realities, and the realities of problems manifest in drug and alcohol use and abuse in Indigenous communities (Brady, 1991; HREOC, 1997). There was, however, increasing recognition of the ways in which psychological literature and pedagogies reflect the standpoints, assumptions and interests of the predominantly white, middle-class and patriarchal values on which they are founded (Bradley & Selby, 2001; Ranzijn, McConnochie, Day, Nolan & Wharton, 2008). The project – an invitation to collaborate with the community of The House in evaluating their programme – was initially intended to resist and to highlight these dynamics.

The first chapter of this thesis represents an attempt to begin telling a story about the research from a standpoint that privileges Indigenous perspectives, that is, a standpoint that de-centres non-Indigenous ontologies and positions the research as 'responding to…' Thus the Burden to this thesis is necessarily brief – a 'parlour of introduction' before the Introduction, offering an explanatory note about the thesis itself.

I am mindful of Pat Dudgeon's (1999) suggestion that "there needs to be a whole discourse about diversity in the first instance, and the construction of Aboriginality, construction of Indigeneity" (in Oxenham, Cameron, Collard, Dudgeon, Garvey, Kickett, Kickett, Roberts & Whiteway, 1999, p. 52 – 53) and the recognition that constructions are shaped by *all* speakers, regardless of their positioning within those constructions. Naming is unavoidable in this thesis: naming 'others'; naming 'self'; evoking experience through words in entirely problematic ways. Constraints on the particular discursive space of this thesis, however, require that such discourse as Dudgeon suggests will be brief.

I recognise that the terms 'Indigenous' and 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander' (all used in this thesis) are European terms introduced through an imperial agenda, that they belong to the lexicon of colonialism and that their use by no means has universal agreement. This language is not the language of many of the people represented through it: how adequately can it, and I, represent them and the diversity and complexity of their self-identifications (Munro, 2007)? Munro proposes the use of 'First Nations people' instead, to refer collectively to peoples who historically identified themselves first and foremost through their tracts of 'country' and communal ties (Eora, Barkinji, Dharug etc), reminding me that in a sense Australia is a single country in landmass only. Where these country and kinship

identifications were known, they became the lingua franca for conversations within The House, however for many people the specific ties were still being untangled and for some may never be. Is to rely only on the specific, then, to erase them? Hindrances placed by colonisation on being able to locate themselves in relation to specific country/communities doesn't lessen their sovereignty, nor remove the conditions of racism and oppression that form parts of their realities. In their stories I heard significances to the terms of 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander' that would otherwise be (re)silenced. In solidarity with those relationships I privilege those terms instead of adopting 'First Nations' as Munro suggests.

Furthermore, I am mindful of the particular significance of seeking to represent a place like The House – accommodating men from multiple Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations, with great diversity in their experience of community ties – *outside* of those specific relationships. Negotiating terminology within one set of relationships looks different when the representations occur in a vastly different discursive community (such as this thesis constitutes) and it is important not to assume the same prerogatives of speech in different contexts (Munro, 2007). What I take from discussions on the problem of language is the recommendation to negotiate specific terms with the people concerned: and thus I adopt a flexible strategy in this thesis.

Where I refer to a particular work, and the author of that work uses 'Aboriginal' (e.g. Behrendt, 2000; 2003) I continue that usage. Where I am referring to practices outside of any reference to a particular work, I tend to use Indigenous (for example, the derogation of Indigenous relationships to land) to locate the practice simultaneously in the context of a more generic (imperialist) ideology[4]. I use 'non-Indigenous' when referring to subject positions available to those who do not identify as 'Indigenous' yet 'gubba' when in more specific reflection on my relationship to The House ('gubba' being commonly used in the area of NSW I lived and worked in at the time) and 'pakeha' when referring to certain subject positions available to me through my identification with/in a set of relationships in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In short, I would hope that for the reader, being sensitive to the context of the utterance would convey sufficient information about the purpose of that utterance, to trouble it being heard as a reified representation of subjectivity.

[4] See Re-memory for a more detailed discussion of why locating practices within Australia and in relation to other contexts, matters.

What the terminology does is evoke a set of political relationships that precede us and that are not undone through changing the language of reference alone. At the crux of the thesis is the question of how to represent the self of the self-Other dyad in ways that account for these pre-existing political relationships and the historical language and its problematisation has been critical to this work. Before this thesis, and early on in my involvement with that (evaluation) project, I gave a presentation – in one of the compulsory forums in which PhD students are required to share their work – on the project and on the first interviews I had held with (3) residents and staff at The House. At that presentation, someone questioned me:

> *How do you position yourself as a white woman in this research?*

I can't recall my response, but I knew then and know now that it wasn't sufficient (I wasn't sure I knew exactly what the question/er meant). The questioner approached me after the presentation and, after reassuring me in that supportive way that (some) academics do for the uninitiated, about the general scope of my presentation, said (something like):

> *You need to work on that question. Your response may have been enough for the majority of people in that room today, but it's not enough in the context of the work that you are doing.*

Throughout this thesis, you will hear resonances of that questioning voice. Generally speaking, she[5] inserts herself into the narration through the use of italics. A questioner is indeed a vital companion (at least that is what I have found) if at times an unsettling one. In relation to the questioner who spoke in the room that day, I experience gratitude as a kind of cherished connection and a form of responsibility – what to do with those questions, now that they have been asked and heard? Sometimes, when I hear myself questioning, that connection is revivified; and when the form that the questioning takes unsettles me, that revivification is often a kind of reassurance[6].

My initial response to that question? I set about trying to answer it. I took for granted, assumed, an "I" that could do so: an "I" that operated at least semi-independently of the

[5] The questioner in that forum was a 'she'; I also use 'she' to differentiate this from the epistemological tradition of masculine voices in the academy which may also be spoken through me (see 'Voice').
[6] It's also sometimes a warning, of the kind that might say 'are you sure it's really appropriate for you to speak on this matter? Who are you to question? How are you to question? And who should you ask?' I mention this to try and avoid a sweet, simplistic storyline where naïve researchers simply need reassurance in their authority to ask and respond to questions, or where questioning is privileged over other forms of speaking and over silence.

relationships that the question – the research – and inevitably, the "I", depended upon. The implications, in terms of this PhD, were that I envisaged a chapter that functioned as a 'Positioning Chapter', that the process of positioning would become an endpoint, the question would be answered and the research would follow. The research would then contribute to the coffins of knowledge in psychology through having an educative function for others wanting to know something about 'what works with Indigenous communities'. Or perhaps something about evaluation within Indigenous community contexts. Or even 'how to relate'. Of course we all had the best interests of the community at heart, and for a while it seemed as though this were somehow enough. It would be a while before I even began to question what *we* meant by 'community', though, or why *that* questioning mattered.

The *process* of positioning defied this vision: I located myself, my cultural, historical position, in relation to others. At The House, this meant flesh-and-blood relationships: gestures of welcome and response; food, touch, tears; respect, infractions, breaches and forgiveness; attraction, loyalties, tensions, divisions, commitments; emotional resonances of shame, despair, joy, love and connection. In relation to histories and critiques written by Indigenous intellectuals, activists, artists, this meant unconsummated intellectual relationships: a tentative dialogue with a departing figure; questions and changed beliefs; all of which resounded in those flesh and blood relationships at The House, at university, and at home, as much as they were reciprocally shaped by them. Positioning (the present continuing tense of a verb form should perhaps have prepared me) was not a linear, finite process but an ongoing one and contingent always on others.

This process of questioning troubled hitherto-unconsidered ontological relationships to the 'self' who is 'positioned' – the assumption that there was a fixed 'I' who was positioned, for example, one that exists outside of the relationships being considered. This is the representation of 'selfhood' with which psychological discourses are saturated. Beginning to think about what I was engaged in – which I metaphorise as the production of stories – precipitated a slew of other questions in the wake of the Questioner: How have the historical positions that preceded us influenced the lived experience of this research? How are we engaged in projects of self and other representation in the telling of our research stories? What are the implications of the representations we make for lived experience of self and others? How are our relationships enabled and constrained by the positions made available, and how we take them up?

The relationships upon which the immediate project depended alternately teetered and rested upon cultural, historical, political positions and the relationships between them: positions inscribed in particular ways by histories unfolded within the specific landscapes we stood within.

> Our historical landscape has caught us all in its intricate mazes; at some points we meet across plains and gorges. Our convergence might be fleeting and unknown. Sometimes the connections are deep and profound and at others we are thrown apart seemingly with no possibility of encounter, let alone dialogue. Such is the story of indigenous and non-indigenous Australians: we inhabit the landscape on different terms, under different cultural premises, and for different purposes. Our collective lives mark out the stories of invasion, attempted conquest, conflict, curiosity, convergence, disdain, co-operation, and abiding friendship across this ancient terrain.
>
> (Saunders, in dialogue with Huggins & Tarrago, 2000, p. 42)

Our positions require other positions, and pre-existing political relationships (between them); surely, then, representing a position requires the re-presentation of relationships, as well as that terrain, and doing so in a particular cultural context: that of psychology in an academic milieu[7]. This context too – of research, of researchers, of university contracts for community collaborations, of non-Indigenous cultural, historical and political patterns and values – this also required explicit representation even though those relationships were not the relationships that I, at face value, moved specifically within when visiting The House. Yet when I sat with members of The House for a week, drawn into the music workshop that became the focus – a lingering burden to a different song – of this thesis, I had to question the presence of those relationships, too: How am I tuned in to receive the songs in the way that I do? How to account for what I interpret as differences in how I hear them, make sense of them, and, through them, make sense of and offer a position for others to take up/enable a particular connection?

> *It sounds as though you came to a place where your earlier assumption – that the project required an appreciation of Indigenous cultures and histories – was unsettled insofar as it became seen as a necessary but not sufficient condition; that addressing the Questioner's question required an appreciation of your own cultures and histories, of your histories as shared, and of an awareness of histories (and your stories) from*

[7] Where you can insert words that are obscure in English, and all too often get away with it – no translation assumed necessary.

Indigenous standpoints. How does this inhere in the context of writing stories from the research as a thesis requires?

In the context of writing, all these questions come together as a problematic: How to represent the position of the dominant cultural assumptions in the research (the 'self' in this instance) in a way that accounts for the (pre-existing, political) relationships upon which the research – and questions of positioning – depends? The relationships alluded to here, then, are both personal and positional (the argument being that each requires the other). Drawing on the extensive body of feminist scholarship that precedes me enabled me to transform the question of representing those relationships from one of personal-professional boundaries alone, into a problem of form: the first can be misread solely as a question of ethics; the second is unavoidably theoretical in its scope, although also not only theoretical (Gilligan, 1982; Taylor, Gilligan & Sullivan, 1996; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2003). Similarly, through Critical Psychology, Nicholas Rose (1991) drew the relations between psychology, or "psy" knowledges, and these questions more broadly than I have represented them here, noting that psychology "like the other "human" sciences, has played a fundamental role in the creation of the kind of present in which we in "the West" have come to live". That is, the context of re-presenting these relations within psychology does not 'belong' to me as a student of that discipline, but applies to me as a subject of a social order in which psychology has a presence and effects. The question, then, is also theoretical because it draws attention to the form that (psy)knowledge takes and the ways in which knowledge (inclusive of form) renders a subject.

From a feminist standpoint, and leaning towards narrative theory (see 'Methodology') I began thinking about how subjectivity tends to be articulated within psychology, as a discourse within white epistemological tradition, and what the implications of individually constituted selfhood are for representing a self-in-relation.

If I experience myself in relation to another, experience something that I name Change through those relationships, and that Change has something to do with a flicker of apprehension of a world beyond the narrative horizons of an individualistic ontology…what are the implications of telling that story through a mode of representation that turns upon a singular 'I'? Whose voices are heard, whose are excluded? What unfinished business does this (re)produce?

Read through discourses of feminism, Narrative Theories opened a space for me within psychology in which to connect questions of representation with flesh-and-blood questions of embodied subjectivity – to touch invisible strings between theory and experience and to treat what might otherwise be considered as a methodological matter (modes of representation) as an ethical and moral one, too.

Autoethnography offered a means of being able to invoke multiple voices: within the monologic requirements of a PhD, this seemed to offer a more appropriate form of representation, one that requires the dispersal and multiple (re)constitution of a speaking subject. As well as enabling a story of the research to be told, a multivocal form enables the vibrations of those invisible strings to be heard resounding through different relationships and in different contexts. At times, the Questioner returns in/through the telling, to wonder at the implications of those resonances for the relationships and for the project.

The story that this thesis tells about the research, then, is not an evaluation story (per se) and neither is it about The House (as such). Rather, it acquiesces to the historically and ontologically prior conditions of its own possibility, and takes as its subject the subjectivity of the researcher, the retelling of whose experiences constitutes 'the data'.

Taking up a theoretical position that subjectivity is inextricable from social context means that tracing these resonances through re-telling some of 'my' experiences and stories of this research back into psychology necessarily constitutes a theoretical contribution. Perhaps, through this, there are other stories that this thesis will contribute to the telling of, that are not of the project at all. And perhaps somewhere this contribution will also be realised within the communities that enabled this research – and researcher – to unfold (see Songs From a Resting Place). Truth be told, I'm not sure. One problem with suggesting there are limitations to agency – which follows from a supposition that myself is not mine alone – is that I'm not sure upon what ground I could conceivably stand to state "this is the contribution": there is always something left for another to decide. I might dare to suggest, however, that the 'Other' who may be making their own decisions in this field, and facilitating other decisions – even elsewhere – will themselves be a student (at least, of sorts), and concerned with Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships within this sunburned land.

If that Other is concerned with the politics of representation – of how we tell the stories we tell as much as what we say through them – then they may find support, encouragement and

provocation within these pages. And if that Other is also concerned with questions of their own subjectivity as cultural phenomena, implicated in political relationships that they desire to resist and yet find themselves ontologically ill-equipped to fathom, then they may find my efforts to represent an alternative subject useful.

For if conversations with narrative theory and autoethnography encourage me to wonder about the implications for embodied subjectivity, then being tethered in relationships with/in The House, and with textual histories offered from embodied Indigenous standpoints (Historical Verses), compels me to treat subjectivity as simultaneously *emplaced*[8]. The relationships I write specifically of, to and from in this thesis, have long and deep roots within Australian soil[9]. To the extent that this thesis constitutes a contribution, I hope it is to the transformation of those relations, which I first glimpsed as a possibility in connections both fleeting and "deep and profound".

[8] In conversation with a colleague (in Human Geography) I learn that emplacement is valued in Human Geography and considered distinct from embodiment – the province of psychology, apparently. And I became aware that I was treating them as enmeshed – something I attribute to my historical involvement with first asking questions about subjectivity in dialogue with texts where it is spoken of in the same breath as land.
[9] And let's not forget that the earth doesn't stop at the sea…

"…the most fundamental trick one is perpetuating in the very act of telling is the idea of starting at the beginning, when in reality 'you have started at the end'."

(Freeman (and Sartre), 2001, p. 95 – 96)

All Aboriginal people know that the past is not 200 years ago, and it is important that I first talk to you about the past if you are to begin to understand the unfinished business of today.

- Pat Swan

The year is 1988 and Pat Swan is speaking at the Mental Health and Status of the Nation Conference in NSW.

It is 21 years since the Constitutional Referendum that allowed the inclusion of Indigenous people in the census.

It is 21 years since the policy for removing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and homes formally ended (in NSW).

It is 16 years since the establishment of (and violent retribution towards) the Aboriginal Tent Embassy on the lawns of Parliament House in Canberra.

The year is 1988.

Three years from now (1991), a Royal Commission will release their formal report into Aboriginal deaths in custody from 1 January 1980 to 30 May 1989.

Four years from now (1992) the legal doctrine of *terra nullius*, which named Australia as "land of no one" will be declared false in the High Court (*Mabo*).

Seven years from now (1995), Pat Swan's paper will be reproduced in the Aboriginal Medical Services newsletter.

Eight years from now (1996) a further High Court decision will recognise that subsequent pastoral leases over land do not extinguish native title (*Wik*)[10].

Nine years from now (1997), the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission will release their report into the "Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families" (*Stolen Generations*).

Twenty years from now, the (newly incumbent, Labour) government will deliver a formal apology at the first sitting of Parliament.

Twenty years from now, I will write Pat Swan's words into this thesis, because they continue to resonate today.

The year is 1988 and elsewhere in this sunburned land, whilst Pat Swan is speaking, celebrations abound in honour of the Bicentennary of Australia.

[10] And be immediately subjected to emendation by the Government

Bridge

‘Burden’ introduced questions of positioning and represented this process as relational and dynamic. It also introduced the idea that some understanding of history was important in appreciating the research context and how positioning unfolded within it. The histories that became important to appreciate were those in which the research, research relationships, and the significance of questioning positioning, made sense as political phenomena.

The House invited the research. As such it is appropriate that I contextualise The House and the invitation within Indigenous historical perspectives when introducing stories from the research. It was appropriate, that is, even before the research awakened an appreciation of how significant it is that Indigenous presences already precede us albeit often unrecognised or unacknowledged.

The research relationships are thus also predicated upon the historical exclusion and denigration of Indigenous perspectives, in favour of white versions of “History”. As the research team took up a position of acknowledging and resisting this pattern, the following “attempt to begin telling a story about the research from a standpoint that privileges Indigenous perspectives” is consistent with the ethical, moral and political commitments of the project.

The following *Chapter 1: Historical Verses* construct a framework for readings of Indigenous perspectives, ushering in a ‘critical history’ in three parts:

1a: ‘Rememory’ grounds these histories within relationships to land, articulating the lie of *terra nullius* with which ‘official history’ is threaded.

1b: ‘Terra knowlegius: existing fiction’ considers *terra nullius* in further detail as an epistemological tradition.

1c: ‘Beloved’ reprises representations of subjectivities within *terra nullius* and considers how they inhere in research stories. Drawing on Beloved as a metaphor for embodied memory, it creates a space for appreciating the implications of the preceding discussions for experiences and representations of subjectivity, and thus for interpersonal relationships.

Chapter 1: Historical Verses

Leroy Johnson sings of seeing ghosts, and Pat Swan speaks of a past that is not 200 years ago. Both voices can be heard to speak of an ancient past (continuing) that inheres in the present (is also present). Both voices can also be heard to speak of a more 'recent' past[11], "a newer historical memory imprinted onto the land as a result of the experience of colonialism" (Behrendt, 2003, p. 36).

> *I should have started with a question – "how might (that) memory be given voice?" – except that we are already beyond that question and engaged in a response, by hearing of the memory through others who precede us in this text. I am called to attend to history (or "something that seems to (me) to resemble a call[12]") only to realise that I already am.*

In locating herself within her (2003) work, Behrendt writes of historical actions that preceded each incremental constitutional and social shift that I used in reading Pat Swan's work[13]. She writes of being "born into a generation of Indigenous people who reaped the benefits of the civil rights movement of the 1960s – including greater access to education" yet nevertheless being "educated within a school system that taught nothing of Australia's history of the dispossession of its Indigenous people or of the removal of Aboriginal children – historical actions that defined my Indigenous family" (p. 1). Through coming to understand her own family history, she writes a greater awareness of the extent of her classmates' ignorance, and her anger and frustration that this ignorance was sustained. I recognised the ignorance she spoke of in my own experiences and in my own understanding. Indicative of a continued resonance, this repetition of ignorance also suggests connections between the historical and the inter-subjective and begins to gesture towards a place for my relationships with/in The House and this research to fall. Repetition also raises questions about what keeps such awkward tenacity of ignorance in place.

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[11] I realise I am implying a linear pattern here, where the past recedes from the present which is problematic for privileging a particular ontological relationship with time. Perhaps if we spoke of 'present' as 'presence' – time would become a question of the company we keep…

[12] I've borrowed from Spivak (1998, p. 21) here: intellectual support for treading lightly in a text. Suggestions of call and response, responsiveness and responsibility are repeated through this thesis.

[13] Behrendt's introduction was the catalyst for the opening a-synchronous timeline taking shape upon the page

Dudgeon and Fielder's (2006) writing places Behrendt's[14] story (including the ignorance) within a social, historical context in which "Indigenous people and their culture were either invisible or denigrated" (p. 397) within 'mainstream' Australia. Being invisible, and being visible but denigrated, can both be understood as forms of exclusion. According to Dudgeon and Fielder's critical history of Indigenous peoples within academia specifically, there the exclusion was total: Indigenous people were denied access to educational institutions, as well as being misrepresented within the curricula taken up and taught through those institutions.

From this perspective, the argument for contemporary understanding being historical is compelling. Yet as Dudgeon and Fielder (2006) demonstrate, the very exclusions that are traced here have significant implications for what becomes known and repeated as "official History" (see also Moreton-Robinson, 2000a; Rigney, 2001; Smith, 1999). Many Indigenous people, they note, have to re-encounter and re-learn, as adults, their own histories and those of their families due to these exclusions. Behrendt clearly traced the implications of 'official History' for her – the implications of an exclusion that includes her family – and goes on, in her book 'Achieving Social Justice' to trace some of the implications for Indigenous people more widely. She also advocates strongly for recognising Indigenous rights and well-being as not "merely an 'Indigenous issue' or 'Indigenous problem' (but issues that)…pose questions and have implications for Australian society as a whole" (p. 14).

Behrendt's feelings towards the ongoing ignorance of her classmates suggest something of how these implications are manifest in contemporary contexts. Similarly, Dudgeon and Fielder (2006), and Swan (1988) locate historical exclusions in relation to limitations in contemporary understanding. Given that contemporary understandings of Aboriginal people are framed by historically available discourses (Dudgeon, Mallard, Oxenham & Fielder, 2002; Dudgeon & Pickett, 2000) in which they have been misrepresented and maligned, then contemporary relationships are indeed already implicated.

Within such a framework of understanding, most non-Indigenous people continue to exist in states of ignorance about the history that is shared with Indigenous people even while, as Moreton-Robinson (2000b) writes, they occupy a position as the perceived centre of Australian identity and do so as a result of "unearned privileges" conferred through dispossession. If historical dispossession and the removal of Indigenous children "defined" Behrendt's Indigenous family, then how do they also define non-Indigenous families? How

[14] and my

specifically do they orient one towards the other? These also, then, form aspects of the "unfinished business of today" that we turn to the past to understand. And yet the preceding discussion tells us that the very past we understand ourselves to turn to is not distinct from where we stand in the present. Our contemporary positions are historical hence Dudgeon and Fielder (2006) propose that:

> ...to understand contemporary times and make space within official 'History', a re-telling of this history from an Indigenous perspective, or at least one that acknowledges Indigenous interests, is mandatory (p. 397).

Is it not only *what* history has to say, then, but also how it speaks – who speaks, and that they do so – that is (also) at issue here? From this, I take a suggestion that reading history from the official historical record will not enable the understanding that is required as much as it will reproduce what is already assumed known. Reading history from an Indigenous standpoint, according to Dudgeon and Fielder, involves looking "for the messages inscribed in the words, always subjecting the text to critical analysis" (p. 398). The limitations of the historical record may therefore be addressed partially when those records are read for what they do not say, or for a trace of the logic upon which their legitimation as 'Official History' rests. To privilege Indigenous perspectives then, entails an engagement with Indigenous re-tellings and critical re-readings of histories to/of the present. In this turn to re-telling and re-reading, there is a resonance with critical theoretical approaches, such as that of Rose (1991) with respect to writing a 'critical history' to/of psychology. "Such an endeavour" he writes, "would be critical…in the sense of opening a space for careful analytical judgement". He goes on to say that:

> A critical history…is a way of utilizing investigations of the past to enable one to think differently about the present, to interrogate that in our contemporary experience that we take for granted, through an examination of the conditions under which our current forms of truth have been made possible.

Following from the arguments above, the 'current forms of truth' that are at issue here, are those of 'official history' and the epistemological position privileged within them. The location of this introduction within Indigenous perspectives of history is a necessary precondition to understanding contemporary experiences (of which this thesis is also one) and to begin to apprehend the conditions of possibility that enable the perpetuation of what comes

to be regarded as true. What follows, then, is not a history of 'facts': not a narrative of significant moments, events, even people. While it draws on these – *terra nullius*, land rights, the 1967 Referendum, inquiries into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and Stolen Generations, critiques of government policy, etc – it is the process and the interpretation of them that becomes the focus. In that place, a meeting place of process and interpretation, I hope to connect this thesis to relational histories – historical traces of relationships – that precede us. The historian may be disappointed; and yet I hope she may also be relieved. As a psychologist, I'm not sure I'm suitably authorised to write history, after all. I merely join my voice with others who would argue that psychology is necessarily historical, and – with its concern for experience, relationships, subjectivity – imposes its own possibilities and limits upon how historical enquiry is undertaken within the frameworks it enables.

In the context of this thesis, this is the framework in which I attempt to approach that newer historical memory that Behrendt wrote of: turning to Indigenous re-tellings of its history and weaving them together with contemporary understandings of what that memory has bequeathed with respect to (our subjectivities via the positions available in), research and research relationships. In doing so, I have tried to respect the fact that for many Indigenous Australians the historical remembrances traced here are "reincarnated daily…and not easily forgotten" (Garvey, 2001, p. 47; see also Stanton, 1999), and to treat the stories shared, the realisations reached, with the respect and care for living things.

I was only a small child when we were taken from my born country. I only remember a little of those times there but my memories are very precious to me. Most of my life has been spent away from my country but before I tell you any more of my story I want to tell you what I remember about the land I come from. It will always be home, the place I belong to.

(Auntie Rita Huggins, in Huggins & Huggins, 1994, p. 7)

1a: Re-memory[15]

(In which she traces terra nullius as an existing fiction in official versions of history)

The notion of a memory evokes something intangible, yet Behrendt's use of it also evokes the tangible and tactile (an imprint on the land[16]); this imprinting upon land also moves something that I might otherwise understand as personal into a space in which it is shared, social, and physical; furthermore, through its relation to the land memory becomes connected to that which is essential to life, and therefore past and present (as long as land remains, perhaps); following Behrendt we are also invited to attend to something that is not a thing at all, and that follows from experiences (is not immediately accessible): it is *of* colonialism. In these figurations, then, land, being, and colonialism are interwoven, entwined, suggesting that in the context of this newer historical memory, accessing an understanding of each requires, to some extent, movement through the other: it is understanding ourselves to speak with soil on our lips.

While 'soil' may be read to connote geographical specificity it may also be read universally[17]. Dudgeon, Mallard, Oxenham & Fielder (2002) note that what can be considered characteristic manifestations of colonialism in Australia were also experienced by many Indigenous people elsewhere and may be considered characteristic of colonialism in general: genocide, forced relocation from land and kin, enslavement and exploitation, appropriation of land and resources, assimilation, control and destruction of cultural practices (see also Smith, 1999). This locates the (re)writing of history within Australia in relation to the project of "Indigenous peoples as an international group…to challenge, understand and have a shared language for talking about the history, the sociology, the psychology and the politics of imperialism and colonialism as an epic story telling of huge devastation, painful struggle and persistent survival" (Smith, 1999, p. 19). The (re)writing of Australia's history is not novel on the world stage, then, and yet how am I, in the context of this thesis, to engage with an international perspective within a moment of critical history that explicitly predicates itself upon specific Indigenous perspectives? How to appreciate the connection without losing the specificity of the relationships of/from which I speak?

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[15] Toni Morrison, 'Beloved' – I am drawing on Alison Ravenscroft's (2004) interpretation of the term as "emphasising the ways in which history and memory are always active processes, re-assemblages of fragments, re-membering." (p. 5), something I later revisit in relation to methodological strategies.

[16] and what kind of imprint? Like the tread marks of a cattle truck? The indelible footprints of people displaced, 'frightened, cold and crying'?

[17] Rememorying the earth as mother…?

This questioning touches on the relationship between imperialism and colonialism: according to Smith (1999), two crucial and interconnected concepts "which are used across a range of disciplines, often with meanings which are taken for granted" (p. 21) and to which the lived experiences of Indigenous peoples contribute another dimension of understanding. Indigenous experiences of imperialism reposition the concept (from celebratory bicentennial narratives for example) as a complex, multifaceted project incorporating and requiring economic expansion, subjugation of others, ideological and epistemological quickening and of which colonialism is but one expression (Smith, 1999).

Smith asserts that as an expression of imperialism, and in the acquisitive pursuit of land and resources, colonialism entails the subjugation of colonial bodies as well as Indigenous bodies. If the intended colonies were to realise their specific potential and fulfil the desires of the imperial imagination, then their development needed to be controlled. The particular tensions and power relations of colonial outposts (including the manifestation of these in relation to the pre-existent Indigenous bodies of particular places) influenced the formation of colonial societies and identities, making "the stories of colonialism part of a grander narrative and yet part also of a very local, very specific experience" (p. 23). This resonates with a sustained critique of colonialist relations in Australia by Moreton-Robinson, in which she considers how ideas of race "are closely linked to ideas about legitimate ownership and formation of the nation, with whiteness and nationality woven tightly together" (2004, foreword).

Moreton-Robinson (1999) advocates for an unpacking of "the specificities of contexts" that is *inclusive* of these "relations between contexts and bodies" (p. 32) and notes that an obscuration of (in her analysis, sexualised and racialised) bodies *across* contexts functions to re-centre (some, white) bodies as the norm[18]. From this I conclude that appreciating colonialism (in an Australian and international context) requires an engagement with other forms of social power relations and with how power is exercised through other contexts and bodies as part of an imperialist agenda. To unpack the specificity of experiences of colonialism within Australia at the expense of appreciating their international contexts and precedents, including gendered/raced relations specific to the colonial position, produces colonisation as an irregularity and risks reassuring (some of) us that history, indeed, never repeats.

[18] this also seems significant in a context of soil-stained lips: an implicit argument being made for colonialism to be treated as embodied…

As I understand Moreton-Robinson's argument now, erasing the connections within and between contexts constitutes a kind of forgetting that enables repetition to recur in an apparently innocent (or at least incomprehensible) fashion. Privileging the present-continuing tense in history creates space for implications to be understood as incurred within and between the specific contexts and bodies that constitute "contemporary times" and relations. This movement, in a sense, sees us standing within an historical imprint (re/comprising body, memory, land) within a shadow (a memory of an imprint?). Where feasible (that is, within the limits of con/text and representation), I will endeavour to locate readings of Australian imprints with reference to what they are also reminders of[19].

In an Australian context, the entwining of colonialism, land and memory goes by a particular name: *terra nullius.* The name *terra nullius* has shifted over the past 3 decades from being "an obscure legal term known only to a few experts" into a more readily accessible public domain, as a focal issue manifest in "intense national debate about property and sovereignty, law and morality; about the past, the present and the future" (Reynolds, 1996, p. 1). While it is far beyond the scope of this thesis – or the skill of its writer – to do justice to these debates and the threads that inform them, some of those intersections can be traced here.

The obscure legal premise that *terra nullius* encapsulated was the notion that this continent (now known as a continent and in the singular as Australia), 'belonged to no-one' and was effectively (although not literally) empty when the first representatives of the Crown became aware of it. Had the Crown acknowledged the fullness of Indigenous being in country, had the Crown acknowledged the legitimacy of Indigenous pre-occupation, they would have been required under Crown law to explicitly declare war or to negotiate terms of use of the land, including residency. These were the accepted doctrines of "conquest and cession" under which colonies were 'lawfully' established (Moreton-Robinson, 2003, p. 24; see also O'Donoghue, 1998). In an international (and internationally historical) context of colonisation, *terra nullius* enabled an avoidance of any public declaration of war and the appearance of a negation of any legal requirement to negotiate.

Should the illustration of Crown avoidance of negotiation be read to imply that any negotiation would have ensured socially just relations between the Crown and Indigenous

[19] at times this referencing may be made through questioning and footnoting

peoples[20]? It seems obvious from other countries where formal 'negotiation' was required that this is not the case. In Aotearoa/New Zealand and Canada the presence of a Treaty has generated little or no protection for Māori and First Nations peoples against the Crown[21]. Similarly, Behrendt's analysis of the Australian Constitution raises questions as to the capacity of those foundational myths enshrined in colonial culture to ensure social justice. Her (2003) book addresses the limits of Australian law even when it is operating 'legally' according to its own framework, to ensure justice for Indigenous people (and cultures) where appearing as subjects within those legal frames (see also Watson, 2005; see also Reynolds, 1996 for further analysis of the (il)legal precedents to *terra nullius*). The international legality of international law, then, is also problematic and, while beyond the scope of this thesis to address adequately, emphasises the problems of ignoring global contexts in considering the specifics of colonialism in any given time/place.

What, though, does such an illustration enable in terms of understanding these historical relations and their interpolation into present manifestations of a moment? One reading is that the authors, by locating the premise of *terra nullius* within an international, historical context of colonialism, historicise its illegality. Any contemporary claims of a well-intentioned but misguided past are severely problematised through such an analysis[22].

Another reading is enabled through reading Watson's (2005) paper titled "Illusionists and Hunters: Being Aboriginal in this Occupied Space", in which she reprises the concepts of conquest and cession. The imagery of occupation employed there can be heard to suggest a war-like state – if an undeclared one – casting contemporary manifestations of relations between Indigenous people and the state in particular ways[23]. In these relations, she describes the state's designation of 'winners' "as those who are prepared to negotiate between the cracks of the sovereign power of the state and the unrecognised, displaced space of Aboriginal sovereignty" (p. 15). Here, negotiation – a pre-condition to cession – takes place between sovereign bodies and remains tied to what the state and its representatives will

[20] or that legal justification can offer absolution from moral responsibilities

[21] Instead of reading *terra nullius* as the denial of sovereignty alone, and the presence of perceived negotiation (a treaty) as proof of not denying sovereignty, perhaps colonisation may be read as *requiring* the denial of sovereignty (humanity), where that denial may take many forms. An argument for specificity is that the form it takes, matters, without implying more or less value to other forms, or to difference...

[22] The invocation of 'good intentions' was commonly deployed, for example, by the Howard Government to undermine what they labelled 'black armband' views of history and to refute Indigenous Human Rights claims (see, for example, Stanton, 1999)

[23] As well as undeclared war, or perhaps, what undeclared war also requires, 'occupied' can be heard to reprise the pre-occupation of/by land for Indigenous peoples; the occupation – a kind of squatting? – of the space she speaks into by the newer historical memory of colonisation; and…and…and…

recognise in another. Either declaration of war or instigation of negotiation requires recognition of a pre-existent sovereignty. *Terra nullius*, by negating the need to observe the accepted (if still potentially unjust) procedures of conflict and cession, negated the existence of any form of Indigenous sovereignties. Through this disavowal of Indigenous sovereignties *terra nullius* contravenes the international standards (of conquest and cession) of the time (Behrendt, 2003). In terms of understanding historical relations, then, a further reading suggests that Indigenous critiques of *terra nullius* take for granted – claim as a starting place – a space of Indigenous being and belonging that is not conquered and has not been ceded. This troubles an understanding of contemporary experience that is predicated on an assumption that Indigenous peoples have been annihilated, defeated, or even – in a sense - displaced[24] (Moreton-Robinson, 2003). It is the colonial position that is out of place. From this position the continued exclusions of Indigenous perspectives from what is repeated as history and from the academic/intellectual discourses that resource psychology[25], is remarkable.

Being ill-equipped to engage fully with the scholarship surrounding sovereignty in its legal incarnation, I hesitantly borrow it into psychology instead – a discipline that is predicated upon an interest in (human) subjectivity and experience and therefore requires a theoretical formulation of 'the subject' to operate. Contextualising the specificity of psychology in Australia in relation to its international roots reminds me that those theoretical formulations are connected to the same historical assumptions that Crown and Constitution are vested in and with, thus critical readings of 'the Crown' and sovereignty have a bearing on critical readings of psychology. Here, readings of sovereignty and *terra nullius* already alluded to (Behrendt, 2003; Moreton-Robinson, 2003; Watson, 2002, 2005) suggest that if both courses of colonialism require other sovereign bodies for the Crown to exist in relation to then sovereignty is inextricably connected to the relationships through which it is realised. If, following Smith (1999), the process of colonialism – articulated here through discourses of *terra nullius* – is also a process through which entities are called into being as particular bodies, then is the supposed sovereignty of the Crown (and psychology, as I will elaborate further on) called into question when the relationship is shown to be untenable?

[24] And through this revelation, the centre of Australian identity as non-Indigenous, colonial and white – alluded to earlier through the readings of Behrendt and Moreton-Robinson – is suddenly placed off-centre…
[25] And not psychology alone…as the predominant academic community of which I am part, however, this is where I offer my reflections, as a recognition of the responsibilities that membership confers

Watson (2002) writes that the "experience lived before the time of Cook[26] was more than the idea of sovereignty" (p. 255). She then goes on to describe relationships between the Dreaming, law, land and Indigenous 'ways of being' (see also, Martin, 2003) that this concept of sovereignty is connected to and yet also misses: of Indigenous law that flows from

> …the dreaming, the place of lawfulness, a time before, a time now and a time we are always coming too. A time when the first songs were sung, as they sung the law. Laws were birthed as were the ancestors – out of the land and the songs and the stories recording our beginnings and birth connections to homelands and territories now known as Australia. Our laws are lived as a way of life, they are not written down because the knowledge of law comes through the living of it, as law is lived, sung, danced, painted, eaten, walked upon, and loved; law lives in all things.[27]
>
> (Watson, 2002, p. 254 – 255)

How to read this, if reading occurs within that set of relations that Moreton-Robinson argues are defined by *terra nullius*?

> In (a personal aside) response to Watson, I wonder at the origins of the law as I know it (Crown law), and I wonder that I do not know, and have never wondered before.
>
> In a (critical theoretical) response to Watson, I wonder how *terra nullius* is understood in the context of this un-ceded, ineffable [what?] that 'sovereignty' is here used to signify?

Terra nullius, it appears, falls somewhere between an unrecognised space of Indigenous sovereignty and the sovereign power of the state that Watson writes of, writing a relationship within the 'cracks' of negotiation. Talking *terra nullius* may therefore partially address the need for critical engagement – adopting a stance that is consciously anti-colonial vis-à-vis naming a reality that the obscurity of *terra nullius* may also have obscured (see Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006). It enables me to approach the experience of a newer memory and attend to the relationships that bind it…acknowledging that attending to the relationships to the degree that practicing respect for another's sovereignty calls for, might even call the very concepts of 'the Crown' and sovereignty-as-understood-in-colonialist-discourse into question.

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[26] Captain James Cook, acting as emissary of the Crown when he was (dis)credited with 'discovering' the eastern coast of Australia, later returning to 'claim' the continent for the Crown.
[27] Elsewhere, I would receive and respond to this differently…

Behrendt (2003) has traced the ways in which sovereignty, in euro-centric discourse, is embedded in specific relations of being and land that bear historical influences of Lockean economics. Within this framework, sovereignty appears as separate from land, able to be wielded over land and subjects, both of which are subject to appearing as 'commodities' in social, political discourse. The laws that Watson describes, that pre-date the arrival of Crown 'sovereignty' on 'Australian' soil however, appear indelibly bound with country and interwoven through the very existence, and living, of life. In the relationships between land, law, and subjects that predominate colonial worldviews, how are the relations Watson describes received? Can they be acknowledged without being understood (when understanding, in those same traditions, seems to precede a kind of ownership of – an idea, a body, a continent)? And in relation to the laws that Watson describes, how must those of *terra nullius* appear?

The complexities of Indigenous relations to land may similarly be heard through the memories that Aunty Rita Huggins (1994, p. 7) shared earlier, evoking a sense of the contours, and limits, of *terra nullius*:

> I was only a small child when we were taken from my born country. I only remember a little of those times there but my memories are very precious to me. Most of my life has been spent away from my country but before I tell you any more of my story I want to tell you what I remember about the land I come from. It will always be home, the place I belong to.

Aunty Rita goes on to speak of her 'born country', as she calls it elsewhere: "…the land of Bidjara-Pitjara people…now known as Carnarvon Gorge, 600 kilometres northwest of Brisbane. This was also the land of the Kairi, Nuri, Karingbal, Longabulla, Jiman and Wadja people" (p. 7). Far from relations to land being non-existent, as claimed under the auspices of *terra nullius*, these relationships are complex, multi-faceted, specific to traditional areas and connected to interpersonal ties of kinship (Behrendt, 2003; Moreton-Robinson, 2003). As well as relations to country suggesting particular intra- and inter-subjective binds, they are furthermore perpetuated within complex inter-social relations that signify a specifically "multi-cultural" milieu existed within Australia "long before migrants arrived" (Moreton-Robinson, 2003, p. 31). The persistence of a social fabric that undulates across an estimated more than 500 different language groups (see Moreton-Robinson, 2003) suggests not only

'more than sovereignty', but more than 'one' sovereignty, and similarly that the *process* by which multiple 'sovereignties' are realised also differs from what is offered through *terra nullius* (conquest and cession). *Terra nullius* can be heard to demand a single head of state or equivalent, from which title to the whole continent – as a singular – could be contested[28]. How can it account for the coexistence of singularity and multiplicity?

Furthermore, in the figuration of sovereignty recognisable in *terra nullius*, the land is a commodity that can be traded, bought, or otherwise acquired through stealth or violence, and yet Paul Behrendt describes the map of relations articulated through the Dreaming as, in part, an "affinity with the land…like the bonding between a parent and a child. You have responsibilities to look after and care for a child. You can speak for a child. But you don't own a child" (in Behrendt, 2003, p. 33) [29]. His sense of 'ownership' here is evoked contrapuntally to the notion of "ownership for the white people (which) is something on a piece of paper. We have a different system. You can no more sell our land than sell the sky" (p. 33).

His words resonate with earlier assertions of Indigenous sovereignty as neither ceded nor conquered – here, significantly, because it cannot be. The experience that sovereignty gestures towards, then, is also 'more than sovereignty' because it cannot be 'made subject to' in the ways 'sovereignty' appears within the cultural historical framework of *terra nullius*.

If sovereignty – itself borrowing, as Watson illustrates, from the language and meanings of the Crown – is not to be trusted to carry something so integral into dialogue, then what is its use here[30]? Perhaps it will be useful to treat 'sovereignty' as I hear it used in the literature consulted here – as a strategic language that allows us to approach an experience of exclusion wielded as injustice that Indigenous people have traced in the imprint of *terra nullius* "as it draws its imagined lines across the earth's body[31]" (Watson, 2002, p. 255). While it may not, in this context, as some readers may have hoped, render the "experience before the time of Cook" transparent and accessible to our understanding, speaking of sovereignty nonetheless

[28] Although see Reynolds (1996) for a discussion on the extent to which this assumption was itself a further contravention of the laws upon which *terra nullius* was based.
[29] See also O'Donoghue, 1998
[30] This may be a useful question for those of us invested (whether spiritually, ideologically, or in terms of our careers) in 'the talking cure' to also consider in relation to psychology…
[31] The imagined lines can be read figuratively, and also witnessed literally, in the naming and binding of state, territory, even suburban boundaries (see Moreton-Robinson, 1999, for a discussion of the imposition of borders and names as iconoclasm – an act of imposing and celebrating white histories and the myths of a white country, upon a sunburned land).

enables us to approach an understanding of that newer historical imprint and of what it denies. The emphasis on the manifestation and perpetuation of colonialism through discursive means draws our attention to the intellectual and ideological roots of *terra nullius*. In doing so, it enables questions to be asked of the spaces that are enabled through white discourse, perhaps to question the very grounds of the relationship that we might understand ourselves to be in.

The following section undertakes to ask these questions through examining *terra nullius* as an epistemological artefact. Borrowing examples of legal discourse and reading them through Moreton-Robinson's (1999) metaphor of *terra knowlegius*, I question what discursive spaces are enabled within narratives historically articulated through *terra nullius*, from which a subject might emerge. In concerning my reading with the emergence of a subject, I am taking up a position favoured by psychology (albeit frequently implicitly).

Our ontological relationship to land, the ways that country is constitutive of us, and therefore the inalienable nature of our relation to land, marks a radical difference between us and the non-Indigenous…Indigenous people's sense of belonging is derived from the Dreaming…The ancestral beings created animals, plants, humans and the physiographic features of the country associated with them…Because the ancestral spirits gave birth to humans, they share a common life force, which emphasises the unity of humans with the earth rather than their separation. The ontological relationship occurs through the inter-substantiation of ancestral beings, humans and land; it is a form of embodiment… This ontological relationship to country was not destroyed through colonization.

(Moreton-Robinson, 2003, p. 31 – 32)

1b: Terra Knowlegius: existing fiction

(in which she locates terra nullius within and as epistemological tradition)

I have borrowed the term '*terra knowlegius'*, or "knowledge belonging to no-one", from Moreton-Robinson's (1999) critique of the historical and continuing appropriation of Indigenous knowledges through dominant colonial practices[32]. This assumption of *terra knowlegius*, she argues, is taken to confer a prerogative upon non-Indigenous scientists and enquirers to claim knowledge for their own uses, and is an artefact of the traditions in which students in academia are taught. They are taught, she argues, "as though they can know everything…to believe that all knowledge is available to them for the taking and everything is knowable" (p. 32). In deconstructing academic practices through which research subjectivities are constituted, Moreton-Robinson's critique suggests implications for intersubjective relationships that speak to the place psychology and this project stands within. Within the ontological formulation she describes, it is assumed that knowledges from beyond the realm defined by white western knowledge systems may nevertheless be appropriated into those systems because they are construed as "unowned and therefore free" (p. 32). *Terra knowlegius* therefore locates *terra nullius* within a more elaborate context than its etymology as a legal premise suggests. In *terra nullius* we see the manifestation of worlds and realities imagined via colonialism as an epistemological position.

The simultaneous derogation and marginalisation of Indigenous people, culture and knowledges within academia speaks to further assumptions about the legitimacy and primacy of some forms of knowledge (Moreton-Robinson, 1999; Dudgeon & Fielder, 2006; Rigney, 1999, 2001). Dudgeon and Fielder (2006) demonstrate how the naming of Indigenous intellectuals – e.g. as "agitators and activists" alone – functions to marginalise and dismiss their critiques within western academia. The undeclared war to which Watson (2005) drew our attention is one fought on intellectual plains, with weapons forged with words.

Similarly, Moreton-Robinson (1999) critiques the practice of appropriating Indigenous work to support white academic voices but failing to apply Indigenous knowledge as tools for theorising. This suggests to me that a doubleness of appropriation exists whereby knowledge

[32] A term that – while possibly not her intention in creating it – speaks to me of an inescapable connection between knowledge and land, and therefore the discursive and material worlds rendered separate in existing fictions of *terra nullius*. It also gestures towards the significance of the knowledge foundations of ideological claims and, in the context of colonialism, whispers of the capacity of knowledge and the form it takes to constitute a form of 'terror'…

is available both because it is unowned and free, and furthermore because that knowledge is not knowledge until it is represented within normative frameworks (here, of academia) – that is, until a 'qualified person' (here, white academic) has *done something* with it (domesticated and civilised it?)[33]. This gestures to the existence of an axiology by which some forms of knowledge are deemed both normative and superior. The implication of this practice, Moreton-Robinson (1999; see also Rigney, 1999) indicates is that it reproduces and sustains a set of relations in which white (and here, colonial) traditions presume dominance over Indigenous. In "the cultural assumptions of the "world" and the "real" by the dominant group" that epistemological privilege reproduces and reaffirms (Rigney, 1999, p. 112), it is also these relationships – the assumed superiority and dominance of one over another – that are normalised and made 'real'. The extent that non-Indigenous research can be decolonising, then, (Smith, 1999) is also a matter of how to re-present research stories in ways that do not reproduce those positions of power and therefore the conditions of possibility for those relationships.

A starting place in the application of Indigenous knowledges in theorising our work is to consider them as normative – to assume epistemological privilege of Indigenous perspectives. This can be taken to mean the privileging of Indigenous epistemologies when engaging with Indigenous ideas and/or working with Indigenous communities. Scholars such as Rigney (1999), Martin (2003) and Smith (1999) strongly advocate this through, for example, the adoption of Indigenist research methodologies. It may also be read to include, as Moreton-Robinson (1999) and Dudgeon and Fielder (2006) appear to emphasise, the generic development of theory[34]. We might also hear epistemological privilege as representing priority – acknowledging the precursory Indigenous epistemological positions within an Australian context. As Watson (2002) reminds us, the inscriptions of *terra nullius* are not commensurate with the laws of the land itself, but are imposed "from a place of power and not law" by the state (p. 255). Through denying Indigenous sovereignty, *terra nullius* seeks to assert a particular power relationship over land and people. In doing so what is also denied is the position of the *state* as subject to precedent laws of country (Watson, 2002; Moreton-Robinson, 2003, 2004; Nicoll, 2004). To exclude this dynamic (of power) from an analysis of knowledge relationships would be to re-inscribe *terra nullius* as a myth of origin – to deny the

[33] Could knowledge be regarded as legitimate without being understood – i.e. while maintaining degrees of incomprehensibility? What would it take of the colonial position to accept this? Perhaps some transformation of its 'internal' relationships: between public and private, for example, and its relationship to the domestic sphere.
[34] Note that the positions described here are not mutually exclusive of each other, but overlap. The differentiation between them is one I have imposed for the purposes of articulating potential readings of privilege.

pre-existent Indigenous positions that colonialism unravelled in relationship with. The application of Indigenous perspectives in our work may also be undertaken through representation and analysis of the traces of terra nullius in the stories we tell of/from research.

Privileging Indigenous perspectives, and by extension, epistemologies, renders *terra nullius* visible as itself the product of epistemology, in contrast to the pattern of *terra knowlegius* that Moreton-Robinson describes, which obscures recognition of epistemological specificity by assuming that all knowledge can be known and acquired. Through considering *terra nullius* as an epistemological trace – not an inevitable product of history – we are also given the means to further appreciate the persistence of its imprint as a newer historical memory: how it is carried forward and sustained in contemporary contexts. This gives us some means of apprehending the continuity that Indigenous perspectives on 'the past' describe: the present continuing tense of colonialism. Perhaps nowhere else has this been as clearly and extensively articulated in contemporary times as through the continued contestation of land rights within contemporary social contexts and courts of (white) law. While I do not do the integrity of these arguments justice in this context, I draw on them to re-present legal arguments as practices of epistemological privilege. Through reading for the ways in which power and knowledge are represented and ascribed, perhaps it is possible to apprehend the concept of *terra knowlegius*, and implications, further. Of the possible implications to consider, I focus on the representation of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relationships as a precursor to considering the spaces that are made available for emergent Indigenous and non-Indigenous subjectivities.

In *Mabo*[35] *v Queensland* (No2) (1992), the Australian High Court declared *terra nullius* to be a false claim, finding that what was termed 'native title' not only survived, but demanded recognition under Crown law (Meadows, 1999). Put slightly differently, overturning *terra nullius* as a doctrine required appreciating Native Title *as a persistent yet unacknowledged* right. Contrary to popular (non-Indigenous?) understandings, Native Title – a contemporary legal response – did not *create* that right (Behrendt, 2003). As well as enabling a pathway in legal forums for the Indigenous land claims to be introduced as legitimate matters of law, the process surrounding this decision was also pivotal in moving the concept of *terra nullius* from a place of obscurity to a place of public discourse (Reynolds, 1996).

[35] Koiki Eddie Mabo was born on Mer (Murray Island) in the Torres Strait, and is indelibly etched into these histories as the figure who brought the test case for Indigenous Land Rights into the Australian legal system.

The reading of 'native title' into law, however, was "as a right that exists when an Indigenous community can show that there is a continuing association with the land, and that no explicit act of the government, federal or State, has extinguished that title" (Behrendt, 2003, p. 41). The Court, in essence, reserved a power of extinguishment to the government, and retained the right, the power, and the entitlement to *define* what Native Title means and to define the scope under which 'acknowledgement' would be granted. This decision, amended rulings, and the subsequent 'Native Title Act' (1994) left open the possibility that pastoral and mining leases could extinguish pre-existent title (see Moreton-Robinson, 2003, for a discussion of the rule of extinguishment as being retrospectively invented in *Mabo* to enable the Crown to deviate from recognising the rights of Indigenous peoples).

In these discussions the Court articulates a "performative assumption of perspective" (Nicoll, 2004[36]), that is, it describes a position of omniscience in relation to Indigenous people and Indigenous knowledge, reproducing *terra knowlegius* through legitimising assumptions that it is possible for non-Indigenous realities to supersede Indigenous knowledge. It also, however, requires *terra knowlegius,* or certain knowledge assumptions, including those that privilege objectivity and neutrality (and that enable the performative assumption) as viable and valued ways of knowing. Seen as politically benign and disconnected from the historical context in which it has developed, the Court wields power specifically because the limits (the specificity) of (white) 'formal justice' to deliver justice in these contexts is obscured (Behrendt, 2003).

> *If it is (at least partially) through social institutions that performative assumptions of perspective are enabled then what would be the implications for social relations of the Court, of the laws privileged therein, being located (in relation to Indigenous land rights at least) within the context of colonialism? What are the implications of it not?*

In between the 1992 ruling and the movement of Native Title into legislation in 1994 under the Act, the *Wik*[37] and Thayorre peoples of the Cape York Peninsula in far north Queensland had their land claims heard in court, in cases that tested the unresolved issues of extinguishment specified in the 1992 High Court ruling. Meadows (1999) offers a brief history of the specific colonial appropriation of land in Cape York, in which the *Wik*

[36] Nicoll coined this phrase in relation to individual agency, describing the manoeuvre by which white people assume prerogative over Indigenous people, or become agents of illegitimate privilege.
[37] 11 communities from the region: Wikmunkan, Wikianji, Mimungkum, Wikepa, Wikatinda, Wikapatja (see Meadows, 1999).

communities were relatively ignored for much of the 19th century, before being restricted to reserves at Weipa, Mapoon and Aurukun (Stevenson, 1997, as cited in Meadows, 1999). In the 20th century, however, when rich deposits of bauxite were discovered in their lands, the government introduced special legislation to enable a 110-year lease to be granted to mining company Comalco. The territory defined under the lease included most of the Weipa reserve, and communities were forcibly relocated in 1963 (under the Queensland Police Force) to the several hundred kilometre distant settlement of Bamaga. Their homes were bulldozed and burned, and twelve years later (the 1980s – the decade of Australia's celebrations of a bicentenary) a similar scene was visited upon Aurukun, when a second mining company was again granted rights to the land with no consultation or establishment of royalties to the Wik peoples.

The relative recency of these events is significant in appreciating *terra nullius* as persistent fiction – a lasting, shape changing, set of beliefs – rather than an artefact of the earliest days of the colony alone. Despite the short period of time between the creation of mining rights over *Wik* and Thayorre lands it was argued in the hearings that, while pastoral leases and native title could theoretically co-exist, where there was conflict pastoral leases would take precedence. This effectively excludes or renders subordinate the pre-existent laws of native title that *Mabo* apparently recognised and that the writers reviewed here have demonstrated cannot be subordinated in the context of such recognition. It also grants a significantly short time-frame in which 'extinguishment' can occur, or privilege be asserted – this is despite (conservative) estimates of ongoing occupation of lands by Indigenous communities for over 50,000 years.

> *It also demonstrates 'extinguishment' not as a word alone, but as a performance within and on: forcibly relocated…bulldozed…burned. How are bodies and homes differently positioned within these sets of relationships that the outcomes realised are so far apart as to be incommensurate? Some reap significant riches from the exploitation, and some are forcibly relocated and their homes destroyed. Where resources are available to be, and can be, mobilised to this end, some bodies are clearly already positioned differently within an existing order – what kind of 'theoretical co-existence' is possible in the context of such embodied inequalities?*

Privileging subsequent pastoral leases where there was conflict further eroded the position available to Indigenous people in dominant white cultural and legal discourses, whereby the onus is placed on them as claimants to prove an unbroken connection and where the form of

proof recognised is a demonstration of "continuing association with the land" (Behrendt, 2003). This is despite, as Moreton-Robinson (2003) argues, the ontological impossibility of Indigenous people being displaced (in a sense, dis-associated) from their country. From an Indigenous ontological standpoint she suggests that continuing association is realised even in the presence of physical dislocation, via the nature of the relationship between land and being. The implications of this are multifaceted. The construction of colonial relations to land *as* constructions are obscured in the unquestioned representation within legal discourse of 'alienable' relationships to land, and the privilege conferred upon the colonial position. In the assumption of entitlement and responsibility to determine who can speak for Indigenous interests in land, the Court becomes a site for reproducing colonial power in the context of the state's relations with Indigenous people. Furthermore, the imposition of this upon Indigenous communities creates conditions of conflict by creating exclusive groups and defining who is 'Indigenous enough' to speak for country (Pat Torres, in Dudgeon et al., 2002, p. 249). There is no reciprocal questioning, however, of the non-Indigenous position in terms of racialising/enculturating identities. The repetition of this performative assumption of perspective betrays the epistemological position that Moreton-Robinson describes – of knowledge and bodies being thoroughly, definitively knowable irrespective of the positioning they are encountered from. As well as assuming and reproducing the right to name and define others (and the world, and the real), this turns the focus away from who benefits from such a conflict, and obscures questions regarding the legitimacy of the Crown to speak on questions of country and Indigeneity. Interpretive power is restricted to those representatives whose positions are privileged within colonial epistemological parameters.

> *What implications might this hold vis-a-vis the position of a writer in the context of psychological research and the particular enablers and constraints of a doctoral thesis?*

The findings in the *Case of the Yorta Yorta Aboriginal Community v State of Victoria and Others* (2002) suggest that the adaptation of the Yorta Yorta to enforced white culture and law demonstrated a surrendering (not survival) of Indigenous identity, endorsing a dominant discourse of Indigenous culture as having been "swept away by the tide of history" (Marchetti & Ransley, 2005). Further to repeating the assumption of entitlement by the Court to construct Indigenous identity, this demonstrates how that assumption may be wielded to invalidate Indigenous accounts of identity, law and history, and to construct Indigenous identity as susceptible to being surrendered, swept away, presumably in contrast to white

identity. In contrast, implicitly, white identity is construed as something that within the shortest span of time can erase all prior imprints – a reproduction of myths, that *terra nullius* endorsed, of the superiority and inevitability of colonial culture. Furthermore, by repositioning the focus of the court upon the abilities of Indigenous claimants to meet the requirements of a white system, overseen by white authorities, other positions are obscured such as the fundamental inaccuracy and illegitimacy of *terra nullius*, the tenability of the Crown, and the legacies and responsibilities of colonialism (Behrendt, 2003; Marchetti & Ransley, 2005).

The implications, or purposes, of reproducing a representation of displacement include a perpetuation of *terra nullius* even where it has been formally denounced in the High Court. In light of this Moreton-Robinson's re-presentation of *terra nullius* as a "legal fiction" (see also Meadows, 1999), seems more appropriate: a doctrine can be overturned, dispelled in a court of law – as, indeed, the 'doctrine' of *terra nullius* was overturned in the High Court's 1992 decision in *Mabo.* A fiction, however, just needs to keep being shared to be so. The ontological shape of *terra nullius* begins to emerge in storied form – a repetitive trope within an epistemological order in which story-forms have become devalued and denigrated.

> The story depends upon every one of us to come into being. The story of a people. Of us, peoples. Story, history, literature (or religion, philosophy, natural science, ethics) – all in one. They call it the tool of primitive man, the simplest vehicle of truth. When history separated itself from story, it started indulging in accumulation and facts. Or it thought it could. It thought it could build up to History because the Past, unrelated to the Present and the Future, is lying there in its entirety, waiting to be revealed and related…Story-writing becomes history-writing, and history quickly sets itself apart, consigning story to the realm of tale, legend, myth, fiction, literature. Then, since fictional and factual have come to a point where they mutually exclude each other, fiction, not infrequently, means lies, and fact, truth. DID IT REALLY HAPPEN? IS IT A TRUE STORY?
>
> (Minh-ha, 1989, p. 119 – 120; emphasis in original)

Among other things, the derogation of knowledge-as-stories creates a context in which those designated lesser forms – the literary, rather than the literal – are themselves assumed *terra knowlegius* by virtue of their primitive, questionable nature, paralleling a denigration of

Indigenous knowledges (and people) to primitive status[38] that is repetitive within the narrative tradition of *terra nullius*. The conditions of possibility for such performative assumptions are embedded in epistemological commitments that eschew metaphor: dismissing a story as 'just a story' if it is not seen to have its roots in incontrovertible 'fact' (which elevate it to something more than a story). The representation of 'myth', 'legend' and 'tradition' within these commitments require and enable the dismissal of Indigenous perspectives that resonate uncomfortably with official versions of 'history' and reality.

When the veracity of prevailing stories is questioned so too is this repudiation of alternative perspectives and the logic upon which that dismissal is based. As well as emphasising the inaccuracy and the illegitimacy of the stories *terra nullius* tells (by borrowing from the very meanings of 'fiction' that *terra nullius* employs), positioning it as an 'existing fiction' can also be heard to problematise (eurocentric) knowledges and ways of knowing.

I set out, in this section, to question what discursive spaces are enabled within narratives historically articulated through *terra nullius*, through which a subject might emerge. Brought together, Moreton-Robinson and Minh-ha's critiques suggest that it is as much the *form* that history/knowledge/truth is told in, as the story that it tells. And when the form that it takes is that of a story, then history/knowledge/truth requires a storyteller. Yet following from these historical critiques, the figure of the storyteller in *terra nullius* appears consistently missing. Therefore before I can go on to consider the specific implications of these histories for the stories we might tell in psychology from the spaces available, I need to trace some subjective outline – some semblance of a body historically enabled through which a story may be 'given voice'. Consistent with a critical historical approach, I do this through tracing the appearance of Indigenous and non-Indigenous bodies in the existing fiction of *terra nullius.*

For as Moreton-Robinson's evocation of fiction emphasises: through whatever imagination they are fertilised, fiction, myth, and story are no less capable than 'fact' of bearing strange fruit. I have borrowed the term 'strange fruit' from the song (identified with Billy Holiday) of the same name[39]. There, 'strange fruit' lends itself as a metaphor to carry the unspeakable weight of African-American bodies hanging in the trees – fruits of the labours of racist violence in southern states. A history of lynching within Australia is not as well documented,

[38] Nurturing a place of 'superiority' and 'advancement' for privileged Others to occupy.
[39] 'Strange Fruit' was originally a poem, made famous as a song by Billy Holiday. The version I have is by Nina Simone.

but oral testimonies attest to similar memories blooming in the shade of many a 'home among the gum trees'.[40] As a metaphor, with fruits of its own to labour under, what bodies do *terra nullius* carry?

[40] Also a reference to a song, made famous by John Williamson

One winter's night, troopers came riding on horseback through our camp. My father went to see what was happening, and my mother stayed with her children to try to stop us from being so frightened…Dadda and some of the older men were shouting angrily at the officials. We were being taken away from our lands. We didn't know why, nor imagined what place we would be taken to. I saw the distressed look on my parent's face and knew something was terribly wrong. We never had time to gather up any belongings. Our camp was turned into a scattered mess – the fire embers still burning…

We had never seen a cattle truck before. A strong smell surrounded us as we entered the truck and saw brown stains on the wooden floor. They packed us in like cattle with hardly any room to move. The troopers threw a few blankets over us (we thought they were strange animal skins). There weren't enough blankets for all of us, and so the older people gave them to us younger ones while they went without. The night was cold and colder still on the back of the open truck. It took the whole night across rough dirt tracks to reach our first destination…(where) our older people were unloaded by the troopers. I will never forget how they huddled, frightened, cold and crying in their blankets. Some of our old relations were wrenched from our lives and arms that day…we were never to see our old people again.

The truck went on, travelling for two terrible days, going further south. As if in a funeral procession, we were loud in our silence. We were all in mourning…by the time we reached our destination we were numb with cold, tiredness and hunger. And this new country was so different to our country…

(Auntie Rita Huggins, in Huggins & Huggins, 1994, p. 9 - 10)

1c: Beloved: Embodied Memory

(in which she considers terra nullius in terms of its implications for embodied subjects, and the subjective positions it enables and constrains)

> The massacres were ritualised violence, intended to demonstrate white superiority and power. The poisoning of flour and waterholes may be common knowledge; burying Blackfellas alive in sand, tying them to trees for use in shooting practice, is less so. Who were the barbarians?
>
> (Huggins & Huggins, 1994, p. 14)

> It is the legacy of colonialism, and the result of any war, that the women of the conquered are assumed to become the property of the conquering. Just as the invading colonists saw Aboriginal land as theirs for the taking, so too they assumed they could do as they wished with Aboriginal women without fear of interference from British law.
>
> (Behrendt, 2000, p. 353)

'Beloved' was the name of the central character in Toni Morrison's book of the same title, the work from which I borrowed 're-memory'. Beloved can be read as an embodiment of memory: the character, a young woman, as a personification of memories of slavery in southern America, handed down through stories and other means, and excluded from the official historical records (Ravenscroft, 2004). She (Beloved) can also be read as an embodiment of ancestral memory, tradition, and future, which slavery sought to abolish (Morrison, 1985, as cited in Panikkar, 2005).

Reprising 'Beloved' as a narrative motif in relation to colonialism in Australia is not new – see, for example, Kathryn McConaghy's (2003) paper entitled 'Pedagogy, Trauma and Difficult Memory: Remembering Namatjira[41], Our Beloved', or Ravenscroft's (2004) brief and critical engagement in her chapter 'Anxieties of dispossession: whiteness, history, and Australia's war in Viet Nam' (Moreton-Robinson, 2004). Here, I borrow from both readings, weaving them together. With Ravenscroft, and continuing the notion of *terra nullius* as an

[41] Albert Namatjira was an Arrente man, who grew up near Alice Springs at Hermannsburg Mission. He gained international standing as a painter, especially during the 1930s and 1950s, yet was denied citizenship until 1957; was refused permission to buy a house by the government authorities. I remember being introduced in school to his art, to his name as an artist, and yet to nothing of the colonial history that he practiced from and out of. I wonder if Larissa Behrendt had the same lessons in art theory as I did…

existing fiction, I trace representations of Indigenous and non-Indigenous bodies and subjectivities within that story, and begin to wonder about the implications for the positioning of contemporary speaking/writing subjects within the context of psychological research. From the work that is consulted here and throughout Historical Verses, I am reminded and re-emphasise that these implications include embodied consequences and that these are distributed unequally according to the location of different bodies. From McConaghy's text, I borrow the notion of an ethics of response and begin to articulate a question about how I am (we are?) located in psychology[42] to receive and respond to the body of Beloved.

Ravenscroft's (2004) analysis of the relationship between the dominant publicised response in Australia to the war in Vietnam and the response to Indigenous-non-Indigenous relations draws upon an interpretation of Beloved as an embodiment of memory: "For her (Morrison), the past cannot be found carried into the present in documents, in the written historical record…even in the documents that describe the trade in African slaves. For her, traces of the past can be found elsewhere, carried in song and story for instance; carried by the body – in touch, voice, gesture; and in the beloved one who has 'passed on' but cohabits with the living nevertheless…" (p. 5). This conceptualisation of the past seems to resonate with a project of critical history[43] that is conceived in the spaces, occlusions and silences that have come to compr(om)ise 'official' history – a project that is predicated on the privileging of some bodies and perspectives, at the exclusion of Indigenous bodies and perspectives. Ravenscroft's analysis of the fear of the war in Vietnam and what it represented for 'Australia' highlights the contradiction entailed in the "enunciation of the supposed colonising tendencies of the Asian 'other', but silence on the colonisation that Australia is already founded on" (p. 10). The anxiety of becoming ('the') colonised is an anxiety that dwells, ghost-like, within the subjective spaces colonialism bequeaths while simultaneously denying acknowledgement of.

What this seems to suggest with respect to history (and its unfinished business) is that as (well as being) an ontological issue, it resides within subjective spaces, or rather, inter-subjective spaces – within relationships *between* bodies, stories and gestures. History is subjectively and inter-subjectively reproduced. Writing critical history to contemporary relationships then is a

[42] because I am writing specific stories, for specific purposes, that are circumscribed by psychology as currently manifest in academic and popular practice

[43] Neither is reading 'Beloved' into psychology as a critical exercise new – see Panikkar, 2005; see also Doucet (2008) for a brief discussion of the apparition of 'ghosts' in social science research, and her use of this metaphor within a discussion of reflexivity.

subjective and relational undertaking with, it follows, subjective and relational implications: we are not so distinct from our stories, then, nor from each other's.

Ravenscroft reflects upon the ways in which Morrison's writing often reprises relations of 'black' and 'white', demonstrating the interdependence of either position upon the other. In this specific aspect of Morrison's writing, she sounds a resonance with Moreton-Robinson's work on the relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous subject positions. The inter-subjective, in Ravenscroft's analysis, is transformed into/through interdependence of the subject positions 'Indigenous' and 'non-Indigenous'. In reading the existing fiction of *terra nullius* through this lens of interdependence I am reminded that, as Moreton-Robinson (2003) emphasises, while Australia was (not Australia and was) "a multicultural society" long before Europeans arrived, there was no 'Indigenous' position per se. Perhaps the 'what was' is better metaphorised, as Watson does, as an experience – that continues – from the time before Cook; the subject position 'Indigenous' however, requires a 'non-Indigenous' partner to be intelligible. This seems to fit with Morrison's critique of 'white' writing, in which 'black' subjectivities are imagined in ways that reflexively service and support the imagination of 'white' subjectivities (see also, Moreton-Robinson, 2004), a pattern she has traced of representing 'black' as "serviceable Other" (Philogène, 2000). The emphasis here is on the relationship between subjectivities and the representations through which one constructs an Other in such a way as enables particular representations of the 'Self', and in which representations of the 'self' also always imply (representations of) an Other. Reading Moreton-Robinson I also hear her say:

> The premise of colonization that Australia *belonged to no one* informed the relationship between Indigenous people and the nation state from its very inception and continues to do so.
>
> (2003, p. 33, italics in original)

and wonder about how this positions us in our research relationships before they have even begun…

The premise of colonialism, then, might be understood to have informed contemporary relationships through the creation and maintenance of specific subject positions for 'Indigenous' and 'non-Indigenous' people to occupy within a colonial fiction of *terra nullius.* Reading history critically therefore allows for history to be read for traces of these subject

positions and a wondering at what these positions enable and constrain in the ways in which they orient and predispose each to the other.

In drawing together Morrisons' work with that of Moreton-Robinson, Ravenscroft considers how non-Indigenous subject positions are frequently and historically enabled by the ways in which Indigenous bodies are imagined and represented: "…we will find our whiteness manifested, therefore, in our representations of our 'others'." (p. 6). Drawing on critical-race theory, which emphasises whiteness as a structural position, as opposed to a feature of skin, her analysis is also useful for disrupting biological-based discourses of subjectivity that tend to be implicit in talk about personhood. Through questioning the subject positions that are available for Indigenous people in non-Indigenous re-presentations of history, she considers the act of reading/writing history itself as a site of repetition for colonising relations: what stories *terra nullius* tells and how they are carried forward[44].

This opens a space within these readings of history[45], in which to reprise those earlier stories that *terra nullius* tells about the land and consider how they invoke/produce particular subject positions for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, imagining and ordering bodies within historical and contemporary narratives in particular ways. We might thus trace the body of 'Beloved' and begin to consider how she inheres in our contemporary relations and positions (Ravenscroft's reading), and therefore in our capacity to hear and respond to tellings of those stories in which she explicitly figures (McConaghy's reading).

Moreton-Robinson (2003, 2004) and others (e.g Behrendt, 2003; Huggins & Huggins, 1994; Watson, 2005) have demonstrated how the derogation of Indigenous relations to land and the concomitant refusal of Indigenous sovereignties is related to the conceptualisation and condemnation of Indigenous people as uncivilised and inferior to the European 'race' (where 'race' might be read as a culturally specific ontological imaginary as opposed to an inviolable truth). Within *terra nullius* fiction, Indigenous bodies were initially classified under the Flora and Fauna Act alongside native plants and animals – a classification which makes its way into reviews of psychological research as recently as 1977 (Garvey, 2007). What are some of the implications for representing subjectivities within these spaces? Alongside the bodies of flora and fauna, non-Indigenous bodies figure not as different human bodies (which might leave

[44] This could also be read to suggest that approaching history through privileging Indigenous perspectives is already, always a critical endeavour…
[45] It also opens a space to wonder about the act of reading/writing research stories – prefiguring later sections of this thesis

open the possibility of 'different and equal') but as the *only* human bodies, the only bodies that matters of Constitution, law and responsibilities need to be concerned with. As opposed to the human body which (in *terra nullius* ontologies) can be both owner and owned (e.g. through birth, matrimony, economic relations) flora and fauna can only be owned, or wild.

Moreton-Robinson (2007) argues that through enshrining in law that Indigenous people had no concept of property, *terra nullius* effectively positioned Indigenous people as property-less, a state of being that extended to their relations to their bodies, the 'management' of which is then legitimated. Such management includes explicitly enslaved labour, exploitative 'employment' contracts and the promise of wages never paid (see also HREOC, 1997; Shaw, 2003; Stanton, 1999). Similarly, Stevenson (1997, as cited in Meadows, 1999) emphasises the lack of royalties paid to Indigenous communities whose lands were appropriated under government-granted leases to mining companies and pastoral interests, despite the significant wealth generated through these contracts. When contemporary realities of poverty, attendant poor health, high morbidity, and housing in Indigenous communities are discussed, it is rarely – if ever – situated within a context of stolen and withheld wealth and prosperity (O'Donoghue, 1998), nor of the specific relations between contemporary poverty and poor health for some, and the relative wealth and wellness of others. Yet both are inextricably tied to the distribution of economic privileges, historically and in the present. Both are tied to the differential location of people's bodies within the social power relations that criss-cross a colonial nation. To the contemporary (colonialist) imagination, historical representations of Indigenous people in ways that legitimate 'management' of them and their affairs, enables a national mythology of Australia as a 'lucky country' with wealth founded upon the backs of pioneers: within this myth, for many, histories of exploitation and appropriation are ostensibly forgotten.

In her analysis of 'Leesa's testimony', taken from a discrimination suit in which she appeared as an expert witness, Moreton-Robinson (2007) traces the relationship between represented states of property-less-ness and embodied performances of "white possession". Her analysis focuses on the prerogative assumed by white, senior nurses to question Leesa's professional (nursing) credentials and especially to do so in ways that invaded her personal space and disregarded her embodied sovereignty: physically pulling on her identification without requesting permission, adopting an indignant and disbelieving attitude towards her that was lacking in their conduct with other, non-Indigenous, nurses. These actions, Moreton-Robinson emphasises, betray a proprietary assumption: an invocation of white entitlement that is deeply

historical while being reproduced as if it is a discrete novelty, called forth by some quality of Leesa. It is also deeply social and yet performed by, through and between bodies and spaces, which, in psy-discourse, are intelligible as 'personal' and distinct from social, historical contexts – a telling of subjectivity and interpersonal space that may be plausible to those who are re-centred through it, but is most likely entirely improbable for others. That is, for Moreton-Robinson, for each of the authors whose work I have engaged with so far, and in all probability for Leesa herself, the a-social, a-historical, entirely individual and dis-embodied self of psy-discourse is readily visible as a peculiarity of white, western, and here *terra nullius* narratives: a fiction bearing all-too-familiar strange fruit.

Behrendt's (2000) analysis of historical representations of Aboriginal women describes a context of sexual violence by white colonists that recalls this assumed state of 'property-less-ness bodies' and indicates that within that broader fiction some bodies are rendered more vulnerable than others. Suggesting that there are dangers in subsuming all relationships between white men of the colony and Indigenous women within a meta-narrative of violence and abuse, Behrendt nevertheless reminds us that where relationships were founded differently[46] they occur(ed) against a backdrop of continuing colonial violence and denial of embodied Indigenous sovereignties. In articulating the positioning of Indigenous women within 'frontier' representations she uses an extract from the diary of a white woman – Emily Creaghe – living on a frontier homestead in 1883[47] in which she has written:

> 20 February – …The usual method here of bringing in a new wild gin is to put a rope around her neck and drag her along from horseback, the gin on foot
> 21 February – The new gin whom they call Bella is chained up to a tree a few yards from the house, and is not to be loosed until she is tamed
>
> (Behrendt, 2000, p. 353)

Behrendt notes the 'matter of fact' treatment that "the usual method of bringing in a new gin" and Bella's reception receives in Emily's diary, emphasising how ordinary this suggests the practice to have been. This suggestion is supported by the lack of recourse for Indigenous

[46] a reminder which speaks to me of possibilities too numerous to imagine…of relationships strategically initiated or enabled by women, or developing perhaps in alliances, mutual respect, friendship, even love? How to speak of these without obscuring *terra nullius* all over again?
[47] Behrendt notes that the extract itself comes from the book 'The Explorers' by Tim Flannery; I have reprised it as Behrendt uses it, however, as it is her reading of it that is central to my understanding

women to seek or expect justice for this and for (other)[48] sexual violence through British law. Behrendt's analysis suggests that against a backdrop of endorsed colonial violence the protection white men historically enjoyed under British law for defining and interpreting (white) women's bodies was even greater with respect to Indigenous women's bodies[49]. As well as emphasising that justice and the law were writ along racialised, colonialist lines, the protectionism afforded (some) white men makes salient an implicit pre-existent gendered order – some taken-for-granted social power relations in which the positions available for men to speak from come with the assumed entitlements to name (here, womens') bodies (as a 'gin', or as 'Bella') and to interpret and appropriate them as desired. The "deeply historical" sense of entitlement witnessed in Moreton-Robinson's story of Leesa's testimony was therefore deeply historical before these specific, colonial manifestations, and constitutes some of the 'and before this…' to terra nullius that a critical history seeks to address.

If Behrendt (2000) traces the historical entitlement that accrues to masculine positions, then Leesa's testimony and Emily Creaghe's diary remind us that it is an entitlement available to other positions in other contexts. In the entitlement to define/interpret/touch the body of another that is conferred on the position of the senior, white (women) nurses in Leesa's testimony, we might conclude that the (feminine-) gendered body, rendered vulnerable in one set of relations, is also rendered powerful in another. And if Emily Creaghe did not hold the power to name 'the woman they called Bella' (and she may have), she nevertheless held the power to re-name, to re-produce and to do so under her 'own' name[50]. The woman whom they called 'Bella' had at least one name of her own, already, by which she was known to others and continues to be known – but not through Emily's diary. The woman 'whom they called Bella' is not written into existence through their naming, nor through Emily's observation, but is interpolated through that into the 'official' historical record. We might hear 'of' Bella through Emily Creaghe's diary, but we do not hear from her. We hear only what Emily Creaghe notices and chooses to record.

[48] Because as per Behrendt's statement about women being perceived as spoils of war, I cannot safely say that this manifestation of power (transporting a woman in chains) is distinct from other, more 'obviously' sexual manifestations, nor that there is no benefit in it being treated as such

[49] See also Andrews (2000) for reference to the continuing vulnerability of Indigenous women within legal systems, and the continuation of these assumptions of sexual entitlement (and protections) through white police officers and representatives of the law and both in the context of criminal conduct *and* in the absence of any criminal activity. This also signifies another site of vulnerability – where bodies are marked as 'criminal'.

[50] Obviously not free from the politics of naming that precede her – the politics that privilege the paternal line, for example, in the 'taking of' a husband's/father's surname *and then being known by it*.

I am thinking of Moreton-Robinson's (1999) emphasis on the value of unpacking 'the specificities of contexts' (colonialism) that is inclusive of relations between contexts and bodies. Earlier this turned my attention to the international location of colonialism; here, and in line with Moreton-Robinson's analysis, I wonder about the place of gendered (and other) social power relations in the subjugation of colonial bodies and in the interpolation of those into Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations. What is the significance of gendered social power relations in the representations (and positioning) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous bodies in terra nullius?

While its matter-of-fact tone suggests an ordinariness of every day, the singling out of these observations for recording suggests a simultaneous note-worthiness, or remarkableness[51]: the ordinariness of Bella's reality must also be extraordinary to Emily's own experience of the world. Emily's imagination, at the time that she wrote that entry, appears to have a limit imposed upon it – a limit of empathetic identification. If Behrendt's (2000) analysis of sexual violence by white colonists towards Indigenous women betrays a sense of ordinariness it is one that, in order to work, requires Indigenous women to be positioned as automatically subject to white, masculinist hostility, desire, and assumptions of entitlement, in ways that non-Indigenous women are simultaneously included in and excluded from.

Behrendt traces the repetition of historical representations of Indigenous and white women into an example of contemporary literature[52], demonstrating how the author draws on and reproduces representations of Indigenous women as automatically freely consenting and sexually available, and of white women as desirable to Aboriginal men and requiring protection against the same by white men. Similarly, Moreton-Robinson (2000) analyses the entwined and divergent positions of Indigenous and white women in Australian history, and in feminist and academic discourses. From each angle of analysis she demonstrates a repetitive representation of Indigenous women as 'little bit woman' and unravels the particular construal of 'woman', 'motherhood' and 'family' that re-place (some) white women's bodies, (some) white family systems and (some) white mother's/parents' modes of raising and caring for children (or, replace all with 'some white patriarchal ideals and fantasies thereof'?) as the civilised and desirable norm from which Indigenous women were

[51] a specific, gendered, condition of McConaghy's (2003) "colonial ambivalence"?
[52] I chose not to be more specific here, to focus attention on the context of writing and the positioning of 'author'; I recommend reading Behrendt's paper.

judged (Moreton-Robinson, 2000)[53]. She traces the interpolation of these ideological assumptions in the exclusion of Indigenous women from feminist 'gains' in social policy, which saw the introduction of maternity allowances through the provision of welfare: Indigenous women were not entitled to this until after the 1940s[54], despite missions – government-endorsed 'homes' for Indigenous children removed from their families – historically being granted access to these funds.

What this also demonstrates – aside from the persistence of *terra nullius* as an existing fiction, and a gendered one – is that the implications of being positioned as 'little bit mother' are played out in family and community, and that the interpolation of *terra nullius*, and its damage, is through and intruding into intimate relationships. It also indicates that the work undertaken in one set of relationships – interventions into gendered social power relations – not only has the potential to occlude the priorities of some women (here: Indigenous) but to actively reproduce (here: racial, colonial) privilege and practices of oppression in other relationships.

> I would not hesitate for one moment to separate any half-caste from its aboriginal (sic) mother, no matter how frantic her momentary grief might be at the time. They soon forget their offspring.
>
> (in the words of James Isdell, the 'travelling protector[55]' to Western Australia in 1909; as cited in HREOC, 1997, Part 4, p. 13)

Who is the implied Other to whom the 'they' of Aboriginal women/mothers is compared? Whose performances of grief are privileged? What is the significance of the singularity that is inferred? To be centred in that representative order and to be perceived to forget your offspring would be an aberration. Inasmuch as it may result in censure, it would also render you *atypical* within a certain category of 'woman/mother' of which she is/I am granted automatic membership: the parameters of the category remain unchanged. In relation to those parameters, according to Isdell, to be Aboriginal and woman/mother, is to *typically*, already

[53] Whilst the positioning of men and women in the context of social power relations may have been deeply historical prior to the articulation of *terra nullius* on Australian soil, the 'some' should remind us here that what is also deeply historical is that the interpolation of specific subject positions is such that the experience of being positioned *as woman* is not commensurate for all women and never was. The implicit invocation of a 'categorical: normative woman' is a myth that underpins the (re)positioning of others in relation to it.
[54] Moreton-Robinson notes the exception to this for Indigenous women granted an exemption from being 'ward of the state', an exemption that was awarded on the basis of perceived proximity and similarities to whiteness – skin tone, facial features, intelligence, social behaviour…
[55] What protections are there against the protectors?

always be deficient. The positioning of women vis-à-vis women is not independent of other positions, other bodies, and other relationships: representations of Indigenous and non-Indigenous women require one another (and other subject positions) in order to work.

> *How are the subject positions available to me historically conferred? In transformations and interpolations of terra nullius, what happens to the position of Emily Creaghe (and me, and this research)?*

In the novel 'Beloved', the protagonist of that name was both woman and (murdered) child, metaphorising, in a sense, the inter-generational and embodied passage of memory[56]. If 'Beloved as a young woman' is an incarnation of ancestral memory and tradition (see Panikkar, 2005) the grown-to-womanhood murdered girl, then perhaps 'Beloved as the body of a dead child' can be read as metaphor for what (in the novel) slavery begets. If Ravenscroft (2004) treats Beloved as an embodiment of memory, McConaghy (2003) cites Beloved as an example of the *difficulty* of remembering – an active, painful and inevitably fraught process of holding, telling and hearing some forms of knowledge. While the novel explicitly turns upon the relationships that different 'black' characters hold with Beloved, it also requires and draws upon relations with 'white' characters, including white readers of Morrison's work. It gestures to that absent-but-implied 'self' who imagines and receives the 'Other', the body of Beloved.

McConaghy's incorporation of this reading of Beloved into her analysis of contemporary Australian educational curricula opens a space for appreciating differently the acts of speaking/receiving in this context. In her specific consideration of Albert Namatjira as Beloved within Australian teaching curriculum, McConaghy focuses on witnessing as well as telling, undertaking a critical analysis of how Namatjira's life and location within Australian society and international history is re-presented to non-Indigenous audiences. She thus includes the position of non-Indigenous witnesses (and writers) within her historical analysis by considering interpersonal spaces (such as the gallery/museum at Hermannsburg Mission, which catalogues selective aspects of Namatjira's life and career) as sites of telling/witnessing. Noticing what is left out of the telling – notably, any critique of the social, political context of colonialism – she brings a psychoanalytic perspective to her reading and introduces the notion of "colonial ambivalence" to consider the "more intimate story of colonial or postcolonial incapacity" to respond ethically to the traumas that litter "the

[56] A representation of memory – embodied – that is somewhat at odds with predominant cognitive models of memory within psychology; models that only seem possible if we first forget the maternal body in particular.

Australian colonial project" (p. 15). Like Morrison's novel, McConaghy's 'intimate' project uses interpersonal, inter-subjective encounters to articulate what *seems* unspeakable in social texts – histories writ through *terra nullius* – and which has been frequently refused (i.e. although spoken, is un-hearable or heard and pushed aside). While I recognise that there are other ways of understanding difficulty of remembering, here I am going to treat it as another form of pushing aside or un-hearing: as McConaghy suggests, the hearing that is difficult to hold[57].

McConaghy suggests that the quality of remembrance constitutes an ethical response in part because its absence requires the repetition of speaking the unspeakable at the same time that the telling is negated, reprising the trauma (see also Wajnryb, 2001). Her analysis also references the social implications of a failure to represent an ethical response: re-presentations of history, of our stories, (and of others and ourselves within them) are significant for what they enable and constrain in other (witnesser/reader) responses. Ravenscroft's (2004) treatment of Beloved as an embodiment of memory can be extended, then, to the embodiment of/by subjects positioned differently: how is *terra nullius* embodied in/through the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions that, in McConaghy's analysis precede the non-Indigenous witnesses to the museum narratives?

And before this, she wrote:

> How to negotiate the legacies of colonisation, as carried on my body and in my relationships, where they are so hard to see?
> How to take responsibility as a speaking subject, when my own subjectivity is hidden from me?
> How to respond to cultural dominance when it is so hard to hear?

For McConaghy, the museum constitutes an encounter where the representation of the political, social context (of colonialism) to Namatjira's life was missing, invisible, pushed aside, forgotten: a denial which requires that the unspeakable be repeated, perpetuating the lie of *terra nullius*. It occurs to me that her article constitutes another such encounter (for me) but one in which that missing representation **is** privileged. And that encounter is significant to me as I reflect on how to represent the position from which I write in a narrative form in which

[57] it would be another thesis in itself to consider all the ways in which letting something slide, because of difficulty in the holding, can itself constitute a performance of privilege..? This is something about the conditions under which something is 'difficult' – after all Morrison has referenced the incredible effort it takes to *not* see the representations of 'others' as reflexive representations of the self.

the existing relationships, and in particular the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions (the 'self' of the self-other dyad in this case), are not usually accounted for.

This constitutes this thesis as a response to Beloved in a(nother) academic context – psychology – through the (re)writing of research stories back into the psychological discursive communities through which a position in relation to The House was enabled for me. However it is not solely a matter of historicizing the subject positions from which I might speak, and questioning how they orient me, but also of querying the resources with which they are replete and what they enable and constrain in the way of representation/reproduction (*Terra Knowlegius*). And the 'resources' of which I write are explicitly psychological: by virtue of being resources for representing 'the self' (a representation over which psychology has come to assume a dominant position), and by virtue of being articulated from and to spaces within the discipline of psychology, specifically.

> *How to represent the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions – the 'self' of the self-Other dyad in this research – in ways that account for the pre-existing political relationships on which those positions, and the research, depends?*

If the position of Emily Creaghe is as much 'subject to' historical narratives as that of the woman they called 'Bella' then it becomes significant for me as a metaphor by which to represent the 'missing' aspect of these historical relations: a space of hearing/receiving/speaking/responding to the body of Beloved within narratives of *terra nullius*. The experiences enabled and constrained within that space are embodied in a gendered body: the writing 'I'. Inasmuch as the position from which that 'I' writes bears a historical relationship with that of Emily Creaghe, then in order to write of that position I first need to trace its conditions of possibility: to outline a space for an embodied woman writer within psychology.

Bridge

Historical Verses represented "an attempt to begin telling a story about the research from a standpoint that privileges Indigenous perspectives, that is, a standpoint that de-centres non-Indigenous ontologies and positions the research as 'responding to…'". It introduced *terra nullius* as an existing fiction of colonialism (*Re-memory*) and an epistemological and ontological concern (*Terra Knowlegius*) with implications for the representation of subject positions and for their embodiment (*Beloved*). Taken together, they suggest that the reproduction of *terra nullius* as an existing fiction, occurs within, through and in between embodied subjects through the stories we tell. How we speak, and what we speak of, constitute sites (like McConaghy's museum) of (our own and others') reproduction and resistance.

Chapter 1: Historical Verses therefore also traces the shift in the scope of the research from an evaluation project to a project in representation: how to represent the 'self' of the self-other dyad, in this instance, in ways that account for the pre-existing relationships and the positioning conferred. Because the particular stories I am engaged in telling here take place within a more specific context, still, the following section takes the legacies of Historical Verses and considers them in relation to psychology within an Australian context:

Chapter 2: Voice writes a viable space for an embodied woman writer within psychology and locates this work within feminist traditions, traditions in which questions of subjectivity and representation are privileged in psychology.

Chapter 3: Psychology as Mythography introduces positioning theory as a framework through which to analyse the stories psychology tells in relation to Indigenous/non-Indigenous Australians. It offers a means of addressing the questions of representation raised.

Chapter 4: A Narrative of a narrative subject develops a theoretical explanation for the particular representation of subjectivity that is privileged in this thesis.

What follows is not *the* story of intersections between psychology and (women and) Indigenous Australians; neither is it the story of psychology in an Australian milieu. It is *a* story: one that enables others to be told….

Not all knowledge is known, chosen, nor actively or happily acquired. In academic institutions where patriarchal whiteness is pervasive, race privilege blinds white feminist academics to their racial embodiment. If experience is an active way of knowing (even if it is not made explicit), and the situated knower is always a participant in the social she is discovering – what happens when the subject's experience blinds her to the social in which she is participating?

Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2000, p. 350)

Chapter 2: Voice

(In which she traces a speaking place for a woman (and her) in psychology)

> I am struggling to find a voice in which to tell these stories. My experiences of voice are deeply relational…a kind of chorus-line where understanding my own song began with a question "am I in tune, and if so with what and with whom?"…a metaphor of singing, a chorus line, dialogue, conversation – all….resonating, all relational. But writing? Writing feels so solitary. It is hard to hold a conversation on a soundless page.
>
> Tracey, draft thesis-writing, 2006

As a metaphor, 'voice' has a significant history for me in this project, as a "struggle" and as a purpose. Listening to my supervisor and colleagues talk so comfortably about 'voice' and speak so confidently of 'the voice' they chose to privilege in their writing was both encouraging and disheartening. For me, experimenting with multiple 'voices', searching for 'the one' that could be utilised in writing (from) this research only resulted in a cacophonous library of sound bites. A single voice – The Voice – continued to elude me. Re-reading earlier reflections now, I'm struck by a sense of impossibility and irony to that struggle: in trying to find a single voice to honour a multiplicity of voices, wasn't I performing the very same authorial imperative that 'voice' as a metaphor, has been taken up in resistance to?

In a way, the above (2006) extract represents a site of tension between the place that I left the academy from (with my understandings of the significance of 'voice'), and a place where my experiences took me beyond the limits of that metaphor.

You talk about struggle and purpose with respect to your use of 'voice'? I wonder how this connects with a history of this metaphor as resistance, and what that history has enabled for you?

Well before I was visiting The House and writing of this struggle, I was living in Sydney and reading Indigenous and African American women's writing on white feminism…and before that (and simultaneously) I was reading feminist texts on the relationship between feminism and psychology...and before I can write of *those* relationships of and between women (and men, and psychology) I find myself recalling an even earlier story about relationships between women (and men, and psychology)…

In order to trace a history of this metaphor of 'voice' as resistance (in psychology) I first have to trace a her(in the)story of psychology.

> The story of a people. Of us, peoples. Story, history, literature (or religion, philosophy, natural science, ethics) – all in one. They call it the tool of primitive man, the simplest vehicle of truth. When history separated itself from story, it started indulging in accumulation and facts. Or it thought it could.
>
> (Minh-ha, 1989, p. 119)

Once upon a time, long before men wrote them down, Ancient Greek myths were passed around orally. They were never told the same and even today, despite the efforts of those men who wrote them down, still they are told differently. It is through the telling, and through these differences that they are sustained: "Stories are the truth that won't stand still." (Pelias, 2004, as cited in Denzin, 2006, p. 423). This is a story of Psyche.

Psyche, a mortal woman (and Greek princess) of such legendary beauty that she offended the goddess Aphrodite, is the youngest of three sisters, of whom little is said other than that they are married – a detail highlighting that Psyche is not. No man will marry Psyche – so threatened are they by the beauty of her form.

> *What if the beauty manifest in the narrative as 'woman' is a metaphor for form? What 'ways of knowing' are being passed around with this story?*

Aphrodite sent her son, Eros, with his bow and his arrows of gold to make Psyche fall in love with the most detestable, contemptible mortal man and to suffer for that love. But Eros wasn't prepared for what he saw, pricked himself with his own arrow in surprise and wonder, and fell for Psyche. She is brought to his palace by the wild west wind

> *Jung noticed that 'psyche' as 'the soul' is related to 'psycho', to breathe, to blow: the ineffability of breath, that which signifies life; and winds that bring change… 'Psyche' has thus come to signify the part of life that escapes the dying body…*

In a narrative form familiar (even fundamental) to western culture, Psyche and Eros will suffer for their love. They're crossing boundaries, breaking rules, a union pregnant with possibility…

Eros comes to Psyche only at night, if she sees his face, discovers his identity, it will mean danger for them both

> *Eros appears frequently in Greek mythology in different forms. His earliest incarnation is from Chaos, his role to bring order, unity and harmony to the world. His second incarnation is as the handsome youth of the philosophers, and in the third Eros is mythologised by epigrammatic and erotic poets as a wanton and feckless boy: the embodiment of sensual love…Thus even to the reader, and to Eros himself, the self that the metaphor of self signifies is elusive, changeable, constituted fleetingly and persistently in relationship with anOther.*

Perhaps curious and bewildered by his subterfuge; perhaps unsettled by being estranged from her family; perhaps lonely in this lavish and mysterious palace…Psyche heeds the advice of her sisters who, convincing her that Eros must be a demon to disguise himself so, urge her to uncover him at night by the light of an oil lamp. Awakened by a drop of oil, his being 'unmasked', Eros, frightened and angry, leaves Psyche and returns to his mother's house. Her own doubts and fears now assuaged, Psyche undertakes to find him.

And so Psyche's odyssey unravels, without the help of the gods, who will not risk offending Aphrodite. Soon, she appears before the outraged goddess/mother and is forced into servitude. As Eros nurses his wounded…heart? pride? ego?…in bed. Psyche applies herself to each challenge set by Aphrodite, succeeding through the assistance of others, animals and spirits.

> *Relationships are integral to Psyche's story, and her survival, encouraging a relational narrative for Psyche's stories to be told through. In the different 'qualities' that are called forth and responded to in each challenge, Psyche is reconfigured anew. There is multiplicity in the forms of relationships through which she is constantly reconstituted, enabled, sustained, and transformed…*

As Eros regains his capacity to function in the world, Psyche is returning from the underworld, bearing a box of rouge for Aphrodite. In opening the box to steal some for herself, she is cast into a deep unconscious. Eros, having learned of the events unfolding during his…convalescence…has dashed off to find her. He awakens her by wiping sleep from her closed eyes and together they return to the palaces of the gods. There, Eros asks the gods

to allow their union. Once granted, Psyche and Aphrodite will forgive each other and Psyche will join the Pantheon: for this, Psyche must be trans-formed from her mortal incarnation into a goddess.

> *Jung traced the origin of the german word for soul/psyche 'seele', and of the english 'soul' to the gothic 'sawaila' and the old german 'sawailo'. These words share breath with the greek word 'aiolos': mobile, coloured, iridescent. In various artistic representations of Psyche as a goddess, she is shown with butterfly wings.*

While psychology is thus mythologised through 'the feminine', it is also, implicitly, mythologised through multiplicity, changeability, and difference. Relationships enable and constrain the agency, desires, curiosities of each character and shape how the story unfolds: Aphrodite and Eros, Aphrodite and Psyche, Psyche and her sisters, the Pantheon of the Gods and Goddesses. And these are some of the ways and stories that inform my culture, the culture from which I write, the culture that shapes how the stories are told:

> 'A good story,' another man of the West asserted, "must have a beginning that rouses interest, a succession of events that is orderly and complete, a climax that forms the story's point, and an end that leaves the mind at rest."…In other words, to be "good" a story must be built in conformity with the ready-made idea some people – Western adults – have of reality.
>
> Minh-ha (1989, p. 142)

Have I put the mind at rest? And in case there is any room for question, let me deepen a sense of completion with the birth of a child: the daughter that Psyche and Eros bear, variously named Hedone, Delight, Volupte, Pleasure, Enjoyment…it seems incomplete for me to leave the myth without that crucial detail, and I notice a simultaneous resistance to implicitly validating a sense of completion predicated on leaving 'the mind at rest' – a resistance to legitimating the appearance of the narrative as 'completed'. I want to problematise 'completion' even as I write of the birth of Delight…and mightn't a birth be read as just that?

Now step into the wild westerly and be borne on iridescent wings into the year 2004, flutter in through the open doors of a small 12th floor unit, where a young woman sits on the floor, legs curled beneath her, reading Carol Gilligan remark about psychology:

> I picked up what you're not supposed to pick up in psychology – that there was a voice, and I asked "Who's speaking?"; "Whose voice is this?"; "Whose body and where's it coming from?" If you listen to the imagery of sexuality and separation…you realise this is a man's body. This is a man's voice speaking as if from nowhere.
>
> (in Kitzinger & Gilligan, 1994, p. 413)

How did something mythologised as feminine knowledge and embedded in relationships between multiple, different ways of knowing come to speak in such a singular, androcentric voice, and to systematically exclude women?

The voice that Carol Gilligan heard spoke in a monologue of what was "relevant to men, was written by men about men for men" (Smith, 1987, p. 18). The concern here is not so much that this monologue showed an interest in men at all, but that it centred on men without recognising its centring practice. Even more surprising, though, is that the androcentric form of psychological discourse persisted *even when what was written/spoken of was ostensibly of/for women*.

Through aligning itself with the language of science – adopting many of its metaphors and meanings – this monologue is one in which the experiences of (particular groups of) men are established as the norm from which all other understandings deviate, and against which they are evaluated. In relation to this norm women (and some men) are positioned as Other– described in ways that function more to maintain the status quo of what these social power relations enable for (particular groups of) men, than to give a sense of 'being woman' in a way meaningful to me (or Carol Gilligan).

> Let us listen to the metaphors we carry with us. Let us choose them carefully. Do we mimic our brothers who scoff at "soft" sciences and who love "hard" data? Do we feel the grasp of "sexual politics" at our throats?
>
> (Gergen, 2001, p. 70)

Perhaps it is unsurprising, then, that a form of writing that came to me so easily in my undergraduate years now confounds me and, when it comes to telling *these* stories, from *these* experiences, that those forms are so inadequate I am left 'struggling to find a voice'. With Celia Gilbert (1977; as cited in Smith, 1987, p. 33)

…I am forgetting the language,
sitting has become difficult,
and the speaking, intolerable…

The language that I am forgetting, that I hesitate to take up again, is closely connected to the language of the voice that Gilligan heard: taken-for-granted ways of speaking and presenting arguments in academic discourse. Monologues, articulated through objective scientific discourses, and in which truth is pursued, and construed in the singular: such textual conventions impose considerable restraints on articulating narrative as 'singing, chorus, dialogue, conversation'.

> *Where the forms of knowledge sought to be shared are not consistent with those privileged in academic discourse, then how reliable are taken-for-granted narrative forms for carrying them? What happens to those forms of knowledge, the lives and livelihoods they represent, when the normative modes of discourse deny them?*

If Gilligan was surprised to hear a single, androcentric voice speaking, then I wonder if she also questioned, in amazement, "Where are the others?" and particularly, given her own standpoint and what was then an obvious absence: "Where are the women? Where are voices like mine? Where in this discourse that professes to speak the truth of my own subjectivity, am I?"

> *So the moral of this story lies in hearing that "voice" metaphorises a particular political relationship: in the speaking voice of a man, Gilligan heard the silencing of women, and here that silence signified exclusion.*[58]

Here, exclusion includes the physical exclusions of women's bodies from public office and from 'institutions of higher learning'. These exclusions restricted women physically to 'the private sphere' (Hare-Mustin & Maracek, 1988) and excluded their knowledge from public realms – realms to which they (and I, and you) are no less subject to. That these exclusions were justified by research 'demonstrating' the inferior intellectual and moral capacities of women, speaks to the historical complicities of research that have rendered it in service to

[58] The specificity of how it is heard here matters: as a metaphor , voice/silence can be read as a binary condition of speech, a reading that fails to account for the multiple meanings of silence (including the ways in which it speaks – e.g. here, of exclusion, and elsewhere, of resistance).

ideological projects and oppression, in spite of (perhaps all the more effectively because of) claims to value neutrality and objectivity (Riger, 1992).

> *How is women's relationship to the private sphere heard? Is it that it is heard as 'only' domestic that I object? That it is restricted, forced? That 'the private' is constructed in opposition – and subordination – to 'the public'? That this opposition, once forced, is utilised to obscure the violence that is perpetrated against women in their homes? That women's voices have then been excluded from public discourses addressing those private spheres?*

In the trivialisation of 'women's issues' in research and enquiry, the devaluing of women's work, and through the derogation and exclusion of women's experiences from specific cultural social discourses, women suffered "exclusion from a full share in the making of what becomes treated as our culture" (Smith, 1987, p. 20). What are the implications of this for subjectivity when it is through these cultural resources that we[59] are invited to know ourselves and (each) other(s)?

> The ideological practices of our society provide women with forms of thought and knowledge that constrain us to treat ourselves as objects. We have learned to set aside as irrelevant, to deny, or to obliterate our own subjectivity and experience. We have learned to live inside a discourse that is not ours and that expresses and describes a landscape in which we are alienated and that preserves that alienation as integral to its practice
>
> Smith (1987, p. 37)

> *Although, if to be no longer 'alien' requires assimilation into a world that is made in ways that refuse, rather than honour, my (and so many) histories and ways of being, then a sense of alienation speaks to me of resistance to assimilation: of a strategic way of engaging with an unequal and unjust relationship, of a useful place from which to engage in dialogue with dominance/difference…and I would rather be alienated if to not be means that I am legitimating the violent eviction and oppression of others…*

[59] Here I also mean men…and I wonder – what subjectivities are viable for men through these discourses of knowledge? How does narrative form predicated on exclusion enable and constrain different subjects?

Within feminist psychologies in particular (within, that is, psychology), 'voice' metaphorised an unequal political relationship, and became a means by which this relationship was resisted: a means of speaking to the inadequacies of existing epistemologies to 'speak for all', and questioning objectivity as a means of adequately speaking for any. The Harvard Project on Women's Psychology and Girls Development (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1982; Gilligan, Lyons & Hamner, 1990) undertook research with specific intent "to listen to and understand voices…that have been missing from or inadequately represented in theories of adolescent development and women's psychology" (Taylor, Gilligan & Sullivan, 1996, p. 236). The researchers set out to listen to those voices that spoke differently to the dominant voice of psychology, and that spoke *of* different realities and different concerns.

So 'Voice' functioned to resist exclusionary and alienating practices in part through ***reclaiming representational power*** *over women's subjectivities and lives. What challenges did this pose to those accepted academic practices?*

Feminist projects predicated on a use of 'voice' as resistance were forums in which standard assumptions about research were challenged: assumptions regarding when and where and how 'subjects' are 'heard' in academic work; practices of 'informed consent' that tended to privilege monocultural, liberal-democratic assumptions of knowledge; institutional constraints that favour the short, the cheap, the simple and replicable research project. And within, alongside, and through the representation of 'missing voices' different methodologies were engaged with and explored. What was previously considered redundant and messy in data – lengthy pauses, stutters, laughter, idiosyncrasies of speech, the temporality of talk – may now be heard to 'speak to' the researcher as much as neat scripts or statistical data is assumed to. What has hitherto been differentiated from 'real data', and excluded, may now be heard to speak of subjectivity, of history, of politics, particularity, pattern, and of difference as a valued phenomenon.

You speak of difference as a valued phenomenon and I wonder how that connects the histories you have traced here, with Indigenous critiques of colonialism and, yet to come, psychology?

Through speaking the personal stories of excluded voices into the domains of formal knowledge, the assumed relationship between personal and political is interrupted. Jackson (1998) remarked on the value of this for a liberatory agenda – for enabling women to see that their "personal troubles were often shared and hence social in origin and amenable to political

change" (p. 45). This requires re-connection of the so-called-individual self with social and political contexts, and brings with it the capacity to transform these contexts (and selves). As well as contributing to the kinds of social, political transformations through which a young white woman gets to be undertaking a PhD in psychology, does it not also compel a kind of responsibility for such a subject?

> The exercise of a feminist imagination…encouraged us to look at ourselves in new ways, to see that our subjectivities were shaped by our social milieu
>
> (Jackson, 1998, p. 45)

If the exercise of a feminist imagination was liberating then it also held the conditions of possibility for being deeply troubling. Feminist epistemologies challenged academics to consider the ways in which their own subjectivities, as academics, were shaped by the social milieu of academia. What voice do we adopt in our own practice? How else might we speak and represent ourselves in ways that make space for voices previously silenced by exclusionary discourses to be heard? And these questions are inclusive of gender – a critical factor if the political relationship that is resisted (one of gendered social power relations) is not to be reproduced elsewhere (in colonialism). For the purposes of this work, then, it appears critical to me that the Harvard Project sought to address exclusions based on age, education, race, and social economic factors and in doing so embedded exclusionary practices *within* social power relations, as opposed to representing exclusion as 'properties' of particular groups.

> Who is listening, as well as who is speaking, becomes an essential consideration, as through this relationship a narrative account is produced interactively, depending not only on the questions of the interviewer and the experiences of the narrator, but also on the 'social location' of both.
>
> (Taylor, Gilligan, & Sullivan, 1996, p. 235)

And thus… "how do you position yourself, as a white woman, in this research". You have been writing histories to my earlier question and revealing, as you go, how your positioning in relation to the relationships that precede you in relation to The House is also a matter of positioning in relation to other relationships that precede you in psychology. Through those positions the relationships are reciprocally bound.

As part of a history that assumes the experiences, perspectives, and discursive habits of an embodied woman subject are significant, 'voice' is part of a history that writes a viable space for me to take up within discourses of psychology, and from which to write as an embodied woman writer. And *as* an embodied woman writer in psychology I am still positioned, as Bradley & Selby (2001, echoing Smith, 1998) emphasise, in a discourse that, through representing others as objects, becomes deaf to experience and, in rejecting experience as valid, simultaneously constrains expressions of subjectivity as objects. A discipline that is deaf to "not me" experiences, they argue, is necessarily deaf to political experiences (of oppression), enabling the reproduction of *terra nullius* fictions within our professional relationships and through the ones that we write into psychology.

> And so it is from a particular space within psychology that I now turn to speak of historical relationships between psychology and Indigenous Australians, relationships upon which this research also depends.

It's peculiar to say the least that as one of the most consulted and researched people in the country, we are the least listened to. We have to go continually to the government with cap in hand, bowing and scraping and proving that we're here. Justifying our existence and our numbers. And our needs, of course. As Kooris, we are born into a situation, according to our report, where our communities are in isolation. We are subjected to a constant procession of academics, researchers, government agents, anthropologists, archaeologists, and sociologists who come to our door requiring information. As sure as one leaves, another arrives. We rarely see the report and often too late. We sometimes get quoted out of context or not at all, to our detriment. And there are no improvements in our conditions or benefits for our efforts. They, on the other hand, have either tidied up their files, made a decision on our behalf, made a scientific breakthrough, attained doctoral status, published their opinions, become experts in the field. Provided a consultant's report, moved onto another job on the basis of their knowledge of Aboriginal affairs. Proffered a whole new theory, gained a new, more prestigious portfolio, attracted lucrative publicity, gained political kudos, altered legislation, made an impressive speech, attacked our credibility, denied our Aboriginality, advised us as to what we should be doing, or created another problem for us on which we will soon be consulted. Quite an expansive industry.

(Bailey, 1993, as cited in Garvey, 2007, p. 71;
see also Garvey, 2001, p. 46 - 47)

Chapter 3: Psychology as mythography

(In which she locates contemporary relations between psychology and Indigenous Australians in historical, political contexts, and develops a theoretical framework through which the next part of this story of the research can be told)

The year is 1988.

Bi-centennary celebrations and condemnations unfurl across the Australian landscape.

In June the *Barunga Statement* – calling for self-determination – is presented to Australian parliament by Indigenous leaders.

January 26th – 'Australia Day' – is heralded as 'a day of mourning and survival' for Aboriginal communities, who hold the largest Indigenous protest in a single location in Australian history. Fifteen thousand Indigenous people and non-Indigenous supporters walk together in the 'March for Freedom, Justice and Hope' in Sydney. Initiated with a mourning corroboree, supporters were invited to join the march over the 5km stretch, culminating in a public rally. The year is 1988 and in a single location some 15, 000 people are rallying for change.

That same year, the 24th Annual Congress of Psychology convened in Sydney[60], attended by approximately 4000 psychologists from national and international communities, representing a range of psychological 'sub-disciplines' of both therapeutic and academic persuasion. In terms of engagement with Indigenous interests, silence prevailed. Representation of Indigenous people and history took the form of a photographic exhibit of Aboriginal skulls. A visiting community-psychologist from Aotearoa/New Zealand faced expulsion from the congress when she/he questioned this (and implicitly the history that it reproduced) at the closing ceremony.

[60] This scene is re-created from Gridley, Davdison, Dudgeon, Pickett and Sanson (2000)

Westerman (2004) argues that colonialism has created circumstances of "obvious need" for Indigenous people and communities (p1), which fall within the scope of psychological concern and responsibility and which psychology has nevertheless been deficient in addressing (see also Ranzijn, McConnochie, Clarke & Nolan, 2007; Stanton, 1999; Vicary & Westerman, 2004). Furthermore, Dudgeon and Pickett (2000) note that psychology, like anthropology, constitutes a 'dominant discourse' over representations of Indigenous people and experiences, despite there frequently being "little connection between representations of Aboriginality/Aboriginal people in academia and Aboriginal people's own perceptions of their roles, histories and realities" (p. 83) (see also Moreton-Robinson, 2000). These representations, they suggest, are highly influential in framing contemporary understandings of Indigenous people (and, continuant with the preceding analysis, therefore non-Indigenous people, too), becoming reified in professional and popular imaginations as authoritative truths.

As well as directly contributing to those circumstances through providing support to colonialist agendas (Ranzijn et al., 2007) psychology also constitutes a discursive and institutional site in which colonialism is reproduced, for example in the pattern of psychologists being positioned as 'experts' in relation to (Indigenous) 'clients', and 'expert' (white) knowledge being uncritically reproduced in diagnoses and solutions (Ranzijn et al., 2007; Swan, 1995). This resounds in the experiences of Indigenous people seeing "their brothers and sisters labelled as mentally ill (and hospitalised or incarcerated as a result) when they understand and know the problem as a social and a political one" (Swan, 1995, p. 2). In the obscuration of Indigenous knowledge and experience what is also obscured are the realities of colonialism, the persistence of *terra nullius* as an existing fiction, and the ways in which the very position of the 'helping profession' rests upon the accrual of historical inequalities.

Ranzijn et al. (2007) note that most of the work detailing the "sorry history of psychology in relation to Indigenous people" (p. 23) has come from Indigenous people and position this as "a significant message to non-Indigenous people and…a substantial, important, and exciting challenge" (p. 24). Given the long history of Indigenous resistance, the relatively recent ascendancy of published work suggests considerable ambivalence within psychology – as within educational curricula for McConaghy – in hearing and responding to this challenge. Responses from non-Indigenous psychologists and academics are also unevenly spread across different discursive communities within the broader 'discipline' of psychology, bringing the

work of this chapter/thesis into relationship with particular discursive communities in which a response has to some degree been privileged: counselling and therapeutic (Ranzijn et al., 2007); community psychology (Davidson, 1998; Sonn, Garvey, Bishop & Smith, 2000); curriculum and pedagogy (Ranzijn, McConnochie, Day & Nolan, 2006; Ranzijn, McConnochie, Nolan & Nolan, 2006; Sonn et al., 2000); critical psychology and critical whiteness studies (Riggs, 2004).

Responses across these 'subdisciplines' share concerns with social justice, social power relations and projects of 'decolonisation', concerns which inhere in commitments to transforming psychology curriculum, teaching and research practices (Ranzijn, McConnochie, Day, Nolan & Wharton, 2008; Sonn et al., 2000), and developing appropriate and effective responses to community needs (Ranzijn et al., 2007; Westerman, 2004). In addressing these more recent efforts I am limiting my analysis to the development of curriculum and pedagogical resources, as a site within psychology that explicitly attends to both the stories told and the development of professional subjects. In the context of 'decolonising the discipline', discourses of curriculum development legitimate, perhaps even require, reflexive attention to and reformulation of the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions as a strategy for social transformation – they entail an assumption that later 'occupation' and performance of that position is influenced by what students are exposed to in course content and pedagogical practice (Ranzijn, McConnochie et al., 2006; Sonn et al., 2000).

In considering recent efforts I am focusing on the use of the concept of 'cultural competence', a concept that is becoming somewhat privileged in relation to psychology and Indigenous Australians and therefore warrants critical attention (Furlong & Wight, 2011). The concept of 'cultural competence' or 'cultural competency' has been employed increasingly in other fields, and in relation to psychology, as a means of addressing concerns with social justice and decolonisation (Ranzijn et al. 2007; Ranzijn et al., 2008; Tyler, 2002). Through discourses of 'cultural competence' writers have traced inadequacies of psychological theories and methodologies for enabling appreciation of (and therefore appropriate responses to) the experiences and realities of 'the Other'. The responsibilities that the position of the 'professional' incurs describe a different position to one in which colonialism is invisible and entails certain expectations and commitments:

> "…a good general knowledge of Indigenous cultures and an understanding of the effects of colonisation and successive oppressive government policies,

> transgenerational trauma, and the socioeconomic influences on Indigenous disadvantage; skills for developing trust and communication, including an understanding of culturally appropriate protocols; and a genuine commitment to social justice and addressing inequality."
>
> (Ranzijn et al., 2007, p. 29)

In the pursuit of these commitments Ranzijn et al. (2008) describe a need for listening to Indigenous people and learning appropriate and effective ways of working. In doing so they draw on subject positions for professionals that are not privileged in psychological discourses of expertise – positions of listening and learning as opposed to speaking and teaching. Drawing on discourses of cultural competence, has, in this regard, been of significant value in troubling the position of 'white knowall' that Moreton-Robinson (1999) described, by invoking the limits of what has been and is currently known and repositioning psychology from being *uncritically* of relevance to Indigenous communities and simultaneously separate from their contemporary conditions, to being *implicated*.

However it is also possible to read cultural competence *from* the position of 'white knowall', from which all knowledge can be acquired including knowledge 'about' an Other. From this perspective, the rhetoric of cultural competence assumes overtones of an assumed entitlement (and perceived ability) to 'know', in an acquisitive sense, Indigenous people and 'culture'. The 'knower' and the process by which they come to know, the role of their epistemological commitments in the knowledge that is constructed and the positions made available for self and others to occupy within that, is once again obscured.

This is not a result of writers failing to articulate the need for reflexive awareness – to extend the concept of 'cultural' awareness from a sole focus on the (position of) 'the Other' to include the position of the practitioner (Ranzijn et al., 2008). Rather, I argue that it is a problem with the pre-existent discursive frameworks that cultural competence is drawn from, into, and articulated through. Ranzijn et al. (2007) note that narratives of psychology are particularly inclined towards reification of psychological concepts – to represent a construct "which only exists as a result of common agreement (as if it) is actually 'real', that is, has an existence outside of common agreement that it does exist" (p. 27). So the normative means of representation require and (re)produce 'objects' for analysis as if they are *independent of the relationships upon which they depend* and do so even when those objects are subjects and (inter)subjectively produced. It is therefore unsurprising that discourses of cultural

competence, when read into psychology, can entail an assumption that as a construct, it "can be behaviourally specified, that it can, and ought to be, delivered as an ''add on'' to the received professional practice" (Furlong & Wight, 2011, p. 39).

While discourses of cultural competence offer some resources for articulating a response to Indigenous critiques of psychology their meaning and scope are also shaped by the pre-existing narrative forms into which they are interpolated. The rhetoric of cultural competence alone is insufficient to change the parameters of psychological discourse: considered through the Indigenous critiques of *terra nullius* as an existing fiction, and feminism, it seems what is needed is a shift in the epistemological commitments with which our sense-making is infused. What Furlong and Wight (2011) propose instead is an emphasis on *critical awareness* in which the interdependence of the subject positions of self and other is privileged, and the influence of the cultural-narrative resources of the position of 'self' can be traced. In a sense, this is to ask how we are tuned, drawing our attention back to psychological discourse-in-context. Unpacking the assumptions we carry with us into talk with/around cultural competence might include (if we accept a certain significance between language and subjectivity, as I do) reflexive consideration of where we are drawing our metaphors of 'cultural competence' from and what they enable and constrain. To develop that further is a subject for another paper, however. In the context of this thesis, it requires some means of elaborating that interdependence and theorizing the relationships (between self and other and between position and narrative).

In tracing a reciprocal and constitutive relationship between language and subjectivity I conceive of language as generative as well as relational – requiring and simultaneously reciprocally constituting subjectivities and relationships between them. This suggests that narratives have a productive function and are also, themselves, produced. Positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1990; Tan & Moghaddam, 1995), elaborated through discourses of post structuralism (Dickerson, 2010), suggests that we "speak ourselves into our communities" through what we tell of ourselves and our experiences, and that in doing so, we produce "ourselves as subjects and communities of voices simultaneously and (reproduce) them in various versions through multiple relationships" (Morgan, 2004, p. 334). This framework speaks to the reciprocally-connected self-society of McConaghy's analysis, to the ghosts that walk alongside and speak through us, and of the history that is (re)produced through soil-stained lips.

As a theoretical framework, positioning theory was developed from Hollway's (1984, as cited in Slocum-Bradley, 2009) analysis of heterosexual relations in which she used concepts of 'position' and 'positioning' to articulate the construction of subjectivities therein. For all that a single definition of positioning theory is elusive, most theorists trace the origins of the framework to Davies & Harré's (1990) seminal paper in which they developed Hollway's use of the concepts and expanded them to include the simultaneous location of subjects in relation to multiple narrative (and therefore moral) orders all of which incur obligations, rights and responsibilities (Drewery, 2005; Slocum-Bradley, 2009).

Much work using positioning theory operates at the level of individual interpersonal interactions, for example, the construction of teacher identities during interview (Søreide, 2006), the collaborative construction of information needs in midwife-client interactions (McKenzie, 2003), self-constructions in everyday conversations (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2003). Several theorists, however, draw our attention to the possibilities of it as a means of addressing other facets, for example what Wilkinson and Kitzinger (2003) refer to as the "*endurance* of some positions…" (p. 172). Those are positions, they argue, that occur across contexts and conversations and that reflect the ordinariness of certain ideas about the world. Wilkinson & Kitzinger further note that the "normativity of these positionings renders them generally invisible and they are not usually explicitly oriented to by participants" (p. 172) until such a time as they are resisted, a phenomena which resonates strongly with this work and which embeds individual and social transformation in the dynamics of relationships[61].

Contrary to the conditions of possibility for their interruption, however, the reproduction of normative positions requires little work or awareness, and indeed can happen while protagonists are engaged in some apparently unrelated enterprise (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2003; Drewery, 2005). In Wilkinson and Kitzinger's work what they noticed was the reproduction of heterosexual normativity in the context of conversations within a group of women with breast cancer. In response to an invitation from the facilitator to talk about how other people reacted to the news – "particularly "people close to you: partners, family and friends"" (p. 167) – the first women to respond included the reactions of their husbands in their reflections. In the instance of the third woman to respond (the extract attended to in analysis), she did so in ways that drew on and simultaneously reproduced normative ideas about the significance and salience of gender (invoking the category of 'men' as a given), of 'what men like' and on the relevance of 'what men like' to all women present. The hesitation

[61] between subjects (interpersonal), between political positions, between phenomena, etc.

of the facilitator in responding to her statements appears to act upon the conversation in ways that disrupt it – in this instance, being met with questions about the facilitator's relational status (and noticeably not her sexual identity). Wilkinson & Kitzinger contextualise the speaker's invocation of these stereotypical ideas in relation to what is achieved by them – namely, they argue, an exoneration of her husband's potentially unsupportive-sounding reaction (in relation to the stories shared by the preceding speakers) through naturalizing it as a characteristic of an entire group: 'all men like boobs, don't they?'. What they make salient through their analysis is how the reproduction of certain positions (gendered norms) in one set of relationships (the discursive community of the group) has the consequence of simultaneously reproducing different positions, discursive communities and relationships of dominance (heterosexual normativity) without anyone 'setting out' to do so.

I am reminded, here, of the scene of the 1988 Congress, where the actions engaged in include the reproduction of narratives about psychology, psychological expertise, authority and knowledge all of which required the participation of subjects in order to work and in doing so produces them as particular subjects – collusive with terra nullius*. The disruption comes when someone – an outsider in many respects – resists the position made available to them (of complicity) and questions the discursive business, and communities, underway. The reaction to this suggests routine costs incurred in interrupting the status-quo.*

Positioning theory enables attendance to relationships of marginalisation and exclusion in potentially useful ways, and at a level that can account for the reciprocally-connected individual as a member of social, historical groups. In her analysis of the ways in which different selves and produced/invited through colonising language, Drewery (2005) argues that positioning theory can "help us to think about the productive impacts of colonising language" (p. 307) subjectively and intersubjectively (socially). Reading positioning theory in the ways attended to here offers opportunities for theoretical development and for appreciating how conditions of injustice and oppression are perpetuated in routine, everyday conversation (including the 'routine' conversations and processes enabled and required by research) (Drewery, 2005; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2003).

There is another aspect to this use of positioning theory that is significant to me. Wilkinson and Kitzinger's analysis represents overlapping positions and filaments of power: in analyzing the response of the facilitator (Wilkinson) they consider how she was positioned in relation to the invocation of heteronormativity (an imposition that her response functioned to

resist) and yet also in relation to the group – as a facilitator and therefore in a particular position in relation to the group, with responsibilities to them and to the conversation. While the 'imposition' of heteronormativity indexes her position in that instance as one of less power (the position outside the norm), her position as facilitator constitutes a position of greater relative power. Her response was enabled and constrained in the context of both these (and arguably other) positions and the relationships between them. Wilkinson and Kitzinger illustrate how this particular experience represents a frequently-incurred 'cost' to non-heterosexual[62] researchers for whom it is ordinary to "suppress our differences from the heterosexuals with whom we are engaging, to allow a heterosexual positioning to continue, so that the actions in which we and they are otherwise engaged can continue without disruption" (2003, p. 172). It also illustrates something significant to me in terms of how our experiences of the available 'researcher' positions and responsibilities may be felt differently according to different positions/experiences in other relationships, and how our occupation of that position enables and constrains the realization of particular goals.

And what about when the position that the researcher occupies (a position of relative power) in relation to others within the research story is also the position of the dominant cultural assumptions that surround that research story?

> …dominant discourses produce (possibly require) marginality of some participants, thus denying them agency within the spheres of activity where these discourses dominate…For all of us, including those of us who are in dominating positions, this means that not only do the stories we tell about ourselves make a difference to how we experience our own lives – the ways we speak have implications for the ways other people can live. We are all caught up in webs of power relations.
>
> (Drewery, 2005, p. 104)

Whereas much of the work in psychology – including that on cultural competence – explicitly acknowledges the need for better, more appropriate responses to Indigenous people, and works to develop those, it does not necessarily extend the criticisms articulated by Indigenous people to join with other critiques and question the construction of psychology in general. It might position psychology as *implicated* insofar as detailing how it has failed to act against

[62] My terminology, chosen to be inclusive of those positions that do not fit neatly within 'gay' or 'lesbian' and which are located 'outside' heteronormative discourses (e.g. asexuality, bisexuality, intersex and transgender…)

oppression, actively supported it, or by virtue of its 'worldview' misheard Indigenous people's accounts of their own experiences but not how its being implicated elsewhere is simultaneously at stake. This produces a version of psychology in which it is only 'done' (rather than something that 'is', *a priori*) (Ranzijn et al., 2007) in *some* relationships, producing the position of researcher as one in which 'cultural competence' is only required in those same relationships. This makes it unproblematic, for example, to reproduce ideas about individual subjects 'getting competent' in relation to a set of political relationships in which that conceptualisation of subjectivity – individualism – has historically been hostile. To pick up the notion of critical awareness, then, requires some engagement with the representation of self and other and implications of the same.

Focussing on the representative features of psychological discourse tends to be treated as a side issue (in non-Indigenous work) to discussions of its colonialist histories and tendencies. I argue that most non-Indigenous work that is committed to addressing psychology as a resource of colonialism necessarily troubles colonialist representations and their reproduction however don't necessarily privilege issues of representation, and the modes of production for doing so, in their analyses. They do not, for example, necessarily join that with a concern for the role of psychology as a narrative of subjectivity more generally – i.e. one in which psychology is not so much considered a study of ontologically certain subjects, but a dominant (in many western contexts) resource through which subjectivities are now articulated (Gergen, 1989; Rose, 1991).

Non-Indigenous critiques of the epistemological and ontological foundations of colonialism in psychology tend to focus on questions of theory and practice without necessarily questioning the construction of subjectivities within those. Personal accounts of students 'coming to awareness' and negotiating their identities – either by teaching staff (Gerrett-Magee, 2006; Sonn et al., 2000) or students themselves (Rademacher, 2006) – explicitly question matters of subjectivity however do not generally attach these to theoretical critiques of psychology or the self as a theoretical construct. Inasmuch as differences in focus may reflect different priorities of authors, and are each significant in their own right, I also consider these differences to be tied to the forms of texts produced the space constraints and acceptable – monologic – formats of articles and working papers, for example, as opposed to a PhD thesis) and also of certain normative ideas: the concepts of 'reflexivity', 'representation' and thorny questions of the construction of subjectivity tend not to be privileged in psychological discourse. This is not to suggest that these works are of any lesser value as academic or activist texts, rather it is

to notice the specificity of the work that they do, and in the space between that work and this project lies a gap into which this thesis slips.

Whatever the story that is being told through psychology the subject that is (heard) speaking is frequently of the same form: the individual, temporally bound subject. Despite efforts to undo this epistemologically, when it comes to representing the position of dominant assumptions in ways that account for the dynamic of the relationship it is embedded in and constituted through, we are still insufficiently resourced. To persist in efforts at social justice while simultaneously producing particular versions of subjectivity, of psychology as a particular narrative, and of ourselves as particular communities of voices, seems problematic. It resonates with a performance of privilege in which those in the dominant position get to pick and choose when they are 'troubled' by the stories they tell, when they pick up and put down their clinical privilege when perhaps "to unlearn clinical privilege is not simply to replace one theory with another, but to move into the realm of negotiating subjectivity itself" (Swartz, 2005, p. 508).

The challenge, then, for this text, is to write the relationships through which subjectivities are constituted even though, linguistically, 'the self' comes ready packaged with definite articles and an extensive vocabulary of individualism. The challenge is to write, as it were, *kin-aesthetically*: to write a subject which moves (is not fixed) and to write in such ways that the relationships (*kin*) upon which writing (and subjectivities) depend are knit into the *aesthetics* of the text. The particular subjectivity that is made the subject of this narrative, in this instance, is that of the researcher as the embodied subjectivity taking up a position through which the project and its histories are (re)produced.

A linear narrative – while the ‘normative’ narrative form in western writing – is nevertheless an inappropriate one through which to re-tell the research. What follows is not *the* story of *the* research, but it is a story: a re-telling of a critical moment that makes other re-tellings possible…that gives those re-tellings something of their significance.

Interlude

"Not only is your story worth telling, but it can be told in words so painstakingly eloquent that it becomes a song."

- Gloria Naylor (American Novelist and Educator)

I'm standing on a street corner in Then, late at night. I feel as though I'm overflowing with the stories and songs of clients and staff from the music workshop I've left behind. Somewhere in the night I'm certain I can still hear a yidaki (didgeridoo) playing and the sounds of guitars, and multiple voices chasing one another from verse to chorus to verse…

It sounds like an intense experience?

It was. It is. Ahead of me waits my cold motel room, the acid glow of my laptop, and impassive lens of a video camera…all awaiting my reflections of the day. I feel as if I'm standing on a threshold of a world in motion. Like, if I don't return to that room now, it's all going to change. But I'm not ready to leave the day behind.

And you didn't feel you could take it with you?

Up until that moment I think I probably couldn't – something had to shift first. I stayed on that corner for what seemed like forever, listening…listening…and then, in a moment, it felt like the earth had shifted beneath my feet, the sky had slipped askew: in a sense, still standing in the same place, but a very different world. It felt like I'd just woken up, and then I started the long walk back to that room. But in the middle of the road I turned and looked back. Maybe I expected to see myself on that corner still. Some pale shadow in the night, a plume of smoke in the shape of a girl. Standing, listening…

There are many moments in my research, where I've encountered a conflict, a disjuncture, or a crossroads, from which I could explore the complex questions of my own subjectivity and how I am located in relationship with participants and collaborators. Here, the single motel room and its company of technology represent a particular experience of a dominant white

culture in which I am located. The songs and stories of clients and staff represent particular experiences of an Indigenous community with whom I visited a while. And I was only, always, a visitor. Their stories and songs were not available to me as places from which I could speak. And I couldn't return to the motel room with ease. When I did it was not so much that the motel room had irrevocably changed, but that I had, and with it, my relationship to that space, as a place for telling stories from. And yet, in the context of a PhD, I need to find some place to stand where I can speak: where I can re-tell stories of this research. For me, that place is on the street corner in Then, where I stood connected to two worlds, belonging in neither, and where I learned something of the significance of listening.

Listen to this song.

Not a White Country – Leroy Johnson

They walk on by
They don't look at me
I'm forgotten people in my country
I'm on the streets
I'm on the land
Invisible, to their average man

But rise up
Don't sit back
Take the future get your pride back
Rise up, you will see
It's a sunburnt land it's not a white country

When I think back
To what we saw
I don't understand what it all was for
Rounded up
Always pushed back
You can't be here boy,
Don't you know you're black

Rise up

Don't sit back,

Take the future get your pride back

And rise up, you will see

The time is now for you and me

And rise up

Don't sit back

Take the future get your pride back

And rise up

You will see

It's a sunburnt land it's not a white country

I look around

And feel the ghosts

Of our old people

What means the most

This land of ours

Our very lives

Belongs to us not them

And it's worth the fight

So rise up

Don't sit back,

Take your future

Get your pride back

And rise up

You will see the time is now for you and me

And rise up

Don't sit back

Take the future get your pride back

You will see it's a sunburnt land it's not a white country

It's a sunburnt land it's not a white country (rep times 3)

It's not a white country

It's not a white country

It's not a white country

Not a White Country reminds us that this research unfolds within pre-existing relationships between dominant white cultures and Indigenous cultures in a country now known as Australia. It also reminds us that these relationships are themselves pre-dated by far, far older relationships between Indigenous cultures, and between Indigenous communities and the very land we walk upon when we visit one another.

From my standpoint on the street corner in Then, I want to explore these relationships and to contextualise my place at once within, and between, them.

> And before that street corner in Then, there is the university I was studying at, and the Aboriginal community of Then who initiated the research….
>
> …and before that, there is the existing fiction of terra nullius, and the persistence of Indigenous connection to a sunburnt land…

Terra nullius tells a story about the land: that it was empty. *Terra nullius* is a white story told about the country we might call Australia. It is not the story of the land itself. As a fiction, it is one that is also told about Indigenous peoples. It is a white story in which Indigenous peoples appear and disappear in service to the whim of white authors. It is a fiction that enabled gross injustices to be perpetuated against Indigenous communities: genocide, stolen generations, mass re-location, repeated denials of human rights, silencing and sickening…

It is a fiction that enabled all this, even while denying it's own existence: telling itself in the language of fact, not fiction, citing as its source the impassive lens of objective truth (that reputedly sees everything…except its own eyes).

It is a story in which Indigenous peoples are both here and not here: nonexistent in an 'empty land', invited in the guise of exotic Other, pilloried as savage Other, whispered of as the national Shameful Other, the skeleton in the closet. It is a white story in which Indigenous bodies are both inscribed and invisible.

It is also a white story that inscribes and inhabits my own invisibility as a white woman. When I listen to Leroy sing about being invisible, I receive a fleeting vision of my own subjectivity as inhabited by 'they'. An indistinct plume of smoke against the night. A trace. I reflect on the many moments in my relationships where my cultural, racialised self has been invisible to me. I struggle with the difficulties that this invisibility has left for me – my own

legacies of colonisation, as a speaking white subject; the texts of terra nullius that are inscribed on my own being:

> How to negotiate the legacies of colonisation, as carried on my body and in my relationships, where they are so hard to see?
> How to take responsibility as a speaking subject, when my own subjectivity is hidden from me?
> How to respond to cultural dominance when it is so hard to hear?

All the stories and songs I had shared in supported a moment that began, ended, and continues on that street corner in Then. Hearing Not a White Country, for example, enables a different relationship to whiteness and the fiction of terra nullius. It supports me in finding a new place from which to speak that (hopefully) does not rely upon, and simultaneously perpetuate, the fictions that inform speaking positions within the dominant cultural narrative.
And that moment of learning to listen, and my hearing of Not a White Country is itself enabled through something other than the song itself and the talent of the singer: some part of myself was already hearing the story of terra nullius and its related fictions, *as* a narrative. Within those pre-existing relationships bordered by Not a White Country and existing white fictions, there are already, always possibilities for other relationships. These possibilities are articulated through the re-telling of this research, and form some of the 'and before this…' of my own relationship to this research: histories and connections which placed me in that motel room at all, and then the street corner, and which will unfold in later chapters.

> From: "Ii" – research review diaries: 2006
> The researcher falls silent and I press 'pause' on the dvd player. Her eyes are opened very wide, looking slightly off screen. She is young – early 20s perhaps – and white. She is sitting cross-legged on a motel bed. She gestures a great deal with her hands when she talks, especially when excited. Occasionally her brows furrow and she appears to be concentrating hard…during the last 15 minutes I have watched her struggling to find words for her experiences. At times she looks into the camera and talks earnestly…and when she falls silent, she appears to be listening to something deeply…

Chapter 4: A Narrative of a narrative subject:

(On the relationship between voice, story, culture and subjectivity)

'Troubling the subject' has a history: for me, in relation to this work, it began with training in versions of Narrative Therapy (White & Epston, 1990; Wingard & Lester, 2001) and feminism which spoke to me of alternative ways of conceptualising selfhood. The term 'narrative' has become almost synonymous (in mainstream psychology in Australia) with 'Narrative Therapy' and in particular with the narrative therapeutic practices of the Dulwich Centre. Those therapeutic practices are themselves threaded into older and more diverse philosophical and intellectual interests, however, some of which I refer to here (as narrative theories).

My intellectual approach is connected to Narrative Therapies as it is through feminist readings of those that I began to appreciate the possibilities of selfhood as *momentary coherence* rather than as ontologically fixed and a-priori of constitutive relationships. What follows comes from a place that those earlier readings led me to and from which I now relate to them; it is a brief narrative, an interlude of subjectivity theorised through narrative epistemologies.

***

A paradox: retelling the research requires the subjectivity of the researcher to be granted a viable space through which to write (of, from) these relationships and yet the emphasis on relationships is at odds with the psy-discursive figure of 'the self' as a fixed, singular, "ontologically prior subject" (Kerby, 1991): a 'self' which has not *originated* in psychology as much as psychology has assumed a near monopoly on "warranting voice" (Gergen, 1989) in defining the nature of its being. This fictitious character (Sampson, 1989) that is the self in psychology appears in various guises elsewhere: its replication/mutation and export is a 'success' (excess) of western technological practices of phenomenal proportions. It is also an artefact of the cultural-linguistic resources through which 'I' 'know' and narrate: compared to the nuances of Aboriginal languages, for example, "English is impoverished: English speakers have a ''deaf ear'' to the nuances of relationship" (Furlong & Wight, 2011, p. 40). If the singular subject, and its universality, is the assumed starting place of the stories we tell then how does that enable and constrain the ways we speak ourselves, and others, into being? And what happens when that is countered?

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4a: Self

Mark Freeman, reading (the autobiography of) Helen Keller:

> "nearly everything she comes to know about the world is acquired 'indirectly', through the eyes and ears of others (leaving her) unsure of what is 'her own' and what is 'theirs'. She – whoever 'she' may be, which is precisely what is at issue here – even feels this way about herself."
>
> (Freeman, 2001, p. 21)

Freeman's interpretation of uncertainty in Helen's autobiography seems credible in a market inundated with versions of individual, bound, temporally stable selves: in the plethora of self-help books (prerequisite: a self), psychological interventions, discourses and drugs, through which 'identity-crises' and 'quests for self-awareness' are elaborated.

> *How to write of 'the self' without perpetuating 'it'? Indeed, without reifying 'it' as an 'it' at all? When writing of this self, I am already writing (of) the relationship between discourses of psychology and 'the self', a relationship without which this self is no longer viable. Somewhat ironic, really, that ways of writing the self, the very construct of selfhood, obscure that which is essential to the viability of that self-same-self: without the elaborate weavings of psychological discourse (of which cultural, historical resources are warp and weft) that self is impossible. In being thus decontextualised, their story lacking history, the modern subject is denied the very conditions of their own possibility.*

Thus, while I might argue that it is a non-possibility to write 'self' without invoking these relationships, even a cursory look through contemporary texts (popular and academic) indicate that it is certainly possible to represent 'the self' in such a way as to perpetuate the fiction. I might then wonder about the implications of having those representations – incorporated into our 'being' – disturbed.

With reference to the memoirs of Australian author Jill Ker Conway (1989, Road to Coorain), Mark Freeman writes of "a process of coming-to-consciousness about certain elements of (her) formation (as a social being) that had remained occluded, hidden from view" (p. 300).

What interests me in his choice of particular narrative is where he traces her coming-to-consciousness of Indigenous histories within/of Australia and the consequences of this knowledge, of its occlusion, for her own identity. Freeman suggests that "Conway's narrative had thus been immeasurably complicated by her discoveries… when this history became part of her story, her life itself took on new and more complex dimensions…". Freeman goes further, to identify this as a process of articulating "counter-narratives (without which) there would be only a superficial and incomplete rendition of the past, one that mistook the manifest order of things for the whole story" (p. 301). I am not sure if Freeman would place his emphasis the same way, but I would emphasise that the problem is not the incompleteness of the record (which, if problematised, might then be read as an invitation/imperative to complete it), but that the manifest order of things is mistaken for something other than what it is, and what is then done with that mistake.

> Her lack of awareness, which came into view as she gazed backward upon her past, proved to be extremely disturbing and humbling. It was as if she had been shaken awake from her slumber
>
> (Freeman, 2001, p. 301)

> *And I remember how it used to feel to be asked "where do you come from" and no longer feel that I knew; to realise that terra nullius was not the only fiction, but that the 'self' I understood myself to be, itself inscribed with that existing fiction, was also, already, a fiction 'itself'.*

Consider Gerrett-Maggee's (2006) questions regarding the responses of non-Indigenous students to Indigenous perspectives in psychology:

> Why do non-Indigenous students find it difficult to open themselves to the stories and experiences of Indigenous peoples; our ways of knowing, being and doing? What is it about the truth of our history and cultures that they seem unable to process or cope with? Why do they take it so personally?
>
> (p. 28 – 29)

Read as theoretical provocations, her questions speak to the construction of subjects that psychology (and other narratives) are engaged in, hinting at embodied consequences (for the position of dominant cultural assumptions) of and for the existing fiction that is the peculiar

western 'self'. It seems to me that embedded in the discomfort of non-Indigenous students that Gerrett-Magee attends to, is the disturbance to their very ontological relationship to/in the world. Indeed, even 'taking it personally' seems to rely upon an ontology that centres on individual persons.

> If we accept the impossibility of selves extricated from the relationships that enable and constrain them then can engaging with the politics of writing/rewriting the self be undertaken as an ethical response to being in relationships we are necessarily already a part of?

***

4b: Tempo

Another paradox for those traditions: in order for history to be history, it needs to be narrated, yet narrations are also necessarily historical (and imaginative), requiring a shift in perspective (and temporality) in order to look back towards (forwards to), and arrange what can now be seen in sequence, bestowing narrative form, meaning and value (Crossley, 2000; Freeman, 1998; Kerby, 1991).

The process of invoking history, of reaching back towards our pasts and selecting moments, patterns of significance, requires a place in which to stand (in 'the present'). And she read:

> While on the one hand…beginning leads to end, there is also a sense in which end leads to beginning, the outcome in question serving as the organising principle around which the story is told. (Freeman, 2001, p. 20)

> And before that, she wrote:
> All the stories and songs I had shared in supported a moment that began, ended, and continues on that street corner in Then.

Consider the opening fragment: in order for me to write (and hence, she wrote) of that moment on a street corner in Then, I need to be positioned in such a way as to identify it as a moment, among many; to trace connections (which may not have been 'visible' at the time, may also have been future-to-it at the time) with people, places, events that give it both meaning and value (Crossley, 2000; Kerby, 1991). Writing of that moment here, re-presents it to me again, not (solely) as a moment of encountering a "tear in the tissue of meaning" (Morgan, 2004) through which I knew myself anew, but also *as* a moment – *as* a memory. In

doing so, I might experience my self to "acquiesce to its pastness" (Kerby, 1991, p. 25), bequeathing the status of memory to the moment, even while I experience it as continuing.

What does it mean, though, to acquiesce to pastness? As I understand Kerby's writing, it requires me to be aware of my'self' as both presently located in time and place (myself 'now'), and of having been otherwise located in time and place, that is, of myself 'then'. Where this sense of bifurcated temporality is lacking, he suggests, the experience moves from being one of memory to delusion.

> And I return, again, to Gerrett-Magee, reflecting on the reactions of non-Indigenous students, which frequently "show no understanding of the real history of Australia nor…give any credence to *how the past informs the present for Indigenous peoples and our communities*"
>
> (2006, p. 29; my emphasis)

Kerby's distinction between memory and delusion is consistent within particular ontological relationships to time, yet it also leaves me troubled by a sense of representation being constrained within a shrinking narrative horizon – how to represent a sense of continuance without reinscribing ideas of delusion, fantasy and reality? I wonder if the difference lies between the notions of *continuance as linearity* and *continuance as linearity imposed through the act of re-creation* – i.e. when the 'outcome (that) serves as the organising principle' is the 'I' of the story. How, then, to represent a self that has integrity with a different ontological relationship to time and place (and subjectivity)?

> *I struggle with a grammar that readily supports this articulation – I do not 'wrote', although I did write…grammar it seems, is dissociative with experience.*

So I pay particular attention, when reading Job (1994) writing an account of violent civil unrest in Russia, to his textual strategy of "writing in the present tense…to be in solidarity with those 24 hours, with the people of those hours, not with the present tense of the reader" (Job, 1994, p. 141). Solidarity, here, speaks to me of a particular kind of relationship – a 'standing alongside' – suggesting the persistence of 'those 24 hours' in the present (continuing) tense of the author while simultaneously recognising their inaccessibility. 'Solidarity' also implies an ethical commitment, and a political one, inscribing our acts of writing and reading as political acts. Here, this speaks to me of a place (and means) for

interrupting linearity when to reproduce it, and ascribe pastness in the process, would constitute a form of betrayal. In the explicit reference to the reader and the open privileging of others' positions over ours, *our* discreteness from history and from the events Job recreates are dislocated, called into question. While the sense of immediacy in his writing may be an illusion (for some), it is one that recreates the conditions of possibility for the political subject by inviting us to participate as readers in particular ways.

And before this, she wrote:

> A linear narrative – while the 'normative' narrative form in western writing – is nevertheless an inappropriate one through which to re-tell the research. What follows is not *the* story of *the* research, but it is a story: a re-telling of a critical moment that makes other re-tellings possible…that gives those re-tellings something of their significance.

***

4c: Embodied

Another paradox. If we accept that the 'I' is constructed through the telling of stories, as much as it tells them, then what Freeman (2001) has as an "outcome" (an "organising principle around which the story is told") is also an agentic subject: a narrator of stories.

> *'Beloved' gestured towards the creation of particular bodies being incumbent upon particular positions. Does taking up speaking positions within discourse enumerate possibilities for multiple bodies? Where is the place for embodiment in narrative figurations of subjectivity?*

Taking up a speaking position suggests a physical stepping into space, finding a voice implies some body from which that voice issues; wrapping words and carrying sentiments borrows kinaesthetic, tactile metaphors. Inasmuch as embodiment is required in narrative figurations of subjectivity, turning to language to articulate 'the self' in psychology also threatens to reiterate a "discursive/material divide" (Morgan, 2004, p. 153). In the representation of the subject looking back towards the past, for example, there is embedded an idea of "the body-as-vantage-point", of the eye as "grounding the consciousness", in which there also lies a risk of recalling Cartesian dualism and reproducing singularity in/of the body (Morgan, 2005, p. 363 – 364).

In these narrations of self that I read, the body is integral and multiply invoked: yet the invocation of bodies (that they are invoked, which bodies, and how) takes place within social contexts where the speaker (alone) determines neither the telling nor the form in which they are told. Michele Crossley, addressing the use of body and voice as metaphors taken up in attempts to "retrieve women's experiences" in psychology and other discourses, notes how easily such retrievals can "slide into romanticism" (2000, p. 39). For me, this recalls attention to the social power relations in which we speak, that shape the form a telling takes, how it is heard, and how story and narrative form are evaluated:

> *What are the limits of a romantic form for telling the body? How do the tellings slide – willingly, naively, exuberantly, or are they pushed? How is romanticism heard, construed, and utilised that makes this slippage so problematic?*

Trinh Minh-ha, again:

> Writing in the feminine. And on a coloured sky. How do you inscribe difference without bursting into a series of euphoric narcissistic accounts of yourself and your own kind? Without indulging in a marketable romanticism or in a naïve whining about your condition? In other words, how do you forget without annihilating?
> …A distinction needs to be made between "Write yourself. Write your body" and write about yourself, your body, your inner life, your fears, inhibitions, desires and pleasures. The first refers to a *scriptive act* – the emergence of a writing self – the second, to a consolidation of writing from the self. The two often overlap, but the type that consistently inundates the market is without doubt the second one…"
>
> (1989, p. 28, italics added)

I wonder about 'the market' that is inundated, that consumes the objects created – what is it hungry for? Does the proliferation of new objects for consumption satisfy? Will you be unsated until I consolidate myself, O/others, our relationships perhaps, into objects I may then write *about*…or does proliferation feed appetitive inclinations?

And before this she read:

> when entering the highly privileged site of academia…we are impelled, seduced and obligated to descend on the body to write it, to inscribe it, and not, as I argue, write/

writhe from it as the literary tradition does

(Panikkar, 2005, p. 41)

And thought: yes

And she also asks, as a white woman writing from "the highly privileged site of academia":

> What subject positions are viable for me within traditional academic discourse according to this text? *Victim* of coercion (I am impelled)? *Victim/object* of seduction (I am seduced)? *Handmaiden* (to the institution)?
>
> *Sound familiar?*

That there is 'the body' to inscribe suggests a discursive pre-requisite: the practice requires an object for inscription. Yet my reading of these texts urges me to also regard 'body' as constituted through writing practices and, critically, *neither condition to the exclusion of the other*.

> *I am both writing and written. Inescapably so. If the object-body upon which I descend is the object-body of another, then I simultaneously write myself into the text as, at best, a seduced handmaiden of discursive compulsion. Perhaps wittingly, perhaps unwittingly, but nevertheless complicit…*
>
> *If the object-body upon which I descend is that of 'myself', then I am both inscribed as the inscriber and she-who-suffers inscription. A mistress of discourse, but never the master*[63]*. Thus, irrespective of the perceived particulars of the object inscribed, the body upon which I descend is always, also, my own.*

And having already written on the relationship between voice and gender (and whiteness), she asks:

[63] Thankfully. Even the master is not the master: ask, how are men inscribed by discourses of entitlement to write 'about'? Like god and the author, the master is also dead.

> *Aren't we are already, always writing from the body, when we write? Is it then that the body from which psychology (academia) has been (continues to be) written – and with/by which I am inscribed – does not speak to me of mine?*

And is it *that* body (singlify, objectify it) that is *the* problem (singlify, pathologise it)? Or might it be the practices by which 'it' is *made* 'it' and engaged? That is, here, the body as a metaphor of embodied 'speaking position': one that is available to me, yet not in entirety, and, as my writing on voice and femininity reminds me, always at a cost[64]. Writing from a position in which the memories of domination are embodied, and from which the threat of 'the body' being erased in public discourse is very real, these are more than 'empty theoretical questions'. What do we do?

> So where do you go from here? where do I go? and where does a committed woman writer go? Finding a voice, searching for words and sentences: say some thing, one thing, or no thing; tie/untie, read/unread, discard their forms; scrutinize the grammatical habits of your writing and decide for yourself whether they are free or repress. Again, order(s). Shake syntax, smash the myths, and if you lose, slide on, *unearth* some new linguistic paths. Do you surprise? Do you shock? Do you have a choice?
>
> (Minh-ha, 1989, p. 20)

So I might be moved by/with Morgan (2004), to "accept the possibility of embodiment as both discursive *and* extra-discursive" (p. 153). To locate a position within this paradox and write towards a moment where the means of speaking/hearing this are realised.

***

4d: A convergence.

And before this she was asked:

> *How do you position yourself, as a white woman, in this research?*

The positions were already there yet in articulating a response I found myself linguistically and conceptually impoverished. I suppose I could say that my responsiveness in that moment

[64] and what cost, I wonder, to other (masculine) subjects…

was an embodiment of the postcolonial forgetting or incapacity to remember that McConaghy (2003) addressed.

> Brought together, Moreton-Robinson and Minh-ha's critiques suggest that it is as much the *form* that history/knowledge/truth is told in, as the story that it tells. And when the form that it takes is that of a story, then history/knowledge/truth requires a storyteller. Yet following from these historical critiques, the figure of the storyteller in *terra nullius* appears consistently missing. (p. 55)
>
> *This is my position: one from which an 'i' is consistently absent and the effect of that absence is to obscure the partiality and subjectivity of knowledge; to reproduce assumptions about knowledge. Yet to represent that 'i' – 'I' – also risks reproduction, by representing only the individual subject. Is it that the 'I' is absent, or the absence of a viable 'I' under which to write?*

If reflexivity of the storyteller is required/chosen, then it demands a form of representation that privileges story and assumes a relationship (and space) between story and teller. It also demands a form of representation of the self, however, in which that relationship is viable, able to be represented, even if only as a whisper. Is this the difference between writing about the self and writing the self that Minh-ha emphasises? In (being heard to be) writing about the self what is (re)produced is a version of the subject that denies a relationship and through which representation of that relationship is constrained. To (be heard to) write the self, however, is to be joined in producing both self and story as already submitted to revision.

Brought together, *Historical Verses* and *Psychology as Mythography* represent the inter-related site of McConaghy's museum: the historical, political analysis as a critique of social proportions and then again as a critique of subjective proportions. *Terra nullius* is represented as an existing fiction of content and form, ontology and epistemology, time and space, memory and embodied contemporary performance.

> *The stories we tell of ourselves are also, always, about others. And the stories we tell of Others are always, already about ourselves. They are stories through which we reproduce versions of ourselves and others and versions of history and the world (including concepts of personhood, relationships between time and place) in which some are denied a viable place. And thus:*

Brought together, *Historical Verses* and *Psychology as Mythography* position this thesis as another response to Beloved, in an academic context: a question of how to (re)tell research in a way that accounts for the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions (the 'self' of the self-Other dyad in this instance) and for the relationships upon which the research and those positions depends.

The following section – Methodology – outlines the textual strategies that I employ to do so.

Chapter 5: Methodology

In which she develops autoethnography as a textual strategy

> *From the Ancient greek graphein (to write): 'graphy', as a suffix, denotes a process of graphic representation – as for the graphical location of bodies (human, geological, metaphorical, or otherwise) in time and space.*

In articulating a methodology, I take seriously Moreton-Robinson's observation that Indigenous epistemologies and methodologies are rarely used in developing theory and designing research (see also Rigney, 1999; and Garvey, 2007). Writing a text which is itself decentred – writing decentring – requires theoretical and methodological choices that draw upon Indigenous epistemologies and attempt to re-present falling into relationship with Indigenous sovereignty. While this does not fit a model of Indigenist research in the sense that others have used it (Rigney, 2001, 1999: Martin, 2003) my hope is that it can be heard to embody an ethical response, albeit one manifest differently – in ways that take account of the very positioning I am compelled to critique.

After I had met The House and accepted the invitation to participate in the project, but before anything further was done in terms of research, I was given Moreton-Robinson's (2000a) "Talkin' Up to the White Woman: Indigenous Women and Feminism" to read. Leaving the university, boarding the train to Then, and opening up the paperback volume to read some more, I heard myself being challenged to look back to where I came from, epistemically and politically speaking. In doing so, I found myself facing a history of representation/s: representation/s that are not, as *Beloved* demonstrates, separate from questions of interpersonal being and doing. The research itself then, as indicated in *Burden*, becomes the focus of the thesis, as it

> "…acquiesces to the historically and ontologically prior conditions of its own possibility, and takes as its subject the subjectivity of the researcher whose experiences constitute 'the data'."

The preceding critical histories present me with a paradox: I might understand myself as a situated subject, and feel impelled to re-present myself as such, yet do so from a situation that has historically been hostile to this practice (Bradley & Selby, 2001) and to forms of representation through which this would be viable. Furthermore, the very 'I' that would speak is itself a construct that, through the act of speaking, reproduces or disrupts itself and the conditions of possibility for its existence. How to represent the 'self' of the self-other dyad in a way that (a) accounts for social, cultural, historical locatedness and (b) interrupts the reproduction of the form that self takes? How to represent that self-in-relationship and thus trace the interpolation of terra nullius through her positioning and embodied performances into other relationships?

The normative modes of representation within psychology, while they enable a *form* of historical critique, neither allow much scope for the representation of subjective experiences, nor the reflexive critique of subjectivity that I understand to be a significant part of representing stories from this research. Before it is possible to engage with the subject (and the *subject*) of the research, then, it is necessary to find a methodological framework in which the representation of subjectivity *as a subject,* and not an object, is viable. While qualitative methodologies offer extensive resources for representing 'the self' and 'other' differently, there is nevertheless a gap when it comes to enabling performative reflexive engagement with (narratives of) self within the same narrative text – it is more common to write *about* reflexivity than to perform it (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003).

In my desire to find a form of representation that privileges a different epistemological position to the one in which the author, as an embodied, located subject, is obscured (Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Kitzinger & Gilligan, 1994; Reed-Danahay, 2002), and in which reflexivity is enabled, I am in rhythm with writers of the narratively diverse 'autoethnography': an approach that "even within the family of qualitative research methodologies…presents a rather radical approach; a subversive and oftentimes provocative relative" (Noy, 2008; p. 143).

Autoethnography is commonly represented as an aesthetically varied form of storytelling (prose, poetry, conversation, letters, vignettes, performance etc) in which autobiographies bond with ethnographic enterprise to create dynamic texts designed to engage readers and evoke an emotional and critical response (Ellis, 1993, 1998; Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Esping, 2010; Spry, 2006). While there is diversity in the interpretations of autoethnography (Denzin,

2006) and in the variety of rhetorical styles used in autoethnographic writing (McIlveen, 2008), there is also a degree of commensurability between texts with respect to the subjectivity of the researcher being a valued facet of analysis. This tends to place it (although not exclusively as I will elaborate) in a somewhat contrapuntal relationship with more 'realist' conventions of writing in which objectivity is valued, and its performance encouraged through particular research practices (Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Reed-Danahay, 2002).

> The autoethnographic text emerges from within the self-as-researcher developing and evolving through a process of recognising and interpreting the imprint of culture on the self through interactions with others in various social contexts.
>
> (Houston, 2007, p. 47)

Houston writes of autoethnography as "a form of scholarly resistance" (p. 45): in particular, in relation to the way that Aboriginal people – especially Aboriginal women – have been represented in research texts. I hear the value that she ascribes to the 'self-as-researcher' in her work as a specifically political one: for producing a different version of the researcher position and in particular for the unqualified assumption in doing so that the specific position of "self-as-researcher: Aboriginal women as Aboriginal women speaking for themselves" is of value. It grounds her work in unceded sovereignty – an assumption that subverts colonialist representations of Aboriginal women. In making subjectivity a specifically political stance, there is some connection between her use of autoethnography and mine, despite obvious differences in our social locations and discursive positioning. Questioning how to represent the located self-in-relationship, and trace the interpolations of *terra nullius* through her, lead me to articulate a mode of representation through which I might address the imprint of culture in/of/through researcher subjectivity and research relationships.

My readings of autoethnography therefore privilege the process of representation and for this reason I am drawn to issues of narrative form, reflexivity and multivocality that writers in autoethnography have attended to. According to Wall's (2006) review of autoethnographic approaches, authors differ in their focus on auto/ethno/graphy. The differentiation of the approach into component parts, and singling out of particular facets to focus on, is clearly significant to the work that other authors are engaged in. In the context of this work, a concern with the question of representation and its relationship to the production of subjectivities compels me to look at the parts as well as the whole – the enculturated self who does not exist outside of the representations made of her. That is, my basic assumption is that

when we talk ‘auto’ we are already always talking ‘ethno’ as well as ‘graphy’ as well as about ‘others’ (Ellis, 2002) although we may not want to articulate this, or be able to within the parameters of the narrative form we use. Autoethnography, privileging connections between self-other, cultural narratives and modes of representation, holds a space for me to do so.

As a methodology, autoethnography legitimises telling stories and the use of narrative metaphors as means of representing human experience, imbuing it with promise in the context of this thesis and the histories and political relationships that precede it. Storytelling is a privileged metaphor in autoethnography in part because of the representational and analytical significance of morality in narrative inquiry and the relational emphasis of its creative process (Ellis & Bochner, 2006). The difference between storytelling metaphors and metaphors of science, for example, as Ellis and Bochner emphasise is that writing narratively means writing with a concern for communication and connection rather than the bare transferal of information. This fits with the tendency to privilege evocation as a goal of autoethnography (Ellis, 2002; Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Kiesinger, 1998; Spry, 2006) and results in particular ways of relating to researcher and other subjectivities represented in the text, and to those of the absent-but-implied (including anticipated readers and the ‘ghosts’ of our and others’ communities).

Autoethnography acknowledges and makes room for the subjectivity of the researcher, the influences she brings to bear on the research and the ways in which she is shaped by the experiences and relationships of research (Ellis, 1998; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). The subject that is privileged in the text is an emotionally present and emotionally engaging one, a self intimately bound with others and with varied cultural contexts and discursive communities through which she moves (Richardson, 2006). The researcher in autoethnography “draws on life experiences, and interpret(s) the meaning of these experiences and requires that they be understood in relation to external social forces” (Houston, 2007, p. 48). Such a reflexive agenda enables/requires particular research practices and representational strategies: the means of tracing the relationships between subjectivity and constitutive discourses and apprehending the performance of ‘self’ (and relationship) in different constitutive relationships.

Houston, again (p. 49):

> …the autoethnographer, to be effective, must be able to alternate between the roles of researcher and subject effectively, speaking within the text as subject and scholar alternatively.

This calls for a multivocal approach to storytelling, not only in the sense of the voices of different people (although it certainly includes this), but multiple modes of representing researcher subjectivity differently, in accordance with the different positions available and different relationships that her subjectivity is articulated through. Multivocality isn't necessarily required in a single text (although it might be), rather it is something written into the discipline: for example, Ellis (2002; see also Hollander, 2004) writes a single-narrative personal letter in response to an academic (Tierney, see Ellis, 2002) critique of autoethnography. Writing a letter enables her to interrupt the ordinary academic practice of writing in "…academic, critical, argumentative , put-down mode, in which ``the critic'' defends and tries to defeat the oppositional voice that has condemned or trivialized her or his work" (p. 400). Instead, writing in a narrative form that is explicitly interpersonal and more intimate, she writes "out of love". Ellis contextualises her choice in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington, noting that the time she is writing from is a time " when it seems so important to promote the idea of a world in which tolerance for difference is embraced, (and in which) I have felt less than inspired about writing the same old critical, aggressive academic argumentation usually required in responses like these" (p. 400). In this she not only responds theoretically and politically to Tierney's criticisms of autoethnography, she also demonstrates the power of narrative form in representation and shaping dialogue *and* demonstrates academic subjectivity as a situated performance, occurring in relation to factors immediately political (academic discursive norms and practices of critique) and culturally/temporally responsive. Her letter is a performance of the fragments of auto/ethno/graphy and of the whole as a complex, shifting phenomenon.

Elsewhere, multivocality takes the form of different authorial voices speaking together in published conversational dialogue (e.g. Ellis & Bochner, 2006; see also Olsen, 2004). Again, an invited response to an academic article (Anderson, 2006 – discussed later), the conversation is *written* from Ellis' position, but *through* two distinct 'voices' – hers and Bochner's. This enables them to "demonstrate…passion for autoethnography through a story or conversation that shows multiple voices and positions…(and) consider where our ideas

merge and diverge and show that not all autoethnographers think alike" (p435). While there are many functions to adopting a conversation as a narrative device, the one that stands out for me most in this instance is the way that it takes what can be an intimidating and revered symbol of professional standing (being published, being invited to respond to another's work in a peer-reviewed journal), and casts it as an intimate, impassioned, wholly subjective and at times even playful relational undertaking: Ellis and Bochner debate, challenge, pay less or more attention to each other, laugh, speculate about their colleague and give a glimpse into their idiosyncratic professional practices (Ellis retrieves an article from the floor of her office having said it is on her desk: she has a filing system like mine!).

The conversational form also enables them to talk about Anderson's work in front of him, in a sense. They are able to use the perspectival benefits of conversation within a discursive context (an academic journal) that limits the potential for dialogue by limiting an immediate response. In a journal-article the response to commentary is always delayed and generally delivered as counter-monologue rather than conversation, per se. Interpolating conversation into this space heightens the sense of this delay and gestures towards the implications of hosting counter-monologues instead of immediate conversation: I found myself wondering about Anderson's response had he been able to speak immediately from the positions made available to him in the Ellis-Bochner conversation, at the *times* they were made available. Listening to Ellis and Bochner talking about Anderson and his essay, I hear their accountability to him being exercised differently to that exercised in, for example, the personal letter Ellis wrote to Tierney. There seems to be a little more license invoked to speculate *about* Tierney when the conversation only includes him on publication/dissemination. I began to wonder about what a co-authored conversation between all parties, rather than an expository-essay-and-response style format, would have been like. Perhaps what I am hearing when I find myself listening for Anderson's absent-implied response, is the (idealistic?) promise of autoethnography for enabling different ways of speaking and listening in academia – a promise that speaks to a desire for a "characteristically different connection" (Ellis & Bochner, 2006) and an assumption that the connections enabled thus far are not only inadequate but frequently unsafe, even impossible, for some stories to be told.

> *I wonder at the different kind of positions that autoethnographic practices and priorities enable in academic discursive communities. Drewery (2011) proposes, "respectful relationships have a great deal to do with the ways in which persons are*

> *called into agentive subject positions in conversational interactions" (p. 307). What might the development of those mean for our various professional subjectivities (researchers, teachers, colleagues), communities, for the knowledge produced therein, for the way that knowledge is made and shared and ultimately for the relationships that create and permeate those boundaries?*

In inviting different connections between writer/reader/text/self/other, autoethnography acts as a discursive space where a located, relational subject can be re-presented and heard. Writing autoethnography, then, is also already a theoretical undertaking whether or not this is made explicit in the text (Ellis, 2002), in that it represents and encourages a different theoretical frame through which to apprehend 'the other' (including the self) and, as such, implicitly queries the construction of phenomena, story, history, self. This connects it to a critical project such as this and moves the 'site of intervention' from the research back to the epistemic communities through which the story is also already being told.

In the following section I expand on the relationship between my current authorial position and autoethnography, discuss the historical ideas underpinning it and some key works that inform my methodological choices, and articulate an autoethnographical approach to this thesis through that. Consistent with tenets of autoethnography as read through discourses of poststructuralism, it is not *the* story of autoethnography; it is *a* story, one that enables other stories to be told (Ellis & Bochner, 2006).

"I believe that writing is both a theoretical
and practical process through which we can
(a) reveal epistemological assumptions,
(b) discover grounds for questioning received scripts and hegemonic ideals
- both those within the academy
and those incorporated within ourselves,
(c) find ways to change those scripts,
(d) connect to others and form community, and
(e) nurture our emergent selves."
(Richardson, 2006, p. 1)

5a: Storying autoethnography

Richardson (1994) reminds me that, as for other contexts, the sought-after approval of a PhD thesis results in "one way of knowing the material and one way of communicating with one kind of reader" (p. 523). While there is room for multivocality in written texts (e.g. St Pierre, 1996), a thesis (in psychology, at least) is nevertheless adjudicated within the requirement for a *written* piece of work. And a thesis, unlike other performative art spaces, carries the requirement for a degree of description and explanation, and of that process hinging upon the giving of a name to 'what I am doing'.

In academic discursive contexts, however, the giving of a name to methodological approaches is frequently problematic. As Wall (2006, p. 4) notes, the "use of the term *autoethnography* is a nod to a dominant claim related to this emerging method".[65] The language of 'claim' infers a statement of legitimation, which is not necessarily problematic[66]; however in conjunction with the iteration of dominance, the 'nod' of naming methodology suggests a field of contested legitimacies and disputed entitlements: a power struggle.

An example of how this might play out can be found in the August 2006 edition of the Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, in which a significant amount of space was given to the introduction, and discussion, of 'analytic autoethnography' (Anderson, 2006a; see Charmaz, 2006; Denzin, 2006; Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Vryan, 2006 and Anderson, 2006b for a response). Anderson (2006a) introduces Analytic Autoethnography as "ethnographic work in which the researcher (a) is a full member in a research group or setting; (b) uses analytic reflexivity; (c) has a visible narrative presence in the written text; (d) engages in dialogue with informants beyond the self; (e) is committed to an analytic research agenda focused on improving theoretical understandings of a broader social phenomena." (p. 375) He takes care to differentiate it from the 'emotional' or 'evocative' autoethnographies (e.g. Ellis, 1993, 1998, 2002; Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Ronai, 1992, 1996) that have become almost synonymous with the term 'autoethnography' by explicitly locating his ideas within a realist paradigm. According to his and other readings of this difference, advocates for evocative autoethnography value empathy and resonance with readers while advocates of analytic autoethnography are more concerned with objective writing and analysis (McIlveen, 2008;

[65] What is the relationship, I wonder, between one way of knowing and communicating in the context of a thesis, and the perpetuation of a dominant claim?
[66] Although I might wonder at the possibilities of metaphorising our relationships to methodological (and other) choices differently…

Spry, 2006). Anderson credits the refusal, by advocates of evocative forms, to 'abstract and explain'[67] with encouraging 'emotional work'[68] at the expense of analytic work and is concerned that the former is in danger of eclipsing the contributions that other approaches might make. Perhaps locating those (evocative) writings in tension with the contexts from which they emerge would offer some connection: a refusal connotes some kind of pre-existing imperative or requirement, after all. Perhaps in the presence of an assertion of a singular legitimacy, one that turns on the repudiation of evocative, emotional forms of writing, it is difficult *not* to be heard writing a refusal when you simply don't do what the status quo would lead someone aligned with it to expect you to do. It may be that some writers of evocative autoethnographies *are* less concerned with analysis; it may also be that some writers of evocative autoethnographies are less concerned with analysis as it is commonly conceptualised in dominant discourses of research – that analysis looks different when undertaken in a narrative form that privileges subjectivity and relationship. I will return to this in my more detailed consideration of particular autoethnographic texts.

Anderson also traces a history to autoethnography, or at least the initial usage of the term (by David Hayano in 1979; see also Wall, 2006), within a realist paradigm. Hayano coined the term 'autoethnography', he tells us, in his analysis of previous ethnographic writing which he took to exemplify this particular approach. While Hayano may have coined the term, however, writers addressing historical antecedents to evocative forms of writing have no greater difficulty in finding earlier works that fit the name (e.g. Esping, 2010; Reed-Danahay, 2002). Furthermore, in her analysis of autoethnography as a potentially useful approach for Indigenous scholars and students in Australia, Houston (2007) describes it as "the new ground where storytelling and research are merging on the borderlands of academia" (p. 47) reminding us that the novelty of autoethnography as a term and as an approach is contingent, in part, on the novelty of storytelling as a legitimate epistemological tradition.

A singular claim to the title of 'autoethnography' seems untenable in this light, and yet that is a claim that appears to be informing the development of this discourse around it: a discourse that has many of the rhetorical features of a contest. It is unsurprising that in his response to the commentary on his proposal, Anderson comes to defend his 'right' to use the term.

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[67] if this is the case then my thesis is doomed to fail given, as I have illustrated, the requirement that I do just that, to some degree. Write to meet the requirements of a thesis and fail at the methodology? Or appropriately follow the methodology and fail to meet the requirements of a thesis? An example of Richardson's emphasis on the significance of context for determining the shape of what is made

[68] Evoking a whisper of that narrowly-masculine void in which the messy emotional text is eschewed

And before this, she wrote:

> *Terra nullius* can be heard to demand a single head of state or equivalent, from which title to the whole continent – as a singular – could be contested. How can it account for the coexistence of singularity and multiplicity? (*Re-memory,* p. 45*)*
>
> *And I wonder: is it (necessarily, only) about legitimising storytelling within academic spaces? Or is it about using storytelling to differently legitimate academic spaces?*

Anderson (2006a) credits writers of 'evocative' styles with not "just produc(ing) discourse about autoethnography…(but also having) modelled autoethnographic scholarship" (p. 377), and applauds them for doing so. Based on my reading of – and the responding critiques to – 'analytic autoethnography' it sounds as though Anderson also writes in ways that exemplify and model the paradigm he writes from: a realist ontology suffused with epistemological commitments to positivism that he believes enable him to (re)produce stories serving the agendas (including, he emphasises, social justice) that he holds to. That he ascribes the modelling of scholarship to evocative forms as a *difference*, and not a differently manifested similarity, is interesting to me. It may be that the relationship between epistemological commitments and developing forms of autoethnography is more frequently explicitly attended to in approaches influenced by post-structuralist paradigms (e.g. as evocative forms tend to be), and when reflexivity is valued, and so evocative autoethnographies are more explicit in this regard. It may also be that expectations of accounting for those relationships are distributed differently – that positions on the margins are more subject to scrutiny of their epistemological and methodological commitments.

Historical Verses emphasised that the stories we tell come from somewhere and are always entwined with the stories of others, and so I will look at this inscribed 'difference' again in relation to communities of voices that the work is undertaken with: that is, that to the extent that evocative forms of autoethnography are more explicitly concerned with the relationships between their epistemological positioning and the form of narratives produced, it may be as a response to being in relationship with communities of voices for whom the question of that (epistemological/representation) relationship matters. Mightn't the meanings of 'emotional' and 'evocative' also be construed differently according to the location of the reader? What was *evoked* for Gilligan (in Kitzinger & Gilligan, 1994) when she heard 'her' reality being spoken in a voice that denied it? What about Dudgeon and Pickett (2000) writing of the

representations of Indigenous people in which they – the Indigenous people that the writing is ostensibly centred on – cannot recognise themselves? If the language, narrative forms, and underlying epistemological commitments that fit for Anderson don't fit for the people whose worlds he represents in his writing then would he still be writing in service of social justice? Or against it? Who would determine this? Who would be heard?

When read through positioning theory, where we understand the ideas invigorating autoethnography to have come from depend partly on where we are positioned in relation to it, what we are drawn to attend to, and what is at stake in our storytelling. Conversely, when we speak of our own or others' interpretations of it we produce ourselves as particular subjects and communities of subjects, and (re)produce versions of autoethnography and histories to it, in the process. Even if I didn't explicitly attend to it, these statements would indicate that I read autoethnography through discourses of poststructuralism, which privilege positionality, partiality of knowledge and multiple ontological legitimacies and which resist the notion of any structure internal a phenomena under question (Dickerson, 2010; Wall, 2006). This influences the way that I relate to and interpret the various ways in which autoethnography has been described and used, as well as the relationships between and to historical claims to it as a methodology.

Thus I also venture that were I to take up the version of autoethnography that Anderson articulates from the realist position he holds, it would no longer be what he initially imagined it to be, nor meet the standards implied in his framework – just as Hayano's use of the term may represent texts that bear little resemblance to the evocative, emotional narratives of Ellis and Bochner, Ronai, and others. My writing from a poststructuralist position "imbues all understandings" (Dickerson, 2010; p357). In this regard I am following a precedent, in academic writing, of treating methodological issues *as* epistemological and ontological ones and understanding methodological approaches to be infused with the epistemological commitments of those who use them (Dickerson, 2010; Mauthner & Doucet, 2003; Richardson, 2006).

Furthermore, and continuing this tradition, I am explicitly making these issues political ones: given that the particularity of *this* thesis, and this research, unfolds in a context of social power relations that I understand myself to be ethically-bound to disrupt, it is appropriate to tread lightly around potential hegemony. So while Wall (2006) suggests that 'standardisation of terminology' offers "unified advances in using, appreciating and understanding this

method" (p. 4), I take up a more sceptical position: inasmuch as an argument for subsuming multiple forms of representation under the auspices of 'autoethnography' would enable me to write "autoethnography is…" is it not also already underwritten with "autoethnography is not…"?

> *Could we confer multiple legitimacies? What would that look like? How would it be done, and who would hold that power and that ethical responsibility (St. Pierre, 1996)? And what might need to be different – in the way of resources and distribution of privileges according to legitimacies in particular – to enable such a shift? If psychology is yet to legitimate autoethnographic writing, as McIlveen (2008) suggests, then it is an interesting position to be in…*
>
> Two months ago, I was having coffee with an English professor from my university. As our discussion began to focus on Butler, she said, "Your reading of Butler is different than mine; in education, you must focus on different aspects than we do." My initial response was "Did I read Butler wrong?" But, no, that is not what she was saying. She was noting, with interest, the different ways we use Butler, the different aspects we choose to emphasize and combine into meaning for ourselves.
>
> (Kaufmann, 2005, p. 576 – 577)

I am certain of very little, but I *am* certain that it is not within the scope of my position or authority to adjudicate on Anderson's (or anyone's) 'rightful claim' to autoethnography[69], nor the legitimacy of what he does *as* autoethnography. I have doubts about the appropriateness or the promise of a rights-based discourse for articulating methodological strategies and, inspired in particular by St. Pierre (1996), would prefer to consider our responsibilities instead. From this position I am confident that, while on some level my research could fit within the criteria Anderson proposes for analytic autoethnography, analytic autoethnography and other realist forms are not appropriate narrative forms for me to tell these stories through. They *may* be appropriate for some narratives, and some research contexts: they do not resound with this one.

[69] and nor would I want it to be

Does invoking resonance necessarily identify me with 'evocative autoethnography', as McIlveen (2008) seems to suggest? Or with the "methodological fence-sitters" (p. 374) to whom Anderson addresses his article? Are those the only options?

My responsibilities to the research and to the text would seem to be better met by assuming the possibility of multiple *autoethnographies* and articulating – accounting for – the particular approaches used here, including historicizing their use in psychology and other academic contexts, yet explicitly acknowledging the partiality and complicity of those histories as I do so. For these reasons I have chosen to follow Reed-Danahay's (2002) conceptualisation of autoethnographies as writing, narrative, or textual 'strategies', which situate them in relation to prevailing academic practices and textual contexts from which they gain something of their significance. My use of the concept of strategies through which to articulate an autoethnographic approach to this thesis also acknowledges the work of DeVault (1990) who uses 'strategy' to resist the suggestion of a single 'model' or 'formula' (p. 96). A 'strategy' also alludes to a political aspect to research, implying that re-presentation may constitute a textual *intervention* into a pre-existent set of relations[70]. This fits with a desire to render the political and/of the epistemological explicit for the purposes of tracing their influence in inter-subjective encounters and disrupting their easy repetition into others. The normative modes of representation within psychology, then, while they might enable a *form* of critique, would neither allow for the representation of subjective experiences, nor the reflexive critique of subjectivity that I understand to be a significant part of representing stories from this research.

Given that the relationships in this project include those within and between the university and the community of Then, intervening in one is also an intervention in the other – creating/sustaining/stepping into a "space in the discourse" of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations both requires and effects change in the relationships that precede those. If we treat the literature consulted and contributed to as representations of/from the epistemological and epistemic communities our work also unfolds in relation to (see Doucet, 2008), then reading and writing autoethnography into psychology constitutes an intervention, or at least some form of a political act (Denzin, 2006) with uncertain outcomes.

As a textual strategy in other disciplines (where, similar to those in psychology, the prevailing epistemological positions are ones in which the author as an embodied, located subject, is obscured), autoethnography has enabled writers to give voice to experiences that are un-

[70] including dominant modes of representation that prevail in psychology and other disciplines

speakable in other forms: stories pertaining to sexual abuse (Ronai, 1996), erotic dancing (Ronai, 1992), experiences of tourism (Noy, 2008), profound grief and the grief experience of sudden death (Ellis, 1993; Hollander, 2004), violence in intimate relationships (Olsen, 2004), the representation of 'enfleshed' knowledge and the traversal of personal/professional/political voices (Spry, 2006), the temporal fluidity of narrative voices in researcher subjectivity (Mizzi, 2010) and the complex, performative interplay of theory and autobiography (Kaufmann, 2005). All these resonated with some aspect of my experiences in this and other (including research) contexts, suggesting possible relevance to psychological inquiry, yet few autoethnographic narratives have been written into psychology (McIlveen, 2008).

Many of the experiences written about above are ones "…about which social scientists do not know how to talk" (Ellis, 1993, p. 725). While Ellis was reflecting specifically on the experience of death in peoples' lives, and this may be extrapolated with ease to other emotionally confronting experiences, it occurs to me that the same also applies to the theoretical questions posed (and addressed, through autoethnography) by Kaufmann (2005), Mizzi (2010) and Spry (2006): in spite of social science having vast vocabularies for intellectualising, when it comes to experiences that trouble the unified, temporally stable subject, we flounder to produce texts that have integrity with *that* kind of subjectivity.

> *And when we want to write our way out of colonising narratives, to write (from) ones other than the existing fictions of terra nullius, our floundering might be both intellectual and emotional. Telling those kinds of stories within a discursive context such as psychology is multiply fraught with ethical and aesthetic difficulties.*

That Ellis focused on not knowing how to talk – as opposed to not knowing what to say – is significant to me within psychology: a discipline predicated on human experience and human relationships. I am reminded of Swan (1995) reflecting on the experiences of Indigenous people hearing the problems of their family members labelled as 'mental problems' when they know them to be political ones, and of the cost – to those we are committed to, to ourselves, to the discipline – of embracing limited linguistic resources. As I engage with a selection of autoethnographic texts, I pay particular attention to how they talk, or the kind of talk that is enabled. My primary focus is on how the writers use narrative form and multivocality to represent what has hitherto been unspeakable – and the form that analysis takes.

I am focussing on analysis in part as a response to the suggestion that it is not privileged in autoethnographic texts. The form of analysis that is (expected to be) privileged is not always explicit in academic discourse, and so to be consistent with the commitment to epistemological reflexivity, I want to be clear about my ontological relationship with the concept of 'analysis'. I am drawing on the translation of the ancient greek (basically a loosening of, or a loosening throughout, the phenomena in question) and the psychological sense of analysis as an attempt to apprehend and appreciate connections: in thought processes (psychoanalysis), in relationships (systemics), in stories (narrative), etc. These latter sensitivities may differentiate my use of analysis from prevailing ideas of analysis as requiring, or being limited to, abstraction and explanation in the sense of phenomena being removed from context and considered in isolation. Does analysis necessarily require excision? Not only do I argue that it does not, but that the act of representing it thus is an epistemic performance denoting a framework in which some excision has already occurred in the delineation of 'phenomena' to begin with. Clearly my reading is again articulated through a relational ontology and poststructural epistemological commitments.

Abstraction and explanation, and contribution to theoretical inquiry, may not be mutually exclusive with evocative writing. Spry (2006), suggests that both are needed, that the "reader of autoethnographic texts must be moved emotionally *and* critically" (p. 191; emphasis added). Invoking the position of a reader in the making of meaning and value (see also St. Pierre, 1996) suggests that as well as potentially holding promise for a different authorial performance to the 'white know all' that Moreton-Robinson (1999) describes, autoethnography may also enable different *reading* positions in academic communities, including the embodied, emotionally present reader/researcher that the preceding Indigenous-centred critiques of history warrant. Consistent with this and with the narrative forms acceptable within autoethnographical texts, I include reflexive fragments of my reader-response (italicised text).

***

5b: Reading autoethnography

> Eager to understand…I spent several months gathering as much published information as possible. I examined various theories and explanations but could not find myself in the endless pages of medical, psychological, psychiatric, feminist, and cultural

> theories. The stories offered by the "experts" in these publications were not my story.
>
> Kiesinger, 1998, p. 73.

Kiesinger's "evocative narrative about one woman's struggle with bulimia and obesity" is embedded in her own experiences of exclusion from the discursive resources through which she might make sense of herself. "Eager to understand", she turns to an extensive body of literature to find her own (body) is missing in the narratives told therein. The absence is significant for her – significant enough that her research becomes an attempt to reflexively connect her own experiences with those of the women she interviews and to do so in ways that enhance understanding and comprehension. To enable 'reflexive connection' Kiesinger draws on re-created interview fragments, interpretive 'case-study' style fragments of 'life story' for one of the women interviewed – Abbie – and pieces of her own autobiography. She also re-presents remembered autobiographical fragments and reflects on her own embodied responsiveness to Abbie's stories as a researcher.

> I was not prepared for the sick way I felt as I listened to her explore the various details and contours of her life. I felt totally ill equipped to respond to her appropriately.
>
> (Kiesinger, 1998, p. 76)

> *I was not prepared for the sick way I felt, as I listened to her explore the various details and contours of hers, and Abbie's, lives. I felt totally ill equipped to respond to her appropriately, particularly in the context of an explicative piece of writing in which I formulate something as abstract as 'my methodological approach'. How to make sense of the parallelism between Kiesinger's response as a researcher, to Abbie's story, and my response as a reader, to Kiesinger's story? It's as if something of the researcher's position is reproduced in the position of the reader.*

If part of Kiesinger's narrative purpose was to "give voice" to the lived experiences of the women she interviewed and to enable "readers to experience those worlds in emotional, even bodily, ways" (p. 74) then my experience of reading suggests she has achieved that purpose. Following Spry (2006), and re-reading/writing my response I might wonder: am I not moved emotionally and critically? What are the implications of an analysis that enables an embodied emotional response as part of the process of knowledge production?

In noticing a connection between the significance of my body in my experience of reading, and the significance of Abbie's body (and Kiesinger's) in the writing of the text, I am reminded of Kiesinger's agenda to write missing bodies and voices back in to academic discourses: among the exclusionary practices of academic writing that she necessarily resists is the tendency to ignore/obscure the body and with it embodied subjectivity (Spry, 2006; Tilmann-Healey, 1996). She is not alone in her undertaking, neither in her use of narrative strategies to enable it. Tillmann-Healey (1996) and Spry (2006) both reference the significance of reclaiming representative space in academic discourses for their relationships to their own bodies, and take this up in different ways as political activism.

> *I think of the significance for me – and this thesis – of being able to represent the position of Emily Creaghe. I think of the white, senior nurses in Leesa's testimony. I wonder about being embodied in such a way that your entitlement over another's body and being is assumed, and of the significance of reclaiming and relinquishing representative space in academic discourses for these relationships to my body.*
>
> Disciplinary power and bio-power have as their object the body, writing on the materiality of my flesh and bones, constituting postures, gestures, and attitudes, inscribing me as a modern body/subject.
>
> (Kaufmann, 2005, p. 578)

Abbie's story has a profoundly physical genesis: the embodiment of trauma. Wajnryb (2001) writes of the phenomenal force of trauma that throws the person experiencing it beyond the reach of meaning and words, into the greater fluency of silence. Addressing the resounding silences with which talk of the Holocaust is infused, she writes of "words as hopelessly inadequate" (p. 82), and that what "is being suggested…is that certain experiences go beyond the limits of language" (p. 83). To speak and write of trauma, she states, is paradoxical: it requires the speaker to communicate the incommunicable and, I would add, to do so with/in discursive means that erase the experiencing body of/from which they speak and in which their story resides. In the intimate choreography of language and subjectivity, where is 'the self' when words fail?

In the context of such a fraught process of communication, Wajnryb suggests that the role of the listener/audience is critical, referencing Kiesinger's other concern with finding ways of

writing Abbie's stories into academia, that "uphold the integrity of our relationship and the trust" (p. 73). According to Wajnryb's figuration of the process, theirs is a relationship developed (partially) through the shared experience of two people trying to connect, to communicate, doing the difficult work of *being in relationship* where both are inadequately resourced for conversation. Furthermore, the process of writing research requires moving into relationship with readers, who are more often than not far removed from the relationships with participants: Josselson (1996) casts this as a particular challenge to writing research in that it requires moving "…out of relationship with my participants (with whom during the interview, I was in intimate relationship) to be in relationship with my readers" (p. 70). Would writing in ways that resist this constitute ways of (re)turning to our academic communities with something other than 'data'? If we listen to our stories – and what is done to/with them once shared – as representative of embodied relationships (including possible future ones) how does that influence what – if anything – we are able to tell? In privileging an-other relationship what is being done to the historical political relationship between psychology and 'its' subject? What is enabled and required by writing in ways that represent a different political relationship? What changes are urged upon us with the move from talking about 'data' to talking (of) others, (of) our relationships and (of) people's stories?

> *It occurs to me that perhaps some of the resistance or frustration expressed by many towards autoethnographies, is a result of the difficulty they pose for readers: how to respond? They remind us that we are human and that we might fail as listeners and speakers simultaneously, right there in the face of anothers' need to be heard. If autoethnographies deal with topics about which social scientists do not know how to talk, then that 'not knowing how to talk' also appears to leave us poorly resourced as listeners…It raises questions of how to respond to personal narratives within academic discursive spaces, yet also how to respond to each other and to the worlds we weave in our work.*

If Kiesinger's text is to be effective it needs to represent her position and that of Abbie simultaneously, and to represent the movement and change in her positioning: the different 'selves' of the researcher – the one sitting in the interview, the one arriving in the car, the one trying to imagine her body into a different body, the one in her own memories. By fragmenting the text and taking up different authorial positions within it, Kiesinger's story unsettles assumptions of the 'temporally fixed and single' voice of the researcher (Mizzi, 2010), assumptions that are embedded in ontologies of time and space discussed earlier. As

Kiesinger "tacks back and forth" between hers and Abbie's lives, and temporally through her own, she enables space for a critique of the resources available to us to make sense of our own worlds and those of others. Her writing charts a movement between relationships, rather than one of her stepping out of one and talking *about* it. The fragmented text and shifting temporal scope loosens the hegemonic potential of monologue, reminding me that her writing has a resistive function, too: to resist reproducing the exclusionary practices of academic writing that vivified her initial approach to the research.

Given that Kiesinger predicated her work in part on writing excluded bodies and voices into academia, as well as trying not to perpetuate those exclusions in her writing, the ability to move between perspectival positioning and illustrate that she does so is significant. The fractured narrative, and her reflexive re-construction of it at the end of the article – where she details some of the narrative tricks and strategies used to create a "meaningful story" from the interviews – emphasise that as much as there is a rich sense of 'Abbie' in the narrative, there is more that exists beyond its reach. The compelling, 'present' representation of 'Abbie' is also only the tiniest, fleeting trace of a person 'known' only through the brief, yet profound, encounter with the writer who brings 'her' story to us: thus, any 'richness' in the text only succeeds in emphasising the complexity and scope of the lives lived outside the text, outside the small moments of a research encounter. It is not the same as hearing Abbie speak: instead, what we are left listening for is a respectful representation, and one in which the researcher position is made vulnerable and accountable. And for Kiesinger: in writing in ways that trace her movements in and out of different relationships, we are implied in the development of her own subjectivity as a researcher through what we 'allow' of her research story. To consider the relationships in which *we* are participating urges humility in a reader.

> *I wonder about a research discipline founded on humility: what kind of subjectivities and relationships would be enabled and privileged in that?*
> *Kiesinger's fragmented writing, imbued with a sense of impermanence, reminds me of the partiality of knowledge and the often-fleeting nature of relationships predicated on research interviews. St. Pierre (1996) wonders whether such multi-textured representation is the only way to re-present research ethically, to emphasise the partial nature of our findings through non-linear, polyphonic texts.*

If there is simultaneously so much, and so little, conveyed in stories told, what does this do to the distribution of responsibility for the meaning of the text? Surely the explicit re-

presentation of fragmented meaning and interpretive process should prompt reflection on our complicity as readers with the dynamics and structures represented to us? The resonances that I noticed between my reader-responses and Kiesinger's researcher-responses emphasise this: as readers we are located in a relationship, with responsibilities incumbent upon us and with opportunities to interrupt or reproduce, challenge or change the patterns that others have shown us. Just as anticolonialist, feminist and postmodernist principles emphasise reflexivity in research, their performance – enabled here through autoethnography – encourages reflexivity in the reader.

> *As a narrative form to listen to, interpolated through a relational ontology, autoethnography presents a different kind of complexity to me as a reader: following a conversation and/or multiple perspectives instead of a monologue. Furthermore, I'm required to tune in to the relationship(s) between parts, a different reading requirement in a context that has come to be dominated by assumptions of bounded, singular and individual selves.*

Kaufmann's (2005) "autotheory" is a compilation of autoethnographic vignettes and theoretical interpretations of aspects of Foucault's work; the compilation – the modes of representation chosen and the ways in which they are placed together – play "with the dialectical relationship between theory and autobiography" (p. 577). The autoethnographic vignettes, placed alongside examples of theoretical encounters, are comprised of both literary extracts and personal journal entries, consistent with Kauffman's expressed epistemological commitment to treat the embodied self as a text. By allowing these select 'readings' (of her life and other texts) to "lie side by side without explicit interpretation…the reader may listen to the complex interrelation between the texts, between autobiography and theory" (p. 577).

What are the implications for me, as a reader? Reading Kaufmann's article leaves me with a sense of reading *with* Foucauldian theory, in contrast to reading *about* Foucauldian theory. In reading *with*, my own subjectivity as a reader is implied: an active significance assembled around a relationship between reading position and text. To encounter myself as implied is to encounter 'myself-as-reader' as *implicated* – inviting me to pause and consider how it is that I am making sense of what I read. Through treating the embodied self as a text, as Kaufmann does, I am compelled to apply the same considerations to the sense I make of her (and others') embodied self, an interpersonal process also entailed in her vignettes.

> *Again, my attention is drawn to the contingency of meaning upon where we are located, or positioned, in relation to what we read/write. This is significant to a thesis that questions the extent to which the representative – including reading – strategies undertaken reproduce the particular ontological subject and existing fictions of* terra nullius*. If autoethnography enables me, as I anticipate it will, to represent a subject that is not the individual, bounded self of psy-discourse, then does it necessarily enable the reader to receive that subject? Or merely confound, frustrate, and confuse them?*

Just as Ranzijn et al. (2007) note that discomfort can be a good thing "if it acts as a motivator to avoid the mistakes of the past" (p. 24) I argue that the same can be said for feeling confounded, frustrated and confused – responses that are co-created in the space/relationship between reading and writing. Those feelings, or the names given to them, urge us to attend to the meanings that we bring with us – assumptions inherent in our positions and interpolated into those we make available to others. As a writer writing in the hope of particular social change, I might wonder about the transformative potential of autoethnographic writing in relation to the positions it enables and constrains in the other (academic) audiences in relation with which these texts are created (Josselson, 1996).

Olsen's (2004) autoethnography of violence represents 3 different, and related, 'subjective' voices: the Narrator (strong and authoritative, the voice of an unseen woman), Author as Academic (analytic, interested in the implications of interpretations for other audiences), and Author as Woman Next Door (warm, friendly, speaking in a personal tone). At times the 3 voices speak in turns, at times in harmony, and at times speak directly to, and also over, each other. By representing each voice in relation to others the influences of their positions on their interpretations and agendas, and the relationships between them, can be traced.

Olsen uses 'stage directions' to move between the different speaking voices (permutations of 'Author-as' and Narrator): she opens the article with a description of a stage set, as-yet empty, and introduces the "Narrator, a strong, authoritative female voice, unseen by the audience, (who) begins to speak from above" (p. 1). This enables her to begin the article "in the traditional mode of social science" (p. 5) before introducing – again in italicised stage directions – the Author as Academic, audibly relieved at having completed the traditional beginning and reminding the audience that she does "not wish to present a third-person analysis about domestic violence…(but) a personal narrative – one woman's account of her

experiences in an abusive marriage" (p. 5). It occurs to me that, in this context, at least, one woman's story takes three different voices to be told.

When the voices speak separately and when they address each other, they do not always do so kindly, or respectfully. At times the Narrator and Author as Academic speak over and drown out the voice of the Woman Next Door – a patterning in their relationships that resembles the dynamics of the very (abusive, intimate) relationship of which they speak.

> *I hear the relief of the Author as Academic to signify something of the constraints she writes under, constraints that compromise the telling of a 'personal' narrative and/or the capacity of this particular audience to hear it. These constraints resonate with a sense of frustration (for me) at needing to legitimise the simple 'telling of stories'.*

Having noticed a pattern (in the text) of the imposition of power and entitlement, I recall McConaghy's work in which she writes that the quality of the response reprises trauma, requiring that it continue to be told. From that perspective, for me, Olsen's text functions as a critique of academic practices and the ways in which they render discursive spaces unsafe for some stories to be told. Olsen also tells a story, however, about presenting this work in a conference setting and being asked by a friend and colleague in the audience "Do you feel you are at risk by coming out with your story?" (p. 8). She proceeds to deconstruct the phrase 'coming out' to demonstrate the place of domestic violence stories in prevailing cultural discourses (and academic ones):

> Does his question not speak to the patriarchal social structures that experience embarrassment and discomfort with relational violence? Doesn't the question perpetuate the assumption that being beaten is still the dirty little secret that we need to keep 'in the closet'? (p. 8)

> *Reflecting on the 'safety' of discursive spaces, I am confused by Olsen's response. Is she saying that to assume that there may be risks to speakers for telling their stories is inappropriate…even part of the problem? How to fit this alongside a concern with epistemic violence that I hear in critiques of psychology and mainstream academic practices, and attempts to alter those practices?*

But reading Olsen's deconstruction more closely, it isn't an undoing of safety/risk but the way this is articulated with respect to the embodied subjectivity of the speaker. In linking 'taking a risk' to 'coming out', the positioning available to her is constrained to those in which vulnerability and risk are created by her move from one to the other. Consider the following questions: 'in what ways are these spaces safe and unsafe ones to tell your story?' or 'what needs to be different in academia in order to hear these stories?' Her deconstruction isn't suggesting that questions of safety and risk are not relevant, as much as that the politics of them *are*: politics embedded in the forms that questioning may take. Enunciating concerns with safety/risk may privilege her perspective and critique the spaces she is stepping into; it might also avoid reflection on the conditions under which risk is viable, and reinscribe vulnerability as a property of her personhood (much like the multiple ways that perpetrators of violence, and social discourses around violence, have for implying the responsibility for violence rests with victims, as her story traced).

> When the political relationships intervened in (textually) are scored with violence what embodied experiences do we hope for in the authorial and other positions we write towards?

5c: Embodying autoethnography

> *Each of the authors whose works I've engaged with draw on ideas of subjectivity and the body in their texts. Having raised the psy-discursive self as a problematic figure I revisit the production and embodiment of it in relation to the textual strategies discussed, and in doing so situate my use of those strategies in relation – and counterpoint – to others.*

In Kiesinger's article it is possible to read the remembering author as reaching back into her memory/files/writing to retrieve exact replicas of real events. Kiesinger has not explicated her ontological relationship with memory in that text and I do not want to be heard presuming that the humanist subject I hear is the one she intends to be heard speaking. Rather, the experience of wondering how 'memory' functions in the text and whether that is commensurate with her theoretical positioning serves to remind me that the ontological subject for such 'memory' is not one that can reappear in *this* narrative unproblematically. That humanist subject (which I hear speaking/remembering in Kiesinger's text) is limited in its capacity to theorise ancestral memory, or the reproduction of things – which might be memories – beyond an individual

self. To the extent that it reproduces a particular subject and ontological relationship with time it reproduces the conditions of possibility for the difficulties that Gerrett-Magee (2006) observed (for example) in students' failing to appreciate how the past lives on. It fails to account for Re-memory, and for the body of Beloved.

> To put it another way, the evidence of experience, whether conceived through a metaphor of visibility or in any other way that takes meaning as transparent, reproduces rather than contests given ideological systems – *those that assume that the facts of history speak for themselves and those that rest on notions of a natural or established opposition*
>
> (Scott, 1991, p. 778, emphasis added)

The emphasis for me here is not so much in the language of experience (its metaphors) as much as it is in the assumptions of transparency with which they are frequently imbued: a mis-taking of metaphor. Consider Kauffmann's writing: considered separately each vignette is replete with 'I' statements and references to embodied experiences/an experiencing body. But in the placement of them "side by side, without interpretation" it is also the spaces between that we are invited to lean into, to hear the (post-structural) possibilities of the subject she invokes in her text, or merely an echo of what we bring to it. To read (and write) memory for a narrative subject (to write the narrative subject through memory) is to construe the relationship with memory as non-linearly linked with the present, and the matter that memory speaks of as neither natural, established, nor transparent. Rather, to narrate memory from this latter position is to treat the etymological roots of narration (narre: to make known) as an active process of creation, not a faithful reproduction of something that exists (is reified) outside of the circumstances of its telling.

What I am contesting here is the taken-for-granted association of the language of 'experience' (as if indistinct from epistemological commitments) with a particular (re)citation of the world, one in which the humanist subject is privileged. The 'evidence of experience' that concerns Scott is, as I hear it, an uncritical privileging of a particular version of experience and particular set of epistemological commitments. Similarly, St. Pierre (2008) writes:

> "…a research methodology that privileges *voice* as the truest, most authentic data and/or evidence has to be problematic for those with a poststructural bent because voice is part of the humanist and materialist discursive formation poststructuralism

works against. Voice is especially troublesome for those who are wary of the supposed conscious, stable, unified, rational, coherent, knowing, autonomous, and ahistoric humanist individual… ”

(p. 221)

And before this, she wrote:
So the moral of this story lies in hearing that “voice” metaphorises a particular political relationship: in the speaking voice of a man, Gilligan heard the silencing of women, and here that silence signified exclusion…

As *Historical Verses, Voice,* and particular academic discourses (subaltern psychology, critical psychology) state: even when writing of ‘Others’ we are no less writing ourselves, and the assumption that we are doing otherwise is one that tends to preserve the already-dominant positions and the serve the interests of those who hold them. Taken this way, autoethnography becomes not so much a performance of endless recitations of references to the self, (although there are certainly those, too, cf. Minh-ha) as ones of intimate choreography. While this undermines popular critiques of autoethnographies as necessarily biased and ‘narcissistic’ (critiques that assume the privileging of a singular self in the text) it doesn’t in and of itself negate a concern with the reproduction of social power relations.

Is it possible to write in ways that account for the position of dominant white cultural assumptions, without re-centring that position, that body? Is it possible to write *from* the problematic body in ways that undermine and unsettle the privilege historically conferred upon it? Or is to write of and from it to unavoidably reproduce it *as an ‘it’* and in the position of dominance? To the extent that it is possible, accounting for those pre-existent relationships would seem to constitute a critical step: it is by virtue of what is enabled in this regard that I take up Autoethnography as an appropriate narrative form through which to tell a story of the research. My analysis in this thesis, then, is shaped by these commitments, commitments that I hold as an extension of the research relationships.

Can any strategy, interpolated into pre-existing social power relations, be inherently, inevitably and consistently ethical and just? I feel compelled (by virtue of the limits of my knowledge) to hold space for the possibility, but would not claim that status for Autoethnography. What writing autoethnographically offers me here is one way of telling a

story that seems to have integrity with what I heard as a requirement to account for my positioning politically, personally, and epistemically, and to do so even when the immediate discursive context into and from which I speak is immersed in assumptions that ignore or dismiss the relevance of that. It seems appropriate to do this in the context of a PhD: a specifically academic discursive space, within the discursive communities of which I am also a member, and which are also enrolled in existing fictions of *terra nullius.* It is not that this is the only conversation we should be having, nor that this is the only way of having that (or any) conversation: I merely suggest that this story, and the way it is told, matters for what it brings to these relationships and potentially enables in performances elsewhere.

The potential of Autoethnographic writing that I choose to privilege in my analysis here is that the forms it legitimates enables me to perform reflexivity through the representation of multiple, partial, perspectives: using 'voice' to represent particular political positions and through them, relationships. In doing so my analysis departs from, for example, Kiesinger's use of autoethnography, in that I seek to trace and interrupt particular representations of 'the subject' and to represent, instead, the political relationships between positions and to consider the implications of how those are taken up and interpolated into interpersonal relationships. In paying attention to the political aspects of this in the story I tell, and to the politics of the storytelling itself, my analysis is aligned with the *commitment to politics* (if not the specific political commitments) of the writers whose work I have discussed here, and the theoretical commitments of, for example, Kaufmann. In the following section I discuss specific textual strategies, enabled through autoethnography, that constitute my analysis and through which I retell the research.

***

It is done now:
the ground is turned
in heavy clods and crumbling.

The green grass now grows downwards,
bedded back in its beginnings,
its greenness to disperse
dissolve
and nourish new roots.

There is soil under my nails,
and running like fine veins in the lines of my skin.
Damp and cool it brushes
from my hand
across my lips

***

5d: Textual strategies for talking of stories

There is considerable diversity in the authorial positions taken up over the thesis as a whole. From an academic standpoint and in terms of narrative complexity (of form), *Burden* and *Historical Verses* are comparatively straightforward: there is minimal inclusion of other voices (e.g. the Questioner); the narrator speaks with occasional recourse to rhetorical devices (e.g. use of more poetic titling practices, use of vignettes or quotes as stand-alone sections, use of footnoting). The movement from *Historical Verses* into *Voice, Psychology as Mythography, Narrative,* and then *Method* and beyond is one of expansion and contraction: there is increased inclusion of other authorial voices, other textual fragments, and interruptions to the text, which at times weaves a more complex narrative and at times returns to a simpler 'storytelling' form (e.g. in coming to The House).

Having illustrated something of autoethnographic strategies, embedded in the particular epistemological and ontological 'ground' of my readings, I am now able to articulate specifically some of the strategies I incorporate into this next part of the story. In the following pages of this thesis I will introduce the project as it was initially conceptualised and undertaken, the House, the method to approaching the music workshops, the workshop that formed a significant moment in the research and for the re-telling, and some of the music from the same.

Storytelling: narrative strategies

I use grammatical tense to cast some things in the past, and some in the present (fictional as that might be), and to invoke and displace connections through doing so. I continue to move between story-telling, narrative fragments (diary entries, poetry, dialogue) and of course (in later sections) a selection of songs from the music workshop that I cast as a critical moment in the research. While the different narrative forms enable (and function as) different 'voices' for the telling I also invoke 3 distinct 'rhetorical voices within the text. If different textual strategies enable shifting between different relationships and positions, the use of 3 distinct rhetorical voices helps tease those apart for the reader to hear the audible effects of them upon the developing story. Because of the narrative complexity of many autoethnographic texts, I reprise the particular strategies (specific to that section) at the opening of each section, to assist the reader. Here, I introduce the 3 main authorial 'voices' that have already been heard speaking and which will continue to be called upon in the following pages. I then discuss that of the letters in re-presenting songs from the music workshop.

Narrator

The Narrator tells the stories. Where there are larger tracts of uninterrupted text – as for much of the beginning of this thesis, including this chapter – that is the narrator speaking. She speaks from the usual position for academic dissertations, although attention is not often drawn to her…the voice she uses – in terms of tone, style, is probably still more poetic/emotional/political than is common for that position.

> *When did you start to recognise the difference in how you held that position?*
>
> Ah, the Questioner. We're coming to you. Looking back I now locate many of my earlier struggles in university with that feeling of not fitting (and not wanting to). There was a moment of some significance during my honours year, where I was meeting with my supervisor, Dave Cairns to discuss my first draft. He told me that I write beautifully, that he hoped I would go on to do a PhD one day, and that he would not feel he was acting responsibly as a supervisor if he didn't discuss with me my style of writing in terms of its acceptability within the discipline.
> He wanted me to be aware that to write the kind of project that I wanted to write, in the way that I wanted to write it, would be to risk the academic outcomes (the disciplinary approval) that he felt was otherwise attainable (and that we both agreed provided an easier entry into an academic career). Later I would look back and recognise an implicit acknowledgement of the injustice of this. At the time, however, I just listened and thought about what he said. I thanked him for his integrity and replied that it had taken me too long to work out how to stand in this space, and to get to a place in my degree where I felt I was finally entitled to write as 'myself': I wasn't willing to compromise that for the sake of convention, especially not one that seemed so unjust.
>
> > *This story is now significant to me (the reflexive voice) as another moment (like the street corner in Then) in which I was dimly and inarticulately aware of the political context in which I wrote, and of the relationship between this space and the self that would be shaped by and emerge from it. It resonated with some felt-sense that would be significant later on. While it isn't the originary story of that sense, it is a moment in which it was held (with another who was prepared to privilege it)) and that would enable later moments...*

The voice of the Narrator is one that can and does break the mould of (monologic) narration – she responds to questions, she orients herself in time and place, and sometimes she stops speaking altogether.

Questioner

The Questioner interrupts the narrative (as above) to question what is being said or how it came to be spoken. She enables attention to be drawn to things that would otherwise be taken for granted. In interrupting narratives she changes the course of them and so, while her presence may appear minor in terms of word count, it is critical. Often her questions are left as they appear – she asks them without expecting or requiring they are addressed because sometimes to do so is beyond the scope of this text and its audience. But they are questions worth asking nonetheless. There is some overlap between the position she speaks from and that of the Reflexive Voice, as a reflexive voice requires some appreciation of questioning: their relationship is frequently played out through sympathetic resonance[71].

Reflexive Analyst

The reflexive voice of the Analyst reflects on features of the developing narrative and on remembered experiences of the research, and connects them with other phenomena, emphasising the narrative *as a narrative*. She is the observer of the self in writing, the whispered 'hmmm I wonder…' that is possibly recognisable at times as a voice who speaks of things that are readily dismissed by mainstream discourses as tangential, semantic, politically correct. She frequently shifts the temporal frame, re-situating parts of a narrative as 'before this…' and disrupting, in the process, the apparent seamlessness and linearity of academic discourse. At times she also speaks through memory – a narrative trick that enables the re-presentation of things in ways that (re)produce pastness – or the appearance of pastness – in order to reproduce the present under different/particular conditions.

Letters

Following the music workshop analyses I re-present a number of songs related to the music programme of The House more broadly, and from the workshop in particular. I use letters to respond to each song. This is consistent with the relationship that I have traced between this

[71] Such as when a guitar string is played, and a different (untouched) yet harmonically similar string is also sounded.

thesis and a literary tradition[72]; that is, throughout this thesis I borrow metaphors from this tradition instead of – as dominant psy-discourse does – that of science. Specific to the context of this thesis, the works of Indigenous writers, Minh-ha (1989) and readings of Morrison's *Beloved* have been critical in locating these metaphors in relation to the historical cultural narratives (and narratives of cultures) through which I come to know them: existing fictions of *terra nullius*.

The use of letters as literary device has a history as vast in its scope (novels, plays, movies, even video games) as it is long. There is no single use to which letters may be turned by an author, but some of the usefulness of them as a device lies in their reliance on different perspectives – something that intersects, here, with a desire to trouble the representation of a singular, omniscient voice that is privileged in psychology and in existing fictions of *terra nullius* more generally. The letters through which I articulate responses to the songs are each addressed to different people, in different positions, thereby requiring/enabling a different position, from that privileged in psy-discourses, from which 'I'. Through writing into and out of different relationships I represent something of the specificity of the narrative tradition through which we are articulated, how it manifests (endures) across different positionings and what it brings to bear on my interpretations. For all the differences between the authorial positions taken up they have one thing in common: they all constitute performances of a more intimate voice, in contrast to the prevailing *out-of-relationship* voice of psy-discourse.

The text overall.

The shift represented across the narrative scope of the thesis is thus one of increasingly intimate narrative forms: direct address, personal conversation and, ultimately, letters. To borrow a spatial metaphor: the closer we come (in the story) to being *explicitly* located in relationships other than the academic ones, the greater the narrative diversity: the changing aesthetics of the text tell a story that is also a (re)telling of the research. They also tell a story about prevailing storytelling practices in psychology. They represent a set of political relationships and a means of resisting them.

A central tenet to the thesis, read through Positioning theory, is that we are always, already located in pre-existing *political* relationships: even when speaking from a position within an academic community and back into academic community. In the context of this research, that presents a particular problem, where the process of *taking ourselves out of* one set of

[72] including historical relationships between literature and performing arts

relationships in order to build others (Josselson, 1996) can include a submission to pre-existent discursive norms (here prevailing narrative forms of (re)telling research in academia) that have historically been hostile to others. To what extent does taking myself out of relationship with participants in this instance – including, for example, building a relationship with an audience in which the defining of people as 'participants' is critical – reproduce something of the ordinariness of gubba-Indigenous relations? How to (re)build a relationship with an academic audience located in the position of dominant cultural assumptions, without falling back into perspective and out of relationship with Indigenous sovereignty in an epistemological sense?

A central critique of the function of psydiscourse as a discourse of *terra nullius* is of the predominance of a singular 'voice', and one that constrains expressions of subjectivity to objects (Bradley & Selby, 2001). In the narrative forms that have historically been privileged in this particular relationship between reader and writer, objectivity and neutrality have functioned to obscure the existence of those political relationships and our positions within them. The adoption of multiple voices and in particular the privileging of more intimate narrative forms is therefore a strategy to resist the political relationship inscribed through the singular, apolitical voice of psydiscourse through which subjectivities and the relationships between them are made into objects.

And before this she wrote:

> *This context too – of research, of researchers, of university contracts for community collaborations, of non-Indigenous cultural, historical and political patterns and values – this also required explicit representation even though those relationships were not the relationships that I, at face value, moved specifically within when visiting The House. Yet when I sat with members of The House for a week, drawn into the music workshop that became the focus – a lingering burden to a different song – of this thesis, I had to question the presence of those relationships, too: How am I tuned in to receive the songs in the way that I do?*

Chapter 6: Talking Stories

(In which she retells the research in relation to other relationships and resources that preceded it and through which it has already been told)

Inasmuch as I was introduced to The House before I visited it for the first time, I was introduced through the narrative resources that preceded me and through which the research was already being told: *of research, of researchers, of university contracts for community collaborations, of non-Indigenous cultural, historical and political patterns and values (Burden).*

6a: The House tells a story about The House as a structure and a place, creating a scene for subsequent stories to be played out against. I tell it in the present tense, to contra pose the 'newness' of first meeting (for me) with the historical precedents to it. There is some inclusion of the Questioner and Reflexive Voice.

6b: Evaluative Forms tells the beginnings of the entwining of the research story with my work. The Narrator and Questioner weave stories of the beginnings in relation to the political contexts that preceded it. The discursive resources of Evaluation and psychological narratives of drug and alcohol were critical to these beginnings and so are paid particular attention here.

6c: Method traces the shape of the research project that emerged from these preceding conversations, and specifies the approach to the music workshop. Told mainly through conversation between The Narrator and Questioner, it also draws on stories from The House and extracts from diaries.

Inasmuch as I was introduced to The House before I visited it for the first time, I was introduced through music: the music of the music workshop to which the heart of this thesis is devoted; the music of prior workshops; the music of Indigenous artists whose work I first encountered through this project; and the music of non-Indigenous Australian singers whose work I also first encountered through this project and whose songs became entwined with those of The House and my own in response.

Listen to this song.

Bridges

Have you stood on a black soil plain
Smelled the rain coming?
Been woken by black cockatoos,
On the banks of the Darling?

Seen the scars of a coolamon tree
Tasted honey from a wild bee

Then we can talk
Cross the room and talk
No nothing can start
While these bridges they burn

I stood in the womb of the city
Seen the fumes falling
Watched as we run to our business
Ignoring each other

Have you seen the scars of a coolamon tree
Tasted honey from the wild bee

Then we can talk
Cross the room and talk
No, nothing can start while these bridges they burn,
Bridges they burn

6a: The House

(In which she takes us to The House and introduces its programme)

The landscape is a fiction
Pulled from my view
Scenery on a slow moving train

Early one weekday morning, a small group of us gather at Central Station and wait for the train that will take us to Then and The House. Prior to this, Daf had given me a CD from the first music workshop that The House had held, a year or so earlier. This, a small newspaper clipping, and a brochure from The House, were additional resources that informed my expectations. Without knowing anything of the singers or their positions in The House, I was deeply moved by the CD and continued to return to the songs. I shared it with friends and family and watched as they, too, were moved…and now, here I was, in the company of colleagues on an overcast, gritty Sydney morning, waiting to move toward The House again[73].

Daf, Coelho (another student involved with the project) myself, and Terry (another academic who has agreed to act as an Aboriginal consultant to the project), share the train ride that winds through the urban decay of the city fringes, out to Then. I like Terry – he talks with me on the trip about postmodernism and modernity and about the names of stations we pass on the way that are embedded in different Aboriginal languages. Through this my appreciation of *terra nullius* as an existing fiction begins to deepen to an appreciation of Indigenous sovereignty – which I understand as the always-already there-ness of Indigenous stories, Indigenous communities. In the misspelled, mispronounced words that weave towns, streets and stations into familiar places for me, I hear echoes of a relationship that we are already located in, yet not all attending to.

> *It seems to me that my relationships with people are being articulated through my relationships with land, and my relationships with land are reciprocally reconstituted*

[73] Looking back now, and recalling how hearing those songs touched her, I might wonder about the significance of a relationship that began, before it began, with an emotional resonance (a ripple), (and before that there was the relationship with Daf, and before that…), and wonder at how that resonance resounds in the relationships that follow…

through my relationships with people: the songs of The House already heard, conversations with Terry, and later conversations with people of/through The House, shift my own ontological relationship with the land I had until then travelled through*,* over*, more than* with*.*

At our destination station Uncle H, an Elder in the community of Then, meets us. I remember this sense of wisdom and humour twinkling in his eyes, and the feeling that he had us sized up immediately. As he drove us to The House, Uncle H shared stories of the town and history with us on the way…

Where will the house be, will I know it when I see it? How will I recognise it? What am I looking for? What will give it away and what will this betray of how I am looking?

And then there it is, nestled unobtrusively on a residential street. What gave it away was the warmth and homeliness it exuded: a solid house, of warm and earthy colours, a welcoming front garden, carefully tended. On reflection, I wasn't looking for a clinical presentation, for a hospital entrance or stern façade. I wasn't looking for a 'gated community'. I was looking for a house that spoke (to me) of healing and of home, of a place where the CD I had listened to could have been made.

So now here we are, on the front verandah, looking back out to that same street that I stood on, looking in. On that day it was busy - people were coming and going, some lingering on the verandah, some flickering us guarded glances of interest. My first impressions of the physical site of The House were that a lot of love and pride had gone into creating a welcoming space for visitors, whatever their story and wherever they were coming from. I try to imagine walking up these steps as a client or family member, for the first time, but that is beyond my reach. I know, now, that beyond the doors The House unfolds through administrative spaces, into communal ones, into an open backyard and recreational area, and then accommodation: even within these welcoming walls there are – it seems to me – nevertheless significant buffers between the heart of The House (its people) and curious visitors.

So let's observe that, and linger here a while, and I'll locate The House in broader discursive context and talk you through some of its history, and some of the resources that inform the technical aspects of its programme.

As an Aboriginal community-owned and managed centre, designed for Indigenous men, The House is located culturally and physically within an Aboriginal community in NSW (and this community is not a homogenous one, nor is it stable or readily confined within particular borders). As a 'service provider' for diverse Indigenous communities, accepting clients from across the state and occasionally interstate, it is also culturally positioned within a broader sense of Indigenous community, comprised of multiple Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures/communities that since colonisation have come to be regarded as homogenously 'Indigenous'. As a service that also welcomes non-Indigenous men, it is also located in what might be considered a 'therapeutic relationship' with non-Indigenous communities. Furthermore, funded by two branches of state and federal government, and nestled within a suburban residential street, it is also constituted through economic and political relationships, and culturally and physically located with/in dominant white borderlines of community. The House also has what might be understood as its own community, comprised of Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients and staff, and their families and communities – membership of which is both persistent and transient.

> To adopt the term 'community' in relation to Aboriginal groups "is by no means neutral or apolitical" (Dudgeon et al., 2002, p. 255). Dudgeon et al. emphasise this with particular attention to the process of distributing services and funding, quoting Ted Wilkes' observation that it "is cheaper to call a group of 500 or more black or brown skinned human beings a community, than a town!" Furthermore, they illustrate that the ways in which 'community' is defined creates conditions of membership through which some people are supported as spokespersons to the exclusion of others: how may this serve particular interests?
>
> *How were we to account for these dynamics in our construction and re-presentation of 'community'? How do our own assumptions about community (our own and others) inhere in the way we form relationships with others?*

Articulated through mainstream discourses – The House (and other community centres with similar purpose) is referred to as a 'residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation programme'[74]. While 'rehabilitation' has its roots in ideas of restoration and return, the relational aspects of this process have become compromised through increasing individualisation of the 'subject' in western ontologies. Accordingly, rehabilitation may be understood within dominant therapeutic discourses to encompass a raft of interventionist technologies performed upon individual subjects by ratified experts.

Particularly with respect to residential centres, the form of 'rehabilitation' that has become privileged is one of removal: where individual clients are separated from their social contexts, subjected to therapeutic intervention – generally from an Alcoholics Anonymous, Cognitive Behavioural, or other individualised model – and returned to their social contexts. Restoration and return are here positioned in logical, hierarchical sequence to one another, rather than in such a way as to take the relationship (between self and social world) into account. Nevertheless, residential models have attained a somewhat privileged position as 'culturally appropriate' programme delivery for Indigenous communities (Brady, 2002), based on a perceived 'fit' between Indigenous 'culture' and group-oriented therapeutic interventions. For at least 24 years Indigenous communities have been able to access drug and alcohol rehabilitation services for Indigenous men through The House. Historically, these services may have included residential services and/or day programmes. The favour (and availability of resources) attached to different models of rehabilitation varies according to numerous social factors.

In earlier incarnations, through the 1980s and 1990s, The House spanned considerable political and social changes in the development, provision and funding of services for Indigenous communities specifically, and for social services in general. It was also impacted on, and survived, to an extent, significant changes in the context of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations, and the positioning of 'Indigenous affairs' in mainstream Australian landscapes. It continues to be owned and managed by the local Aboriginal community of Then. It continues to be a house where men and their families can visit for the purposes of healing; however, the programme (and the physical space of the house) has undergone dramatic restructuring since a change of management 18 months ago.

[74] a phrase which still takes up too much room in my mouth…

Here, a restructure entailed a period of voluntary closure in response to community and funding body concerns about the continued viability of the existing programme. The House, as a designated service for Indigenous communities, was cyclically funded by the NSW Department of Health, by the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH), and periodically supported by individual grants from various government and non-government agencies. Community and funding bodies indicated concerns that so few Indigenous men were using the service, or employed by the service, suggesting significant problems with some aspect of the programme that rendered it unsuitable, undesirable, or unsafe…

The house that we are now visiting is a departure from this history. The programme is designed with the diverse needs of Indigenous men in mind, and while non-Indigenous men are still welcome the majority of clients are Aboriginal and Torres-Strait Islander men. How some of this may look different will become apparent when we consider some of the modules of their programme. It is important to recognise, too, that The House liases closely with legal institutions – both Circle Sentencing and mainstream (whitestream) police/court/prison services.

> *So there is diversity in the positions that men accessing these services have moved through prior to taking up positions as 'clients'…*

In meeting the needs of clients and their communities, The House staff drew on a range of resources to broaden the programme: where previously it followed a primarily Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) framework, for example, the current programme addresses the use of narcotics, cannabis and prescription drugs as well, and utilises a range of perspectives and resources in doing so. Asking one of the senior staff members about their perspective on the programme, we hear that

> "We're just about supplying more options, find what option is best for you…what works for one person won't necessarily work for another person. So, my view is – of the programme – is we've got to look at the person and try to make the programme fit the person instead of the person fit the programme."
>
> *His words resonate with my sense of this place doing something a little different – doing something for which the discursive resources privileged in the university are an*

impediment to sharing. Already I am wondering: "how am I to evoke a sense of a programme that sees, hears and responds to people when the discursive resources available to me from this speaking position often fail to notice people (as people) at all?"

The philosophy shared by the staff member, above, is evident in the scope of the current (at that time) programme of The House. These resources include a series of group workshops and individual counselling sessions, incorporating modules from a range of 'interventions' – such as motivational interviewing, relapse prevention, harm reduction – that are widely used in therapeutic contexts. Further to this, however, there is significant emphasis placed on work addressing grief and loss, colonisation, and identity. In the focus on colonisation and contemporary identities the programme (and the positions available for Indigenous and non-Indigenous men within it) stand apart from mainstream service design, despite those services also being specifically based on the needs and experiences of particular groups of men. The programme also includes spaces for journaling, art and personal 'time out' (time that is not explicitly or specifically articulated through discourses of 'the programme').

Further to the 'technical' aspects of the workshops, the programme retains an extensive focus on physical health and recreational activities – some regular (yoga, tai chi) and some according to the season, weather, and other factors (bushwalking, swimming, diving, canoeing, camping, rugby, abseiling); the programme also draws on other health providers within the community to offer massage and acupuncture, as well as liaising with medical staff at the hospital for health check-ups, and with external counsellors. Privileging what are sometimes called 'alternative therapies' alongside accepted 'psychological therapies' suggests something about understandings of care, health and healing that might intersect with more prevailing conceptualisations of 'substance use and abuse treatment modalities' in interesting ways.

What is not as easily articulated through the language of programme resources, but that I nevertheless came to see as fundamental to The House, are also the community connections – events for local families on Friday nights; fairs, fetes and workshops for other organizations in Then that The House might cater for, provide rooms or staff for; gardening and home maintenance for Elders in the community; and various forms of community work. Furthermore there was an emphasis on the immediate families of the men who came through the programme – how to include and support them as part of the support of the 'clients'.

There were also other relationships like ours – between The House and universities/bureaucratic agencies that brought The House and the people who moved through it into relation with other communities, and brought other communities, people, ideas into The House and the day-to-day lives of the people to whom The House belongs.

The music workshops were somewhere within and between all of the above. An independent musician and artist facilitated them: one of several similar projects that he has developed with communities across Australia. The particular workshops at The House came out of a friendship and collaboration between he and a staff member at The House. In the workshops, the facilitator works with people who have chosen to participate, helping them to write and perform a song that is then recorded. The result is a professionally-mastered CD of songs from The House, some of which are sold and some of which are given to participants to send out to family.

> *How to represent the 'therapeutic' implications of this work, which is, unavoidably, what an evaluation project would be required to do? What other implications are there for telling stories of and from The House through such discourses?*
>
> *I wonder if we are in a position, having come as far as The House and heard something of the worlds evoked in and through it, to turn and look backwards towards the worlds that you came from: the 'and before this…' to the moment where you stepped on the train and travelled to Then for the first time.*

6b: Evaluation

(In which she introduces the conception of the initial evaluation research project in relation to the political relationships that preceded it)

Though *Historical Verses* I embedded this story of the research in cultural historical contexts; what follows is a story of the research project as it was initially conceptualised within academic spaces, through specifically psychological and evaluative discursive resources.

I do this through locating the conceptualisation of the project – and constructions of The House – within the discursive spaces and political relationships specific to the university; I then interlace narratives of the development of the project with readings from the DSM-IV (a central text in psychology), and readings in evaluation. As both sets of resources are situated within the existing fiction of *terra nullius*, detailing them here enables a critical reading of the relationship between research and colonialism in the context of actual relationships with/in The House.

***

6b(i): Evaluative conversations.

So before you visited The House, there were the beginnings of the project. Tell me about those beginnings?

It's hard to say where (and when) this project started. In one sense, for me at least, it began in a conversation between two white women a few months after I started my PhD. The two women were Daf (a senior lecturer with whom I was working at the time) and myself.

How did you come to be having a conversation where there would be space for this project to be discussed?

Good question. Daf was one of only a few voices in the department privileging social justice and politics in psychology, and qualitative research. She had marked my honours thesis, in which I explored first-year psychology students' (of course) understandings of Reconciliation. It was, I suppose, semi-qualitative research. At the time, and in the context of an undergraduate degree at this university, it was marginal and therefore something of a risk to

write, although I didn't really understand the politics of this risk. I came to *that* project through my relationship with my honours supervisor and the work that a previous student of his had done. So there is a history to the position I hold in that space (as a student), of students and academics before me privileging socially-conscious, politically-inspired research and supporting the development of students/academics through these discourses.

So our conversation is, in a sense, the continuation of conversations that began long before, and a confluence of a number of different socio-historical, political activisms. These include the intellectual and political activism of Indigenous people and communities, the civil rights movements of the 1960s and in particular of those (for me) feminism – all of which wrote marginality into institutional spaces and into psychology in particular. I read over the range of Indigenous writers whose work I was able to draw on in Historical Verses, and I reflect on how relatively easy it is for me to select a book from my shelf/article from a database. I am lost for words when I think about what it has taken for this to be the case[75], and in particular, what it has taken in the lives of the writers for their words to reach me.

So without really knowing it, I was already occupying marginal space within some political relationships in the academy, and simultaneously centred in others; and I was making choices (of forms of research, of professional relationships) that were themselves embedded in these pre-existing political relationships. I can't speak for Daf of course, however I suspect that she was, through my research and our work, forming her own sense of my ways-of-being-in-the-world and my politics, even if I was still working it all out. I suppose the relationship we were already practicing, and the location of that relationship within the margins of institutional space, was replete with possibilities for just this sort of conversation…

So this particular conversation occurred in a physical space (a university office) and yet also a conversational one: an intangible meeting place, marked out by mutual interests and marginality. It was a conversation that was enabled by, but not confined to, the academic institution in which you spoke.

And in that conversational space two white women (we) are talking, when one asks the other how her PhD work is progressing.

Me: It's going okay I guess

[75] and there is still such inequality…

> Daf: Okay, you've got a project. You probably don't need to hear about another one then.
>
> I sensed a moment of some significance for me. In truth, I was already questioning my decision to undertake a PhD. What I was working with lacked passion for me and felt devoid of social significance. So I asked Daf to elaborate on this 'other project', and she handed me a newspaper clipping and a brochure about The House, and a CD of music from one of the music workshops, and then spoke of another conversation, happening in another location…

The other location was a discussion group at a state drug-and-alcohol conference, in a generic convention-centre room. The conversation represents another intangible meeting place, enabled by, but not confined to, the bureaucratic space in which two (other) white women met. One of those white women was, again, Daf, and the other was Glenda, then-CEO of The House. Again, this conversation occurred on the margins of the institutional discourse it occurred within: a conversation that centred on the difficulties of developing culturally appropriate programmes with limited resources, and then not being able to evaluate the programmes in appropriate ways. It seemed as though collaboration between The House and the University might be able to address that and so the connection that was made in that conversation resulted in an invitation for Daf to visit The House to explore the possibilities of facilitating an evaluation of the programme.

I'm noticing a repetition – of white women talking in institutional spaces – that seems significant in the origins of the project…?

It seemed unremarkable at the time: an unremarkability that now speaks to me of historical exclusions (whereby the presence of women as women is frequently erased) and historical privilege (whereby the 'whiteness' of our positions – of the institutional spaces we occupy – is ordinary for me).

> Writing *after* the street corner in Then, I am reminded of the question: how to take responsibility for my speaking self, when my own subjectivity is hidden from me?

The repetition also resonates with aspects of my experience, and occupation, of the 'student' position in this story: inasmuch as the student position might be told through narratives of

‘apprenticeship’, the particular art to which I am applied is also the art of activism, of politics, and of socially-just resistance. When we entered into a research relationship with The House, we did so from our locations within those other discursive communities to which we belonged (as racialised, classed women with membership in psychological, academic communities). The following descriptions of the psychological, and later, evaluative, discursive resources is a reading of dominant narratives within this discursive community, from a position on the margins of it.

6b(ii): Psy-discourse in practice

Whether explicitly employed in practice or not, a central text to psychological discourse is the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. With a stated aim to “provide a helpful guide to clinical practice” and “to facilitate research and improve communication among clinicians and researchers” the DSM is far from a neutral or inconsequential text. In the relationship presupposing the text – the “clinical practice” to which the DSM may be enlisted in support of – the ‘clinician’ is positioned in the role of diagnosing and ‘fixing’ one or multiple forms of pathology or disorder diagnosed *within* the client/attributed to their subjectivity. Assumptions regarding the subjectivities of both client and clinician (and clinician and researcher) are embedded in the text: a ‘diagnostic and statistical manual’ only constitutes a ‘helpful guide’ to particular possible relationships.

The presupposition of ‘pathology’ is central to contemporary mainstream psychological ontology and practice, to which the rhetoric of the DSM can be seen as a conduit for the assumptions, ideologies, philosophies and meaning-making practices, infiltrating professional and social contexts and shaping taken-for-granted ways of making sense of ourselves and our social worlds. The DSM-IV and preceding volumes are embedded in historical precedents privileging classification, definition, diagnosis, and prediction in which differences are regarded as conflicting, and construed as requiring resolution. This is consistent with underlying positivist assumptions that privilege “experimentalism, measurement, and calculability (as) legitimate ways of determining what counts as knowledge” (Busch, 2007, p. 8). Here, that ‘knowledge’ is an understanding of psychological phenomena. The pursuit of a unified, empirically sound, universal answer unfolds within this model of unified, empirically sound ‘knowledge’, constantly open to revision and refinement as improvements in scientific method come to pass – but only within the borders of what is deemed to constitute ‘science’

and ‘knowledge’, and therefore only what is already consistent with existing paradigmatic knowledge.

With respect to the DSM, that ‘answer’ is frequently presented in the form of a diagnostic label, a “system of interpretation and meaning that directs attentions to certain issues and relegates others to the periphery” (HareMustin & Maracek, 1988, p. 111). From the first to the third editions, the number of diagnostic categories increased dramatically – from 198 to 340 – expanding, refining and reorganising the range of behaviours and experiences that might be subject to therapeutic scrutiny, even as the nature of that scrutiny, as elaborated through the narrative style of the text, becomes increasingly medicalised (ibid). While an overview (in the introduction to the text) of its development acknowledges reformulations of the DSM to reflect differing theoretical influences (e.g. the influence of psychobiological views in DSM-I), it has primarily been the task of other commentators to critique the cultural, political, social history of the DSM (and of those theories which are granted periodic influential status). In this neglect I hear resonances of the individualising, distancing practices that have come to characterise psychology: recognition of the fundamental logic of the text as already, always being culturally and historically constructed is lacking.

What is the relationship between this logic and that of ‘drug and alcohol/rehabilitation’, then? And what might this mean for programme evaluation undertaken in relation to that specific framework?

The DSM-IV constructs multiple ‘disorders’ under the rubric of ‘mental disorder’. The use of ‘mental disorder’ (implicitly distinguishing ‘mental’ from ‘physical’, ‘spiritual’, ‘emotional’) is acknowledged as “a reductionistic anachronism of mind/body dualism” that is contrary to a “compelling literature” illustrating the interconnection of mind and body in experiences of ‘mental illness’. While literature that critiques the scientific merit of a discrete mind-body split is acknowledged, the specific cultural locatedness of this dualism is not itself engaged with in the text of the DSM. Thus while recognised as problematic, the perceived scope of the problem is limited to a politically sanitised ‘semantic’ framework: “unfortunately the term persists…because we have not found an appropriate substitute”. Even from within a framework that minimises the constitutive power of language, the integrity of this position is suspect.

Similar shifts are evident in the specific terms of reference for 'Substance Use Disorders', a concept historically embedded in psychiatric diagnostic criteria (Brady, 1991) and the popularisation of the disease metaphor. Advanced in the 1960s through medical discourses, the metaphor of a 'disease' may have disrupted the earlier 'moral failing' discourses through which substance use was articulated, theoretically opening space for less punitive forms of engagement within therapeutic and other social contexts (Rhodes & Johnson, 1994). Yet moral negotiations and adjudications continue to be traceable in professional discourse, in the narratives of people using alcohol and other drugs, and in the socio-political and legal discourses informing the licit/illicit status of various substances, their distribution, and their use.

Accordingly, the language taken up to construct 'the object' of discourse (the space in which a subjectivity might appear) shifts between editions of the DSM from 'an alcoholic' to 'an individual with Alcohol Dependence' – or more generally, "substance dependence". Read through narrative therapeutic discourses (in which separating the person and the problem is a critical and valued feature) this shift seems significant: opening space for the person to be respected as a *subject* and for the problem to be the *object* of the discourse.

I want to regard these shifts in the language, and in the metaphors privileged, in the DSM as an 'improvement' in the discipline. I recall a time when I took up a speaking position from which making a space with/in language for 'the person' to be separated from 'the problem' felt not only right, but also sufficient. And yet here in the DSM the form is unchanged: neither the individual-imperative, nor the underpinnings of 'Alcohol Dependence', nor the historical, cultural, political locatedness has been altered. Questioned, perhaps, but nevertheless retained for the want of an appropriate substitute. To paraphrase LeCompte (1993): changing the name of a condition is not the same as changing the conditions of naming[76].

> *Dislocated from the political inflection of narrative therapy, how is personhood-separated-from-the-problem constructed here? And how, in this discursive space, might 'community' be represented? Is the subject position still that of an individual, albeit with room now to talk about their relationships with family and community? If so, then any space in which the significance of community might be spoken is one that*

[76] the actual quote is that "creating a name for a condition is not the same as naming it" (p. 14), something which functions on its own as a critique of the increased specificities of diagnostic criteria.

> *is subject to the same disordering conditions of intelligibility with which a viable presence in the DSM is conferred.*

I wonder how the relationships between *particular subject positions – e.g. staff and client – are ordered?*

> The essential feature of Substance Dependence is a cluster of cognitive, behavioural, and physiological symptoms indicating that the individual continues use of the substance despite significant substance-related problems.
>
> (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p. 176)

Or, to put it another way

> "You (as construed through a matrix of cognitive, behavioural, and physiological symptoms) persist with something that is bad for you. We know this – 'your' symptoms told us so. But wait, there's more…according to our predictions, and the relationship that we define between 'dependence' and 'disordered', it's likely that you are suffering a Substance Use Disorder. Now that we understand this about you, let's talk…"

Positioned as objects of 'diagnosis', the relational space available to clients is perpetually marked as 'disordered' and 'abnormal', signifying, too, a fundamental diagnostic reliance on a concept of normality (Lauder, 1999). The basis to notions of normality, the pre-existing 'order' from which the subject strays, are not engaged with nor made explicit in the text.

> *Here, the boundaries of that space are marked by the diagnostic – which become the criteria by which human subjectivity is included in one space, and excluded from another, the criteria according to which subjectivity is managed and constrained.*

If there is a position (the *disordered* space) that is marked through diagnosis for some subjects and not others, then there is also a position (presumably *ordered*) that is marked as diagnostician – one that, again, some subjects are excluded from occupying. Certain forms of power are accrued to this position – the power to set and define the space, the boundaries, around the client, and to adjudicate on the suitability of another to occupy that space. Adjudicating on another's suitability also exerts economic power, as it is the Expert who is reimbursed for the encounter and as the specificities of diagnosis carry implications for the care a client is 'entitled to' and for the legitimacy with which any claims (for health cover,

compensation etc) following from that care are made. As the physicality of a positioning metaphor suggests, what can be sensed and experienced from a particular position is also limited – including, perhaps, the implications for another of performing that position. In the discursive repetitions of subjectivities and relationships with/in psy-discourse, some subjects are consistently positioned as 'Expert' while some consistently suffer the violence of the position of 'disordered Other'.

> *And before this she was reading:*
> Pat Swan (1995) writing of the ordinariness, for Aboriginal people, of seeing "their brothers and sisters labelled as mentally ill (and hospitalised or incarcerated as a result) when they understand and know the problem as a social and a political one…(where the) diagnoses are always 'white' non-Aboriginal ones, and the solutions are seen as another form of oppression." (p. 2)
>
> *And wonders: when pre-occupied with fictions of* terra nullius*, what other violences are being re-visited here, as subjectivities are simultaneously erased and inscribed within representations that are presented as if distinct from socio-cultural, historical contexts?*

In this context, the proposed aim of the DSM to "facilitate research and improve communication among clinicians and researchers" appears as both a gesture of good intent (*for whom?*), and a study in perpetuating relationships of inequality. From some standpoints this particular clinical-academic relationship is entirely unproblematic, even desirable:

> (In the health sciences) clinical work and academic research are integrated in theory and practice…(a model that) provides for shared socialisation of clinicians and researchers. The medical model…helps to create shared norms about treatment and research, and perhaps *forces* clinicians and researchers to recognise the value of clinical and experimental knowledge.
>
> (Weisbund, 2003, p346, emphasis added)
>
> From my place on the margins in academia, I wonder…what about when we question the socialisation that is being shared?

*From my place on that street corner in Then, I wonder what else is being reproduced when recognition is **forced**; and what relationships, predicated on such force, are enabled/perpetuated in and through clinical/academic practice…*

6b(iii): Evaluative practices…

The dominant form that evaluation research takes is embedded in similar epistemological assumptions to those that inform psychological practices – assumptions that support and require the construction of human subjects as objects of scientific inquiry. The limitations of the DSM as an example of the dominant discursive form through which human subjectivity is constituted in psy-discourse (Parker, 1997) are similarly traced through evaluative technologies that critique, substantiate, legitimate therapeutic practice in the same way that the DSM might be read to critique, substantiate and legitimate particular interpretations of subjectivity.

Reading examples of evaluative literature, then, offers insights into the ways in which evaluation technologies are mobilised in relation to the people and places that constitute the narrative subject. The 'Process evaluation of an out-patient detoxification service' (Sannibale, Fucito, O'Connor & Curry, 2005) is set in Sydney, Australia, and published in the *Drug and Alcohol Review.*

Similar to The House, the service evaluated here (the out-patient detoxification service, or ODS as it is described in the article) was established within state government guidelines and thus it and the project are also located within, and constituted through, relationships and protocols of governance with/in state and federal health institutional practices. Similar to the evaluation project that enabled my research, this research – and the writing-researchers – are produced within particular professional relationships and protocols. Within those discursive communities the stories they tell are bound by assumptions about what constitutes professional and academic merit, of the perceived purposes of evaluation/research, of particular audiences. These assumptions are entwined with, and enforced through, the legitimating process of peer review.

From the article, we learn of the 'out-patient detoxification service' that:

> During its first 10 months of operation, the ODS received 199 inquiries, assessed 82 individuals and admitted 76 clients for detoxification. Withdrawal treatment proceeded without complications and within the expected time frames. Fifty-four clients completed withdrawal, 10 ceased treatment, 10 remained in treatment without completing withdrawal and two were transferred elsewhere.
>
> (Sannibale et al., p. 475)

> *When you are reading a text for spaces through which a person might emerge, the depersonalised language so common to these discursive contexts is nevertheless startling; might I even say that it is* **evocative** *of discomfort in me as a reader?*

The report centres on the ODS itself and gives little information on the process by which 199 inquiries resulted in 82 assessments. What are the stories of the untold 117 inquiries, and what happens to them when turned away? Whether or not this figure represents 117 individuals seeking assistance who were deemed 'unsuitable' for the service, or whether it includes repeat queries, or queries of a professional (relating to employment, training, information, referral) nature, the process by which 199 becomes 82 is indicative of some winnowing process informed by the purpose, capacity, or needs of the agency as much as of the enquirer. From the body of the report, I learn of a mediating step – 163 telephone assessments followed by 82 face-to-face assessments. I am assuming a linear process here (that is, consistent with intake procedures for many centres, these assessments function as screening practices from which individuals are invited to proceed further into a particular relationship with the centre).

> To you, nameless, faceless excluded 87 – from the text I infer that you might "have a history of severe withdrawal symptoms…an acute medical condition, a mental health condition that might interfere with compliance with treatment or complicate withdrawal or a benzodiazepine dependence of greater than 80mg…" (p. 476). You could, all 87, be representative of the "high need" population the ODS was established in, and perhaps you were referred on to the associated residential service? You could be further divided and differentiated according to the point in an assessment continuum at which your unsuitability became evident. Even in the absence of your inclusion, the criteria for your exclusion gives you a certain presence here – represents, and invites assumptions of, your subjectivity…not so nameless, nor faceless, afterall – but would any of you recognise this self of 'yours', and each other, if you were to meet in this text?

> *And she wonders on how the perception/representation of their absence is* required *in the narrative form that is imposed on this research: in dominant approaches to research stories* "…the consumer is defined only as a disinterested outside reader and the only consumable is considered to be the written text itself. Lost is how informants themselves can be consumed…"
>
> (LeCompte, 1993, p. 21)

Of the 163 'individuals' who are assessed (some of whom are later assessed again face-to-face), 76 are invited to take up the space of 'client'. The client position, then, is one that is gradually constructed through a sequence of 'enquiries', 'assessed…individuals' and finally 'admitted…clients'. And there is nothing after 'client': even after meeting the standards set by the ODS (completing treatment, which here means withdrawal of/from the substance of use) do the spaces available to people using the service remain those of 'clients'? Do they become 'ex-clients', their identity still consistently hitched to this slim yet compelling narrative fragment about their lives? Or do they simply disappear?

Thus while some people and stories are physically and discursively excluded from the research, others are discursively excluded even when admitted into the client position. What we come to believe we know about the experiences of the people positioned as 'clients' is knowledge about what is of value in and to the research/evaluative/funding context. Those who participated in the programme are simultaneously excluded from the study as anything other than objects of research. Their participation in the programme is not inconsiderable, either: according to the report each client engaged with 11 different measures and a semi-structured interview at assessment; daily visits at the clinic for medication and monitoring; possible follow-up through GPs; possible home visits; monthly telephone calls; and a follow-up assessment at 3 months for the purposes of evaluating withdrawal.

> Overall, the ODS met its goals, providing a safe and effective supervised withdrawal to local residents, especially women, young people and those withdrawing from benzodiazepines who had significant substance dependence, impairment and previous alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment. Non-injecting substance users benefited most from the ODS in terms of withdrawal completion and ongoing treatment.
>
> (p. 478)

In the singling out of "women, young people and those withdrawing from benzodiazepines" I hear a concern and familiarity with the particular circumstances and needs of these groups and begin to wonder: how was the programme especially safe and effective for these people? How are their experiences different to others, that safety and effectiveness was greater (and is the reverse often true for other services)? If this observation is an 'exception to the rule' then it tells us something about how predominant support may function in such a way as to exclude some (perhaps particularly vulnerable) groups of people. This seems to be a significant feature of the service, if this is the case. Reflecting on some strengths of the programme, the authors note that:

> Out-patient withdrawal may also be more appealing than residential withdrawal to substance users and their families because of the reduced disruption to daily life [6,13].
>
> (p. 478)

This interpretation seems to support the observed effectiveness of the programme for the above groups of participants: for example, given that the bulk of family and domestic responsibilities tend to fall on women, there are considerable barriers to effective service provision for women 'clients' if these responsibilities are not taken into account. There are also certainly factors in the lives and relationships of others that might make out-patient withdrawal more appropriate, or conversely residential or in-community withdrawal that supports them in the context of their lived experience. This aspect of the research, then, seems to be one that attempts to account for the person-in-context.

So it seems remarkable to me that the voices that are privileged in these interpretations are exclusively those of other authors: in the citation of two other papers. Given the magnitude of engagement undertaken by clients (concomitant disruption to daily life?), and the apparent goal of the ODS in providing "a safe and effective supervised withdrawal" service, when it comes to 'the appeal' of the service for 'substance users and their families', how is it that the only voices consulted are those of other researchers? What would need to be different in order for the voices of the participants to be included?

> *In what ways do processes of legitimation that researchers and their texts are subject to (of which citation of pre-existing, previously legitimated research texts is an integral practice) encourage privileging of some voices more than others? As a site of*

> *knowledge production, how do research practices and the form those practices take influence what knowledge is produced, by whom, for whom, and to what ends?*

The research is articulated within a reductionist and positivist epistemological context in which the literary standard of publication has historically been set according to neutrality and objectivity: a literary standpoint that treats subjectivity as a contaminant, and therefore justifies the exclusion of some voices and experiences on the basis of their untrustworthiness, unreliability, or irrelevance. From this standpoint it is also the voice of the researcher and their own subjectivity that is shaped in particular ways: included in the text *subject to constraints*. It is only through the subjectivity of the researcher that we hear the programme was safe and effective – they are required, by virtue of the epistemological context in which they operate – to speak for those positioned as 'clients'. And yet the position from which they write is not one that ascribes any value to asking clients, or, if asking them, then in privileging their experiences and granting them the same status as the interpretations of other researchers.

While both researchers and participants are enabled and constrained by the discursive context of writing, however, the implications of that are not equally distributed. In the context of greater vulnerability of the 'client/participant' position, what is the significance of re-presenting subjectivity in increasingly de-personalised ways, and of excluding, from the very research evaluating the safety and efficacy of the services ostensibly designed for them any reflections on their experiences, their knowledge, their concerns…? And of excluding any reflection on the discursive, ideological, theoretical scaffolding on which the research is constituted?

> The findings of the research may well be of value to all the people concerned: the judgement of that is not mine to make. Rather what is significant for me here is how, in the process of representing research (and the positions upon which it depends) it is possible to reproduce patterns of authority and vulnerability even when the findings explicitly seek to respond to the conditions of people's lives through which they might already be made vulnerable. My critique of the research here is aligned with what Wilkinson & Kitzinger (2003) observed – the ordinary capacity to reproduce taken for granted categories and entitlements of who speaks, on what authority, in what contexts.

Consistent with the epistemological commitments that have become standard assumptions within western academic discourse, evaluations are frequently undertaken with the intention of attaining a value-free, a-political and bounded study (Geva-May & Thorngate, 2003). If it is the form and underlying assumptions of evaluation strategies that determine how therapy should be evaluated and 'what works' in therapy, then this carries significant implications for therapeutic initiatives and social programmes that are incompatible with the epistemological basis of those strategies (Busch, 2007). Nevertheless, methodological initiatives for evaluation are frequently represented in literature, taught in research training units, and taken up in practice, without any discussion of the epistemological commitments that inhere in their development, nor how these commitments enable and constrain what can and will be realised in research. In the form required – or at least, reproduced – in the ODS evaluation above, how might I and others speak of The House? Given that what is included/excluded has implications for how we make sense of the world and ourselves and others in it, as well as for funding decisions, teaching, policy…then "…*every act of evaluation becomes a political act.* Indeed, every act of inquiry, whether evaluation, research, or policy analysis, becomes a political act in this sense." (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 35 italics added).

This also signifies to me that irrespective of how much I may have understood my PhD to move away from being 'an evaluation of The House', it remained an evaluative piece of work no less subject to those ethical, political issues. The awakening of a political consciousness in a social sense, then, is entwined with recognition of how my personal experiences and relationships are also political in the sense that they are subject to inscription and erasure through the contexts they are re-presented in. What does a political consciousness require of research praxis? And how, then, can we take account of the political contexts in which we are located?

> *To address this question, she turns and looks beyond psychology and health – searching for an evaluation that privileges some facet of political relationships. In her search she finds, within a journal dedicated to evaluation, an evaluation report by Margaret Mead, and several accompanying commentaries by writers in 'Evaluation': Greene, 2003, Patton, 2003, Russon & Ryback, 2003.*

In that conversational space, she encounters Mead writing on the first 'Salzburg Seminar' in 1947, in the Leopoldskron Castle (Salzburg, Austria). The Salzburg Seminar is, according to Russon & Ryback (2003) one of the "foremost international educational centres" (p. 97).

Mead's evaluation of that inaugural event, drawing together students and facilitators from a range of countries and diverse intellectual interests, notes the political and economic struggles students faced in a post-war setting to build the seminar, and the "first shock as they found themselves sitting side by side with men whom two short years ago they might have killed" (p. 106). The explicit focus on political precedents and attention to context offers another perspective on representation within evaluative projects.

Similarly, Patton (2003) remarks upon "…the strength and clarity of her voice" reminding us that "…she was writing at a time and in a place and as a member of a gender where the third person passive academic voice would have been the accepted and expected voice of scientific authority" (p. 124). What would be the implications for the seminar being represented through that voice, I wonder? How does a third-person passive voice represent the embodied subject of 'shock…sitting side by side with men whom two short years ago they might have killed?' In what is remarkable about this evaluation, there are clues as to what is ordinary in our contexts, and I am left with the impression that as much as it is the form of underlying evaluation strategies that determine how therapy is evaluated, there is also a reciprocal influence, such that epistemological privilege is granted to certain forms of therapy and certain evaluation strategies: the medical model which is so pervasive in psychology, also influences what evaluation strategies are taken up, and shapes those that are in particular ways.

It is not a model, however, that would legitimate reflection – in the evaluation that this project grew from – on the social context of The House and our research relationships. And reflecting on the social and historical context of The House (and the university) matters, when we understand the 'political act' of inquiry to be one in which existing fictions of *terra nullius* may be reproduced, challenged, and perhaps, perhaps…may be changed. In Anthropology, which much of Mead's work is articulated through, social context is afforded a more privileged place than it is in psychology. So too is the voice of the researcher and reflexive space for the relationship between researcher and participants and the social worlds of both to be considered. If Mead's evaluation of the Salzburg seminar is noteworthy in Evaluation studies for what it does differently, then in developing an evaluative approach within psychology that has integrity with the project requested of us necessarily locates us on the margins of Evaluation studies, too.

And this was the sort of dialogic space in which two white women found each other, at a drug and alcohol conference in which there was little questioning like this…and in that finding they also found that they shared some political ground from which an evaluative project might grow;
And elsewhere, in another conversational and physical space (which could also be the same because it involved a mainstream and margins…) Daf and I were talking about the possibilities for a PhD project in the context of this explicitly political evaluation…

6b(iv): Fourth Generation Evaluation

Guba & Lincoln (1989) pose similar questions to evaluation studies and situate these questions within broader socio-political developments within the United States (and presumably elsewhere) that drew attention to value pluralism and demanded changes in social and political relationships (institutional and personal) in response. These socio-political, historical developments are entangled with epistemological shifts offered through (but not restricted to) postmodernist approaches to thought and theory. The relationship between social and epistemological change matters when prevailing epistemologies and the practices they legitimated are restricted by individualisation of the subject and a search for singular, universal truths. Within the matrices offered therein, how is 'value pluralism' to be recognised, let alone valued?

It was into this context of epistemological contest and social change that Guba and Lincoln (1989) traced the beginnings of what they call an alternative paradigm, of 'Fourth Generation Evaluation' (FGE). This was the academic text that I was recommended as part of an introduction to what this project with The House might look like, thus the stories I tell, and those I keep silent, owe something to its influence. It offered a framework that would legitimise a turn towards methodologies and research practices made strange in psychology, albeit with precedent elsewhere.

Consistent with the values and epistemological assumptions upon which FGE was based, Guba and Lincoln explicitly construct the text around epistemological and political axes, and re-present an historical analysis of evaluation theory and research that locates FGE within social and intellectual contexts. While functioning to establish FGE as a specific response to perceived inadequacies and inequalities of previous evaluation frameworks (Huebner & Betts,

1999) this introduction to FGE also impressed upon me the difference of talking about reflexive engagement with epistemological tradition, and reflexive representation.

Locating FGE historically enabled a more critical engagement (for me, as a reader) with the possibilities and limitations of the proposed 'fourth generation' forms and of the form in which the articulation of those forms is made. It enabled me to reflect upon the limitations of a generational metaphor, for example: to reflect on the ways in which the persistence and projections of history into the present may be constrained, within a particular ontological (western) relationship with time, to a notion of linear inheritance. It also enabled me to recognise that a critical engagement with one text locates a reader – me – in relation to other texts. In recognising an inevitable orientation towards history, an appreciation that history manifests in our methodological choices, perhaps in unexpected ways, is somewhat more accessible. If I locate our articulation of this project in relation to Fourth Generation approaches, then it is in the relationship between Fourth Generation approaches and prevailing paradigms.

Fourth Generation Evaluation suggested a collaborative stance towards research, which resonated with our orientations at the beginning of this (our) project. Looking back to those earliest conversations between Daf and Glenda, Daf and myself, and myself and The House, the concept of collaboration was informed by values of social justice and personal/political experiences we 'brought to the table'. For me, these principles were also recognised in FGE and in my readings of feminist and narrative therapy texts. In my engagement with texts by Indigenous authors and non-Indigenous authors writing of working with Indigenous communities, I also heard an emphasis on collaboration, cooperation and reciprocity. Finding evaluative forms that made space for research to be done differently was thus a priority informed by several different perspectives.

With a focus on collaborative processes, stakeholder input and negotiation, FGE privileges multivocality and suggests the potential for acting as an intervention into social power relations. In this context adopting a fourth generation evaluation framework enables evaluation to be centred on the realities of particular groups of stakeholders who have traditionally been excluded from research, other than as objects of study/sources of data. It is a framework that, in centring on subjects as subjects, enables and requires the use of different 'voices' to that of the third-person, passive and exclusive voice of mainstream psychological and evaluative discourses.

While collaborative dialogue may be valued in other evaluation methodologies as a precursor to what is then regarded as 'actual' research, FGE treats these initial conversations, intended to develop shared understandings of the purposes of evaluation as focal points themselves: the evaluative process is one of "*understanding and reconstructing*" the constructions of all participants, including researchers (Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2001), through sharing the constructions of each stakeholder group with each other group in a constant re-iteration of co-construction.

> All parties are thus simultaneously *educated* (because they achieve new levels of information and sophistication) and *empowered* (because their initial constructions are given full consideration and because each individual has an opportunity to provide a critique, to correct, to amend, or to extend all the other parties' constructions).
>
> (Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 149; italics in original)

This same framework, according to the authors, simultaneously equalises power through granting equal significance and space to the concerns of all stakeholders, thus interrupting tendencies for people in more powerful positions, such as managers, to exert undue influence over the evaluation. The extent to which empowerment is facilitated for parties unable to be present, or unable to speak from their experience for whatever reason, is unclear. As for those present, there is an implicit assumption that being present and speaking – and being heard – is consistent with empowerment. There is also limited space for appreciating silence or absence as an assertion of empowerment.

For Huebner and Betts (1999), "(b)uilding an evaluation on the basis of stakeholders' constructions is empowering in and of itself because it allows the stakeholders to define the outcome" (p. 342 – 343). Yet there are limits on how 'empowerment' might be exercised by stakeholders: citing problems pertaining to funding relationships, and processes of (re)securing funding, for example, rarely results in intensive evaluations of funding bodies and/or governing institutions, or in changes in funding resources. Furthermore, the effectiveness of evaluations in impacting policy and funding decisions also cannot be taken for granted – an unfavourable report is no guarantee of reduced funding, and programmes deemed 'successful' may still be shut down (Bonner, 2003). This emphasises the significance of context, including political relationships that precede the immediate research relationships, in enabling and limiting the principles with which we undertake research. To engage with

these aspects of research, and fulfil the political dimension of FGE, requires some degree of researcher reflexivity to be undertaken alongside interpretations of the 'Other' (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2001).

As an intended collaborative process, where the evaluator undertakes to craft an evaluation in dialogue with stakeholders, then the evaluator themselves are – according to the parameters of FGE – subject to empowerment, education and change. In practice however – and very few FGE evaluations have been reported in the literature (Huebner & Betts, 1999) – representations of the researcher/evaluator position tend to privilege the use of FGE to diminish, or redistribute researcher/evaluator power rather than to also discuss the process of empowerment, education and change that may have been experienced by the other half of the researcher/participant relationship.

> *From the street corner I look back and wonder: Doesn't this preserve the impression that empowerment is only possible for some parties in a collaborative arrangement (the 'disempowered'), and reproduce unproblematically the notion of researcher/evaluator power? What happens to the positions of 'researcher' and 'stakeholder' and the relationships between them?*

But that is a wondering that has been enabled specifically through the process of an evaluation project and that of postgraduate research. Perhaps there is something about postgraduate research which is more open to engaging in the kind of theoretical reflexive critiques that I came to regard as critical in this kind of research (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003). Within the scope of a PhD there lies an expectation that the author can and will account for themselves and the research to a broader extent, and that expectation grants greater space to do so than is possible in the kinds of research articles through which I learned something of the significance of doing so. The project, that literature, and the sense made of it at the time, become some of the means through which I found myself on a street corner in Then, looking back towards the vanishing present[77] of the motel room and beginning to question the conditions of possibility for the project, our research relationships, and my positioning within them.

> Before that, however, there is the undertaking of the project through which that questioning was viable: a project that was shaped by the ideas and agendas discussed

[77] borrowing from Spivak.

here. In the next section I describe the method of the project: the specific form that the evaluation took and that shaped my visits with The House, my presence at the music workshop and the position from which I formed relationships with people there and heard the songs they were singing.

6c: Method

(In which she describes the re-iteration of the research in practice)

6c(i): The Project

The collaboration initiated between Daf and Glenda had been formalised in institutional discourse through an ethics proposal and a funding proposal both under review when I first met The House. So the beginnings of this project, and my relationships with The House, are nested in those others. The first (and funded) part of the project was intended as a pilot evaluation. In our funding application we constructed it as follows

> The focus of **this grant application** is the exploration of the views and experiences of the staff, past and present clients and community stakeholders of The House. This will provide data on the perceived strengths and needs of the programme and on its community sustainability.
>
> Qualitative interviews will be conducted with past and present clients, staff and community stakeholders (Indigenous groups, correctional centres, health professionals and other interested parties). Drawing on multiple perspectives creates a framework for critically evaluating the programme in all aspects of its functioning. Approximately 60 interviews will be conducted with people who volunteer to give their views. Analysis of interview transcripts will clarify programme strengths and weaknesses, and will inform the direction of future studies in the evaluation project.

In consultation with the management team of The House, our attention was drawn to specific aspects of the programme: intake, the individualised case management programmes, follow-up with clients after completing the programme, staff experiences, community experiences, and the music workshop.

A short conversational interview protocol was developed as a framework for facilitating interviews. Conversational interviews offer a few short and fairly general questions to 'start the conversation' (e.g. 'How did you come to be at The House?', 'What do you feel are the strengths of the programme?'). Adopting an open-ended and minimally-structured approach allows more space for participants to direct the conversation and focus on what they regard as

significant. The role of the interviewer is to be responsive to the priorities, concerns, interests of the participants which may also involve listening for what they do not say, or hearing patterns in how they relate to a phenomena under discussion, as much as what they have to say about it. While it isn't 'owned' by narrative therapy, the approach of the interview was articulated through discourses of narrative therapy in its design: narrative therapy was the privileged therapeutic and research approach within our team. When I took up the interview protocol I did so through this perspective, which held that undertaking the project in this way enabled a respectful deferral towards the knowledge and experiences of respondents and enabled appreciation of the meanings and significances of The House for them in the context of their lives.

Staff had spoken about developing the programme with scarce research and financial resources: a paucity of information existed about what worked, therapeutically, for Indigenous communities even though the inadequacies of mainstream approaches were well documented. The evaluation project was unfolding in a similar theoretical milieu – the historical failures of existing evaluation methodologies in relation to which Fourth Generation approaches had been developed. Unfolding research gradually, and through the existing relationships and protocols of the community was deemed the most respectful, appropriate and sustainable approach, as well as theoretically and ethically sound, following the poststructuralist underpinnings of Fourth Generation Evaluation. In a sense, the aim of the project was necessarily double: a community focus – to develop meaningful documentation of how the programme worked in a way that would support the community and The House in strengthening and sustaining it; and a theoretical/methodological focus – to document an evaluation story that might enable shifts in how evaluations are undertaken with Indigenous communities (and, it was anticipated, more generally).

Initiating Interviews

The interviews were invited through the networks of The House and the community: we left invitations to participate in the evaluation project (Appendix B), and postage-paid return-addressed envelopes, with management of The House who disseminated them to staff, clients, and community members. Recipients also undertook their own referrals. The invitations included an option for people to request an Aboriginal interviewer despite there not being one contracted to the project at that time.

Is it ordinary to start a project without staff?

I don't know if it's ordinary. I do know that the realities of getting applications in for funding deadlines, and ethical approvals can force projects into play before everything is ready. We didn't, at this stage have any other interviewers or transcribers hired. The difference is that the assumption we would find them was a relatively safe one to make – there were a number of students that Daf had already identified as suitable candidates. We had no such surety when it came to employing an Aboriginal interviewer. So our failure to have contracted an Aboriginal research assistant in the timeframe needed speaks back to our locations in institutional spaces; to political and institutional inequalities; to a lack of reflexive awareness of the limitations of our position and a performance of privilege in assuming that contracting staff would look the same irrespective of the specifics of the position. We overestimated our position when we uncritically carried this assumption into the project and we later experienced/produced difficulties with that.

So how did it work in practice?

A few potential initial interviews were not realised because the respondent had ticked a preference for an Aboriginal interviewer. When I contacted them to say that we were not yet ready all but one had left The House. The exception was a staff member who approached me when at The House and asked if I could interview them on that day. After the first interviews had been held, no further forms came in with requests for an Aboriginal interviewer, something that I attributed to my increasing familiarity to people and an informal 'grapevine' within The House. It may also have been that over time the project became known as one that only had non-Indigenous people working on it, and people who might have expressed a preference otherwise were put off by the obvious lack of involvement of Indigenous researchers/interviewers.

Whatever accounts might be offered of this, a process that I simply do not know about and was not privy to, the experience delivered a lesson in privilege to me: failing to account for the relative (and the racial) privilege (of being white, of working in a white institution) supported the delivery of a promise that then could not be kept, perpetuated a pattern of institutional disadvantage and of gubba-Indigenous relations.

From the street corner I also wonder what precluded us from taking this up within the institution…? The issue just…faded away…? And so I ask the empty space of that interviewer position, and the institutional context that informs it: what would need to be different, in order for you to be filled?

In relation to the interviews themselves, coordination was a complex task: more so than I had anticipated. I learned quickly that any responses needed immediate follow-up or clients may have moved on, graduated or left the programme, as above (and this could happen in the few days it took for the mail to reach me).

What I'm hearing so far is that the imagined process of the research changed considerably over the course of doing it.

The practices of the research were dynamic, often amended – sometimes spontaneously, sometimes on reflection – in response to the experience of being in relationship with The House. Over the course of 12 months I probably made 7 visits to The House. I had hoped to get there once every month, and found that even once every 2 months was not always possible. For each visit, I'd spend a few days in preparation, stay for several days at a time, and over the intervening weeks undertake transcription, review, reading, training for psychology registration, teaching and my administrative work. I inevitably found transitioning between the university and Then/The House to be a discombobulating process, and it took me a long time to come to appreciate that, let alone find ways of living with it. It strikes me now that there was very little in the world I was leaving (the university) to enable a safe return.

When in Then, I'd stay in a motel that was walking distance from The House, and if visiting friends in a nearby town, I'd often try and visit The House then, too although those visits didn't include any interviewing. As I became more of a presence at The House, the process of issuing invitations lapsed as people took to approaching me directly, and participation was invited more informally through word of mouth.

Several times I met with clients of The House as a group, to introduce myself and talk a little about the project. The frequency of my visits meant that, over time, this wasn't necessary, as existing relationships with clients who stayed with the programme for longer, took care of introductions to men who may have been new to The House and the programme in between visits. The first time I met with a group, there were already a few men there who I had met

before, and who I felt semi 'chaperoned' me (or the newer men) in introduction. While talking with them, I stressed the confidentiality of their interviews, the flexibility to amend them, and the freedom to withdraw at any point, without penalty from the university or from The House.

It felt significant to place myself before them, face to face, and show something of who I was and how I worked. Mostly, very little was said explicitly at the time. Sometimes someone who'd taken part in an interview would say something about having found it a good experience. Sometimes someone would approach me afterwards. One of the men asked whether participation would assist with court appearances – could I compile any kind of report on their participation in the research? I thought this was a reasonable request, however, I also doubted the value of any report I could write – especially given the limits of our relationship as a research one, and not a therapeutic one. I suspect that my status as an 'intern psychologist' had meaning to the questioner that wasn't commensurate with my status in institutional contexts. Furthermore, if there was any room for participation to be taken into account, I felt that would be a case-management consideration. I responded that to the extent that it was within my capacity to do so, I would support them in their work within The House, and while I doubted that could include anything like the reporting he had in mind, I would take the question up with staff. The idea was dismissed at the staff meeting.

This sounds like it was significant for you?

The exchange challenged assumptions I didn't realise I held – about the meaning of research, the significance of it, for people involved in relation to the differences of our positioning and the inequalities attendant on them. For me: a return to the university and the gradual unpacking and analysing of stories (theirs and not theirs) in the hope of telling another story from which some good might come. For him: the rhythm of The House and his work within it, and things like court appearances that all this was of little use to.
As well as this, the exchange is also now significant to me as an experience through which I can notice – and question – the ways in which participants were frequently constructed as passive in ethical and research protocols, a construction in which their active assessment, adjudication, and shaping of the research encounter – and me – was missing. Those discursive resources fail to speak to the subtle evaluative processes that the project (and I) was always, already subject to.

I will never know how I was talked about at The House. Participation came to represent a tacit acknowledgement that I was 'okay' and that the research, or even just the conversational context it enabled, was of some relevance. And that also left me with a question of how to read non-participation – even how to define it. Non-participation is often stated in research projects as a limitation on the extent to which results can be generalised, or where it highlights an issue with some aspect of recruitment. Here, its significance as a phenomena steeped in numerous, historical, significances, was made salient.

6c(ii): The Process

Interviews and participants

Twenty people participated over a period of 12 months: seventeen were single-interviews; one person was interviewed on two separate occasions; two further people engaged in a series of 3 interviews. In total 25 tapes were transcribed for analysis, with 22 resulting in transcripts intended for use in the final analysis of the project. All interviews were held individually, in spare rooms at The House and opened with a general discussion of the research and discussion of the information and consent forms. Participants were given the option of selecting a pseudonym or being given one by the researcher. Six were undertaken by another non-Indigenous woman working on the project, two by a non-Indigenous man also completing a research project nested within the evaluation; I held 17 interviews.

Eight interviews (no repeat interviews) were with staff, one with a community member and the remaining 16 were men who were clients of The House (one non-Indigenous man, the remaining were Aboriginal men from diverse communities across NSW).

Were the interviews useful for people at The House? If so, in what ways?

I believe that they were and for various reasons, although I find it easier to assert that in relation to the interviews I participated in: the interpersonal process of participating in interviews constitutes a significant resource in the inference of usefulness for others. That said, I found nothing in the transcripts from the other interviews (nor in my conversations with participants and the other interviewers) to suggest a lack of usefulness for the person being interviewed. That they happened at all, and the length of time of interviews, the repeat-

requests for some of them, and the range of emotional and intimate reflections shared all suggest some form of usefulness, the nature of which can only be speculated on up to a point.

My interpretations are that sometimes the usefulness of an interview was as a semi-therapeutic encounter (in the way that conversations about sensitive issues have the potential to be). In these instances, and in relation to the Indigenous men I interviewed (where colonialism and racism, grief and loss featured largely in the conversation), I think there may have been an added significance of therapeutic value being recognised through the sharing and co-construction of stories with someone implicated in the social power relations that preceded them (especially in the context of those stories having historically been denied in those spaces). There were some personal affirmations made to me that would support that.

The interviews also offered forums for reflection, legitimation, affirmation, and critique of the programme – a programme on which to a certain extent all participants were dependant, whether as clients or staff or community members. I think that this was potentially useful for individuals and sometimes for The House as a whole. The interviews also offered a space, which may have been useful, and the specific meaning of which was obscure to me: people participated for their own reasons and in pursuit of their own agendas and I would not necessarily be privy to that. And there are the ways in which interviews may prove useful in unanticipated and potentially discomforting ways – such as happens in the course of encountering a construction of yourself or your relationships in which you are prompted to reflect on your subjectivity and circumstances from a fresh perspective. In those instances I'm mindful that people could choose other adjectives over and above 'useful', but reading this through therapeutic discourse, in which subjective difficulty is frequently construed as an opportunity, then it's possible that interviews were useful in that way, too. It raises the question for me, though, of who gets to define 'usefulness' and to what ends.

Where I am increasingly uncertain is of the usefulness of the interviews for people appearing through spaces marked as 'community stakeholders' – given that there was only one who participated through that space, and they did not approve their transcript for inclusion. I necessarily question the usefulness of the interview for them, and also the usefulness of this intended feature of the project for The House given we were unable to represent anything of it to them.

What meaning do I make of the lack of 'community' engagement? There is no simple answer. The community member who participated withdrew after being sent their transcript. Through checking-in with other participants, and with staff, I heard that the form of transcription was a problem. I had resisted 'cleaning up' the transcripts, relying on the written representations to evoke a sense of the individual 'voices'. In resisting 'cleaning up' transcripts I was following an extensive history of ethnographic research in which participant 'voices' and verbal idiosyncrasies were valued features of 'data'. This follows a humanist epistemological assumption that 'voice' can be 'preserved' through careful transcription, and that greater 'preservation' correlates with authenticity – and the pursuit of authenticity is a valued endeavour within that tradition.

Resisting 'cleaning up' transcripts was also intended to resist the imposition of other values and norms pertaining to spoken language.

> *…A long time after the research, and before the writing of this, she was reading the collaborative (auto)biography of Aunty Rita's life (by Aunty Rita and Jackie Huggins). In it, she read about historical pressures to 'talk proper' (where 'talking proper' meant 'talking white ideals'). The tensions of retaining (re-presenting) unique features of Aunty Rita's 'voice' are also tensions of historical 'shaming' and contemporary practices of reclaiming. The story about these narrative choices is compelling as is the storytelling style that is retained for Aunty Rita's 'voice'. In that context, to resist the imposition of 'cleanliness' was to resist the representation of some voices as 'clean' and others as 'unclean' and therefore requiring the intervention of the writer/researcher. And she remembered that earlier intention to resist similar political relationships that had been so significant in the research formulation and had informed the way that it was interpolated into transcription practices…*

Their story speaks to me of the kind of ideal that was intended in my research practice: from that position transcribing as closely to the spoken record as possible was a further means of privileging participants' voices and resisting the reproduction of those 'white ideals'.

What does this story of the pursuit of one (unexamined) ideal, in the resistance of other 'white ideals' represent to you now?

I wonder at the extent to which these practices re-presented transcription as distinct from interpretation and furthermore how my decisions privileged my own position and perspectives of the research: *I* decided what 'cleaning up' represented in the context of these relationships; *I* decided that the choice 'not to' had greater significance and respect for others. I acted as if the particulars of our positioning and our relationship could be commensurate with other contexts (e.g. writers speaking back to – not *from* – historical positions of privilege; writing outside of institutional discourse and discursive resources). In other contexts, and other relationships, that strategy of transcription might be legitimate[78]; in this instance the lack of reflexive process around the strategy undermines any potential value it may have had. Again, the juxtaposition: of this strategy, these choices, in the specific relationships and (research) context that they occurred in, with Aunty Rita and Jackie Huggins writing their own stories into white discursive spaces.

> *In assuming that this practice would look the same in the context of this research as it might elsewhere I failed to take account of my position and of our relationships. So what this story represents to me now is a moment where something of the ordinariness of gubba-Indigenous relationships was reproduced: the very reproduction that those research choices had been intended to resist.*

It would be inappropriate for me to draw conclusions as to whether the withdrawal of the transcript by the community member, and lack of future engagement from people 'outside' the immediate community of The House, was related to this (alone) or (also) something else. But it imbues the question of non-participation with particular significance. Can non-participation constitute a form of participation? How do we represent and account for an absent presence, the histories to which hold implications for the research that may be difficult to trace? And what about the non-participants whose absence represents something else altogether?

Participating non-participants

The small grant that was awarded for the project came from one of the same agencies which funded The House for individual projects, and which funded teaching programmes within our academic school. The grant enabled us to buy-out staff time at The House, to employ a

[78] And also may not be, for example in contexts (say, violence in intimate relationships) where 'cleaning up' transcripts might represent an additional, critical layer of safety: a further measure taken to protect the identity of participants whose lives would be in danger were they able to be identified through idiosyncrasies of speech…

research assistant, cover travel, accommodation and transcribing costs, and support dissemination of the research through professional conferences. The grant also signified another relationship through which the research was told. As one of the organizations through which The House was funded, the same body was also implicated in the evaluation as a 'stakeholder' and the relationship between them and The House was another one through which The House was constituted. Yet we did not seek inclusion of representatives from this funding body in our evaluation of The House, despite there being space, through Fourth Generation Evaluation principles, to do so. Perhaps our desire to 'give voice to the silenced' in this instance supported a status quo whereby some positions are *protected* by silence.

As for many community organizations reliant on government funding, staffing positions and all aspects of the programme could never be guaranteed beyond the current funding cycle. Evaluation therefore needed to be able to contextualise the 'community owned and managed' operation of The House within these parameters. And as for many community organizations reliant on government funding staff at The House were mindful of the limits imposed upon them by insufficient funds, or by the reporting requirements for which they were frequently under-resourced. The relationship between The House and the funding body was clearly a significant one, and one which we might have made explicit given our commitment – in the proposal – to consider the community sustainability of the programme.

Where, then, were the voices from the funding body? Where were the voices that spoke from a position similar to the one we took up – of relative privilege and institutional power? From prevailing, mainstream evaluative frameworks where their exclusion is ordinary (just as ours is), there would nevertheless be room for it in a more extensive body of research – a PhD for example. Yet we did not seek to include them in our interviews. While this may be understood to fulfil a social justice imperative to privilege marginalised voices, it may also be understood to undermine it as the other side of the relationship in which marginalisation occurs is not asked to account for their position, nor explore their own marginalisation within that. Perhaps our exclusion of the funding bodies betrays an assumption that the relationship is unidirectional and the only voices that 'matter' are those from The House.

And yet…there was a representative from one of the key government bureaus responsible for funding (not the same as that which supported our project) whom I sat in the sun with one day, at The House, and who seemed to have something to say…

> The House was alive with a celebratory feel: a number of men were graduating from the programme and everyone was swept into the preparations. Graduations at The House were generously and genuinely celebrated: balloons and streamers would be hung; the house – constantly clean – would be sparkling; long tables would be moved out onto the verandah to bear mountains of food. The Aunties could make the meagrest of budgets feed many mouths luxuriously and in abundance. In the morning and prior to lunch those of us who weren't having case management consultations or counselling (or, in my case, interviews), or appointments in town or external classes, would be helping the Aunties with food preparation, setting up tables, and laminating certificates.
>
> 'Rob', a representative from the government department which partially funds The House, has been with management all morning and will leave soon after lunch, needing to get to another appointment with another centre that afternoon. Over lunch, we talked about funding and evaluation and more specifically, about The House. I was surprised to hear him speak of the inadequacies of the protocols available to him to 'assess' The House with respect to future funding. An older, non-Indigenous man, his reflections on The House suggested a genuine respect for the people who made The House what it was. Looking around and gesturing towards all the people (clients, family members, staff, community representatives, including a couple of policeman who have come in support of one of the clients)… 'How,' he asked, 'can this be measured?'

Initially I felt frustrated as he left, hearing traces of something like the "anachronistic reductionism" of the DSM – a status quo known to be inadequate, inappropriate, and maintained anyway. Yet Rob's question sounded genuine, and genuinely concerned – as if he had a sense of the implications of the 'immeasurables' being excluded from analyses of The House and its programme. I had to pause and question my readiness to assume the prerogative to question, to judge, his position.

What this now represents to me is a moment that came before other moments, that fed into that moment on the Street Corner where I turned towards the question of how to represent the position of 'self' of the 'self-other' dyad in ways that accounted for the pre-existent political relationships.

In speaking his concern, space was briefly opened between two subjectivities located within positions of relative privilege…if not held in the re-presentations of the research which enabled this moment, what now happens to that space?

6c(iii): Moving towards ethnography

After a few visits to The House, and preliminary analysis of initial interview transcripts, I was talking with colleagues about struggling to comprehend and to articulate 'how' the programme worked, and about the limits of being able to use only what was said in interviews as a means of addressing this question. What interviews couldn't account for were the interactions between staff and residents, and the dynamics of daily life at The House through which the programme was (also) performed. I was somewhat surprised to remember that technically I couldn't write anything of my interpretations/observations outside of interviews into the research story. The ethics and research proposals had only specified interviews – we had not accounted for (or perhaps foreseen) the difference between being incorporated as a visitor at The House and only being present for interviews.

So an ethnographic turn in research was precipitated through a desire to represent, legitimately, your experiences (or more specifically, at that time, the experiences of others)?

Yes; and so we submitted an application for, and were granted, ethical approval for 'observational' research. In doing so we were following a tradition of research whereby having more *sources* of data, and more data (or the representation of more things as data), is understood to enable greater reliability and authenticity; where reliability and authenticity are considered to represent the 'fit' between what is said and what 'actually' exists/ed, independent of the (re)presentation and the person doing the representation.

What this legitimated were my observations 'about' what was happening: it didn't require that the implications of my location for what was seen and how it was interpreted be considered or made explicit in analysis. In spite of taking up post-structuralist ideologies in our approach, the process of research was still articulated through protocols that assumed something stable existed *a priori* to the researcher-Other interaction that could be faithfully represented by excluding or shaping the researcher's subjectivity in particular ways
While the process didn't require reflexivity on my part, per se, it was nevertheless a process – of documentation within the University – that enabled me to notice the seams of how research

is construed in those spaces, and to notice that it didn't mesh with my experiences at The House. And the shift towards a more explicit reliance upon the subjective experiences of the researcher, as opposed to the interviews (which appeared to be less problematic to the university), may have required a change in protocol in the university, but my subjectivity was always visible at The House.

But not always to you. That came later, after the street corner, and even now it moves in and out of focus for you.

Yes. And from there/here I might now look back and wonder about the legitimation of experience as 'accrual of data' in the name of authenticity: while an ethnographic turn may have enabled the position of the researcher to be made explicit how were we to account for the increased scrutiny that this also legitimated?

> *Scrutiny that, in the context of this thesis, enables an historical ordinariness to Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations to be re-inscribed.*

6c(iv): The music workshops

Video Recording

So I came to be at the music workshops. As staff members of The House were interested in filming the process, ideas passed around about making a kind of documentary and I joined with this. For me the video footage, like audiotapes of interviews, promised some kind of closer take on 'reality', as if what happened in the room could be preserved, enabling a more 'accurate' interpretation. Even while theoretically privileging subjectivity in our research approach, there seems, in this position, a suspicion of the capacity of my subjective engagement. At the time, I felt like I was able to leave something of 'the researcher' behind, knowing that the camera was recording what other things I may miss. Implicit in this feeling is an assumption that 'researcher' and 'self' are separate entities, the one able to be picked up and placed down at will.

> *Perhaps all this facilitated was the abdication of responsibility for what was 'seen' and recorded? Wasn't I now, through ethnographic approaches and visual recording,*

beginning to embody the very surveillances of the 'Other' that the project was intended, in part, to resist?

And what was seen and recorded? There were two cameras: one hand-held, to enable focussing on specific aspects of the workshop; the other mounted on a tripod and trained on the group. They were both meant to be operational for the entirety of the workshop (both group and individual sessions) although this was not the case. Permission was granted for me to use the material in the research, although the documentary, to my knowledge, was never completed. The intended analysis of them was also never undertaken. From the days of footage available, only a few scant hours were returned to regularly. Footage of individual men recording their songs was occasionally viewed to clarify a remembrance, and the footage of the group workshop was used to transcribe the introduction of the workshop and the development of the group song. The footage that was reviewed more regularly included material shot after hours when the camera became a sort of joke, a casual prop for performances of a different sort.

So is it that the camera enabled the researcher to be put aside, and me to be more present as I wished to be? Or did it enable the intrusion of the researcher into other contexts, other moments? Did it subvert, or did it reproduce…?

Video diaries

> When I got down to Then and started this I had planned to keep this sort of visual record of the research…and it didn't entirely work out as planned. I think time constraints and being overwhelmed somewhat by everything that was happening…I didn't record myself every night or every day and perhaps I should have
>
> (video diary entry)

The decision to maintain research diaries was somewhat spontaneous. It had a certain congruity with the form that this music workshop (and this part of the research) was taking, in which I was complicit with a request for others to be subject to the blank lens of the video camera (although we were positioned differently in relation to the 'waiting eye/I' beyond that).

There was also an element of technological and analytical curiosity present for me: researcher reflexivity and reflections, in psychology, tend to favour journals and diaries. I had also come

across the use of transcripts of self-interviews, interviews with supervisors and peers, as techniques taken up in order to destabilise the subject position of researcher. Using video diaries had a kind of promise (for me, at the time) for extending the means of reflexivity in the same vein as increased scrutiny of others was imbued, in ethnographic research, with the promise of greater 'authenticity'.

Reflexivity has become a privileged term (although not practice) in many genres of psychological research, generally in ways that require and reproduce the humanist subject of psy-discourse. From the space of *that* form of reflexivity it is it is almost required that subjective experience be atomised in words, that every granule of *personal* researcher subjectivity to be turned over and examined for its place in the sedimented order of things. The performance of researcher reflexivity privileged in this sense is not so dissimilar to the 'confessional' metaphor of therapeutic discourse and personal autobiographical style. Read through those means, the use of video diaries both enables and constrains: looking back at myself (literally) gifts a form of perspectival experience of the self not generally possible, but it doesn't show the self-in-relation to her location, nor require me to step outside of it.

So there in the slightly grainy texture of a face mine-and-not-mine and made wan by cheap motel room fluorescence, there is a confluence of purpose. The image of 'I' is enabled through a turn to technology in which it is destabilised and simultaneously held steady. This somewhat paradoxical relationship with the use of technology troubles any assumption that technology can grant access to 'reality' as it is or was.

However I remember it now, the planned diligence of diarising didn't occur. The days were long and often turned into nights as well; and, there in Then, surrounded by songs and music and increasingly questioning 'voice', there were times when only silence could hold me.

> Reaching this point in the journey is like some window inside me being unlocked and thrown open and a world of ideas, memories and inspirations come rushing in like a soundless wave…if Magritte didn't do something like this he should have…
>
> (journal entry)

The last video diary I made was several days after returning to Sydney:

Did a lot of journaling, took a lot of notes…I *feel* like I've got a really good understanding of the process but it's funny, looking back I can't even articulate what happened on any given day.

When I came back

I think that's when I really started to realise

(when it) really hit me

that this changes you.

I know that you read about it. You read about it from an intellectual stance –
or *I* think about it from an intellectual stance… "well it's always a collaborative enterprise – it's always partly your story not just somebody else's etc etc" and
"you're shaped by your research as much as you shape your research"
but I don't think I really appreciated

that it can really

change

you…

How to represent those sorts of shifts on the page?

From: “Ii” – research review diaries: 2006

The researcher falls silent and I press ‘pause’ on the dvd player. Her eyes are opened very wide, looking slightly off screen. She is young – early 20s perhaps – and white. She is sitting cross-legged on a motel bed. She gestures a great deal with her hands when she talks, especially when excited. Occasionally her brows furrow and she appears to be concentrating hard…during the last 15 minutes I have watched her struggling to find words for her experiences. At times she looks into the camera and talks earnestly…and when she falls silent, she appears to be listening to something deeply…

Interlude: Burden to the music workshop

She sits cross-legged on the large bed – it takes up most of the space in this small motel room. Taj is reflecting on the week ahead – the making of the 4th CD from The House. For him, "the whole house, the whole week, is geared around the music". The week is just beginning. It's a Sunday night – around 7pm – and having just arrived on the train from Sydney, she's tired and also excited: after listening to previous CDs on the journey it's as if the music workshop has already begun.

> *And before this there was the 3rd music workshop, where she came to visit The House during the last few days of the process, and felt the changed energy as she walked in the door. The men she was already familiar with looked 'lighter and more alive' than the last time she had seen them, and Glenda was beaming. She could tell that Cohen was there and that another CD was currently in the making. It was like a physical ripple spreading through The House, suggesting to her that the music workshop, like The House, requires the bodies and beings of all who are connected to it, to make it work.*

And so there is she is, in the motel room, in conversation with Taj, connected to a process by virtue of the research.

In that 'conversation', she sat taking notes, thinking, reflecting his words back to him: a conversationalist with a particular purpose. She and he talked for some time into the night. At one point, knowing him to be a musician, and wondering how this influenced his understanding of the process, she asked him about this aspect of his own connection to the workshop and was surprised to learn that it was through the making of the first CD that he began singing his own songs, that until then no-one had known that he wrote songs. But he felt that he couldn't ask the men that he worked with to put themselves out there and be exposed, and not do so himself and so, a few weeks before the first workshop, as he was playing guitar, and yarning with them, he introduced some of his own songs…

> And she asked him: How did you come to be writing your own songs?
>
> And he paused for a while and then said:
> I got sick of singing other people's songs, basically.

Later he reflects on the process of 'singing your own song', that each of the men involved with the workshop face in their own way:

> You put it out there, take it back…there's a real fear: you just want someone to say 'that's good, keep going'.

Hearing of the fear that goes with "singing your own song" and having it heard reminds me that it is not an individual exercise, but a relational one: the audience is implicated. The motel room and its company of technology represents a particular position from she took up a seat as an audience. And after that there was the street corner which turned her around to see that motel room, and the university before it, in the context of something more, something before those, which enabled and constrained that audience position and inheres in the stories that follow:

> Our historical landscape has caught us all in its intricate mazes; at some points we meet across plains and gorges. Our convergence might be fleeting and unknown. Sometimes the connections are deep and profound and at others we are thrown apart seemingly with no possibility of encounter, let alone dialogue. Such is the story of indigenous and non-indigenous Australians: we inhabit the landscape on different terms, under different cultural premises, and for different purposes. Our collective lives mark out the stories of invasion, attempted conquest, conflict, curiosity, convergence, disdain, co-operation, and abiding friendship across this ancient terrain.
>
> (Saunders, in dialogue with Huggins & Tarrago, 2000, p. 42)

It was like a physical ripple spreading through The House, reminding her that the music workshop, like The House, requires the bodies and beings of all who are connected to it, to make it work.

Chapter 7: A Narrative of the Music Workshop

(In which she retells the first morning session at The House)

On the following morning, she walks to The House, her breath mingling with the cold air and hanging in a mist before her. She adjusts the strap of the camera bag over her shoulder, feeling the weight of its awkwardness…

When she gets to The House and is greeted by everyone already there, she can drop the bag in the front office and join the morning staff meeting. Cohen, the workshop facilitator, is already here and is setting up his equipment in the back room. Cohen is a non-Indigenous man and long-time friend of Taj. A musician, he has travelled extensively around the country, working with numerous communities in workshops similar to this one.

In that meeting, Taj talks with the staff about how the workshop will affect general activities, making use of the flexibility of the programme to weave the workshop in with the specific plans and needs of individuals. They talk about clients spending the morning with Cohen as a group, and then taking one-on-one time with him throughout the week to work on their personal songs. They talk about how filming has been arranged – that she will be recording parts of the workshop with Mick, the non-Indigenous recreational coordinator, for The House. She talks about the importance of the group consent for her to do this, and how the same process for her sitting in on group sessions previously will be followed – that someone may approach her directly, or via a staff member if they want the filming to stop, and that if staff members have any concerns, they will also be heard and filming will cease.

After this, she and Taj and Mick move into the front group-room, to sit with clients in the morning House meeting. Here, where any business arising from individual programmes or The House as a whole might be discussed, the music workshop and her presence is explained to the group of men. She is already familiar to many; some of the newer members she is meeting for the first time. She talks about her relationship with the programme and her studies and how she has heard parts of the music workshop before and is interested in their experiences of it. She talks about the filming and is careful to emphasise that there is no cost to them, The House, or her if someone is not comfortable with it and filming is stopped, and that the same goes for her being physically present at any moment – she can and will leave. She also emphasises that giving consent for her to be part of the group does not mean they have given consent for her to be present in their individual sessions with Cohen, and that, as for the group session if someone is not comfortable with her presence/the cameras, then she and/or the staff will take care of that.

Moving down to the back group room 12 clients, Bob (a young Indigenous worker), Mick and she meet Cohen as he is finishing setting up the computer and recording equipment. The room comfortably holds them as a group. It also has a small adjoining cubicle, usually used for massage and acupuncture, which in this context can also be used for recording individual songs. She sits beside and slightly behind Cohen, across the room from Mick and his camera, and sets the digital video camera on a tripod next to her. The idea is that hers will be the 'roving eye' and Mick's will stay permanently on the group. From here, she can see what Mick cannot – himself in relation to the group. From where it is set up his camera picks up what she cannot – herself, visible, in spite of the camera she sits behind.

She makes herself small and quiet and tries to tune in to Mick's introduction of the workshop and of Cohen. He stands near her, smiling, speaking clearly and with a swift and energetic tone that suggests excitement and energy. He begins by giving Cohen's name to the group, and explaining how he will "take" the group this week; that they will be "working on songs". As he talks further, she hears that this

> *Might seem a lot, bit scary for a lot of you guys: there's going to be a lot of stuff, coming out of your comfort zones, but I'm telling you now, you're going to have a lot of fun. If you trust this man, he will do good stuff for you okay?*

Something about this telling of the workshop is already jarring for her; the lack of stillness in the room and a sudden stillness in her suggests something is not quite right. Continuing to listen, both to Mick and also the men in the group (becoming aware of their voices and their silences), she overhears the following …

Mick: *All it is, is singing a song and I know you can all sing and you all know you can all sing because you've all sung in bars all over the country – don't tell me you can't sing, everyone here has sang. All we're doing now is –*

Noah: *-- I can tell you I haven't*

Mick: *I'll tell you now: you're going to this week, don't worry. But I'll tell you what, all it is, is now, is using the same confidence that you had when you were*

using, you don't need that confidence to sing – you can get up and sing anywhere.

Noah: *I never had any confidence*

Mick: *Well you're going to have some now…(*Group:-- *you're going to have some now)…by the time we're done (?) you're going to have plenty.*

Noah's interjection resonates with her discordance. He is leaning back in his chair; his head tipped back, his face a picture of casual defiance. Mick's response is partially obscured by the voices of other men in the group, echoing the words "you're going to have some now". There is quite a lot of laughter accompanying this exchange – she can't work out whether people anticipated what Mick would say, or just picked it up very quickly, but something about this overplay of voices lingers with her. Someone's voice rings out above others to suggest that Noah might get a "crash course in confidence" here, but Mick is already moving on to say

> *I'm going to hand you over to Cohen. Just give him your undivided attention, he'll let you know what's going on, boys.*

She's watching Cohen's face – which wears a gentle and open smile – as he accepts the space to talk with a laugh, saying "excellent" and then leaning forward in his chair with his chin in his hand and directing himself towards the group.

> *It's really good to be back here at The House and I just really enjoy coming here to you lads, and all having a go. I have a lot of respect for you and I know that you all have different stories to tell that are incredible and unique to yourself and it's totally up to you how much story you want to tell me or how much you want to tell the rest of the world, or family or how much you want to write.*

She notices that he embodies this talk with stillness and a soft solemnity, his face open and expressive.

> *But I just want to let you know I really respect how much you've been through to actually be here and having a go. And a lot of my family members have suffered all that stuff that our families…you know how our families are suffering. And I guess that*

gives me a big motivation to be here and help people tell their story and come through and get to another end, another point.

His face lights up with a smile again as he refers to previous visits, the shared histories with The House taking on a greater presence in the room. As he talks the workshop in greater detail through this, he also picks up the threads of Micks' introduction.

And you guys have heard some of the other stuff we've done, with The House? Fantastic stuff! And Mick made it sound hard but it's a lot easier than that. You don't even have to sing – David will tell you. You don't even have to be able to sing, you can say words, you can tell a story, can say a poem, can even just say your name and where you're from and your family members or say a message to someone in your family and your friends and then can just manipulate it with music and sound to make it like a little soundscape sort of thing. Don't be worried about anything like that just be confident we'll get something that's going to be good.

David had just slipped into the room – a non-Indigenous client, perhaps in his 40s, and someone who had been resident at the house previously while other workshops were underway. So as it happened he was here again – making it his 3rd CD. As Cohen talked, he often nodded and smiled at David, who responded with a smile and a hesitant glance around the room. *She wonders – are you making yourself small and quiet, like I was?* Cohen continued:

And I'll tell you a little bit about myself – I grew up in There, Western NSW, anyone's been there?

In the voices responding, she heard Noah call out "Yeah, I got family there" and turned in time to see his face as Mick echoed "Yeah I got mob there". Mick's back was to her as he and he was busy with something on the table opposite, but again she felt the stillness in her stomach that suggested something was not okay with what had just passed. The attention in the room had swiftly returned to Cohen, though, who picked up with his storytelling of home.

There's the same town as what a lot of you have grown up in, probably similar to Then in a lot of ways: small and when you're growing up there you never think you can do anything, be anything, and I was lucky enough to discover songwriting and

realised I had a bit of knack for it and when I went to Newcastle and Sydney and Melbourne and people were listening to some of my music and saying 'oh yeah that's what happens out in There, I never knew that' and just sort of from there I've been able to play in some incredible places, some great festivals around the place and meet all those great singer-songwriters like Archie Roach and Shane Howard, from the Goanna Band, Neil Murray, from the Warumpi Band, all those lads from Warumpi Band, Coloured Stone, probably (?) family members that play music here as well; and also part of it is going around the communities, part of what I do is going around communities and help people tell their stories, show people how easy it is to write a song. But I might do some singing, hey? Show you what I've been up to. You know where That is?

There is some 'knowing' laughter in the room, and when someone answers that they do, and goes on to say they lived there, Cohen looks and sounds surprised and pleased. He's picked up his guitar and is bent over it, tuning the strings and looking up to smile and engage with the group whilst he does so.

Yeah? Wow. (tuning guitar) Anyone else play guitar?

A few people name Taj, and one of them, Callum, has either made some indication, or been pointed out by someone else in the group, as another guitar player, because Cohen turns towards him and asks

You play a bit?

Callum is a young koori man from Then who has so far been very quiet, but intensely focused on Cohen. She notices him partly because his reputation precedes him – Mick has expressed some frustration with him as someone who resists authority and is arrogant. She doesn't get a sense of this in the way he defers to Cohen, emphasising that he's "still learning chords and that" and so is prompted to wonder what it is, and in what relationships, that he might be understood as resisting (and what this resistance is in relation to?).
Cohen is still tuning his guitar, and continues to talk stories with the men as he does so.

Yeah I grew up on a cattle property out there, my parents owned a dairy farm and I never went to school til I was about 16...my mum's Mexican and all my

family, on her side, are all musicians and play so I got to, at a young age, learn to play. But There, like all Aboriginal communities, you know, some fantastic guitarists and singers there. Weather's mucking around with my guitar. (pause) *I put it on the aeroplane and haven't checked it since. This first song – I'll show you how easy it is. Made this story up about my wife – my wife's an Aboriginal person from (the country including the towns of There and That) – her old man was a shearer and I made this song about him and…it's called "I'm never going back to That again"*

The knowing laughter that greeted his first mention of That increases as he gives this title, and the group is keenly engaged with his storying and his song. Most of the men (particularly, she notices, Noah) are now leaned over their knees, intently watching him play. Some have smiles playing over their faces and by the end of it there are more than a few feet tapping and heads nodding in time. The finishing chords are met with resounding applause and Callum says, with what sounds like a kind of reverence in his voice,

That's pretty tricky that one…

Cohen is laughing and shaking his head – seemingly shrugging off the praise:

Yeah? (laughs) *still way out of tune. But that's all I do, think about where I grew up, the River, that mountain There, you know, trees that are out there…and just try and make my songs so that they describe where I'm from and that sort of thing. And that's the secret behind it: all song-writing is, is just trying to find a few words that say where you're from; say you're from Then, well that's by the sea so you can describe the sea as part of the song "I'm a boy by the sea" or you know "I grew up by the waves…*

Callum: *Backstabbers here*

Cohen: *Yeah? Well there you go, you know you could write a song about that whole area. Sounds like a rap song*

The laughter that met Callum's comment grew stronger with Cohen's response. When he suggests a rap song, there's more laughter still. Cohen then again begins playing notes on his guitar

I'll just (tuning) *I'll do a couple more and then we'll have a go at our own song.* (still tuning) *Next Sunday, make sure you put it on ABC, I got an interview on Statewide and I''ll be talking about The House and all that sort of thing*

After confirming the details in response to questions from men, Cohen suggests that

So if we get something recorded I can play it there. But everyone's really interested in using songs to go through this process: Tracey and Taj you know have been looking at that because music is an important part of your life you know who hasn't been listening to music all of their lives? You know, geez everyone, everyone's listening to music…

She catches the end of a statement that Callum makes about deaf people. Although she heard the comment about deaf people as being offered in contradiction, Cohen seemed to hear it differently, again extending the comment with an example from music, by referencing Mozart.

That's right, though – even Mozart, hey, he was deaf! I think he went deaf later, though but he even thought it in his head, you know. But I was…you know how when you're fishing and you're waiting for something to bite and I noticed that everything has got a sound: everything's almost like music. Obviously birds, but even the sound of a truck coming past has…brrrrrrrrr…you know you can find the note of that truck…(plays on guitar and vocalises sound of truck passing again) *you know? And it's like our lives: everything's music and we've each got a song in us and that's what I want to try and find out over the next couple of days, find out where you've been and the towns you grew up in, all the nicknames, the waterholes, the fish that you caught, your family, you know even if you want to talk about what you've been through you know, the track you've walked the rocky road, the light ahead you see or whatever…and ah, great way to tell stories and help people who have been in the same situation too.*
Um, a couple more songs hey? Should ask you to choose a topic and I'll see if I've got a song about it.

Voices called out numerous suggestions – "beach", "trees", "yeah trees and the beach", "water", "sex and the city" (this from Noah and followed by his demurral – "nah – trees and the beach"), "wind", "fog"…Cohen responds to several of the suggestions and expresses a kind of encouragement and delight at the enthusiasm, encouraging them to keep it up and remember the ideas for the song-writing that is to follow. When a song arises, he locates it in relation to both their suggestions and what it connects with in his histories, still engaging with ideas being called out in response to the specificity of his connection:

> *Got one about where I grew up, like I didn't grow up on a beach, so I couldn't do that* (someone calls out about a specific river, other voices join in) *yeah I got all that* (someone calls out "yellow belly") *yellow belly*

Uncle: *Where you come from there'd be all cod there now*

Cohen: *Is now…yeah, the buggers…* (someone else calls out "turtle diving") *yeah keep all this we'll write it all up in a second. Will do a song – this is my interpretation of the bush, coz we had 30,000 acres Muriwarri tribal land, beautiful country and this is a song I wrote when I moved to the city and I realised how different it was: city people and community people, you know?*

Again, the response to this song is energetic and warm, and Cohen immediately suggests another, a cover of a Warumpi Band song "My Island Home"

> *I was thinking about a song you'd all know where it's like every word is telling a really simple story. You'll know it straight away it goes:* (plays song)

She hears the song and his telling of it as a story about displacement and longing, a connection that survives distance and a telling that speaks to the power of "a really simple story". The group response is resounding, and Cohen speaks to this by connecting it with Taj (of whom it is a favourite).

> *That's an old Taj classic, hey? I reckon we should make a start, hey? (*amid further group applause*) What are some of the styles that you listen to?*

As people suggest different styles of music, Cohen plays examples on his guitar. The first suggestion is 'country' and as he plays fragments of country ballad style song, someone else is already calling out "rap" and making a comment about "for the young fellas". Noah takes this comment on with a degree of indignation

Hey us young fellas listen to that too! I was brought up on country and western music!

Others are already calling out the names of specific artists, and beginning to jokingly negotiate who, in the group, should go first with their own songwriting. If she were to reflect on the time at this point, she would be surprised at how swiftly the group has moved from a place of wary engagement to 'taking ownership' of the enterprise. Their bodies have told the story of this shift though – with each song performed by Cohen, a greater freedom of movement and joy…as the negotiations get more specific, Cohen offers suggestions for structuring the process:

He's a level 6 too!
I reckon all level 6s should go first.

Cohen: *You know what we'll do today? I think what we'll do today we'll write up a group song like where we're all from or whatever and we'll find something to sing that we can all sing together and we'll ease ourselves in to the rest of the week and ah over the next if that's alright with you, we'll um, just, one on one say for two or three hours, and you don't have to really finish the song or have any words or anything in mind or you can just come with nothing and we'll just sit down and write it down just the two of us and we'll get there in the end. You can tell me what music style you like and I'll play it if you like jazz, do some jazz* (plays) *rock and roll* (plays), *do anything.* (Callum asks 'what else?') *what else?*

Someone calls out "blues" and as Cohen begins to play blues chords, one of the men, Hank, sings in a rasping, husky parody

"Went down Then late last night"

Cohen plays along with the laughter, inviting, it seems, for Hank to continue. Someone else joins with this, calling out

Keep going, Hank! Come on, crank it there, bruz!

Amidst the laughter Cohen picks up the threads of dialogue with which they are articulating the workshop possibilities.

> *...we got didj players, we can do a bit of do some percussion, do what we like and then I'll show you how this computer works, which is crazy – just think of any style you can think of especially all those rap styles and dance music picks it up straight away...David's had experience with it, it's amazing, hey? You just push a few buttons and the next thing it's making a whole song*

Again, Cohen connects the telling with the knowledge of others in The House – she has noticed him doing this with David before, with Taj and through referencing the singers on previous CDs. This time, David takes up the space opening in the conversation and joins with the telling.

David: *If your voice is a bit rattly you can change it around so it sounds alright*

Cohen: *yeah don't worry about making mistakes or anything like that because next thing is you get a pair of scissors and just*

Client: *cut and paste*

Cohen: *yeah cut and paste and you only have to sing one thing once and then you can repeat it – it's very easy.*

Cohen starts strumming a tune on the guitar again, at which point Bob addresses him. The following exchanges again fall against the background of music

Bob: *so you've done the last couple of CDs that clients have done here (*Cohen*: the lads, yeah) the last couple of years*

Cohen: *I think it's the last couple of years yeah*

David: *Nah 2001 I think was the second one (*Cohen*: was it?) yeah (*Cohen*: Geez, four years) And the last two or three have just been over the last year or so*

Cohen: *I'll play one more song. You know where Walgett is? Ah, about 6 or 7 young fellas, about 12 or 13, they were at – coz you know how in Walgett – you know how everyone's got the different suburbs like, ah Newtown in Walgett, there's Newtown in Walgett (*One of the men interjects*: like sister cities?) yeah, nah it's in the town but it's like a nickname they call it, like Moree's got Top End and Little Camp and all that sort of…*

Another of the men picks up on Moree and says:

In Moree – there's a place in New Zealand that's a sister city to Moree

Cohen: *Is there really? Hey. Anyway this is one the lads wrote, it's called Chilling with the Boys in Newtown (which is in Walgett but everyone thinks is in Sydney)*

She remembers an earlier visit, walking with Bob and some of the men down into town, and him asking her what she thought of Then – coming from the city. She talked about liking the town and loving its proximity to the river and the coast, and added that she didn't feel she knew that much about the town, spending most of her time with The House. In comparison to the city, though, she knew where she would rather live and it wasn't the city. He seemed surprised and pleased and talked about how most people from the city thought it was a backwards country town, and never bothered to visit it. So when she heard the laughter that rippled through the group in response to the story about Walgett's 'Newtown', she heard it as signifying specific relationships to 'the big smoke', a parody of its 'self-perceived' importance and ignorance of what lay beyond its borders. And this lent the song itself – ostensibly a song about nothing, "just chillin'" – added significance for her. She wondered again how much of the choice of songs was deliberated, or spontaneously inspired, when Cohen finished playing and, to the laughter and applause said

See you can make music and songs out of anything! Alright let's make a start! This won't be hard at all…

Having finished with a song 'about nothing', Cohen moved across to the whiteboard, engaging everyone in talk about the structure of a song and how they'd select a style of music to which they'd set the group song. Mick reappeared briefly to indicate that an invitation had been made for the residents and staff of The House to attend a lunch hosted by one of the local government agencies, to acknowledge the work they put into the community. Signalling that the bus would leave in ten to fifteen minutes put a time frame on the conversations, but didn't impede them at all. As she follows the rapid-fire exchanges of participants, nominating themes and lines for the song, and wonders at the way that the group begins to develop a group song based on the places they've all come from, we might slip out, acknowledging the limits of this form of re-presentation to do justice to that process, and inviting some other voices to pick up the story from here…

> *Because after this, throughout the rest of the week, and beyond the arbitrary borders of that music workshop (which began before that morning, and which continues), she had many critical moments of reflection. The simple story shared here is itself a telling only possible after what follows, and what therefore also, was before this…*

Chapter 8: Reflexive Analysis

(In which she revisits the story just told about the opening morning of the workshop, and analyses it for what it suggests of the (research) relationships that preceded it)

I remember very early on in this process, coming across a quote from filmmaker, Robert Bresson[79] that resonated strongly with me at the time. It read:

> Make visible what, without you, might perhaps never have been seen

It has signified numerous meanings for me over the years: when she (and I) set out that morning, breath rising whitely in the cold air, she had it as a sort of reassurance for her being there – that however problematic her presence, she was there and therefore had a responsibility to uphold. The question then was 'what to make visible'?

Here, I wonder about what is missing in that question (and its relationship to responsibility): the process by which that which is visible becomes visible, the ways in which something takes on form and substance and is made sense of. And I wonder, too, about the limits of a visual metaphor for enabling these stories to be told. Perhaps *a* form of reflexivity is enabled; and perhaps the ocularcentrism that is privileged in white western narratives also impedes the articulation of stories that resonate with the echoes of songs and movement…

> But the project of making experience visible precludes critical examination of the workings of the ideological system itself, its categories of representation…its premises about what these categories mean and how they operate, and of its notions of subjects, origin, and cause.
>
> (Scott, 1991, p. 778)

There in that workshop, and increasingly in the reflexions and retellings that followed, is the being and voice of an analyst: engaging, hearing, seeing, interpreting. There may always be aspects that remain unremarked-upon, dependent upon the conversations in which a story is

[79] Among other possible narratives of Bresson's life and work, is one that has his films as pivotal resistances to mainstream cinematographic practices, as re-figuring the camera not as a means of recording reality, but a means of creating it. Bresson's use of narratorial voice has similarly been understood to act upon and change other elements of a film, corresponding here to the position she is already, always occupying – whether it has become a part of her narrative yet, or not.

told. Taken for granted in the first telling, here a story of that morning is re-told in such a way as to try and render some of those implicit analyses audible. I do this through dialogue between the 'analyst' and the Questioner. In this conversation it is possible to represent some of what is missed (and vital) in the seeing, hearing and telling.

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I notice an ordinariness of the opening scene – her, walking, breath misting in the cold air – a weightless ordinariness juxtaposed with the camera's awkward bulk. I'm reading for a repetition of that juxtaposition – of what is ordinary against her interpretations.

The staff meeting, for example, seems to appear ordinary for her, so let's pause there: I'm curious about that appearance of ordinariness, and about the representation of some people as 'staff', some as 'clients' and some as 'researchers'…

I hadn't thought about the ordinariness of the staff meeting before. It (and my presence at it) had become part of the backdrop of The House against which other things were noticeable: particular staff dynamics, differences that arose around case management, conversations about community concerns. The noticing of those features required my presence, but my presence itself was taken-for-granted (by me). Furthermore, that there *were* staff meetings, that there was a division and differentiation of subjectivities into particular positions (staff, client, community member, researcher) was unremarkable. The existence of these positions and what they enabled and constrained was taken for granted: what mattered was what was seen and heard from there, not *where* we were standing in relation to each other and how these positions enabled and constrained (inter)subjective performance.

What does your presence at the staff meeting suggest in terms of particular relationships between these positions?

My routine presence at the staff meeting signifies that some tacit conjoining of the 'researcher' and 'staff' position had taken place, such that it was ordinary for me to be there, and not elsewhere in The House. It suggests that the subject position of 'researcher' comes ready-made with the possibility of privileges to attend staff meetings while that of 'client' does not. It also infers a greater value (to the research) of the knowledge/information gained from standing closer to the subject position of staff than that of client in that moment.

If the differentiation of subjectivities into particular positions effects their placement in the world I wonder what it does to their relationships with each other. Inasmuch as subjects are required to take up positions, and these positions affect their perceived entitlements, access to resources and what they, as subjects, are included in and excluded from, the *relationships* between positions are also enabled and constrained in particular ways.

It sounds as though certain privileges and responsibilities are conferred upon the relationships between researcher and staff: for example, the ways in which 'consent' was discussed with staff prior to discussion with clients?

Yes. And that is a pattern across the research – my conversations dealing with consent always occurred with staff (and research colleagues) before they occurred with clients. What does it mean to have conversations about others from which they are excluded, especially conversations in which things will be determined that have implications for their lived experience? What does it mean – in the context of this research – for the relationships between other subject positions?

To the extent that the staff-researcher relationship is one that was privileged in the research in terms of the sharing of information and construction of the research, then the researcher-client relationship is then one that is undertaken *through* that of staff-researcher. Reflecting on the narrative of the music workshop it seems that this happens even when we are gathered in a space from which neither is physically excluded: I notice Callum in the music workshop in relation to the reputation that precedes him, a reputation articulated (via Mick) through the staff-researcher relationship.

I'm not suggesting that this 'relating through reputation' is unidirectional or fixed or even problematic in and of itself: clients and I actively engaged in constructing versions of staff and staff-positions in the course of our conversations, too. Read through narrative and positioning theories, telling stories about other people (and ourselves) – constructing versions of self and other, and of relationship – is a very ordinary process. The implications of it, however, for example in research protocols, are rarely attended to. Furthermore, it doesn't take place outside of relationships, and those relationships (here, anyway) are also ones of social power relations. What is significant here is that our positioning and the privileging of certain relationships (re)creates circumstances whereby some are more exposed than others. In the patterning of staff, client, and researcher positions what is also reproduced are

assumptions in which some are *routinely* positioned as being spoken for and others as *entitled* to do the speaking.

It sounds as though there are precedents, in institutional discourse, to these assumptions. Can you talk a little about some of the historical negotiations around consent that preceded this moment in your relationships with staff?

The pattern noticed here (of consent for filming being discussed with staff first) follows the same pattern of discussions about consent in relation to the interviews and ethnographic research. At the time of the music workshop I had been visiting with The House for about 12 months, with institutional ethical approval, and that of The House, to record individual interviews and to use the approved transcriptions of those for analysis. This process was subject to the usual institutional practices of issuing individual participants with consent forms to be signed and returned. Staff raised concerns with the use and expectation of individualised consent forms, emphasising that approval had already been given and was signified through our continued welcome at The House. Changing the procedure for the music workshop stemmed from these discussions.

These changes required legitimating within institutional discourses, however, and so Taj, as a senior staff member and an Aboriginal man, was formally named as consultant to the project and wrote a letter specifying that staff of The House spoke for 'informed consent' of clients.

I'm not sure of the meaning of this for the people of The House. It may be that within the community of The House and Then it was entirely appropriate for staff to be positioned 'in front of' clients in relation to research processes; it may also be that the research was articulated within The House and the community in ways that did not maintain staff being 'in front of' clients: the meaning of the relationship between the positions of staff and client, for example (the meaning/validity *of* those positions), from *within* those sets of relationships was/is not readily intelligible to us. The meaning (in *those* relationships) of the order in which discussions of consent unfolded, has significances that we cannot apprehend from here. They are not relationships from which I can speak, nor mine to speak of. So this question is not, for me, about the 'rightness' or otherwise of the order of discussions *for The House* (or even if the order was as it appears here), but for the meaning of those within the context of the research relationships and what is reproduced of the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions.

Within institutional practice there is a precedent, in ethnographic research in particular, of researchers liasing with a local community member, ostensibly to ensure more appropriate, ethical and sustainable research practices (González y González & Lincoln, 2006). While this practice may be undertaken with the intent of 'decolonising research' (as it was here), it is also possible to hear how 'sanctioning' the authority of The House in this context also functions as a form of accommodative voice (Sampson, 1993). By accommodating community practices into the pre-existing categories of the institution, to what extent are institutional practices changed, and to what extent are community relationships re-presented in white discourses of ethics as relationships in which staff were then more "fully informed" than clients?

I hear a note of particular care being taken in the discussions you subsequently had with the people positioned as clients that is missing in your representation of the conversations about consent at the staff meeting. And I wonder – what are some of the implications you notice now, of the subject positions and relationships being reproduced in this way in the research?

I wonder whether, in the articulation of the research, staff-client relationships are nudged toward being considered somewhat equivalent to researcher-client relationships, and researcher-staff relationships treated differently: some assumption of 'sameness' in terms of relative power and responsibility between the dominant positions in each dyad? The care that you notice seems to me to resonate with a (paternalistic) 'taking care of' clients and is not apparent in the discussions with staff. It isn't there, for example, in relation to staff as 'participants' in the staff meeting, despite conversations about consent. It is almost as though the position of 'client' is held closer to the position of 'participant' than is that of 'staff member'.

So now I wonder a bit more about the implications of holding clients closer to the position of 'participant' than staff. Does it assume, for example, that staff members will feel more comfortable to approach me if there is some kind of problem? That they 'should' be more inclined, or able, to take up a responsibility in this regard – for their own participation, for others? Does it reproduce, too, an assumption of greater vulnerability, as a participant, for the subject position of 'client'? And some positions are indeed subject to particular vulnerabilities more than others: I am thinking here of the client who asked me about the potential for participation in the research to be used to support his application to Court. But vulnerability

always occurs in relation to something/someone else: when vulnerability is evoked in the absence of any required reformulation of the responsibilities of the other position (here, the researcher/institutional discourses of ethics, consent and responsibility), vulnerability and passivity is re-inscribed. Here, that is reiterated in the routine positioning of some positions being spoken for by others without a reconfiguration (in the representational order of discourse) of what that 'speaking for' signifies and how it is conferred.

When, in relation to those positions that are 'spoken for', some people are positioned as less vulnerable/more powerful (the staff position of the staff-client relationship) then does the assumed proximity of *their* subject position to that of the researcher treat their representation (and that of the staff-client relationship) in institutional discourse as less problematic? Furthermore, when the entitlements and assumptions reproduced reflect the ideologies of the institution, then, in privileging the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions again isn't something of the ordinariness of *terra nullius* reproduced?

So it's partly that the conversations were ordered in particular ways, and also that those ways were not required or expected to be accounted for (within the academic set of relationships through which these stories are told). What does that require of the position of the researcher?

When you portray the relationship between researcher and staff as having certain privileges and responsibilities conferred upon it, I'm left wondering how we carry those responsibilities – especially in the movement back into those academic discursive communities and the research stories we tell there. My experience of that difference (between re-issued consent/the requirement that it be explicitly revoked and the different relational dynamic I was subject to at The House) is that it requires/invites a different relationship – one in which 'ethics' and 'consent' are questions of responsibility, and continuously revisited. There is no checklist to say 'consent has been given and can be revoked'. There is only the ongoing-ness of the relationship and therefore of the responsibilities to each other and to self. The question becomes more about – what are you going to do with this story? Who are you to hear it? How will you bear it responsibly? How will you know if you fail?

To extend the frame to include questions of researcher responsibilities-in-relationship requires that the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions be included in the discursive construction of the research. As I've already discussed, this is not expected, required, nor

necessarily valued, in the retelling of research stories. So my experience of the difference is discontinuous with the discourses that the story was/is required to be articulated through. In repetitive citations of research some positions are routinely marked as more vulnerable; some relationships are consistently privileged; and some patterns of relationships – of domination and subordination – are consistently reproduced. In the movement from ongoing relational responsibilities to accommodative voice something of the ordinariness of research relationships and, in particular here, of gubba-Indigenous relationships, is re-inscribed.

It seems remarkable that some of the 'ordinariness' of research is somehow managing to be re-iterated despite the commitments of fourth generation research…

We might have been moved to critique some of those practices through taking up fourth generation evaluation, yet the form in which our stories were being told nevertheless required the stepping-into of some pre-existing positions. While it was possible (through Fourth Generation Evaluation) to critically examine some taken-for-granted assumptions of psychological discourse, for example, we did so in ways that required and then reproduced subject positions (routinely intelligible in narratives of *terra nullius*) of 'staff', 'client', 'researcher' and 'community stakeholder'.

In relation to the music workshop, I specifically chose to focus on 'client experiences', separating those from the 'client, staff, and community members' of the evaluation project. In doing so I slipped into considering only the individual and collective bodies physically assembled in the room and subjected to filming, reproducing those as particular subjectivities, distinct from yet dependent upon others. I engaged in a process of continually recreating the less privileged position as the object of research interest and preserving the ordinariness of the assumed relationships (client, staff, researcher) in the process.

When it came time to re-present the music workshop in writing, I began questioning the politics of these representations (although I didn't conceptualise it as that, then) – were the men assembled 'clients' or 'participants'? What were the implications of each categorisation? I felt both to be problematic and inappropriate yet could not find an alternative, right-feeling signifier. In conversation with others I decided to 'settle on' one, perhaps changing it during the course of analysis, and including reflections on these challenges in 'my positioning chapter'.

So you opted for a resolution of the discomfort: how does this strategy – setting aside a noticing – work for you now?

It reminds me of the 'anachronistic reduction' of the DSM. The motion of 'setting it aside' looks like a trivialising gesture: the kind that you might make, for example, if you believed (or wanted to believe) that analysis was something separate from, greater than, interpretation. It seems to suggest temporary neutrality is possible, and infers a greater value in 'writing the story' rather than considering the question and the discomfort (or resolution of that) to be critical to how the story is told.

It sounds as though the story told is also a story in which the positions of some people are subject to reformulation (client/participant) while others ('researcher') are not?

In that sense it reproduces the 'Other' as the object of interest while the choice itself – the means by which we construct the texts we write, and each other within them – is obscured. In all this isn't there a reproduction of privilege: in which the naming of others is of little consequence, able to be set aside, until a more convenient time for consideration? In obscuring the privileged position – of the researcher – isn't something of that ordinariness of *terra nullius* re-iterated?

'Reflecting on…' in a positioning chapter is one strategy for dealing with this, yes, and one that is only possible from a vantage point enabled by the choice. I can look back upon having chosen 'client', for example, but only from a place within a narrative that speaks of 'clients', preserving a kind of boundary between 'them' and my place in creating 'their' image. And where in the story of choosing is the function of the choice (as a resolution of discomfort for the position of dominant assumptions) preserved? Where is the reformulation of the subject position of 'researcher'? What are the implications of this being set aside? Along with the subject positions what is also reproduced are the relationships between them: political relationships in which one position is consistently privileged, consistently incurs benefits from its location, and from which its subject is consistently shielded from the knowledge of that or the need to account for it. When the language that is questioned is language crucial to the construction of subjectivities, what is 'set aside' is a moment whereby these repetitive citations might otherwise have been interrupted.

There seems to be a connection here with a notion of analysis as ordinary sense-making that has been lost in historical articulations of research. The idea of analysis that is privileged in research discourse is the one that comes after – that is 'done to data', rather than ***re-done****.*

Yes. And that's a very different way of thinking about the whole project of research. If we consider analysis as ordinary sense-making, something that is re-done, then we might need to think differently about 'data'. Rather than being something that (only) precedes analysis, is separate to it, we can think of data as produced through analysis. Or perhaps more accurately, the notion of 'data' is itself an analytic construct: a category imposed on formlessness that then enables (and constrains) further sense-making. Some things are attended to (in dominant narratives of research are selected as 'data', deemed 'worthy' of analysis), and some things are excluded – but the means by which that process of selection occurs (and the assumptions that what is selected exists *a priori*) is rarely subject to the same scrutiny. Nor are the implications of selecting out, or of being subject to the specifics of a given process of selection, often considered.

How does this fit with a singling out of the music workshop for particular consideration?

Music had a somewhat privileged place in my relationship with The House: the CD of an earlier workshop being pivotal in my introduction to The House. Nevertheless, singling out the music workshop entails an assumption about the parameters of the music workshop – a differentiation of it *as* a music workshop and *from* the rest of The House and the activities within that.

This already suggests a different relationship to music to the one, for example, that Cohen describes in his introduction.

That's true: the notion of music as, well, an ordinary part of life, inherent in everything – that is not a part of how I heard the music workshop; it's not how I approached it. So it, in my first introduction to it, had already been singled out for me by virtue of it being 'musical' in a framework where music was not privileged.

So you are not hearing it as, say, a musician might, for example. How ***are*** *you hearing it – what else made it 'singular' for you, in the context in which you encountered it?*

The CD from an earlier workshop was particularly salient, in the academic-therapeutic context in which I was listening to it, as a counterpoint to discourses of alcohol and drug rehabilitation: hearing men singing about their lives, their families, places they lived, their pain, sorrow, humour…the diversity of stories that Cohen refers to in his introduction to the music workshop is not a predominant feature in psychological narratives of drug and alcohol use/rehabilitation. Even aside from the use of music, the intimacy of first-person accounts and peopled stories was anomalous with prevailing representations in academic and public discourse.

The prevailing voices of academic therapeutic discourses are not those of the people upon whom drug and alcohol rehabilitation is ostensibly centred.

The privileged 'voice' of those discourses are those of professionals (psychological, psychiatric, rehabilitative) and researchers. Approaching these discourses through those of feminism, I hear the silencing of other voices (and other expertise) embedded in the privileging of those of 'experts'. And here, as for Gilligan (in Kitzinger & Gilligan, 1994) elsewhere, that silence speaks to me of exclusion: it is not so much that a minority of voices are ever granted space to speak, but that they are so readily and repetitively privileged and speak so readily for and about others.

There seems to be a certain congruence in the 'removal and return' of western therapeutic discourses in relation to rehabilitation, and the singling out and 'doing to' of data and analysis in research. And the songs from earlier music workshops rendered those discordant for you. What is the relationship between that earlier discord and your retelling of the music workshop here?

The discord was reproduced for me in the introduction of the first day. Let's step back into the room where we are gathered as a group, and Mick is introducing Cohen and talking about the music workshop. Twice Noah interrupts his introduction. Asking myself what it is that Noah is interrupting turns me towards the conversational work of both Mick and Cohen. I notice how Mick and Cohen tell different stories of the workshop, and tell those stories differently. What do their stories enable and constrain in the way of subject positions and the telling of other stories for the (other) men invoked? What of clients' subjectivities and lives are viable in these initial constructions of the music workshop: what is invited through a reference to their having 'sung in bars all over the country'? Alternatively, what is invited through

Cohen's references to families, communities, country, and his assumption of their uniqueness, their strengths, their hidden knowledge and that everyone and everything has a song?

In Cohen's story it isn't that there is less space for men to bring their songs of drugs, alcohol, suffering, but that they are represented differently: possible storylines among many possible storylines from which each person might craft a song. While ostensibly Noah's interjections are in response to specific statements – having sung before, having confidence – they can also be contextualised in relation to the general shape of those statements, the general form that the story takes.

Following positioning theory, I hear Noah's interruption as a form of resistance to the discursive work of the introduction through which some sedimented ordinariness is disturbed and made apparent (e.g. Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2003). Listening to Mick speaking I realise that I cannot hear the tune of the songs I had heard from previous workshops; the story he is telling doesn't speak to me of a place in which those songs could be made, nor re-sound what those earlier songs evoked for me. This is in spite of Mick's efforts to reassure the men present that they could, indeed, do this. Instead, when I listen to Mick's introduction I hear a particular authorial voice speaking: one that assumes entitlement to speak *for* the men, for their being and for their experiences of the workshop; this voice speaks in a didactic tone, lends his telling the air of a prescriptive command. It tells a story about the music workshop in which the men who should be privileged within it instead appear as objects over which his position grants him uninterrupted perspective; it is a story in which Mick and Cohen feature as authority figures. Noah's interruptions spoke to me of a resistance to illegitimate authority, inappropriately assumed: that of Mick to speak for him or for what his experience of the workshop would be; that of Mick assuming a familiarity or any connection between subjects and positions such that it would be appropriate for him to say 'I've got mob there' in response to Cohen's question. To the extent that *I* then heard Mick speaking in that voice about the music workshop (and himself and others within it), I heard a voice that this project was intended to resist.

So in hearing Noah as a voice of resistance, you come to notice and question the voice of the privileged position in the staff-client dyad, which is also the privileged voice and position in western therapeutic discourse, that of the dominant white cultural assumptions?

Historicising that position locates the story that Mick was telling in a pre-existing narrative – part of the existing fictions of *terra nullius* through which his position incurred assumptive authority and entitlement. To the extent that I hear Mick telling stories of the research in that voice, I hear a political relationship that the project had set out to resist. I hear strains of a similar resistance in Noah's interruptions. But then, in response to his second interruption ("I never had any confidence") the voices of other men in the group join Mick's in a disjointed chorus of "well you're going to have some now". What meaning do I ascribe to that? Are they aligning themselves with Mick or with Noah in some way? What is the effect of their voices, joined with Mick's, on the developing story?

What is the relationship between the position you hear Mick taking up, and the one from which you speak? Between that story, and this one?

I didn't attend to that, did I? How is the position that I am assuming any different to the one that I hear Mick to speak from? A young white woman, a researcher, interpreting the relationships between a community of Aboriginal men? An analysis supposedly contributing to the dismantling of social power relations that she perceived to precede that, social power relations from which she was (un)remarkably absent in her representations? I feel the touch of the institution, and terra nullius, in my work. In order to make this analysis I am increasingly assuming a transcendent standpoint over the narrative of the music workshop and the relationships represented through it. How is that different to the sort of epistemological commitments that this project was meant to resist? In terms of the relationship between the stories we are telling, what is the relationship between our positioning (how we occupy it) and the re-presentations of the workshop, singers, songs, that we make?

Returning to Cohen's introduction, I notice that aside from a moment where he addresses the implication in Mick's introduction that the music workshop was difficult, Cohen doesn't reference Mick again or any other staff person *as a staff member.* Others (e.g. Taj), who might elsewhere be represented as staff, are referenced by Cohen and others but specifically in a musical capacity[80]. The spaces in Cohen's introduction that are available for others to occupy with any kind of authority are spaces circumscribed by musical significance – not an authority over other people. His story becomes significant to me not only for the absence of the repetitive 'client', or 'disordered', position of western therapeutic discourse but the

[80] And it may be notable that Mick's name is not volunteered by anyone in spite of him playing a musical instrument and being known to do so

concurrent absence of the 'staff', or invisibly 'ordered', position. If the story that Cohen is telling – a story that resonated more strongly with the songs for me – does not require or reproduce subject positions that were so ordinary for me – those of staff, clients, and researchers – then what does this mean for retelling it through research narratives, in which the re-citation of those positions, uncritically, is a fundamental feature?

So some of the congruence between the removal and return of western therapeutic discourses and the singling out and 'doing to' of data analysis in research, lies in the repetitive recitation of particular subject positions – here, of some as 'staff', some as 'clients', and some as 'researchers' and the relationships between them. It lies, too, in the singling out of some positions from the relationships (with other positions) upon which they depend and reproducing particular relationships and (here) positions of dominant white cultural assumptions as if they exist independently and *a priori*.

And while there may be some significance in questioning the relationship between the positions of 'Mick' and 'Noah' for example – some significance to telling a story about interpersonal embodied performances of *terra nullius* – in failing to account for how I am positioned in relation to that what is obscured is that the sedimented ordinariness traced in initial interpretations is the ordinariness of my position. While there may be value in questioning reproductions *of terra nullius* in interpersonal spaces, that is, it's noticeable that I didn't get there by asking 'how am I hearing Mick?' but rather 'How does Noah appear to be hearing him?'…slipping into speaking for, uncritically representing, the Other. While I might have been telling a story about the reproduction of *terra nullius* in the embodied interpersonal spaces of one set of relationships, I was reproducing it, uncritically, in others.

The relationships singled out are those of staff-client, and then researcher-client (as you begin to question the implications of your analysis vis-à-vis your position in the community), dyads. It sounds as though there is some significance here to do with the relationship between researcher-staff positions?

In a sense, not reaching this place through asking 'how am I hearing him' saves the relationship between our positions from scrutiny – a relationship which in this instance is also a relationship between non-Indigenous subjects, that is, subjects privileged in and through positions of dominant white cultural assumptions. Earlier you remarked on the suggestion of particular privileges and responsibilities being conferred on that relationship; now I wonder –

to what extent did the 'privilege' here became about invisibility; what is the significance of particular relationships being privileged in the context of our embodied cultural/racial positioning? There is not particularly any precedent in institutional discourses around ethics and research participation to account for this. The moment just passed – of making sense of the music workshop, in ways that required but ignored the relationship between our positions – that moment is, in fact, a reiteration. Remember that before we moved down to the group-room for these introductions, I noted that I was assisting Mick with filming the proceedings?

Mick favoured the cameras being left on if we left the room. His argument for doing so was that some clients habitually tried to 'get out of' activities expected of them and that this contravened the therapeutic value of 'being challenged'. He felt that clients would inevitably regard me as a 'soft touch' and pressure me to turn the cameras off, thus he felt it necessary to specifically advise me to be prepared for clients to complain, and to leave the cameras on, regardless. While I heard nothing throughout the music workshop that I would construe as a complaint, I did find myself making a decision of this sort about the cameras in one of the initial individual sessions.

One of the first men to work individually with Cohen was a young koori man who was about to graduate from the programme. I had been sitting in the room when he joined Cohen, and when it came time for him to record his song, something suggested my continued presence would not be okay and that this 'not okayness' extended to the camera's gaze. I heard something in his joking about being nervous, and as he wondered about whether anyone could see or hear him from outside. Also, Taj 'dropped in' for a 'reassuring chat' with him, despite having maintained a very low profile until then. He didn't attend to me at all.

Nothing was explicitly said about my staying or going or of the camera being on or off – no explicit exercising of 'non-consent' occurred, but something nudged me out of the room, turning the camera off as I went and indicating to the young man that I had done so.

My choice felt appropriate within the context of those relationships and can be readily legitimated through recourse to the research protocols, yet when Mick found me later, and enquired specifically about that session I told him that I had left and turned the camera off and deflected the annoyance he seemed to feel (the young man had clearly 'put one over me') by citing technological reasons (which it is true I was experiencing with the equipment); what I don't recall is whether I made any reference at all to the ethical issues involved or invited him

to reflect on his stance. That I don't recall the conversation clearly is itself significant for the implication that it was not considered important enough to give me pause, or that some other cause for hesitation was privileged.

What this story signifies to me here is another – embodied, interpersonally performed – moment of setting aside a difficult noticing within a particular (political) relationship. And it is a story of this happening at least twice: when Mick first undertook to 'advise' me, there is scope for me to talk with him about the ethical protocols and how they imply that clients can voice their discomfort to staff, safely, and why those protocols exist; in the second conversation I might have had a similar conversation or even invited him to reflect on what it was that he felt imbued his interpretation of an exchange that he was absent from, with such authority. Instead I remained silent (literally, or by privileging a different conversation) in both. It's not that I didn't notice something discordant occurring, but that I treated it as something that I could return to later – in analysis, for example – as if I was not (then, and in any imagined future state) responsible for co-producing the very discord.

You opted for a deferral of a difficult conversation? How does that strategy – setting aside a noticing again – work for you now?

In this movement a certain ordinariness of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations is re-inscribed, and then again in the (re)telling of the research in other contexts and other relationships. In both conversations (with Mick, and in initial retellings of the research) it is the actions, reactions and 'rights' of Indigenous people that is made the object of scrutiny: here, the young man whose space and song it was, 'putting one over me', or (through my positioning) being represented as particularly vulnerable. What is not iterated is a whole set of questions about how we come to be in particular places: our rights, responsibilities and obligations in being there; appropriate ways to take up the positions available; whole discourses about how we are hearing the others with whom we are in relationship.

In deferring a conversation, deferring a process of making different sense of things (to a later moment 'of analysis' and out of the immediately constitutive relationships), what was also deferred was the undoing of privilege and consideration of responsibility. In the process the relationship between our positions is reproduced as one of complicity. To the extent that deferring that conversation constitutes a silence, what is also reproduced is the silence of psychology (which has a history in terms of its collusive practices with colonialism), and a

certain ordinariness of gendered power relations: having already been positioned as 'having one put over me' I then choose silence in the context of a gendered, enculturated relationship in which silence is too often heard as consent.

There seems to be a connection here between the endurance of positions across different pre-existing political relationships – gendered social power relations and colonialist ones. What is the significance for you in terms of questions of representing pre-existing relationships (in particular of the position of dominant white cultural assumptions) in the context of retelling the research?

If the story – of the camera – above is one about reproducing or naming oppressive practices in routine conversations, then it is also a reminder to consider as similarly routine the stories we tell *about*…and what was repeatedly missed here (and ordinarily so for research narratives) are performances in other relationships that prove to be critical to the scaffolding of oppression elsewhere. Here, the performances include those within political relationships of gendered social power relations, in which deferral is preceded by my positioning as a particular (gendered subject) and which itself precedes a moment of complicity through which something of the ordinariness of gubba-Indigenous relations was reproduced. It situates the telling of the research as yet another iteration of a story already in motion, one that requires all bodies invoked in order to work; in the ordinariness of research, then, I hear a repetition of the subjugation of all bodies that Smith (1999) reminds us is critical to colonial projects.
So the conversation between Mick and I (and this one, here) re-presents conversations between privileged subject positions (although not equally, in relation to each other) that are difficult to have. If I wonder what would need to be different in that first conversation, in order for that to be spoken, I am reminded of the voicelessness that was reproduced in the context of writing this thesis into academia: the silence in the discursive relations between the gendered, racialised subject positions Mick and I occupy is historical.

I wonder about our resources to have those conversations and my particular responsibilities, about what would need to change, and am pulled forward to that moment on the street corner where I turned and looked back to where I had come from.

That story, then, also re-presents here a turning of the thesis towards being a contribution to *that* (unspoken but longed for) conversation – which is very different to contributing to a conversation about Indigenous people, Indigenous communities, the experiences for 'clients'

of this music workshop. By turning the story toward a telling in which the deferrals can be re-collected, the relationships underpinning them represented, I wonder if something about the relationship between those positions (and the positions themselves) might be transformed.

Interlude: A Burden in letters

Dear Mu,

Do you remember when we met for coffee at The Stone Oven in Devonport? And you asked me about my PhD, and I falteringly articulated the difficulties I was having – difficulties of representation (although I wouldn't have described it thus at the time)? And you said:

> You need a haiku for your PhD. All a haiku is, Tracey, is waking in the morning, having an adventure in the day, and reflecting on it at night.

And I heard an echo of another conversation:

> *all song-writing is, is just trying to find a few words that say where you're from… …you can say words, you can tell a story, can say a poem, can even just say your name and where you're from and your family members or say a message to someone in your family and your friends and then can just manipulate it with music and sound to make it like a little soundscape...*

What I sensed as a discord between the story of the workshop that resounded through Mick's brief introduction, and the songs that I had heard from previous CDs, seems to be repeated in my relationship, as narrator and analyst, with these stories: a discord in trying to write these stories into institutional spaces, spaces defined by different relationships. And yet for all that 'a voice in which to tell these stories' eluded me in those relationships, I was able to tell *a* story about the research to you, and elsewhere, in other relationships, it was also told.

This brings me back to the haiku. A haiku is a song with the music implied. The connection between a haiku and my PhD, as I appreciate it, anyway, is not about 'reducing' the complexity of these stories to a sparse few words, artfully arranged on a page. It's more about finding a form in which to tell them which privileges an understanding that what is explicit and implicit work together…

In the kind of relationships that Cohen's storytelling suggested, I heard resonances of those earlier recordings, resonances that seemed to say:

> Yes, this is a space where those songs were made.

And in recalling our conversation at The Stone Oven, I encounter an echo: that somewhere in the space that our relationship enables, it is possible to give voice to tellings of the workshop that are stifled in the representational forms privileged in these institutional spaces. In which case perhaps (re)telling that part of the research in which the songs of others are heard is also a matter of re-defining the relationships within the institution into, and from, which I speak.

Thank you Mu…

Chapter 9: Songs from a Resting Place

In which she re-presents a selection of songs from the workshop, interspersed with her responses to them.

I met The House through music: songs from the music workshops, other songs that the community and friends shared with me, and musical influences that resound in cultural spaces. So I might also say that I met The House, and singers/songs from the music workshops, through relationships with music that preceded me in a connection with community. How does this relationship shape my connection? Not as a musician, not sharing the workshop as one who makes music with the group and anticipates being heard, but as one who listens.

My reflections on the songs, their meanings and implications are partial, subjective and specific. Similarly, where I reach my interpretations through conversations with some of the singers (as was often the case), this is no less a position of listening and interpreting. The structure of this section is as follows: each song is followed by a brief response to the singer – some gesture of reciprocity; a second reflexive-analytical response to each song is written as a personal letter in a different relationship. The relationships are all personal and political, taking place between subject positions that are specific for what they enable and constrain of the letter written/story told. The exception (to the personal relationships of the letters) is the first song – Real Me – where the immediate response is followed by an open reflection. In a sense it is an open letter about listening – a letter about listening (a kind of 'listening guide' perhaps) to the responses to the songs.

Some of the songs that I re-present here are from an earlier workshop. Even if they didn't precede me in The Workshop, temporally, the songs precede me in writing these stories and have interrupted my receipt and re-iterative interpretation of those songs from one workshop. They constitute, therefore, histories to my listening that carry me into relationship with songs from The Workshop, and simultaneously, are moved through my experiences of The Workshop, to be re-presented here, and listened to anew. That, perhaps, is the rhythm to any response I might make to the singers: *I am changed by your song and I hear the world differently because of you.*

In a sense, the rhythm of my reflexive letters is that of accounting for the same, in different relationships.

Real Me – Leroy Johnson

9a: Real Me *– Leroy Johnson*

I'm going to scream,
And get this thing right out of me
I'm going to live
A life where I can dream
I'm going to walk
A road and not look back and see
I want to leave
This place behind me

And I want to cry
And take away all this pain
And I want to fly
Above the clouds and rain
I want to hope
That I will see a better day
And I want a voice
Strong and proud to hear me say

Here I am, look at me
I'm finally the man I want to be
Here I go, see me now
Look at me I'll make you proud
And I want
some time
to stand on my own and say that's mine
All I want
is to see the real me

I want to right
The things I've done I know are wrong
I want to find
a place in this world where I belong
I don't want to run
I want to fight the things that keep me down
And I want a love that gets my feet back on the ground

Here I am, look at me
I'm finally the man I want to be
Here I go, see me now:
look at me I'll make you proud
And I want
some time
to stand on my own and say that's mine
All I want is to see the real me
All I want is to see the real me
All I want is to see the real me

I'm going to try
to stand on my own two feet again
I'll get by
if I stay on this road right to the end
I've got a light
to see the things I need to see
And I'm going to say
just one time before I leave:

Here I am
Look at me
I'm finally the man I want to be
Here I go
See me now
Look at me I'll make you proud
And I want
some time
to stand on my own and I'll say that's mine
all I want is to see the real me
All I want is to see the real me

And I'm going to scream
I'm going to live
I'm going to walk I'm going to give
and I'm going to cry
I'm going to say
I'm going to love and do it my way
and I'm going to hope, I'm going to try,
I'm going to learn I'm going to fly and I'm going to fight
to see the real me
And I'm going to see the real me
And I'm going to see the real me
You're going to see the real me

I want to scream,
And get this thing right out of me.

To the singer,

Your dreaming leaves me haunted. Thank you. This thesis is my song – my response to yours - in another context. Go well, Tracey.

When I hear Leroy sing about finding 'the real me', I hear an emotional, spiritual power, that speaks to the complexity and the richness of that 'me'. And this hearing fills me with hope and silence. I also hear a reminder of how 'me' has become a site of contention and resistance, in psychological (and other) discourse, and of how simple it still is, even from this place of political, ethical resistance, to miss, and disrespect the complexity of another. This hearing fills me with hope and sadness.

'Real Me' was one of the early songs that I was listening to, that came my way around the time I was listening to the music of The House, through my connection with The House. Like those songs, it touched some chord for me and evoked a response in the context of preparatory thesis-work. Here, I revisit my (pre-workshop) response and then offer an interpretation of that response, from this post-workshop space.

> Scene One: on an early morning train to Then. The view from the window is one of urban decay – an unsettling beauty.
> I am listening to 'Real Me' again, and musing on what sort of themes might emerge from analysing the songs of The House. I have just completed another workshop in Narrative therapy, and recognise the threads of this in the research conversations with my supervisor. Here, on this train, and very much taken by ideas of multiplicity and what they enable in psychotherapeutic discourses, tuned to discordance in the notion of a 'singular self', I began to wonder how therapeutic interventions are constructed as interventions around this idea of a 'singular self'. This song seems to speak to some idea of a 'real me'…that the music workshop might then enable participants to reconnect with. But if there is no 'real me', but many forms of 'me', then what does this mean for the workshop, and the work that participants are being guided in? Isn't the pursuit of a singular self anti-therapeutic? The workshop, then, becomes a site of re-producing western concepts of singularity…
> …
> … I've lost something of the feeling I just had. From the window, Sydney is jaded. Listening to music leaves me listless and my notes dribble to an elliptical conclusion on the page…

Scene Two: A writing room. Two years later. Leroy and I are preparing a workshop on the same songs. In my preparation for our meeting I have revisited earlier notes – re-encountered Scene One.

My response to my earlier notes is somewhere between stupefaction, horror, sadness and shame. 'I've lost something of the feeling I just had…' and no wonder: do you feel the political point with which a connection was just skewered?

> Consider this: a white woman academic on the train to Then takes as her *object of enquiry* a song sung by an Aboriginal man, hears it through the framework of relationships enabled through western therapeutic discourse, deconstructs and reconstructs it within that same set of power relations in order to render it knowable, intelligible, re-presentable to an academic audience within that same discursive space…

In responding, I missed the significance of the pre-existing relationships that multiplicity, and 'voice', as a metaphor, had been taken up in resistance to. Generalised almost unquestioningly into multiple contexts, and now in my hands, post-modern reasoning was beginning to look very much like…well, modernity I suppose. Or at least the manifestations of modernity, which I understood post-modernity to talk back to.

On that train to Then, when trying to respond from an 'appropriately' (in the context of a PhD) analytical space, I slipped into a theoretical playground (in a relatively small, 'western', backyard), and mistook it for a universe. In that landscape and in relation to the song, Leroy's experience, and the therapeutic relationships that I was visiting, the position available to me was somewhat omniscient – assuming an intelligibility of what happens in a therapeutic moment, for example, that can be re-presented in words. In that moment, I missed the gift of Leroy's song. It appeared to cease speaking to me the moment I stopped listening to him singing it.

How did that happen? What were the shifts from 'listening' to 'analysis', and then in position, that changed how I heard the song and thus my relationship with it?

And what is the relationship between 'listening' and 'analysis' that is privileged here, through which such a shift is viable? In this formulation, listening is placed in a subordinate position to analysis: an objectified process requiring legitimacy. In constraining 'listening' to this narrow space – existing as a necessary condition for analysis – then all those ways in which listening *requires* analysis, *is* analytical, were excluded. And included in those exclusions

were those resonances – the personal, the spiritual – that formed my earliest connection with this song. Is it any wonder, then, that it appeared to cease speaking to me – when I was moved to a place where I could no longer hear it sing?

What else is particularly significant for me now, in a post-workshop, post-train-ride-(s)place, is that the listening position, deaf to the ways in which listening is analytical, and analysis therefore ordinary, is also deaf to the ways in which listening – that simple, unavoidable, purportedly unproblematic 'act' – is no less subject to the strains of historical cultural specificity. And the answer to 'how are we listening', is not ours alone to make…

My Black Queen – Thaddeus

9b: My Black Queen – Thaddeus.

I want to dedicate this song to my mum, for all the stuff that I've put her through; you're the best mum on earth, love you mum. And it's called 'My Black Queen'

I lost my brother at a young age
Started drinking going on a rampage
Starting fights and getting chucked out of schools
Hanging with the big boys,
Breaking all the rules
Steal off people, get(ting) chased by police
Locked up, cautioned, and then released
Hide from my mother bring tears to her eyes
Breaking her heart and telling her lies

I've turned my back on all the things that I done
Forgive me now I'm no longer on the run
Caused trouble for you and I made a big scene
But you're always in my heart
And forever my Black Queen

All the hurt and pain that I put you through
Running from the law and not going to school
I know at times that I made you cry
And I never stopped and wondered why
I can't believe I was doing this shit
Bashing up people with boondis and bricks
Soundtracks to my life was a police siren
Thrown in the wagon while my mum's crying

I turn my back on all the things that I (I have?) done
Forgive me now I'm no longer on the run
Caused trouble for you and I made a big scene
But you're always in my heart and forever my Black Queen

Didn't care how you felt while I did this stuff
Til I was locked up in handcuffs
It was too late for the damage was done
Only worried about my feelings and not my mum
She was torn apart that final day when her youngest boy was taken away
Not knowing where he's going or where his head will lay
I can remember the look on her face

I turn my back on all the things that I done
Forgive me now I'm no longer on the run
Caused trouble for you and I made a big scene
But you're always in my heart and forever my Black…
I turned my back on all the things that I done
Forgive me now I'm no longer on the run
Caused trouble for you and I made a big scene
But you're always in my heart and forever my Black Queen

But you're always in my heart
Forever My Black Queen

Dear Thaddeus,

Thank you for the song. Hearing you sing your relationship with your mother reconnected me to relationships with women (and men who are also sons) in my life. It's a powerful song and it moved me. I think this must be common, because I've shared your song with many audiences, and not a single woman has heard it and not been deeply moved. In Toronto, Canada, I met another woman, Beverly Hawksley (again, through her son, and through his songs) and had a conversation with her about your music, and about his. At that time, this woman (an artist) was working on a ritual performance of relationships with land. As part of this performance, she hand-stitched a sort of prayer-blanket and sent me a photograph of it. I treasure that photograph for the same reasons that I treasure your song, and I hope you will allow me to pass it on to you here – if not for you then for you to pass on to your mother…Thank you, Go well, Tracey.

Dear mother-of-my-mother, and my mother…

Why is it that when I sit down to write to you of what this song means to me, I hear an insistent, vicious whisper over my shoulder, accusing me of straying too far from the matter of this text? Of wandering aimlessly and vainly past mirrors of my own making and transforming this thesis, in the process, into just another narcissistic whinge of a white woman, at the expense of the community of Then?
How curious. Afterall, what else am I to do with a gift, such as this song, but attempt to reciprocate? And what does reciprocation require if not some demonstrated understanding of the value of that gift? And how else am I to begin, if not through unwrapping that gift in the presence of those who also give it meaning for me: my own mother, and her mother before her?

I was not alone in being moved by Thaddeus' song – there was a community of men in The House, and the Aunties, and his mother and family too. Some of the men listening when Thaddeus' song was first played were crying silent tears, as did I, and I wondered where this song was taking them, what places and faces they were being returned to. One of the men, when speaking to me about his song (to his daughter) remembered Thaddeus' song and described it as "the song of all of us, for our mothers". And yet while there may be commonality in our response (to be moved), there is also diversity in the experiences that each listener, positioned differently in relation to My Black Queen, brings.

From where I sat – in the position of a young white (then-childless) woman visiting the community of Then, what resonated were my relationships with women in my life who are also (my) mother/s, and my relationship with those unavoidable (pre-existing, political) positions of 'woman' and 'woman-mother', 'woman-not-mother'. And that resonance felt like a remembrance of something forgotten, if not personally, then socially: the enduring value and mystery of those relationships. That is my relationship with the song; and in a sense my understanding of the singer is also refracted through the resonances that his song evoked for me.

Thaddeus spoke with me about what writing, singing, and giving this song back to his mother, his family, represented for him. The man with whom I sat and talked was quietly spoken and reflective about the histories of how he was seen and understood as a young man in his family. He talked about being understood as an angry and a 'hard' young man, and wanting to

speak from a different position than that which this understanding enabled; of wanting his mother and family to hear him as he didn't believe anyone could – speaking from a place of softness. So when I hear him sing of his mother, I also hear him singing a song that comes from a place he believed few knew him to stand in. And I hear an intimacy in how he articulates his mother's experiences that suggests that place is *not* new to him, nor foreign in that relationship; it suggests something sacred in his relationship with her, his Black Queen.

I thought I heard something in his story – something that obscured the relationship between he and his mother and encroached upon the space available to him to be heard to speak as that man – her son – in *other* relationships. And now I remember reading another woman's (Morgan, 2005; p. 358) writing, in which she

> *remembered reading O'Neill's warning that "[i]n the distance created by our future biotechnologies, we may one day erase our maternal memory and with it the world's great model of love (O'Neill, 2001, p.179)*

and I wonder that such a relationship could be obscured, interrupted, forgotten…

Before this, I read Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2000, p. 40), reading white radical feminists writing of motherhood:

> Adrienne Rich (1977) has argued that because men fear women's reproductive capacities they need to control women's bodies. She asserts that motherhood as an institution underpins social and political systems, but she does not explicate which racialised forms of motherhood underpin which social and political systems. For her the normative form of motherhood is white motherhood. She states that motherhood "has withheld over one-half of the human species from the decisions affecting their lives; it exonerates men from fatherhood in any authentic sense; it creates the dangerous schism between 'private' and 'public' life, it calcifies human choices and potentialities" (Rich 1977:13). Motherhood as an institution has made some classes of white women prisoners of their bodies. What radical feminists have failed to take account of is that for other women, such as Indigenous women in Australia, motherhood meant having their children forcibly removed from their care (Wilson 1997).

And how faltering my footsteps now fall – treading lightly in the spaces between race, gender, and the academy[81]. That I am enabled to sit with Thaddeus, and to hear his song as a gift, is a position which owes its viability, in part, to how my mother, and her mother before her, walk before me: resisting the forced schism between 'public' and 'private', and enabling a path into institutional spaces from which I came to The House as the young, childless, white woman that I was. And it is also a position that is historically entangled with that of his mother, where the positions of my mothers and of myself (then childless, and now a mother) are implicated in her stories and their realities, including the grieving of which he sings.

In any relationship with Thaddeus and his song I am also, already, in relationship with the community. 'I' am always, already, articulated through my relationships with you, and yours with each other. So while I might have understood myself to be in relationship with Thaddeus, and his song and (mis)taken this as my starting place, depending as always on you, I was also in a relationship with the women of the community as a woman-member of another community.

If I missed that earlier, then perhaps that is in part a consequence of the discursive context in which institutional space was made. In being represented as a place *bereft* of (some versions of) history, this place has been one in which the always-already-thereness of my relationship

[81] A phrase comes to me: step on a crack, break your mother's back. Curious by the recollection of this childhood rhyme, I search 'online' for histories of this particular 'superstition'. Going to: http://www.csicop.org/superstition/library/cracks.html I am told that "the original rhyming verse is thought to be "step on a crack and your mother will turn black"' and that it also refers to earlier superstitions that walking along the cracks in the pavement would result in marrying a "Negro and having a black baby". So in this interpretation, it seems clear that the warning only applies to white girls…(whereas I might assume that (white) boys are also positioned as possible subjects of the implied warning against breaking their mother's backs).
I am saddened, and not surprised. Our stories are not separate from the uses they are put to, and this speaks to the specificity of the sorts of histories with which I am entangled, and of which Aileen Moreton-Robinson speaks: that racism is gendered, that gender is racialised. Is valuing of '(white) mother' here contingent upon denigration of 'black'? Is the privilege of being unmarked (white) mother perpetuated at the expense of 'black'? Of bearing black babies (thus our relationships with black men are articulated not through relationships with/in and through community, but through the expulsion from white privilege? White privilege thus also reproduced as the only kind of privilege desirable)…
From these positions, arguing against patriarchy (as white feminism enabled) is not arguing against racism, is not undoing the complicity between 'subject position: white woman' and racist practices of 'othering' (both black men and black women). Arguing against racism, as a white woman, enabled as a visitor to Then with the potential usefulness of a voice within the academy, is not separable from white privilege. The dream, the dilemma, the anticipation, the rejection – however I might articulate a relationship with the position of 'mother', it is always within the purvey of 'white'; and the sense that I make of Aaron's song, the significance with which it is imbued, cannot be articulated as separate from this, without reinscribing cracks in the narratives as places of danger, around which I tread carefully not out of respect and recognition of the limits of this speaking position, but fear or places where I might slip and lose the transcendental standpoint of white privilege…? No, let me tread lightly, not in case I slip, but so that the story can breathe, move, and slide between the tears that we cry into these tissues of meaning…

with (my) mother cannot be heard/is not valued. In the denial of those historical relationships what is also denied is the accrual of privileges that are specifically attached to those.

From that place – of privilege and of loss – what can I say of mother-son relationships? How can I speak of racialised, gendered relationships? What can I even begin to whisper of my relationships with the women of the community? From that place, how can I speak of what this song means for Thaddeus, for his mother, for his family? I can't. I simply don't know.

But I can speak, with you, of what it means to me.

I want to share these memories with you because you are always, already before me, in everything I do and so, in a sense, they are already yours. When I listen to Thaddeus sing of and for his mother, am I not also hearing the resonances, the echoes, of my relationships with you, of yours with each other? This is partly what moves me through hearing his song – that something in the listening reconnects me. I have a history. I stand in a line of mothers. Of women. And perhaps through speaking (in/from) that relationship another place will emerge where our songs might be yet be sung as they are with our mothers.

Love,

Tracey

Tribal Ways – Eddie

9c: Eddie's song – Tribal Ways

I'm gong back to my tribal ways
I'm leaving behind these mission days
I'm going to find my spiritual place
Where I belong
Since time begun

Where you cannot tell me what's right or wrong
Cause our culture is way too strong
You keep preaching your sovereignty
But can't you see we're a minority

I'm going back, back to my tribal ways
My tribal ways, my tribal ways
I'm going back, back to my tribal ways,
My tribal ways, my tribal ways

Back to the bush and this corroboree
Where our people were meant to be free
Where you cannot keep placing the blame on me
With your weapons and white authority

I'm going back, back to my tribal ways
My tribal ways my tribal ways
I'm going back, back to my tribal ways
My tribal ways, my tribal ways

We lived off the land for thousands of years
And can't you see those shedded tears
We've been oppressed all our young lives
And yet we're to blame for all the strife

And can't you see we're only human beings
Or are you adamant to thinking, you were wrong (?)
Now it's time to kick along(?)
And show them the Aborigine's strong

I'm going back, back to my tribal ways
My tribal ways, my tribal ways
I'm going back, back to my tribal ways.
My tribal ways, my tribal ways

Tribal ways, my tribal ways

I’m going back, back to my tribal ways,
My tribal ways, my tribal ways
I’m going back, back to my tribal ways,
My tribal ways, my tribal ways

Dear Eddie,

Thank you for the song. Your lyrics seem timeless, suggesting to me that perhaps those old ways are still with you? I want to give you something in return, a poem I wrote around the time I left Australia.
As I write this, years have passed, and I am in a different country, yet your song can bring the people and the stories alive for me again. If your song can resonate so strongly with me, I hope that it also sustains you, your connection with the friend you wrote it with, and your connection to the ways that go before you, that live through you still.

Be well,
Tracey

Sulphur-crested evensong

At home
I watch the valley
recede beneath the wheeling white
sulphur crested cockatoos:
flame-bearers
against impending night.

The lambent moon behind them
pulled in flight.

The day fanned away
in the breath of their wings,
their call, thrown forward
to chase the sun,
rebounds and echoes
long after they've gone...

And all the world
Is circled with song

Dear Taj,

When I sit down to listen to the response I feel to 'Tribal Ways', I find myself addressing it to you. Given that when it comes to listening to these songs you have been a kind of mentor to me, I am both surprised, and not surprised, to find that my response to this song is entwined with a response to you.
Perhaps what I have to say is less about this song, and Eddie, than it is about my relationship to the song, and to the relationship between you both; and perhaps it's not so much what I have to say, as what I do not say, and of which I cannot speak.

Let me start with how I hear this song: it is compelling, as I remember the singer to be. Some of the men participating in the workshop arrived with a draft of a song, some with a word, some with a connection to a person to sing to and for, or a memory, or maybe a tune…Eddie arrived with a song he had been carrying for several years. It is compelling for me, partly because I have this memory of an insistent energy burning from this young man: an image of a song, bursting forward in search of an appropriate audience. Perhaps some of the value of this workshop is about enabling an audience, or supporting a song on the long journey it takes to find its way home? I don't know. Cohen spoke of the workshop being about connecting people to the secret knowledge they didn't know they had, and to knowledge they did not know to be so valuable. I thought, at first, that Eddie was well aware of what he knew, and its value, but perhaps the value that has most significance, in the context of these relationships, is between he and his community/ies. I don't know what it means there, despite being invited – in the context of a thesis (and, I argue, inappropriately) – to reflect on this.

What interrupts me each time I am invited to write with authority on this? An image of Eddie: this young Aboriginal man, with black curly hair throwing drops of water into his eyes, leaning eagerly, intently, over a guitar you have just passed him, and following your voice and fingers as he is lead along the chords of a song you are teaching him. This happened after-hours – you and Mick were playing songs and singing, while the other men were cleaning the kitchen after dinner, and talking and smoking in the courtyard. From my place nearby, I watched Eddie lingering at the door a while before sliding it quietly open, and slipping into the room.

The space opened itself to him and you passed him a guitar, gestured to a chair beside you. As I watched you both I had this feeling of removal – as if I were on the other side of some semi-

permeable wall. Sound filtered through, but something was lost, remained unheard. There was a space within the space and that space was just the two of you.
I was reflecting on how you seemed to be – who you seemed to be – to the men in The House, and was suddenly made aware of how relationships with men do not seem to figure predominantly in the songs from these workshops. Songs of mothers, daughters, friends, enemies, struggles…If I listen for relationships with men, I hear them in particular ways, but for the most part, what I am met with, is a silence that I am illiterate in.

I remember the two of you, and the sense of something significant taking place between you, and I can hear in the background that popular discourse that speaks of 'angry young black men' as 'missing father figures', and lacking 'male role models'. It seems out of place here. If I stop and listen closely to that voice and ask myself – whose voice is that? – then I hear, a little like Carol Gilligan did, the voice of a white man speaking. And there's something about this white male voice talking about 'angry young black men' and theorising where they are coming from and what they need, that strikes a discord right though me. If it can roll through the space I speak from so profoundly, that also suggests that I am standing quite close to the voice. And if I don't want to be heard to speak with it, I might just be quiet for a moment.

…

…..

…..

And once that settles, I hear Eddie singing again, and you, singing with him. Hearing that other voice has frightened me from speaking – if I open my mouth to respond (and I do believe that something other than silence is required here) will I speak with that voice? In speaking of it, about it, will I cease to hear the singing? If it is not my place to speak of the relationships with and between men, nor of how those are articulated, nor what significance they have for conferring 'value' upon the singer/song in ways differently to me…perhaps I can speak of the value that *I* hear in this song, and how I understand it to be a gift; necessarily speaking, that is, as a white woman.

In relation to this song I feel like…an invited eavesdropper. Like that night watching the two of you: my presence invited, even welcomed, yet nothing that passed between you was of, about, or for me. Here, I feel invited to attend to this song with the responsibilities (responsiveness) of a guest. So how do I hear it? As an evocative, articulate critique of whiteness and of colonisation. A clear and intelligent refusal of positions made available through the existing fictions of *terra nullius*. A song in honour of grief. A song in honour of survival. A song of resistance and persistence – the sovereignty never ceded.
When you and I spoke before the workshop of what music is used for, you spoke of using it for protest. Were it not for our conversations of and through this workshop; were it not for conversations with Eddie about the song and the friend he sang it for; were it not for my relationships with others in the community of The House, I might call this a 'political protest song'. Why do I resist doing so?

'Political protest song' is a genre of music recognisable to me – a form that is spoken from and through positions in white cultural discourse. Historically, it has invoked an understanding of politics as distinct from personal stories, as 'belonging to' the public sphere, representative (or not) of 'the people'. But if we are our stories, as you once told me, then I might understand us to also already be occupying political positions in socio-historical narratives. So to call this song 'political protest' undermines the ways in which I also hear 'My Black Queen', for example, as intimately political. Similarly, in My Tribal Ways, I hear an invitation to grieve with the singer, an invitation to celebrate: in short, I hear a 'personal' account. I hear this invitation as political because of the ways in which it disrupts existing fictions of *terra nullius*, white stereotypes of 'angry young black man', and blurs simplistic binary positions of 'political' and 'personal', of 'them' and 'us'.

To call this song a 'political protest song', then, excises the strategic potential and the power of these readings. And yet in negotiating a space for 'political' to be heard differently, I know I am engaged in risky business – of reimposing *that* interpretation upon the song and the space it was created in too. I might trouble distinctions between personal and political but I'm still talking of, about, and with, a genre of white ontological proportions. If I hear it as political, and that politics is entangled with colonialism, then have I filled the space where it might be heard as…just a song…as…something else? And isn't filling the space with meaning somehow ordinary in the repetitions of *terra nullius* that I think I am aligning myself against, and disrupting with my representations of this music? I cast my gaze back over my

shoulder, looking forwards into the distance of down-stream, trying to determine how the sediment of my presence will settle…

Sometimes, in listening to this song, I wonder after Eddie. In a way, that image of you sitting together – that and the look on his face that day in the courtyard when you played a cardboard postal tube as a yidaki – these images have frozen him in time for me. Yet those remembrances also speak to a continuance – that his song was always, already, being sung in relationships that I, and others, were not privy to, even when sitting in the same room. The timelessness of song is also a timelessness of those relationships. I stop watching for sediment. Close my eyes. And listen.

Go well
Tracey

Blake's Song

Blake's song is from the third CD made, one where I visited The House during the last few days of the workshop. Blake is a non-Indigenous man, who had been at The House for some months when the (4th) workshop was held.

9d: Blake's song…

Staring down the highway
On my way to nowhere
Still trying to do it
My way

Going place to place
My blood is tainted
I'm a shadow of a man
I once knew

Been running for so long now
Don't know who I am anymore
Oh lord won't you set me free

And let me be, oh won't you let me
Just leave me, leave me be

So I can live my life
Free
As a bird
Make a friend or two
Along the way,
along the way

Just don't know who I am
I've been lost, so long now
All filled with pain

Running down
The highway
Looking over my shoulder
When I was really running from me
From me
Yeah, from me

And nowhere seems everywhere these days
And the days run to weeks
Oblivion has no mercy
And oblivion runs deep in my veins
Cursed by the flower of the seed
I am a man, a broken man

My will taken long ago
Won't leave me alone, no,
Consuming my life, my blood,
purpose and soul
Keep trying to break free,
Break free
Yeah I want to break free

Yeah made a mistake, cost me my life
Every direction I've ever taken
Leads me back to a junkie's life
And a junkie's life 'aint no life at all
A needle and spoon will be calling soon
But I got a plan to take away all the pain
To stop
To stop this eternal rain

So I can live my life free
As a bird
Make a friend or two
Along the way, along the way

So I can live my life,
Free, as a bird
Make a friend or two
Along the way, along the way

Make a friend or two,
Along the way, along the way

Dear Blake,

Thank you for sharing your song. Listening to you sing reminds me of a picture I was given many years ago. The connection between your song and this painting might not seem so clear at first, but perhaps you won't mind if I tell you a little about what they both mean to me? The original painting (Firebird Hatching) belongs to a friend of mine, and was a gift from the artist, Kevin Jackson. Before I met this friend, though, I had seen a print of the painting, in the midst of a difficult time in my life, and it seemed to speak to me of pain and of hope. I see the bird as emerging: a representation of a moment of creation, of transformation. It suggests to me that there is always another story entwined with the one of pain and suffering. Your song reminds me of this. At the 3rd workshop, when you wrote it, I saw you like a representation of the vulnerability in the little bird. At the 4th, you were like a phoenix emerging...

The artist, Kevin Jackson, gave me permission to share this with you, to reproduce his art in the context of acknowledging another's.

Thank you,

Tracey

Dear Susanna

I've been struggling with how to respond to Blake's song.
I know what I want to say, and it's difficult to find the voice with which to say it.
Because I'm writing to you in the context of your teaching/supervision arrangement in relation to this project, I'm going to borrow from academic discourses in this letter by referencing other intellectual work and framing some of the text as suggestions for future academic consideration…perhaps this will turn out to be the draft of a paper somewhere – what do you think?

Now to explain some of my struggle with responding to Blake's song – to do this I think I need to tell a different story first. This story is from a time before the street corner, before the music workshop and before his song; it's about a conversation about an interview with another non-Indigenous man at The House.
The conversation took place within a research discussion group at university – a small group of white women, most of them students. I had brought along an extract from an interview with this man – I'll call him Fred, because that's what he wanted to be called. In the extract he was questioning the legitimacy of having a place at The House, having left the programme once before and then returned to it. The story I want to tell centres on the loudest voice (taken up by more than one of us) in response to his concerns: it was a voice of irritation and frustration at 'another gubba whinge', a voice that also wondered what Fred would make of taking up space, as a non-Indigenous man, within The House.

Now that voice was – and is – a critical one to me as it brought very swiftly and sharply into focus that I hadn't been attending to the 'racial' positioning of non-Indigenous men in The House; in doing so I hadn't been attending to mine, either. So the story is significant for me as a moment in which our interview was reframed as an interpersonal context in which a certain ordinariness of colonialism (the invisibility of our positioning) was reproduced.

> *How and when and where does the 'noticing' happen?*
> *Under what circumstances are conversations that account for our positioning enabled instead of constrained?*

They are not the (only) questions that I have been struggling with in my response, however, or the (only) ones I want to address here. You see, that group – and those sorts of conversations – have been significant to me, have resourced me, in my attempts to decolonise my'self' as a

personal project *and* as a theoretical/political one. These are some of the features I alluded to in my letter to Blake – of 'difficult times in my life'. While there may be other experiences embedded in the reference to difficult times, I ground them in experiences of a kind of political consciousness-raising that, while relatively privileged, is also difficult.

So it matters to me that those conversational spaces exist where our positioning is made visible and the work of decolonising the discipline/self/society is supported; and it matters to me that we remind each other, when we forget, that conditions of inequality, marginalisation and oppression can be reproduced through conversations that appear to be about something else altogether (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2003). So the story about that conversation in the discussion group represents a moment for me where certain conditions of possibility for the existing fiction of *terra nullius* (invisibility and normalising of non-Indigenous bodies) were named and interrupted. And I thank that voice that dominated the responses for that reminder.

Reading Wilkinson & Kitzinger (2003) also reminds me that in that conversation about Fred at the university I was (am) positioned in other forms of power and privilege – we all were. From our positions there we were/are resourced to unravel the inscriptions of *terra nullius* from a place of privilege with respect to: finances, social support, discursive resources, health…to give names to a few significant political relationships. The position that the group implicitly wanted Fred to be taking up is one that has (from my experience of it) implications attached (as per the allusion to difficulty). And yet none of us reflected on our relative privilege in relation to that in the course of our discussion about the interview. When we fail at *that*, then isn't that very moment (which was significant for me as an interruption to existing fictions of *terra nullius*) also one where the very conditions resisted, are also reproduced?

So the spaces for reflection have been significant for me and might also have been significant as places where others – in the course of finding their place in relation to the position of dominant white cultural assumptions – could express their frustration and irritation (as that salient voice did) at the reproduction of privilege in the context of such staggering disadvantage. And yet the conversation stopped there, seemingly betraying a taken-for-granted that anyone and everyone is equally resourced to question their position, that there is a moral aspect to their failure to do so ('whingeing'), that the legitimacy of Fred's place in The House is linked to this and – perhaps most significantly – that it is our prerogative to make those judgements.

> So the moral to this story is also a reminder that alongside all the other positions I might occupy in relation to peers in a discussion group at University, in the course of the research I was also, always in the position of being a visitor at The House. And some of what we were discussing in relation to Fred overlaps with the therapeutic jurisprudence of The House – a position *not* available for any of us to take up.

I'm mindful of the positions used and reproduced – and then left unquestioned – in *that* position (of that voice) being taken up in that moment: a gubba whingeing might also be something applied to my story. It sails close (in my hearing) to the accusations of 'narcissistic whining' applied to the stories of women, for example. It touches on very significant concerns of being used as an excuse or entitlement for the (concerns of the) position of dominant cultural assumptions to be re-centred (e.g. Rademacher, 2006). So is it partly a question of what the self-reflection is in service to, or support of?

> *And in what spaces do we speak, to whom, and from what standpoints?*
> *Does the process free (somewhere along the way) or does it repress?*
> *How will we know?*
> *Who are we listening to?*

Now you might be wondering how I've ended up here, struggling with this in relation to Blake's song, other than that he doesn't reflect on his positioning, explicitly, either. There are other facets to my response that I want to consider. One is in relation to the interstices of what we might call drug and alcohol therapeutic/rehabilitative work at The House *and* what I think was called identity work. A lot of the programme explicitly attended to histories of colonialism: the impacts of it in people's lives, the historical trajectories of contemporary difficulties, the litanies of grief and loss. This was deemed a significant (at The House and elsewhere) factor for working with Indigenous clients. I know that for other non-Indigenous people involved with The House (and this may have included Fred, remember) the experience of coming to question their positioning and identities was a part of their relationship with The House. It was a feature, for example, of Blake's time there:

> I spent the morning 'sitting in' on one of the group sessions. That morning each of the men present reflected on some of the histories to his use of drug and alcohol. For each of them, their stories included features of racism/stolen generations/abuse and so Blake was confronted by the existing fictions of *terra nullius* as they manifest in the

> lifestories of his peers. And he talked about having to reconcile what he knew of his childhood with what that meant for others – reconciling narratives of his family context and culture with cultural historical narratives that he now heard to have inflected the lives of others. His response to men in the workshop, as he reflected on the racism of his own family, was emotional and troubled. I wondered about how that sat with others in the room. I wondered about where he'd take it when he left the room.

This intersects with some of my initial reflections when I first heard Blake's song. Steeped as I was/am in considerations of culturally-located subjectivity, I heard an aching isolation and loneliness that made me think (theoretically) of the isolated form of the individual self. I thought of certain dominant narratives about masculinity and identity that privilege separation, detachment, and independence and which devalue relatedness, connection, vulnerability. I noticed that when we talk about 'culturally appropriate therapy' we seem to assume that mainstream therapeutic approaches – and the assumptions they are predicated on – are already appropriate for those positioned at the centre.

We tend to make the work of reflecting on your cultural-self something that is of value for some groups of people, separated out from the norm. We tend to privilege reflexivity (if at all) *only* in direct relation to others who we define in advance as 'different from ourselves' – recreating sameness (e.g. whiteness) in relation to other Others in which relationship that reflexivity is no longer required. Does this reproduce a certain ordinariness of *terra nullius* discourses in which the legitimacy of the stories told through it are unquestioned – it's just that they're not appropriate for *some*? The epistemological commitments, the process through which the assumptions of those stories are made – they are not questioned. Can that really be considered consistent with a project of decolonisation? Can we transform that pattern without appropriating?

> *Can agendas of social justice be co-articulated with therapeutic ones?*
> *What are the assumed relationships between individual and social wellbeing that we are drawing on in our responses to that question?*
>
> I *think* that conversations about racial/cultural positioning might be significant ones to have. I *think* that they might be significant in relation to other 'work' (e.g. rehabilitation work). I know that there are precedents to this, such as in the way that

> Narrative Therapeutic approaches privilege dismantling the cultural discourses around people as part of separating the 'person' from the 'problem'. And I *think* that we are not used to reflexively questioning the person-in-context.
> I *think* that these questions can be articulated in ways that are centred on Indigenous perspectives – that do not re-centre non-Indigenous bodies and priorities in a kind of 'me too!' manoeuvre. But I'm not sure how we get there. I'm not sure how to respond in that way. I wonder if holding a space in our general conversations – in the way we talk with each other – to question the respectfulness of our 'everyday position calls' (Drewery, 2005) might be a part of that, however?

I wonder if Blake imagined that his song would be significant to anyone in this particular way. I wonder if it continues to be significant to him (and in what ways). It lingers with me, as a song and as an echo of the act of listening – of things lost and things sustained. If we listen to another's song or story in ways that do not dignify their voice within it, then what might cease to be heard in the process?

> At the 4th workshop I watch Cohen's face light up with recognition as Blake enters the room. In the time that has passed since that 3rd workshop and the writing, performing and recording of his song, Blake has 'graduated' from the programme, is living in transitional accommodation and employed in a career that he loves. Cohen is genuinely enthusiastic about his song "that was awesome, you had that amazing arrangement…" He starts playing the opening bars of it, asking him to remind him of the exact chords. He asks him whether he will do something similar this time. Blake is already bending over a guitar, seemingly shy in the presence of the group. He lifts his head and smiles at Cohen. "Nah, maybe something a little more upbeat this time".

Thank you

Tracey

The White Man's Gift – Michael

9e: The White Man's Gift – Michael.

You were happy in your dreamtime
Your spirits wild and free
You roamed the land on walkabout
Til white man sailed the sea
We came 200 years ago and ripped your world apart
And now we want to make amends so let this be a start

It's the white man's gift, the white man's gift.

We'll teach you all the noble things that white man has to know
We'll give you medicine to help your children grow
We'll make you live in houses, and speak the English voice
Abandon all your values, you do not have a choice

It's the white man's gift, the white man's gift

We'll teach you European traits and make you get a job
We'll blame you for the crime rate
When anything goes wrong
We'll give you our religion, forget your tribal rites
Believe in holy jesus, and you will see the light

It's the white man's gift
It's the white man's gift to our ancestors,
It's the white man's gift

We'll let you vote the white man's way, respect the white man's law
Who cares that you don't understand what politics are for
We'll give you back your sacred land, it's yours for what it's worth
It's useless now: a barren waste, our miners raped the earth

It's the white man's gift to our ancestors
It's the white man's gift.

We robbed you of your native home, no longer you are free
You'll always be an outcast, in our society

The white man's gift, white man's gift, white man's gift, white man's gift
White man's gift, white man's gift

Dear Michael,

Thank you for your song, and for sharing the space in which it was created. I've shared your song often – with students, colleagues and with friends. When I find myself talking with other white women about it we talk about what this knowledge means for us, and what we should do with it:

A gift that is also ours.
Which we also pass on.

And for which we are sorry.
The stories I tell my daughter, and the songs I sing her, are changed through having heard yours.

Go well,
Tracey

Dear Anthony,

There's a song here that I'd like you to listen to – and there is something I'd like to say. I'd like you to listen to that, too. It's about a conversation (a while ago now) in which I almost gave you this song and then didn't.

In that conversation you told me a story about having seen 'time and time again' a pattern of Aboriginal men hooking white women in to their political agenda by appealing to their softer dispositions. You spoke of these women feeling guilty and blindly supporting Aboriginal men in their agenda without realising they were being taken advantage of.

I had no words with which to respond to you.

Where to begin? Would it be by deconstructing your representations of Aboriginal men? Of white women? To ask you outright what subject position was available for 'white men' in this? To ask how you knew whom any woman was talking to and the extent of her conversations? To point out that your analysis required the invisibility/absence of Aboriginal women? To ask what would need to be different for you to credit the responses of those white women with any substance? To question whether your reservations about the appropriateness of guilt came from engaging with any of the critical work done by Aboriginal writers on the function and limits (the politics) of 'white guilt', or somewhere else? To ask you to talk more about how it was that you came to be seeing these scenes – to describe your position within them? To try and hear beyond the rhetoric?

But instead, I fell silent. The distance seemed too vast to cross and it seemed to me that your story held no space for a woman to be heard speaking, which (I now regret) I then perpetuated.

You see, I hear Michael's song and I think it's brilliant. It's eviscerating and sad. It's beautiful. It's clever. I listen to it and I hear an analysis of colonialism; an adroit appropriation and reformulation of the coloniser position; inversion of paternalism; unspeakable grief; a testimony to the illegitimacy and hostility of colonial 'society'…like I said, I think it's brilliant. I want to talk about that song and the experience of hearing it being made, and I want to do so in ways that work *with* that song. Any story about the song and about Michael that I might tell are not separate from the positions I tell them from and the relationships

(political and/or personal) that I tell them in. How I come to hear and receive 'White Man's Gift', what I do with that hearing, and how I respond, is *also* connected with relationships between the subject position I occupy and those that you do, and the ones we make available to each other in our conversations.

And on that day with you, I chose to remain silent. In the course of telling that story, you produced yourself as a subject whose hands were neither safe, nor deserving, of the song because of what your story represented – for me – of the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions. Or rather…I produced that story with you. We did that. From the space made available to me in your story – that of a white woman 'taken advantage of' by Aboriginal men – how could I speak of Michael's song, the meaning of it for me, the significance I ascribed to it. And *how could I speak of complicity*? How could I hear the ways in which I was about to engage in the same? From a space in which being a white woman lacks agency, only appears as the object of another's advantageousness, how could I speak of the desire to respond responsibly? How could I speak of my own capacity for violence?

And in *not* speaking out about the story we were co-producing in that moment, isn't that a form of violence? My refusal/inability to speak of this song with you *might* have been warranted (although it might also bear scrutiny for traces of paternalism), but in falling silent about the very politics of what we were doing, and of the implications of *that* relationship for the representation of others…didn't I just enable a certain ordinariness of gubba-Indigenous relations to be reproduced? I could have turned our conversation towards another end in the moment that it became one in which I could not speak of my experiences with The House, and of where these songs were made. So perhaps I missed an opportunity for us to transcend a moment, and instead left us mired in it.

> Sharing is a good thing to do, it is a very human quality. To be able to share, to have something worth sharing gives dignity to the giver. To accept a gift and to reciprocate gives dignity to the receiver. To create something new through that process of sharing is to recreate the old, to reconnect relationships and to recreate our humanness.
>
> Smith (1999, p. 105)

Hearing this song is, to me, a gift, albeit one I tentatively receive. In unwrapping that gift I wonder if what I've overheard is also meant for you – I'm sure it's not meant for me alone. I didn't get to be hearing it on my own, afterall, but through pre-existing (political)

relationships that enable and constrain my receipt of it. It locates me as a participant in a conversation that started long ago and requires that I hold it and that I pass it on.

Years ago I mistakenly heard the lack of a position in a story told as the only one available, and in doing so I reproduced the story as the only one possible between these positions. But in being able to hand the song on elsewhere, I have come around to a different relationship to the subject position you spoke from that day…or to a place where *I* might take up a different position in that relationship, albeit to uncertain effect.

Anyway – here's the song.

Go well,
Tracey

Dear Dave,

In truth I didn't need to wait long to hand this on. You were already there, although it took me a while to realise that there has always been space between the subject position I tried to speak back to, and the performances of subjectivities in and through it. As someone to whom I could speak, with whom I could share this song and some of my stories around it, you enabled me to write a different position into a different conversation – as I think I managed in my letter to Anthony.

As a supervisor, Dave, your encouragement included the en*courage*ment of courage – to find and use my own voice; return to methodologies not highly valued in psychology; respect metaphor, and be playful in writing. Following you, I find honour in a science that has earned dishonour through its misapplication in the contexts such as those I write in.

Do you know the value of the spaces you hold?

Did you know that the way you occupy those spaces have so many implications for how I am enabled in mine?

> I asked one of the Aunts what she made of 'My Black Queen'. In her reflections, I heard that 'speaking from the heart' was a valued way of speaking. And valuing this a form of speech seems to honour the heart that it comes from…what if we hear 'White Man's Gift' as also being spoken 'from the heart'? What would a response from the heart sound like? I wonder how that might be heard/uttered in psychology. Is it valued there? How can a heart be heard?

These are methodological questions – about representation – and also questions of ethics and responsibility: because if the embodied subjectivity available to me in psychology does not have a heart, or can only be heard to tell stories of a heart that is taken advantage of (the 'soft touch', the seduced woman)…then so much becomes untellable. And while I do value difference in articulation, it is difficult for me, in the context of writing against the grain of past violence, to desire any other form of telling these stories than softly, from the heart…

In the ways you occupy space in academia I find hope for ways of embodying these and other spaces, and hope for the reconnection and re-creation that Smith writes of.

Thank you, Dave: all I have to give you in return is a song that I heard once, somewhere, and which I thought you might appreciate…

Go well
T

Gemma-Jane – Peter

9f: Gemma-Jane - Peter

Have a daughter up in Sydney I miss dearly
Part of me's been away now for too long
The spirit that we share speaks to us clearly
And like the stars and the moon, cannot be wrong

It's you I cherish, Gemma Jane
How I feel I can't explain
I toss and turn through sleepless nights
Hoping that your welfare's right
You're so precious to me
It's your smiling face I see
And like the moon is to the sea,
There I'll always be

How time has passed us by
I could not justify
What I've done I should have done I realise
Through good times and the bad,
I'll always be your loving dad
Like the tide
Our memories will never cease

It's you I cherish, Gemma-Jane
How I feel I can't explain
I toss and turn through sleepless nights
Hoping that your welfare's right
You're so precious to me
It's your smiling face I see
And like the moon is to the sea
There I'll always be

I sit and watch the moon rise over Bateman's Bay
I hear the crashing of the rolling waves
I feel the breeze and feel the ease come to me
I will treasure all the common days (?)

It's you I cherish Gemma Jane
How I feel I can't explain
I toss and turn through sleepless nights
Hoping that your welfare's right
You're so precious to me
It's your smiling face I see
And like the moon is to the sea
There I'll always be

It's you I cherish Gemma Jane
How I feel I can't explain
I toss and turn through sleepless nights

Hoping that your welfare's right

You're so precious to me
It's your smiling face I see
And like the moon is to the sea
There I'll always be

Like the moon is to the sea
There I'll always be

Dear Peter,

Thank you for this song, and for your hope that it offers something to all the fathers in The House. It resonates with me because of the special place that music has in my relationship with my own father. My relationship with my father is embedded in the music I listen to. The best parts of us are articulated through listening and sharing songs. So, given I am not a songwriter or a singer, I give you a mix-tape in return: of songs that speak to me of my relationship to my father.

Be well
Tracey

For:

Bolero	Ravel
Gula Gula	Mari Boine Persen
Melancholy and the Infinite Sadness (piano)	Smashing Pumpkins
All that you have is your soul	Tracy Chapman
Le Onde/The Waves	Ludovic Einaudi
Gurrumul History	Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu
Sorry	Tracy Chapman
Perte	Preisner

For my father…

What I know of father-daughter relationships, I know through you. So it seems appropriate to share my responses to Peter's song with you. That I hear him, how I hear him, and the value this song has for me, all this comes to me through our relationship, and others before us.

And what do I hear? I hear Peter sing of time having passed them by and I get a sense of loss – of a hole where shared memories should have been. Other men also spoke of their relationships (here, with their children) being interrupted; I hadn't thought before about the constitutive effects that a relationship with a child could have: that is probably something I reflect more on now that I am a mother. It is something I think about now – the particular pieces and performances of ourselves, and our histories, that are invited or elicited from positions as parents; the place of our own parenting stories in our parenting; the ghosts of our own parents' and families' experiences that inhere in ours. It leaves me wondering about the particularity of a loss that is incurred when the relationship 'interrupted' is that of a parent to a child.

I also hear softness in Peter's song, a softness I recall hearing and seeing in other men in The House when speaking of their children, their families. Reflecting on other songs, I notice that I'm often hearing and commenting on 'softness' and wonder why it's so note-worthy. I pause for a moment and consider the language that I'm using, of 'softness' and it's invisible pair 'hardness' – the hearing of it is not peculiar to me or to the context of this song. Jon, an Aboriginal man who participated in the 3rd workshop, sang of his family being his strength. When he spoke of being a father he reflected on how experience had taught him to bury his love and be 'hard' with his children; and of how now he was reconnecting with a different way of being a father and 'showing love'. It occurs to me that 'softness' is not something traditionally associated with strength – certainly not in the dominant narratives of masculinity and fatherhood that I'm familiar with. There, it is the marginalised political metaphor.

Perhaps its salience to me in this context, then, owes something to its relative absence or devaluation in the narrative tradition from which I speak. My relationship to it, within that tradition, is forged from the position of a daughter and mother (not as a son, nor as a father). From my position in relation to the prescribed paternal role I hear whispers of casual brutality – of 'necessary severances' from the maternal body, of 'tough love' and schools of hard knocks. I think of what you could have allowed to be reproduced, through you, in our

relationship. And I stand in awe of the quiet ways in which you have resisted that. And so perhaps it is also, in part, your *resistance* that positions me in such a way that I hear softness in Peter's song: because I have experiences of that in my relationships with paternality, experiences of the performance of that position in which 'softness' is valued. And I have experiences of the 'daughter' position in the father-daughter dyad that leave me hearing distance, and holes that should have been filled with memories, as a loss and not, for example, as a matter of safety.

My experiences of that position also inhere in the interpretive significance that I place on the experience of those relationships for others positioned as fathers. In conversation with some of the men at The House and certainly in reflection on social narratives I hear an element of greater freedom for men to speak of and draw on 'softness' in their relationships with women: as sons (Thaddeus and 'My Black Queen'), as fathers (Peter and Gemma Jane), and (elsewhere) in relation to partners. So thinking about the significance of the father-daughter relationship as a place where 'softness' is enabled in the narrative order also leaves me thinking about the possibilities of its representation as a disruption to the repetition of ordinary ideas about masculinity and family relationships – disruptions that I heard men at The House placing treating with value. And that may be part of what drew me to select this song for inclusion in my thesis: as a song that speaks to me of something that I heard was valued by men at The House and frequently silenced in prevailing cultural discourses.

Yet reflecting on those prevailing cultural discourses leaves me troubled: they turn on assumptions about those positions and relationships that precede me. They require gendered assumptions that categorise 'men' and 'women' and 'girls' and 'boys' and therefore 'fathers' and 'daughters' and then ascribe particular expectations to those positions and the relationships between them; and those assumptions, as part of gendered social power relations, also inhere in any differentiation of father-daughter and father-son dyads that I might hear and make; and wrapped around all that there is also the conceptual framework of 'family' and what has been normalised through it – it's structure (nuclear), the conferral of responsibilities across gendered positions within that, it's location as an, and within, economy…and how all these have historically been interpolated into and through discourses of *terra nullius*.

From there – what can I say of the meaning for me of father-daughter dyads, of 'softness' in relation to gendered positions and the performance of family relationships? How can I speak

of those in relation to songs from The House, and in particular, to this song? Given the histories I have touched upon here, and hear us all to be touched by, I am cautious in carrying my questions too far. Especially given that some of the relationships in which I query significance are not mine to speak of: Peter and Gemma Jane, Peter's song and you, Peter/you and his/your father and his father before him…but *that* the song is made, *that* it is shared and resounding with other listeners in other ways, of that I am certain – and I participate by passing it on.

So in place of further talk, I return, instead to his song. And others. Some things, perhaps, are best represented in song (slipping in between the bars in the words that rhythm demand be dropped), or hummed quietly...

Thank you for the music you have given me: for it, for my relationship to it, and for my relationship to the father-daughter dyad.

Love
Tracey

Uncle's Song

9g:Yarning with Uncle

All songs tell stories; a story is a song with the music implied…
Uncle's song is unique from the workshops for its narrative form: a song with the music implied.

But Minh-ha reminds us that according to "another man of the West…(a) good story…must have a beginning that rouses interest, a succession of events that is orderly and complete, a climax that forms the story's point, and an end that leaves the mind at rest."

In transcribing Uncle's song, I found the implicit music began to be overpowered by the explicit definitions of this man of the west.

So instead of transcription I chose the visual equivalent of silence.
Perhaps you, as you listen to Uncle, might break it by taking up your own instruments:
a pencil,
a pen,
whatever you choose,
and softly writing on the pages that follow...

…ways in which we are already, always reciprocating ourselves into space…

Dear Uncle,

There is a walnut tree in my garden. I don't know how old he is; he's big though, and beautiful. I have a secret about that tree… I'd like to share it with you. I realise now that in a sense it's already yours. Some of the significance of the secret comes from your song. Your stories take me places. And I come away from them, from you, hearing the world differently. Will you let me whisper this secret to you?

…

…

…

thank you for your song and the gifts it keeps on giving.

And my best wishes for you and your family.

t

For my grandfather,

Uncle speaks of hope being realised through relationships with children, and of this being contingent, then, upon parents. And I find myself reaching back along the chain of parents/children and parent/child relationships that I am situated in…and I find myself with you.

And with you, and our relationship, there lies a question about how age is valued and under what conditions it is granted privilege. I remember one evening when you were in Sydney and I came and had dinner with you. You were telling me of how you experienced the city as an 'old man', and how you noticed that you were invisible to others. People talked over you, stepped in front of you in queues, looked over you at other customers. You said this without any trace of judgement. You were more…curious…almost amused, perhaps? I was…more vocal than you. In feeling offended at your experience of being made invisible, and being 'more vocal' in my response, I suppose I mimicked, in a way, the behaviour of all those others who stood in front of you, spoke over you...and missed an opportunity to listen. In doing so, I missed – and the way you occupied that position was a clue – how being invisible is not, in and of itself, or always, associated with powerless-ness or denigration. My reaction might have closed the circle of meaning in which this could be inscribed, but until then (and even then, and again after then) wasn't it open?

Now, in the context of responding to Uncle's song, it returns to me as a question: how does a subject that is articulated through discourses that privilege youth over age, and novelty over experience…how is that subject positioned to receive his song, the stories he tells? How am I to begin 'locating him in his context', when my own context is so hostile to age that its language is deficient in offering positions for 'old men' to be heard to speak from, with dignity, beyond the familial 'grandfather'. And where my responsive position is still entangled with those – thus I step into a righteous rage, or complicity, or, or…or…

Perhaps this is why my hand stalls when writing Uncle's song: writing can be so loud and discordant on the page. I questioned differently the transcription of those other songs, set to various musical styles and forms. But then, in the tradition of the technologies through which I encounter music, there is also a tradition, musically, of lyrics being written on the leaf-notes. A reader will read those lyrics and I hope will listen to the songs as well – and they may do this several times, perhaps even without the transcripts, and with their eyes closed and maybe in the bath or on a bus…you know, however that might work for them, I don't know what

their particular process will be. But I decided that I can trust that process to enable them to connect with the voices of each of the men whose songs I've included here, that I can trust that to happen in spite of the way that writing directs the ear differently…

Yet it comes to this spoken-song I cannot bring myself to write the story down. At first I thought it to be more vulnerable. And my refusal to transcribe was an act of protection. And then I remembered talking with you in Sydney, and your soft smile at my reaction…and I recalled Uncle, with what seemed to be a similar smile on his face as we talked about the meaning of the workshop for him. And I was reminded of the meanings with which 'protection' is also imbued… I wonder if we might also understand some stories as iron sand…"it's very powerful stuff – leave it!"

Then, it was my hearing, my receiving, which seemed vulnerable. From that position, not transcribing became a means of supporting readers in tuning in, in hearing past the cultural historical murmurs that shape how we receive and connect with another's story. But then, how am I to know how my work will be received and transformed in the passing on…

Intentions, again…

And now? From this position, not transcribing is transformed into a visible absence of transcription, leaving an audible sense of what transcription (and other modes of receiving and responding) might do to listening…

Similarly, among the secrets whispered to Uncle, there might have been some words about how his song has re-turned me towards you, and re-vivified a conversation that I thought could not continue in your absence. From the place that Uncle's song has carried me to, this absence simply signifies a change in how I've been listening…

Love
t

Dear Mu,

What do you notice, listening to Uncle?
Takes time, doesn't it?
Covers a vast span of country.
And there's so much to hear.

Somewhere, nestled in there, there are references to 'what brought him to The House', in stories which start with country and family, and weave together stolen generations, state interventions, land rights, politics…
How does psychology as a genre hold these stories?

Why does this question matter? Because it is not separate from the vision for the future that is also contained in Uncle's stories:

> "In the future I'd like to see the people mixing together. The biggest part of people mixing together boils down to mother and father, and both Aboriginal people and white people."

I began this analysis with a song about mothers and a letter to my mother and her mother before her. I end with a song by an Elder, and a letter to my grandfather, and to you, who are…? A woman connected to both my grandparents, to my family, to me and now to my daughter…inheriting a position that in our narrative tradition, wants for a name. A critical space, as for a haiku.

So it is with you that I end this analysis, because in a tradition that does not have a name for you, there is a genre – psychology – within which I am required to leave these stories.

Thank you for the spaces you have held,
And love,
t

Chapter 10: Exegesis

(In which she reflects on the relationship between the aesthetics of the text and the story told of the research project)

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> The challenge, then, for this text, is to write the relationships through which subjectivities are constituted even though, linguistically, 'the self' comes ready packaged with definite articles and an extensive vocabulary of individualism. The challenge is to write, as it were, *kin*-aesthetically: to write a subject which moves (is not fixed) and to write in such ways that the relationships (kin) upon which writing (and subjectivities) depend are knit into the aesthetics of the text.
>
> (Ch.5 Methodology, p. 80)

This is the space within a thesis where I am explicitly expected to critically reflect on what has been written (St. Pierre, 2008) and, because the emphasis in this part of the research story has traditionally been placed on contributions *to the discipline*, to reflect on the value of this thesis to the academic communities of which I am a part. In the context of this thesis, embedded as it is in commitments to the communities of The House, to Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations and to social justice, it is also a place to decide whether it is free or if it represses (Minh-ha, 1989). How to do so?

It seems necessary here to differentiate between the research project and the project of the thesis as a critical retelling of the research[82]. In adjudicating the value of the research through commitments to social justice I might ask (cf. Bailey, 1993, as cited in Garvey, 2007): Has it resulted in any material improvements for The House or the community of Then? No. Has it changed anything of the bureaucratic spaces that they figure in? Made a difference to funding or professional development and resourcing? No. Then what has been achieved? Given the shift (of the thesis) away from the intended purposes of the research as an evaluation, are the above criteria still the most appropriate ones by which to adjudicate *its* value? If not, then what criteria do we use? How to hold the necessary priority of contributing to the needs of Indigenous communities? How to configure the relationship between a contribution (if one can be found) that may address 'needs of Indigenous communities' in a more general sense, and the needs and priorities of the particular communities of The House and Then? And what

[82] Can I be heard to differentiate without (re)inscribing separateness?

is the relationship between these concerns, and those of the discipline to which it also needs to be of value?

An emphasis on research benefiting the communities engaged is important and I stand with others who argue that the priorities of the communities engaged should be privileged in research. I also wonder how to hold that as a priority in the stories we tell of research without reproducing a version of research in which the 'end product' is given sole significance – obscuring the significance of the relationships through which the research is enabled – and also without cleaving the *telling* of research from the question of *outcomes*, rather situating it as one of the same. Put differently: research protocols tend to favour the 'outcomes' of research as what is returned to participants – even when what is generated through retelling the research into academic discourses frequently bears little resemblance to what people contributed and may have limited scope for effecting the kinds of changes that researchers – and community members – are committed to. In the context of this research these issues take on particular significance as this retelling (the thesis) occurs outside of the set of relationships that I would articulate our responsibilities in relation to.

Where the relationships continue there exists the possibility for ongoing re-iteration of the research back into those relationships; a scope for turning it again and again toward the priorities of The House and the communities of Then. With the cessation of those relationships, however, and so far in advance of the completion of my thesis, there is an immediate reproduction of disadvantage: I can continue to turn to this work, to re-produce more from it and to do so in service to priorities that may appear to bear little resemblance to those in which the research was conceived, and I do so in the absence of those particular collaborations. While I can reflect on what was returned to The House throughout the course of the project of the *research*, the place at which that project became the one of the *thesis* is also a place of no return to those specific relationships. So explicitly naming and addressing this imbalance is significant to me, as is locating it in that historical tradition of the unequal accrual of benefits, through research, to the position of dominant white cultural assumptions. It leaves a question of what to do with research in the wake of interpersonal relationships dissolving and the form that my address to that question has taken has been to focus on the political relationships that precede us and to hope that in privileging those in the telling some 'return' might still occur.

In this telling of the research I have attended to the relationship between the project and the programme; I have traced, in the *doing of* the research relationships valued exchanges, moments of reciprocity and also the (re)production of conditions of possibility for the very forms of oppression that the project was intended to resist. I have already told a story, that is, in which I reflect on the political significance of the relationship between the project and the programme. In this telling, and in response to the interpersonal relationships and those intellectual ones in *Historical Verses*, I have conferred significance on representing the connections between the research relationships and the pre-existing political relationships (and in particular the position of dominant white cultural assumptions) upon which those relationships depend.

> *This is not* the *story of* the *research, but* a *story: one enables others to be told. Can what it enables in the context of other (including research) stories, constitute a return to the communities of The House and Then, without minimising or excusing the reiteration of unequal distribution of benefits? Can returning include passing on?*

My position on the street corner in Then was one enabled through these historical relationships. From there, I heard the songs of the music workshop, and was oriented towards the literature through which I have also articulated this thesis; nevertheless from that position I was inarticulate in representing the political relationships that preceded me. That I can do so here suggests some significance to the story has already been conferred – something has been enabled through the strategies chosen.

***

> So once again I am standing on that street corner in Then…the sound of songs surrounding me: "multiple voices chasing one another from verse to chorus to verse…"

Here, those 'voices' include some from the music workshop, some from elsewhere in The House, some from literature both academic and poetic: all of them speaking, from different times and places, and to different ends, and all of them vital to this (re)telling of the research. While there are multiple voices (of others, speaking/ writing/singing) chasing one another from verse to chorus to verse, there are also multiple *voices* in the sense that there are multiple

representations of political relationships. The concept of 'voice' therefore has a privileged place in this thesis as a metaphor and a strategy.

In the following pages I reflect on the textual strategies used and what they have enabled and constrained in terms of retelling the research. To what extent have I been (en)able(d) to represent the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions in such a way as to account for the pre-existing relationships upon which it (and the research) depends? To what extent have I been (en)able(d) to represent the 'self' that is (of) that position in this instance in such a way as to disperse the ontological subject historically privileged in representations of subjectivity in psy-discourse?

> First, I reflect briefly on the thesis as a whole – considering the function of those textual strategies in the context and service of the larger narrative of which they are a part. In a sense, this reflexive analysis is a study in *harmony*.
>
> Secondly, I consider particular uses of different voices (Narrator, Questioner and Reflexive Analyst, letters) in the context of their (re)telling of the music workshop and the songs. In a sense, this part of the reflexive analysis is a study in *counterpoint*.

Across these reflections I also address the question of the significance of each in terms of the pre-existing relationships and the communities of voices that are produced through it, and through which it is produced. To the extent that the thesis is my song (my response to those of the singers), it is here embedded back into academic discourses. I argue that any value to those discursive communities must be articulated through and in relation to questions of value to Indigenous communities including those of The House: that is, I ground reflections on the contributions of the thesis in the pre-existing political relationships upon which it, and we, depend. This is not to say that I am not interested in, or confer value on, discussions of the broader possibilities that Autoethnographic strategies (for example) might offer, or where such approaches may lead. Those are significant conversations and ones I imagine may be appropriately privileged in future papers and other forums. Here, I consider those contributions specifically through the lens of the political relationships that I have sought to privilege in this telling of the research: how do the particular methodological innovations articulated here enable and constrain this telling of the research and the creation/maintenance of positions within that?

Harmony

Following Josselson (1996) we might treat the introduction of a thesis as an explicit performance of a particular position within a particular community of voices: a student in academia speaking to differently-positioned others in academia. The relationship that is privileged is an academic one; the voice (of a 'Narrator') and the language used are familiar and (at face value, within those relationships, probably regarded as) unproblematic. In the context of this work, however, privileging that relationship uncritically was already problematic for what it reproduced of historical privilege in the political relationships that precede us: the tension was one of adequately explaining a research context in ways that engage a naïve (to these stories) listener and simultaneously resisting the tendency to reproduce a version of ourselves – and the text – in which the pre-existent political relationships upon which the research depends are again excluded.

In *Burden* and *Historical Verses* I interpreted the idea of accounting for our position as asserting epistemological and representational privilege of Indigenous authors: turning to and responding to Indigenous work first and foremost, and then other non-Indigenous work that expressly supports Indigenous agendas, the dismantling of other social power relations or social justice agendas more generally. To the extent that it requires a Narrator it positions the voice of that Narrator as already responding to, decentring its historical place of omniscience in the discourse; to the extent that it requires a monologue, it is one that relies heavily (and explicitly so) on privileging the voices and perspectives of Indigenous writers, activists and intellectuals and articulating the research in/as a response to theirs.

Furthermore, when considered as part of a whole – i.e. in relation to subsequent parts of the thesis where the research is retold through increasingly diverse narrative forms – what is elsewhere (in psydiscourse) considered representative of *the* academic voice, and *the* appropriate one for retelling research, is here produced as *one* rhetorical strategy among many.

This sounds a little like reformulating the speaking position of the dominant white cultural assumptions – I am wondering what you feel doing so enables?

Earlier, in discussing my use of naming the positions of 'Indigenous', 'Aboriginal', and 'non-Indigenous', I referenced Dudgeon's (1999) call for "a whole discourse about diversity in the

first instance, and the construction of Aboriginality, construction of Indigeneity" (in Oxenham, Cameron, Collard et al., 1999, p. 52 – 53) and the reminder that everyone is implicated in those constructions. Read through Positioning Theory that call for a discourse on diversity is also a call for a discourse on the *interdependence* of 'Indigenous' and 'non-Indigenous' positions, as discussed in *Historical Verses*. The naming of 'Indigenous' and 'non-Indigenous' describes a political relationship that was critical to the research and our positioning within it, and that needed to be accounted for. In a way, writing *Historical Verses* in/as a Narrator and in response to Indigenous perspectives constitutes a performance of the interdependence of those positions and, in situating the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions as *subject to* the scrutiny of Indigenous critique, and responding to it, troubles the perception of a narratorial voice speaking from 'above' relationships, rather than from within them.

If this invites the question 'what is the function of this voice, in this place, telling this part of the story?'[83], then it invites attention to the thesis/research *as* a story: as a construction; the implications of the construction of which can then be considered. Given the hegemonic potential with which neutrality, objectivity and singularity have been quickened in historical discourses of colonialism, interrupting it in retelling (this) research represents a different political relationship/(re)produces a different position (and vice versa). As a space where *the* voice becomes *one among the many* of the thesis the use of the Narrator (in relation to other voices) here also has a function in producing the thesis-as-a-whole as one in which the authorial subject is (re)produced according to different positions throughout the text and in response to different communities of voices simultaneously. It contributes to the dispersal of the ontological subject and the representation of the relationships upon which the subject depends.

In a sense, in the context of this thesis I was already writing autoethnographically, even before specifying my strategies or being heard to speak so strangely that an explanation was required. And it matters that this be articulated in(to) a discursive context in which historical articulations of research differentiate the reporting of data, and the analysis of it, from the rest of the research story.

[83] To invite the question and enable a response is itself a rhetorical act of academic reflexivity – a privileged goal in the context of work predicated on the decentring of academic practice.

Harmonically, then, I have achieved what Anderson (2006) credits writers of evocative autoethnography with achieving: modelling performances of the methodologies they privilege. The inclusion of multiple modes of narrative representation enables me to do so in ways that bring the reader into relationship with the ideas in a graduated way yet does not entirely reproduce the pattern of methodology being something that is only applied to 'data', which is separated out from the rest of the story and treated differently. As such what is also enabled is a different representation of 'analysis' to that which is privileged in academic discourse. In the following Counterpoint in Harmony I consider how the use of multiple voices facilitates this in different ways in relation to the narratives of the music workshop and the songs in particular.

Counterpoint in Harmony

> *I specified that the form of analysis to be privileged in this work was one of 'a loosening' of the phenomena in question in an attempt to apprehend and appreciate connections – in other words, to make sense (p. 124). Read through narrative theories 'making sense' is both ordinary sense-making and an act of (re)creation.*

Inasmuch as this thesis is a narrative it thus *makes known*: writes knowledge into the disciplinary discursive community of which I am a member. In the context of a particular historical precedent to this work – the 'white knowall' of Moreton-Robinson's analysis, the prevailing performance of that disciplinary position – perhaps offering the performance of 'not knowing' as a contribution would be appropriate, even revolutionary. Yet the work of a thesis, the narrative forms it requires and/or legitimates, the ways of knowing, relating and representing material (Richardson, 1994), also requires writing *against* the statement 'I don't know'. If that seemed an insurmountable paradox (to me) for a long time, I regard it differently now – as a kind of reckoning regarding what can be known, what knowledge it is appropriate to speak of, and to whom. The conditions of its apparent impossibility (for me) are embedded in the disciplinary expectation, the desire (with which I colluded and through which was shaped), for knowledge *about* others – about the people of The House, about the programme, about what works – knowledge of positions that are not mine to speak from. In the narrative produced, instead, what has been made known is not so much knowledge *about* an Other – nothing like what would be expected from an evaluation, that is – but rather a trace of what preceded us and shapes the retelling, as it invariably shaped the articulation of the research into practice. It is reflexive knowledge of the modes of production we (implicitly or

otherwise) are engaged in and which we might interrupt or reproduce; knowledge of the reflexive ghosts that inhere in what we do (Doucet, 2008).

In relation to the sense-making of the music workshop and subsequent songs, using the different voices of the Questioner and Analyst, and of interpersonal letters, was critical. Retelling the first morning through the Questioner-Analyst relationship enabled antecedents to sense-making to be traced. The story that is told exposes some of the scaffolding to the research – some of the pre-existing political relationships upon which it depends. The re-citation of assumptions as ordinary as the positions to which we were assigned ('staff', 'client' and 'researcher') are the kind of ideological categories of representation uncritically reproduced in narratives of research (e.g. Scott, 1991), imbued with expectations and premises about the world and how it operates.

As I demonstrated in the reflexive analysis, the epistemological and political commitments of the research may have enabled me to attend to some pre-existing relationships explicitly of the order of *terra nullius* (for example in querying the dialogue between Mick and Noah for what it reproduced and resisted of white privilege and the ordinariness of gubba-Indigenous relations) but not without simultaneously reproducing others. That reproduction, I argue(d) hinged in part upon the taken-for-granted practice of research of taking myself out of relationships (with Others of the research and also with the text) and taking up a position of omniscience *above* them instead.

How does the use of dialogue resist that?

It operates in a number of ways. The movement itself – out of one set of relationships and into others, into the 'specialness' of research analysis – is troubled by the interruptions of the Questioner: it's difficult to reproduce the appearance of omniscience when the story is being picked apart at the seams as it is told. This represents the stories we tell, the knowledge constructed, as co-constructed and that representation doesn't lend itself to reification in the same way that privileged representations of phenomena in psy-discourses do. Inasmuch as explicitly conversational forms represent relational enterprise they re-place the text, and writers/readers, in the context of specific relationships.

The Questioner-Analyst dialogue does that through juxtaposing a story of interpretations made in the context of relations between staff/client/researcher (in which my positioning was

invisible to me) with the relationship between Questioner and Analyst, in which it *is* attended to. The role of salience in particular positions is also illustrated in the specificity of the letters written in response to each song. In the specificity of each letter (those to the singers and those to Others in relation to whom I articulated my response) there lies an invitation to the reader/listener to hear the relationship between the response and the interpersonal/interpositional relationship in which it is uttered. How is the story told differently according to the particular relationships speaking into and from? How am I hearing the songs? Through what sense-making frameworks? What, in the relationships evoked for me (and through which I respond), is exposed of the positions I hold and how my ear is thus tuned to particular notes?

The diversity of letters enables me to represent the simultaneous, multiple positioning involved in any given performance, and the endurance of some positions across those (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2003). While drawing attention to the value of doing this is not novel, finding ways of representing and attending to them may be slightly more so. Read through a narrative theoretical framework, doing so may also be critical to facilitating the reformulation of subject positions and transformation of social power relations that it has been argued positioning theory can useful in addressing (Drewery, 2011; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2003). In the context of the songs and the letters written, the relationships invoked include those of family positions, age, gender, peer, academic, and through each of these I trace threads of the position of dominant cultural assumptions (in assumptions about maternal priorities and the structure of the family, for example). In writing a letter to 'mother of my mother, and my mother', there are echoes of what I heard in Thaddeus' song and reflections on his relationship – that the way we might speak and be heard to speak in conversation with our mothers (for example) is different, and that difference is significant. Writing *that* political relationship into psychology as I did, through feminist discourses, represents a move towards/requirement for undoing multiple social power relations in the context of addressing those with which I was initially principally concerned in the research and the thesis.

It sounds as though some of the significance of using multiple modes of more intimate address is to do with being able to speak, and perhaps be heard speaking, differently in psychology?

If each letter represents a particular relationship – a performance of a position embedded within a political relationship – then taken together the letters tell a story about the significance of the positions available within psychology through which knowledge is

produced. In response to 'White Man's Gift', for example, writing letters into and out of different relationships with others whose positions are privileged in existing fictions of *terra nullius* demonstrated how the negotiation of the relationship between subject positions influenced the (re)telling of a story about the song. In one, I could not speak – some other conversation had to happen first, some other voice had to be found; in the other, there is an example of the kind of relationship in which it is viable to write some of those stories silenced in the other. The relationship between subject positions that is described through those letters reiterates the political relationships with/in psychology that 'voice', as a metaphor, represented and was taken up in resistance to.

If the prevailing 'voice' of psychology metaphorises a particular political relationship that, here, signifies exclusion, then adopting a different voice writes the space for a different political relationship into psychology. If changing the form of the story represents a different political relationship then it enables and requires a change in the positions available within the (here, academic) discursive community into which it is told: a change, that is, in the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions; an interruption to the repetitive citations of *terra nullius* in research. This speaks to that other hope toward which I turned the thesis: that by adopting these strategies, and through the story told, different positions and relationships might be enabled (and constrained). This feature of the narrative, which I argued autoethnography was significant for me in achieving, is one area that I feel holds significant promise. I would develop this in two directions. The first would be to continue developing reflexive capacity (what Furlong and Wight, 2011 call 'critical cultural awareness') in the discursive resources of psychology. One aspect of this would involve further consideration of the relationship between epistemological commitments and reflexive practice (e.g. Mauthner & Doucet, 2009). The second direction in which I would extend my analysis would be in consideration of the scope of Autoethnographic strategies specifically: how Autoethnographic writing might enable and constrain the stories we tell of/from research, and what other specific forms analysis might take within those.

If using more intimate forms troubles the reproduction of particular political relationships, they also privilege questions about the implications of what happens when those relationships are reproduced: moving backwards (and forwards) from academic discourses into research relationships, what are the implications of assuming or striving for omniscience in intimate relationships? What sort of relationships are characterised by that if not ones of power and

control? What, then, are the implications for our embodied interactions of privileging, to the point of exclusion, forms of writing that require us to do just that?

This gestures towards a relationship between positioning and narrative, and embodied performances of subjectivity. How does this fit with the hope you mentioned – of telling this story, in this way, constituting a contribution towards the transformation of political and social relationships?

The knowledge produced through this narrative is a trace of what preceded us – the pre-existing political relationships upon which the research depends. Read through Positioning Theory, it is knowledge regarding the performative assumption of perspective of which Nicholl (2004) writes: a trace of the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions and how it is interpolated into relationships and re-created, reproduced. Nicholl notes that few people volunteer to fall out of that perspective and into relationship with Indigenous sovereignty, prompting questions about what enables such a fall and, I would add, sustains it: if it is possible to fall from one into the other, it is also possible to fall out of relationship and repeat the performance of perspective, the active assumption of the position of dominant white cultural assumptions. If the story told is one of falling out of perspective and into relationship – such that we are hearing music from The House at all, for example – then it is also one of the reverse; of a certain ordinariness of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations being reinscribed in spite of the commitments of the research project and the people within it. Developing capacity of and for reflexive awareness of that movement seems useful if we are to come to a place of appreciating and interrupting it.

Re-presenting conversations between Mick and I (regarding the camera being turned off) was significant to me as a story in which a necessary interruption *did not* occur for example: an absence, if you will, of a Questioning voice through which attention might have been drawn to the conversations in progress and their significance. I might have taken up a different position – might have *been* that Questioning voice – and did not; in not doing so the story also becomes one about a deferred conversation – a conversation (which didn't happen then) in which the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions was accounted for. I argued that, in the deferral of that conversation, we (re)produced ourselves as particular embodied subjects through which something of the ordinariness of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations, and existing fictions of *terra nullius*, were reinscribed. Through us something of the ordinariness of those relations endures.

Here, articulating this through a conversational form – Questioner and Analyst – constituted a performance in which the deferred conversation was privileged and the relationships scaffolding it made explicit. Similarly, the letters (in response to *White Man's Gift*) written to Anthony and Dave represent different embodied performances enabled and constrained by the positions available for me to take up (and what I do with them). That they take place in the context of a thesis embedded in the search for a viable voice through which to retell the research gestures towards the implications of particular narrative forms being privileged in psychology for what they enable and constrain of embodied performances in (research and other) relationships. It seems to me that if accounting for positioning requires a kind of critical cultural awareness (Furlong & Wight, 2011; Swartz, 2005) then becoming fluent in the pre-existing political relationships underpinning the endurance of some positions (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2003) is a necessary condition of the same.

If writing in this way has been beneficial for enabling particular retellings of the research to be told, then it has also been significant for an embodied woman writer seeking ways of hearing, accounting for, and taking responsibility for her own subjectivity in spite of its frequent occlusion in the discourses and discursive communities through which she is also constituted. How do I hold my responsibilities to Mick – in interpersonal and textual performance – alongside my responsibilities to others? What does responsibility look like in the political relationships that Mick and I inherit our positioning through? Creating space for these questions to be realised provides scaffolding for elaborating more closely the specific intersections of privilege and oppression, of gendered and racialised social power relations. Potential future directions of this include developing understanding of the relationships *between* different political relationships: to what extent do racism and sexism require one another? How do (re)iterations of class function within the institution to support the reproduction of race privilege (and race)? That would be a future project, however: in terms of the relations between positions described *in this text* the scope has been to write a space in which such questions are viable – to trace the position of an embodied woman writer in psychology not to reinscribe exclusion elsewhere, but rather to address it. Finding ways of working with multiple exclusions, simultaneously, may prove critical do addressing any. Thus, if writing in this way has enabled and required (even momentary) reformulation of the position of dominant cultural assumptions in psydiscourse, then it has potential for the development of praxis of critical self-awareness.

I have a song…

> Most researchers turn inwards to their self/selves when they engage in reflexive thinking. Yet, as Amanda Coffey has argued (1999, p. 133), "[t]he boundaries between self indulgence and reflexivity are fragile and blurred" so that there "will always be the question of how much of ourselves to reveal."
>
> (Doucet, 2008, p. 75)

It seems prudent here to specify the relationship between reflexive awareness and representation, as I use it here, and familiar forms of reflexivity in psy-discourse. As a narrative, psychology predisposes towards an 'inward' turn towards self (see Doucet, 2008, above). While there can be usefulness in such forms of self-reflexive writing (even when read through something other than a relational ontology), that usefulness is curtailed here by a desire to explicitly account for a political relationship and to represent positioning that is social, historical, and dynamic. Remember the awkward tenacity of ignorance that Behrendt observed in her classmates (*Rememory*), the postcolonial incapacity to respond to the body of Beloved (e.g. McConaghy, 2003), the difficulties non-Indigenous students encountered in reconciling historical narratives with contemporary experiences (Gerrett-Magee, 2006)? The self-reflexivity that is privileged in the context of this thesis is in terms of the position of dominant white cultural assumptions, which here *is* that of the 'self' and is also not limited to individualist accounts of selfhood.

The conceptualisation of reflexivity privileged here is something akin to the critical awareness that Furlong and Wight (2011) refer to yet explicitly including and accounting for the ontological foundation of subjectivity that is frequently taken for granted in talk about 'self reflexivity'. As I addressed in developing the particular reading of autoethnographic strategies privileged here, if autoethnography enables representation of experiences "about which social scientists do not know how to talk" (Ellis, 1993, p. 724) then those experiences are also theoretical and methodological: the narrative forms that autoethnography legitimates are forms that enable the production of texts in which the unified, temporally stable subject is troubled[84].

[84] a double entendre that leaves open the possibility that feeling troubled/discomfited/disoriented by a text might be as much to do with the position from which we encounter it as it is to do with the story being told or the form it takes

Piecing together a text through multiple voices enabled a disruption of that subject, and a particular (re)telling of the research in which I can also draw attention to the seams of its production. It doesn't guarantee that I did it well. Ellis (1999) writes that autoethnography is "…not something that most people can do well. Most social scientists don't write well enough to carry it off. Or they're not sufficiently introspective about their feelings or motives or the contradictions they experience. Ironically, many aren't observant enough of the world around them. The self-questioning autoethnography demands is extremely difficult." (p. 671 – 672). This, then, may prove to be a further area of development in psychology in which this thesis also offers something of value. In developing discourses of Autoethnographic representation, I would seek to privilege a consideration of the relationship between introspection and ethical performance with particular attention to representations of subjectivity; how to articulate introspection – or what introspection is turned towards in humanist texts – through post-structural discourses of subjectivity? These are theoretical and methodological questions that remain marginalized concerns within dominant discourses of psychology, but are part of a conversation, nonetheless, that my analysis contributes to.

Thus, while I concede limitations in my literary skills, as well as in the acuity and courage with which I approach reflexive-introspection, I am more interested in considering Ellis' observation (through the lens of Positioning Theory) as a reflection on the performative relationship between subjects and the positions they occupy. That is, where Ellis seems to locate difficulties in writing autoethnography as personal, idiosyncratic failures, I am curious about them for what they suggest of the discursive and epistemological resources available to subjects from the positions they take up in the particular communities of voices from and to which they write. In particular – given the specific location of this work and my embodied subjectivity within discursive communities of psychology – I am treating her observations as a commentary on the consequences of trying to write things (into psychology) about which psychology, in particular as part of the narrative tradition of *terra nullius*, does not know how to talk and which it is not well resourced in hearing. Where these may be personal narratives, they are also political, theoretical and methodological: questions of representing a different version of subjectivity. On this latter issue I note that while turning autoethnography explicitly towards enunciating theoretical phenomena is not common in Autoethnographic writing, neither is it without precedent (Kaufmann, 2005; Mizzi, 2010).

How does the novelty of Autoethnographic writing in psychology fit with the rarity, that you mentioned earlier, of reflexivity, and where does that position your thesis in terms of the contributions it makes?

As McIlveen (2009) noted, very little has been written into psychology by way of autoethnographies, positioning this thesis as a contribution to the reception, interpolation and legitimation of what are currently novel methodological strategies in psychology. The readings of autoethnography that I write into psychology are necessarily partial and limited, already differentiated from those of other writers whether by virtue of the particular epistemological commitments we bring to our work or other, not unrelated, factors, for example: discipline (sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, for example), geographical location (North America), gender/the gendering of bodies and sexual orientation. A further of extension of this, however, and embedding any contribution I make through autoethnography back into the specificity of the contexts and bodies that I have privileged here, my readings of autoethnography into psychology are also differentiated by virtue of the very position I encounter them from and that I use autoethnographic strategies to represent and critique. It is different from – and not – that of Houston (2007) turning autoethnography towards the creation of spaces within academia for Indigenous women to represent themselves.

To the extent that my thesis constitutes a methodological contribution to psychology, it is one that I articulate through its commitments to enabling change in Indigenous/non-Indigenous relationships (whether within research or other contexts) specifically and social justice agendas more generally. Thus inasmuch as by writing autoethnograpically within the context of a psychology thesis constitutes a methodological contribution, I hope I do so in ways that leave room for multiple legitimacies – and for the potential *illegitimacy* of it, in relation to particular audiences, to be heard.

My particular readings are influenced by the significance placed on reflexivity: of being able to account for the political relationships that precede us, in particular in terms of the position of the dominant white cultural assumptions so often rendered invisible and/or represented as the norm. In addressing this, I have referenced the discrepancy between writing *about* reflexivity and actually performing it in academic writing (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003), and I have located this discrepancy in relation to the specific discursive context of psychology, construing it as a manifestation of prevailing epistemological assumptions and representational forms privileged in psychology. In a sense, I have written the history to the

first question of the Questioner – how to account for my positioning as a white woman in the context of the research. Returning to that moment, from here, I can differently appreciate the conditions of possibility for my inarticulateness: I tried to give an answer where the response required a story. I responded from and with a position in psychological discourse where, as part of the genre of humanities,

> …there is a sort of search for solutions, whereas in literary discourse there is a playing out of the problem as the solution.
>
> (Spivak, 1996, p. 55)

The story required was one that could account for the existing relationships, and positioning, yet the means (representation) of doing so were lacking. Here, read through discourses of poststructuralism, the narrative forms used offer a means of (representatively) reconnecting 'the subject' to social, historical and political narratives and to the epistemological foundations of psydiscourse (on which such a subject depends) in the stories we tell. Recalling Conway's memoirs: the process of 'rewriting the self' (Freeman, 2001) to account for social, political stories previously hidden or considered as separate from personal ones is as much a theoretical and political undertaking as it is a personal one. While we might hear Freeman as referring to a process of revising personal narratives, it is also a process of rewriting the subject in psychology.

To the extent that rewriting the self contributes to rewriting the discipline, and the extent to which this is desirable and successful and translates into material and political benefits: this requires the adjudication of Others and is not for me to decide. But writing towards that requires holding space for the relationship – it requires that there exist, in psychology, positions from which it might be possible to enter into those relationships (as I did), and to hear what is spoken.

So the form of reflexivity articulated here is not solely a matter of self, but a matter of relationships: how to hear, listen, receive, and to 'leave space for the Other to exist'?

Read through the discourses privileged here there is not one without the other. And I think that this is relevant whether we are considering reflexivity in relation to interpersonal relationships (what I called flesh-and-blood relationships with people at The House) or intellectual relationships – such is in the interpretive relationships we build with what others

write. This latter aspect is relevant to projects of 'reading' Indigenous experiences and histories into the discipline, for example, and it is also related to Drewery's (2011) attentiveness to the relationship between academic practices and respectful relationships. It places an emphasis and 'burden of proof' on the privileged position: how are you hearing? How did you get here?

This might be extended, in practice, into developing stronger counter-narratives to the prevailing discourses of psychology. That is, scaffolding for students' experiences might be strengthened through attending to and articulating histories to their own 'coming-to-awareness' – a gradual eroding, that is, of the hegemonic potential of psydiscourse, which might 'tolerate' difference in one set of relationships but in ways that create accommodative spaces only, reproducing normative ideology elsewhere, simultaneously. Sustaining the fall out of perspective and into relationship with Indigenous sovereignty may require dismantling other social power relations – not in ways that exclude social justice in some relationships, but that support and recognise it as necessary for social justice for any. In the context of this thesis I explicitly represented connections between gendered social power relations and colonial ones (prefigured by Indigenous and other feminist intellectuals) – locating projects of (de)colonisation in relation to the broader narratives (e.g. imperialism, see Smith, 1999) of which they are a part.

I can imagine scenes in which this kind of attention to the relationships between contexts and bodies (Moreton-Robinson, 1999) might come to dominate, reproducing a relationship in which the specific interests of some (in marginalised positions) are rendered irrelevant, invisible, or in service to, those of others.

Then it would no longer be the kind of reflexive, critical, undertaking that I write towards. The relationship that would there be reproduced – where the many are reduced to competitive jostling for space – is part of the very tradition that I have here taken up Autoethnographic strategies in resistance to. What would it look like to confer multiple legitimacies? Who would hold that power and responsibility? How would we honour and attend to the congruence and contradictions that would arise?

I feel that developing critical reflexive awareness in this way might be significant for ongoing discussion about the colonising potential of research including in academic discourses ostensibly privileging social justice. Rademacher (2006) discusses a similar concern

regarding the limits of discourses of whiteness as liberatory agenda: that discursive work initiated by marginalised, non-white activists and intellectuals specifically to work against racialised relations of power, might be taken up in such a way as to reproduce discursive, epistemic and material privilege, essentially becoming 'another excuse for white people to talk about themselves' (Bellear, 2005, cited in Rademacher, 2006). Having addressed the difference between writing/talking *about* the self and rewriting the self, I'm going to consider this issue from a different angle here. Can the kinds of reflexive writing, that I'm suggesting here have potential as interventions into pre-existing social power relations, also recreate the very political relationships that they might be intended to resist? I believe so. So perhaps they are merely part of a conversation – a playing out of the problem as opposed to the solution. And a conversation is a relational speech act – more explicitly so than a monologue. The self-reflexive emphasis – as opposed to reflections on the self – is not restricted to one way of speaking, nor does it *exclude* knowing when to be silent and about which not to speak. Thus, in terms of whether the oppressive potential is realised, perhaps the specific conditions of the conversation – about what, in relation to whom, to what end – are relevant.

So is the specificity of the relationship in which we have particular conversations significant?

In efforts to decolonise the discipline through incorporating Indigenous content into the curriculum I hear a concern with creating 'safe' spaces in classrooms in order for students to undertake the work that is deemed necessary – this suggests that in some contexts and some relationships it may be appropriate or at least unavoidable. Perhaps what is needed is some consideration of what constitutes 'self indulgence', of what constitutes a 'safe space' and how to honour apparent needs of safety (for students, for example) in ways that do not effectively exclude other groups (and the priorities they may hold) by virtue of reproducing a version of community in which their existence would not be viable. How would we know if we are achieving this? How to address that question? These are questions I would pose to/as future developments in this area, questions that I argue would require privileging other subjugated voices in their address, and therefore the exploration of other positions from which subjugated voices might speak, and be heard, in psychology.

To return to the question of the contribution to the discursive community of which I am a member, and contribution to the community of The House and/or the priorities they hold: the disproportionate returns of research for the communities who bear the unacknowledged

burden of it exist in relation to the returns conferred upon the already-privileged position. The other side of that relationship, Bailey described as follows:

> They, on the other hand, have either tidied up their files, made a decision on our behalf, made a scientific breakthrough, attained doctoral status, published their opinions, become experts in the field. Provided a consultant's report, moved onto another job on the basis of their knowledge of Aboriginal affairs. Proffered a whole new theory, gained a new, more prestigious portfolio, attracted lucrative publicity, gained political kudos, altered legislation, made an impressive speech, attacked our credibility, denied our Aboriginality, advised us as to what we should be doing, or created another problem for us on which we will soon be consulted. Quite an expansive industry.
>
> (Bailey, 1993, as cited in Garvey, 2007, p. 71; see also Garvey, 2001, p. 46 - 47)

I have scrutinised my work for any suggestion of it denying Aboriginality and attacking credibility: an ethical cornerstone to writing *this* story *this* way, and exploring issues of reflexivity and dominance within it, has been to write towards modes of 'self'-representation that 'leave room for the Other to exist'. I have already argued that the thesis bears theoretical and methodological significance for the discipline: as a response to Bailey's critique, I have done so in ways that entwine the significance with, articulate it *through*, the political and ethical commitments of (and to) the relationships that precede it. I write that, however, with the awareness that even this risks conferring 'political kudos' upon my position; I write with an awareness of the value of doctoral status, as a signifier, to many discursive communities (especially academic) and of the future career moves and opportunities that are attendant upon that status.

Writing this thesis, even this way, has not undone the illegitimate privileges of my position. I believe – have written with the intention – that doing so undermines the uncritical reproduction of that position and contributes to other efforts to interrupt, undermine and ultimately transform existing fictions of *terra nullius* in the pre-existing political relationships of which we are already, always a part. I have done so in ways that are befitting the academic context of a thesis without forgetting or leaving behind the other (political) relationships to which I am always, already accountable. In terms of the interpersonal relationships that

precede me and to which this thesis cannot be returned, I have only the passing-on of the story, a re-iteration of what has gone before and what I have also, already returned.

Listen to this song.

Te torino haere whakamua, whakamuri

At the same time as we are going forward, we are returning.

(Ihimaera, 2005)

Reprise…

When I stepped off that street corner in Then, and looked back, I saw something that changed the course of my travel – the shape of something yet to come; the shape of something that was also already there, had been there long before me, and would continue wherever my footsteps took me next. What is seen, what is heard, has become part of my story, and with that comes a responsibility. The responsibility cannot be evaded, cannot be left behind – all that is left is a question of how it is to be borne…

The story will be told (Trinh T Minh-ha).

What has gone before in these pages is not an answer, not a map, not a shortcut, not even a dissertation. All metaphors are mistaken: the best that I can find is that it is just another story…that needed to be told and that enables others to be told.

When she returned to the motel room that night, she wrote her own song. She wrote this story all those years ago in a form that was right to the time and befitting the relationships that gave birth to it. It was hers and not hers, mine and not mine. The following morning, against all usual practice for her, she gave that song away. She gave it to an Other to whom it also already belonged. She didn't watch it being read, didn't wait for an answer. The song needed to be written and it was; it needed to be given away (returned), and it was. That is enough.

And later, as she sat in the sun at the long kitchen table out the back of The House, scribbling in her notebook, she felt a gentle hand touching her arm in passing and heard a voice saying quietly and evenly: it's good.

Now, I have written this story again. It is hers, and not hers, mine, and not mine. Against odds that I didn't believe I could surmount in the intervening years, I am giving it away: to others who can read it – to whom it also already belongs.

So, in response to Gloria Naylor, from the opening onto the street corner, the story was always, already a song: I hope that in the painstaking unpacking – that is befitting of this time and place, these relationships – some eloquence remains in the telling.

Appendix A: Ethical Approval

MACQUARIE
UNIVERSITY ~ SYDNEY

27 May 2003

Dr [redacted]
Division of Linguistics and Psychology
College of Science and Technology

Reference: HE02MAY2003-R02342

Dear Dr [redacted]

FINAL APPROVAL

Title of project: ***Evaluation [redacted] Rehabilitation Program***

Your responses to the outstanding issues raised by the Committee have satisfactorily been addressed. You may now proceed with your research.

Please note the following standard requirements of approval:

1. Approval will be for a period of twelve months. At the end of this period, if the project has been completed, abandoned, discontinued or not commenced for any reason, you are required to submit a Final Report on the project. If you complete the work earlier than you had planned you must submit a Final Report as soon as the work is completed. The Final Report is available at http://www.ro.mq.edu.au/ethics/human/application.htm#forms
2. However, at the end of the 12 month period if the project is still current you should instead submit an application for renewal of the approval if the project has run for less than three (3) years. This form is available at http://www.ro.mq.edu.au/ethics/human/application.htm#forms. If the project has run for more than three (3) years you cannot renew approval for the project. You will need to complete and submit a Final Report (see Point 1 above) and submit a new application for the project. (The three year limit on renewal of approvals allows the Committee to fully re-review research in an environment where legislation, guidelines and requirements are continually changing, for example, new child protection and privacy laws).
3. Please remember the Committee must be notified of any alteration to the project.
4. You must notify the Committee immediately in the event of any adverse effects on participants or of any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.
5. At all times you are responsible for the ethical conduct of your research in accordance with the guidelines established by the University (http://www.ro.mq.edu.au/ethics/human/policy.htm)).

Please note that the email address rachael.krinks@mq.edu.au is no longer operating. The contact email address for the Committee should be amended to kdesilva@vc.mq.edu.au on all your documentation.

If you will be applying for or have applied for internal or external funding for the above project **it is your responsibility** to provide Macquarie University's Research Grants Officer with a copy of this letter as soon as possible. The Research Grants Officer will not inform external funding agencies that you have final approval for your project and funds will not be released until the Research Grants Officer has received a copy of this final approval letter.

Yours sincerely

Catriona Mackenzie

Dr Catriona Mackenzie
Chair, Ethics Review Committee (Human Ethics)

CRO File: 03/541

ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE (HUMAN RESEARCH)
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY (E11A)
SYDNEY, NSW, 2109 AUSTRALIA
Chair: Ph: (02) 9850 8865 Fax: (02) 9850 8892 E-mail: cmackenz@scmp.mq.edu.au
Deputy Chair: Ph: (02) 9850 9859 Fax: (02)9850 9890 E-mail: swyver@acss1.acss.mq.edu.au
Secretary: Ph: (02) 9850 7854 Fax: (02) 9850 8799 E-mail: kdesilva@vc.mq.edu.au
http://www.ro.mq.edu.au/eth_hum.htm

Portrait (85%)

Appendix B: Invitation to Participate

Evaluation of The House Services

You are invited to take part in an evaluation for The House rehabilitation programme. The purpose of the study is for you to tell of your experiences with The House. This research will be used to improve the services offered by The House.

The study is being conducted by Tracey Powis in the Department of Psychology, Macquarie University, (02 9850 8033; tpowis@psy.mq.edu.au) under the supervision of Dr. Doris McIlwain, Department of Psychology, Macquarie University, 2109 (02 9850 9430; dmcilwain@psy.mq.edu.au).

If you decide to participate you will be asked to take part in an interview or focus group, approximately 1 hour in length. These will be audiotaped and then transcribed for research purposes. You are able to select a fake name for use on the tape, and all identifying information will be deleted from the final transcript. The researcher will be available to provide feedback on the transcript if you wish. Your audiotape will be destroyed after use. Transcripts will be used in the PhD thesis of the researcher, in the final evaluation of The House and in publications. You will not be able to be identified in any way from this research. The final report will be made available to The House in order that they may use the information in developing the programmes offered to their clients. If you wish a copy of this report to be made available to you, please indicate this to the researcher.

The staff of The House will not know whether you participate in the research or not. If you decide to participate please fill out and return the attached form in the reply-paid envelope provided. If you decide to participate you are free to withdraw from further participation in the research at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

Thank you and warm regards

Tracey Powis

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1. Not a White Country
2. Bridges
3. Real Me
4. Aaron S
5. Bobby Darren
6. Shane
7. Aaron T
8. Richard
9. Uncle Richard1
10. Uncle Richard2
11. Uncle Richard3
12. Secret Song