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Cover 33/2, Design: Debra Livingston – University of the Sunshine Coast.

An aesthetic abstract approach seemed appropriate for the cover design of this general un-themed Social Alternatives issue. The notion of 'aesthetics' is derived from the Greek word 'aisthetikos' that pertains to sense perception. In scholarly work, 'aesthetic' refers to a philosophy that provides a theory of the 'beautiful', as in the fine arts or a 'person's sensitivity to the beautiful' [PDF].

The aesthetic image of the cover design presents a visual language of abstract forms, colours and lines that has a degree of independence from actual visual references of objects in the world. Drawn from a century of practice, the premise of abstract art is grounded in a relationship between the artists and nature at its most basic and conceptual, in relation to recognisable objects, living animals, organisms and processes.

For this issue cover concept, the designer abstracted a photograph of the colour spectrum - a phenomenon from nature. The designer then transposed the photograph using digital software to create a transformed aesthetic abstract image. Here, 'there is a sense of nature de-composed and/or re-arranged' (Crowther 2012: 3). Crowther suggests that the creative process of abstraction is a natural activity for artists, that has its 'origins in Romantic notions of the union of nature and spirit' (Crowther 2012: 3). Crowther further proposes that:

...abstract art and nature are linked in generally significant ways through two broad artistic strategies—abstracting from nature, and creativity affirmed as an expression of natural inspiration rooted in the conditions of physical embodiment. It must be emphasized also that these two aspects and their interrelations have not been followed on the basis of artistic theory and practice pursued in isolation. Rather these activities have been influenced frequently, by scientific, philosophical, and related theories.

Reference:

Crowther P., and Wünsche I., (eds), 2012. Meanings of Abstract Art: Between Nature and Theory (Routledge Advances in Art and Visual Studies), Routledge, NY

PDF. Introduction: 1.1. Empirical Aesthetic Research: Historical Overview:

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Social Alternatives analyses, critiques and reviews contemporary social issues and problems. The journal seeks to generate insight, knowledge and understanding of our contemporary circumstances in order to determine local, national and global implications. We are committed to the principles of social justice and to creating spaces of dialogue intended to stimulate social alternatives to current conditions. *Social Alternatives* values the capacity of intellectual and artistic endeavour to prompt imaginative solutions and alternatives and publishes refereed articles, review essays, commentaries and book reviews as well as short stories, poems, images and cartoons.

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Submissions of articles, commentaries, reviews and fictional works are subject to double blind peer review and should be emailed to the general article editor. Authors are encouraged to consider and reference papers previously published in *Social Alternatives* to promote ongoing discussion. Submissions should be double-spaced with page numbers on the bottom right. Academic articles should be approximately 3,000-5,000 words, commentaries and review essays between 800 to 1,500 words, book reviews 800 words, short stories 1,000 words and poetry up to 25 lines. Submissions must include:

- copyright release form
- title page listing contributing authors, contact details, affiliation and short bio of approximately 150 to 200 words
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Please use Australian/English spelling and follow Harvard referencing. Submit tables, graphs, pictures and diagrams on separate pages. Remove in-text references identifying authors and replace with [name removed for the review process].

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BRONWYN STEVENS AND ELIZABETH EDDY

The articles in this special non-themed edition of *Social Alternatives* reflect the wide variety of topics and disciplinary approaches contributors have brought to this journal over the past thirty-seven years. These articles are united in their presentation of alternative viewpoints that contribute towards themes fostered in this journal – non-violence, sustainability, egalitarianism and equity.

Binoy Kampmark examines Citizens' War Crimes' Tribunals. These sought to establish some form of accountability for war crimes committed by national leaders too powerful to be indicted by existing domestic or international courts or tribunals. Leaders whose actions have included deliberate deception and flagrant violations of international law which have resulted in massive civilian casualties. He argues that the weaknesses of such tribunals, a lack of jurisdictional authority or enforcement capacity, can also be their greatest strength.

Itsushi Takedo focuses on identity and citizenship in his article, 'Exploring the Subjective Concept of Migrant Native Citizenship: the case of two Japanese migrants in Australia'. This article considers the emotional and subjective element in the concept of citizenship, the way it signifies identity and a sense of belonging, from the perspective of two Japanese migrants.

In 'A Persisting Fascination: German interest in Aboriginal Australians', Oliver Haag examines German translations of two well-known stories of Aboriginal Australians by non-indigenous authors, *The Little Black Princess* by Jeannie Gunn and *The Last of the Nomads* by William John Peasley. He concludes that these translations ignore the historical context of inter-racial relations while reinforcing traditional German perceptions of indigenous Australians as a timeless, unchanging, pre-modern and harmonious naturefolk.

Catalina Botez's article, 'Liquefactions: River floods and tides of memory in Anne Michaels' *Fugitive Pieces*', presents a critical literary approach to this fictional work by Michaels. It introduces the concepts of liquefaction and fluid trauma to explore its themes of healing and co-healing in relation to post-Holocaust trauma and transnational survivorship.

'Society as a Patient: Metapathology, healing and challenges of self and social transformations' unites Western and Indian philosophical traditions to shed insight on the relationship between the health of the individual and the health of society. Ananta Kumar Giri proposes

that understanding 'society as the patient' brings our focus from individual pathology to recognising social pathology – or 'metapathology'. The transformation of self and society necessitates 'creative suffering', referring to the need for critiquing narrow individualised notions of pathology.

In 'The Myth of Femininity in the Sport of Bodybuilding' Jamilla Rosdahl examines the challenge that strong muscular women pose to traditional assumptions of femininity. Through an examination of the sport of bodybuilding she highlights the contradictory relationship between muscles and femininity.

Anoushka Benbow-Buitenhijs utilises the critical theory of Marcuse to analyse the complex and contradictory attitudes of Australian women to the globalised corporate ideal of flawless perfection, in 'A Feminine Double-Bind? Towards understanding the commercialisation of beauty through examining anti-ageing culture'. The images portrayed by the cosmetics industry through commercial advertising create an impossible ideal of beauty that creates anxiety in women and further problematises aging.

In 'Workchoices – Characterisation, Effects and Resistance: An AMWU Perspective', Brett Heino explores the campaign of resistance conducted by the AMWU in response to the Howard Government's Workchoices legislation. Heino argues that this politically oriented campaign was a departure from historic tradition that is tied to the political and economic transformations of Australian neo-liberalism.

Janice Newton's article 'Permanent Residency in Caravan Parks: Alternative and acceptable housing for some', investigates permanent residency in caravan parks and finds some surprising benefits. These include greater sociability and enhanced cooperation and tolerance that suit many residents. But there are also problems including the fragility of the residences and restrictions to secure tenure that indicate limitations to this mode of living.

The edition also includes two commentaries. Richard Hil gives a scathing indictment of the current state and future directions of Australia's university sector in 'Post Whackademia'. Elisse Kleiner identifies the advantages of community living in 'Sharing a Vision: Intentional communities in Australia'.

Authors

Bronwyn Stevens and Elizabeth Eddy are members of the *Social Alternatives* editorial collective.

Austerity Poem

There are no birds in this poem,
no brightly feathered
metaphors for freedom.

This poem won't win any prizes
or be toasted by
clinking champagne glasses.

This poem has upturned hungry faces,
is desperate and fearful,
takes shelter in doorways.

It has cold feet in worn shoes,
uncut hair,
one less shower a week.

This poem works for a pension,
for those who care more for the rights
of the unborn —

than for those who struggle
from pay cheque to pay cheque.

This poem brings no salvation.
It won't bang any drums
for a thousand fallen trees —

because this poem
is already on its knees.

There are no birds in this poem.
They already pecked
the fallen crumbs
and have all flown away.

SARA MOSS
GOLD COAST, QLD

no country is an island

*"No man is an Iland, intire of itself; every man is a piece of
the continent, a part of Maine." (John Donne)*

*"se escucha también con el alma, con el espíritu"/ "we also
listen with the soul, with the spirit". (Montserrat Figueras)*

I

"i" is en route to the other incessantly
spermatozoids swim towards the ovule
the ovule becomes a human being
human beings get together in societies
societies coalesce around cities
cities are unified in imaginary countries
& countries create their own distances
& degrees of separation & islands

"i" migrates towards the "lucky country"
creating its own imaginary ports & laws
as certainties dilute into unknown currents
& while "i" drifts wor(l)ds vanish &
under his/her feet new islands are brought
into existence by the semantic of fear
so countries create their own distances
& degrees of separation & islands

II

& boats come from all flanks
webbing out their own "tierra del medio"
an aged mediterranean sea languaging
that bridges the islands & continents of the mind
in a seaword made of fleshy stories
conversing & listening themselves to life

& boats come from all flanks
in all colours & in old languages
bewitched by their own beating heart
listening & conversing out a continent
for thee, John Donne tells us, the bells toll

SERGIO HOLAS
ADELAIDE, SA

Citizens' War Crimes' Tribunals

BINOY KAMPMARK

Ad hoc war crimes tribunals established by concerned citizens to punish the 'crime of aggression' and various atrocities, have a history stretching back to 1967, when the Russell War Crimes Tribunal was convened. Since then, several such tribunals have been held, providing an array of evidence to examine when considering whether such deliberations can ever be useful. The legacy of such tribunals is a mixed one, but it is argued here, considering the efforts of the Russell Tribunal of Palestine, that the attendant weaknesses (a lack of sanctions and jurisdictional force) can also be their greatest merit.

Are there not impossible things which no human action can make possible? – Marta Harnecker (2007: 70).

George Monbiot, veteran British activist and author had made no secret of his indignation with former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. Incandescent with rage, Monbiot felt that the citizen's arrest of the man he accused of war crimes was not only appropriate but essential for justice to be done. In 2010, he urged readers in *The Guardian* to arraign Blair for 'illegal acts of mass murder', or, to be more accurate, 'the supreme international crime' – the crime of aggression. The Crime of Aggression was first defined at the Nuremberg war crimes trials after World War II. Monbiot also inaugurated a website – www.arrestblair.org, its sole purpose being to raise money for a citizen's arrest of Blair. 'Anyone meeting the rules I've laid down will be entitled to one quarter of the total pot: the bounties will remain available until Blair faces a court of law' (2010).

Such efforts form the basis of citizens' activities in the pursuit of justice when there is a perceived reluctance to prosecute powerful figures who have been said to have committed high crimes. In such cases, citizen activism has attempted to fill the breach with at times novel exercises of judgement and condemnation. Democratic citizenry, as argued by Amartya Sen and Carolyn Forché, is an active body, rendered 'fit through democracy', a daily assertion of conduct that takes responsibility for actions (Esquith 2002).

Esquith (2002) observes that war crimes tribunals and truth commissions might be 'easily parodied and exploited' but may prove effective forces of 'democratic education in more consolidated as well as transitional democratic societies'. Such experiments might also be deemed exercises in the 'acceleration in conflict resolution and a persistent discourse of justice' (Teitel 2003: 70). The problems of establishing international criminal tribunals are complex enough. They are also deemed, as Kingsley

Chiedu Moghalu (2006) remarked, matters of political choice, and creatures of political will. That does not necessarily imperil their validity, though it suggests how hostility to such tribunals may arise.

In the context of international citizens' tribunals, putative authority derives from assumptions of responsibility and duty undertaken by the civic body. Legitimacy for such civic action extends from the activism associated with social movements, non-government organisations and community groups. The peoples' International Climate Justice Tribunal, which had preliminary hearings in October 2009, provided a striking example of this purpose: 'Although the duty has not been granted us by any formally constituted legal authority, we recognise responsibility in the name of mankind and in defence of civilisation and Mother Earth' (Solon Foundation 2009).

The challenges presented by peoples' tribunals are best described by the theoretical suggestions made by the Chilean political scientist Marta Harnecker (2007) in discussing various forms of authority. For Harnecker, an 'a-legal space' exists as a means of explaining various collective actions that, while not legally binding, exert considerable authority as 'political facts'. They might have a legal flavour in terms of aspirations, but lack the formal status of law. Of interest to Harnecker is an acceptance on the part of progressive movements that they do not consider a 'theoretical, organic, programmatic crisis' disabling (Harnecker 2007: 66). Antonio Gramsci's view on how the politician should not merely operate factually, but also normatively, is cited. The figure of political action can move 'in the plane of effective reality, but so he can control and overcome it (or contribute to it)' (Gramsci, cited in Harnecker 2007: 67).

Harnecker examines, in particular, the actions of the political party *La Causa R*. The party erected ballot boxes through Caracas in 1992 to ask citizens to 'vote'

on whether the then president Carlos Andrés Pérez should stay in office. The action was considered effective. Twenty-five percent of the city's residents participated in this mock referendum. Of those who participated, 90 percent voted against the President. It was an act that was 'not legal but not illegal', and resulted in political change – in this case, the eventual impeachment of the President. Such an illustration is useful in terms of our discussion here, as an example of citizen-directed domestic political action akin to the peoples' tribunals movement.

In short, other avenues present themselves in terms of morally execrating individuals in high positions who have been accused of grave crimes against the international community. One notable experiment of international citizens' justice, which yielded varied offspring, remains the Russell International War Crimes Tribunal. The Russell Tribunal held sessions in Stockholm and Roskilde in 1967. The Tribunal was convened to investigate allegations of war crimes in the Vietnam War by the United States and its allies. But what is less known is how the Tribunal itself ushered in a series of international citizens' tribunals of various degrees of significance.

Following the Russell Tribunal, other committees were formed by citizens to try purported high crimes. Their scope has been varied and in some cases, innovative. In 1976, a peoples' International Tribunal on Crimes against Women held hearings. In recent times, peoples' tribunals have proliferated over a plethora of issues. An Independent People's Tribunal on the World Bank Group in India found crimes in the conduct of the World Bank. Tribunals on climate change have also been convened (Solon Foundation 2009). A citizens' international war crimes trial was held in Kuala Lumpur (Falk 2011). It is therefore striking to find that literature on the legacy of such tribunals, in both theory and practice, is far from extensive. Arthur Jay Klinghoffer and Judith Apter Klinghoffer (2002) examined the value of international citizens' tribunals in one of the few notable studies on the subject.

This article will now consider the latest efforts to convict, albeit always in absentia, figures or institutions alleged to be responsible for various high crimes. While these efforts have been numerous, special attention will be given to the attempts made by the Russell Tribunal on Palestine as a study on theory and practice in the effectiveness of such peoples' tribunals. It examines the potential effectiveness of such moves, considering the first effort made by the judges of the Russell Tribunal on Vietnam. What such actions suggest is a hunger on the part of international citizenry to engage the justice system at the elemental level, tackling alleged high crimes through unofficial means that should, strictly speaking, be addressed by official judicial procedures. If states refuse to institute

domestic or international prosecution for alleged high crimes, citizens may step in, at least symbolically, to fill in the void. Political alienation can be overcome by measures of citizens' engagement, notwithstanding their lack of formal judicial status.

Early crimes, early efforts

In the *New York Times* on 28 March 1963, the British philosopher of logic and mathematics Bertrand Russell alleged that the United States was 'conducting a war of annihilation in Vietnam' (Russell 1967: 31). Russell wrote to the paper outlining what he claimed to be various illegal methods of war adopted by the U.S. military. The atrocity assertions were met with doubt. By 1967, the journalist Joseph Buttinger (1967) claimed in his far from radical history that torture and shooting of prisoners was 'routine', while the more indignant intellectuals of the New Left pressed for a broader categorisation of the war as criminal and genocidal. The Nuremberg decisions purported to apply a universal law in assessing the behaviour of governments. As the U.S. Chief Prosecutor at Nuremberg Robert Jackson submitted, 'If certain acts and violations of treaties are crimes, they are crimes whether the United States does them or whether Germany does them' (Falk et al. 1971: 222). The resurrection of Nuremberg's principles against the war efforts of the United States became the main feature of the Russell War Crimes Tribunal which attempted to apply the jurisprudence of atrocity to the conflict in Vietnam. Its membership was broad comprising, primarily, international citizens of the left – the Yugoslavian jurist Vladimir Dedijer, existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre and the dissident Polish born Marxist Isaac Deutscher.

What was different from Nuremberg, as Sartre opined, was the Russell Tribunal's absence of a punitive power structure. There was no issue of victor's justice, nor one of penalty since there was 'no formal prosecution'. There was 'a jury and no judge' (Julin 1967: 712). The Russell Tribunal, since it had neither the strength nor the means to frame the law behind the prosecution, had considerable flexibility in what it could garner and what it could dictate. As the Klinghoffers themselves noted, the venue itself lacked legal standing (2002: 1).

The outcome of the tribunal was in little doubt, a perennial tendency in the exercises of such judicial exercises. Even before they start, a note of certainty is struck. The members found that the United States was guilty of the 'deliberate, systematic bombardment of civilian targets ... dwellings, villages ... medical establishments, leper colonies, schools, churches, pagodas, historical and cultural monuments'. Russell spoke of the 'moving and unparalleled resistance of the people of Vietnam' (Kulic 2009).

Such conclusions reportedly fell on deaf ears. As Clifford Truesdell and Joyce Johnson observed in the *New York Review of Books* (1 Jul, 1971), the decisions of the tribunal had 'not appeared in the United States'. Since the political position of the judges was predominantly on the Left, ideology transpired to distract critics from examining the nature of America's Indochina adventure. American war designs were overlooked in favour of *ad hominem* attacks against the gathered authors in Stockholm and Copenhagen. Its critics were, according to numerous editorials, 'cynical and ridiculous' (*Time*, May 19, 1967: 37); Sartre was 'a long Communist crony' (*Time*, May 12, 1967: 30); Russell's intellect was enfeebled by political naiveté, 'an old man in a hurry,' wrote Bernard Levin acidly, 'who has left his judgment, his reputation and his usefulness behind' (Levin 1967: 68). The large document arising from the proceedings, detailing U.S. war policy, was ignored in the personal invective of Cold War passion.

American elites and public opinion saw the Tribunal as an exercise flawed by ideological contentions and inappropriate procedures. Officials of the United States, argued critics, were not given a fair hearing. For one, such citizen judges were not schooled in the basics of procedural justice. Even anti-Vietnam war critics questioned the universal purview of the Russell Tribunal: it was caught in a political demonising of American foreign policy, a selective approach to the atrocities of one side at the expense of the other. The atrocities of the Viet Cong, for instance, were not submitted to the same review (*Newsweek* 44). The prominent anti-war activist Staughton Lynd (1967), for that reason, refused to participate in the proceedings. 'I believe that [what Russell proposes] amounts to judging one side (the N.L.F) by its ends, the other side (the United States) by its means. Precisely this double standard is what I had thought all of us, in this post-Stalin era, wished to avoid' (1967: 76).

To see the exercise as one without impact, despite such negativity, would be a mistake. An editorial in *Commonweal* (May 16, 1967) saw this people's tribunal as a novel form of protest in an 'effort to rescue the nation and the world from what can only be described as Lyndon's folly' (*Commonweal* 1967: 252). Indeed, contributions to *Commonweal* prior to the full-scale deployment of U.S. forces in Vietnam were already arguing how 'our government is making murderers of us all' (Zahn 1966). Parallels were being drawn between the impotence of the Catholic community in Germany to stop Hitler in his tracks and the indifference of Americans to condemn a war which was providing regular reminders of the destruction of Ethiopian towns (by Mussolini's Italy) and the cult of the military in the dark days of fascist aggression. The development of the 'cult of the Green Beret (with its equivalent of the Horst Wessel song and all!)' was particularly disturbing for contributor Gordon C.

Zahn, who had authored a monograph on the subject of Catholicism's silence in Germany during the crimes of the Third Reich (1966: 356).

Unofficially, the exercise of citizens' justice troubled officials. Publicly, the Johnson administration was uninterested in the efforts made by the members of the Tribunal. U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk refused to send a representative to the Russell Tribunal, seeing little need in playing 'games with a 94 year-old English Professor' (*Newsweek* May 15, 1967: 44). Privately, however, comments were made on the potential impact the tribunal might have on Swedish-U.S. relations. Johnson's national security advisor Walt Rostow discussed the matter with Swedish Prime Minister Tage Erlander in Bonn, on the occasion of West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's funeral. Rostow conveyed the President's concerns: 'the burden of newspaper stories on you at this time would be heavy and that, in fact, this kind of story helps prolong the war' (Rostow 1967).

Erlander, while sympathetic to Rostow, had his hands tied. The Tribunal members had already created a storm when Russell published the letter Erlander had sent him on 9 December 1966. 'I urge you not to choose Sweden as a site for such meetings' (Klinghoffer & Klinghoffer 2002: 139). Neutralism, Erlander felt, would be jeopardised if such a process was to take place, not to mention the potential for undermining the secret mediation being facilitated by Stockholm between Hanoi and Washington. A worst case scenario would be American economic retaliation. Both Erlander and his foreign minister made it 'clear that the whole operation is bad for Sweden's relations with the US; but he has no legal basis for excluding visitors from France, Britain, Yugoslavia etc. because there are now no visa provisions operating unless Sweden's national security is involved in the narrowest possible sense' (Rostow 1967). This was a position he would repeat on American television (Klinghoffer & Klinghoffer 2002: 139).

Subsequent tribunals

The scope of events that have warranted the interest of international citizens' tribunals demonstrate how influential the Russell Tribunal's precedent has been. Transnational judicial activity, initiated by international citizens, has grown in interest. Be it Sudan and the refusal by the international community to intervene; the issue of Palestinian rights in the West Bank and Gaza; the Iraq War; or the impact of the World Bank on developing economies, the model of the tribunal has been embraced by international citizenry. The focus of these tribunals is standard: the reiteration of the Nuremberg precedents on leader responsibility, war crimes and crimes against humanity. By the time the Kuala Lumpur War Crimes Tribunal began its hearings on the role played by the US-led coalition in its invasion of Iraq in November 2011,

jurist Richard Falk, an initial critic of the Russell Tribunal experiment would argue that, 'The KIWCT did not occur entirely in a jurisprudential vacuum' (Falk 2011).

The Russell Tribunal on Palestine (RTP) provides a fitting case study in this discussion. As described by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation (2012), the Russell Tribunal on Palestine would operate in the tradition of the Russell Tribunal on War Crimes in Vietnam. It was 'a citizens' initiative which aims to reaffirm the primacy of international law as the basis for solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and at raising awareness of the responsibility of the international community on the continuing denial of the rights of the Palestinian people'. A traditional and conspicuously public formula is adopted in such initiatives. Their promulgation is not by any formal act, but by public announcement. For instance, as the Peace Foundation explains, the Russell Tribunal on Palestine was launched by press conference on 4 March, 2009 in Brussels. It was chaired by the French Ambassador for Life, and former resistance fighter Stéphane Hessel.

The range of the hearings was considerable, adopting an even more expansive format than that used at Stockholm and Copenhagen. Hearings took place in Barcelona, London, Cape Town, New York, with the final March session concluded in Brussels in 2013. The themes were also extensive, with Barcelona dealing with complicities and omissions of the European Union and its member states regarding the occupation of Palestinian territories by Israel and Israel's alleged violations of international law; the London session examining international corporate complicity in terms of violations of international human rights law, humanitarian law and war crimes; the Cape Town proceedings considering the possibility that Israel might be responsible for apartheid practices; and New York proceedings taking a specific US and UN focus on complicity in Israel's violation of international law.

While lacking legal status, the objective adopted by the RTP was that of its Vietnam predecessor – that the Tribunal abide by the will of the people to consider injustices and violations of international law that had been simply avoided by international jurisdictions, or recognised and continued with impunity (Russell Tribunal on Palestine 2012). In so doing, members would abide by the framework of international law established by UN General Assembly, Resolution 181, 'Future government of Palestine' A/RES/181(II), (29 November 1947) on the partition of Palestine and to UN General Assembly, Resolution 10/15, 'Advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem' A/RES/10/15 (20 July 2004) acknowledging the International Court of Justice view that the construction of the Wall by Israel in the Occupied

Palestinian Territories was in violation of international law. The outcome of the Tribunal's efforts would be a form of civic engagement. Through this approach 'civil society' in the states concerned with the question of Palestine could be mobilised. 'The legitimacy of the Russell Tribunal on Palestine does not come from a government or any political party but from the prestige, professional interests and commitment to fundamental rights of the Members that constitute the Tribunal' (Russell Tribunal on Palestine 2012).

Criticisms of the various sessions were forthcoming, replicating the arguments made against the original Russell tribunal model. NGO Monitor was particularly harsh, questioning the objective basis of the RTP and suggesting that the convenors were using 'a legal façade to create an image of neutrality and credibility' (3 Oct, 2009). The argot of a judicial proceeding was being mimicked to mask a political experiment (NGO Monitor 3 Oct, 2009).

The New York session, it was also argued, lacked a serious Palestinian presence, occasioned by an assortment of visa denials for such figures as the Palestinian Ambassador to the EU, Leila Shahid and Raji Sourani, founder of the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (Federici 2012). The proceedings revealed to such commentators as Federici a striking inadequacy in the very framework of international law the tribunal was using. Nor could Israel, despite its citizens being made aware of the ethical and legal problems of Israeli policy, be necessarily moved. The Tribunal's own witnesses emphasised this point. 'We thought,' claimed a key witness in the proceedings, the Israeli socialist historian and activist Ilan Pappé, 'that Israelis, when they would know and would agree that this is what happened, that [such revelations] would inform their ethical and moral view. But this has not happened' (Federici 2012).

The Cape Town gathering received considerable criticism for its conclusions that 'Israel subjects the Palestinian people to an institutionalised regime of domination amounting to apartheid as defined under international law' (RTP 5 Nov, 2011). Richard J. Goldstone, a former justice of the South African Constitutional Court, and chief of a UN fact-finding mission on the Gaza conflict of 2008-9, described it as a 'slander' on Israel (RTP 5 Nov, 2011). 'The charge that Israel is an apartheid state is a false and malicious one that precludes, rather than promotes, peace and harmony'. Goldstone further extended his criticisms of the Tribunal, claiming that the 'evidence' was one-sided to begin with and actually dangerous for the prospects of peace. A few journalists reported that the session in Cape Town resembled 'lurid political theatre' (Massyn 2011).

In the United States, the pro-Israeli Stand With Us community group spoke of the RTP as 'yet another effort

of the global campaign to delegitimize Israel and promote boycotts, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against it' (Stand With US 2011). Seeing law in its legal compass, the organisation spoke of how only four of the jurors had 'any claim to knowledge of expertise in law; the others are actors, writers and activists.' Similarly, Massyn (2011) saw it as a simulacrum of law, equipped with 'super-serious titles' for the jurists, 'testimony' and a 'quasi-legal process'.

Such criticism serves to show that civic efforts in the form of peoples' tribunals have considerable influence within the 'a-legal' context of political change, even if they are deemed by critics to be misguided at best, insidious at worst. In a sense, they cannot be deemed to be exercises of law purely described since they are outside official legal channels to begin with. It is precisely their legacy, for all its extra-legal importance, that concerns opponents. The very hostility vented by such figures as former U.S. government official Elliot Abrams serves as a case in point, describing the RTP as 'another milestone in the history of intellectual dishonesty [and] virulent bias' (5 Nov, 2011).

Reflections

In the scheme of things, are such transnational people's tribunals effective? The black letter lawyers would find fault with such experiments due to a lack of viable sanction and formal establishment. Without a judiciary backed by powers of enforcement, we can only ever be sentimental over such matters as entering convicted names into a 'Register of War Criminals'. There are no prisons awaiting the verdict at the end of the day, no constabulary to clap the sentenced figure in irons and lead him from the dock. The culprits are at best scolded, at worst ridiculed.

The historical record shows that such tribunals do have traction, if not publicly, then at least in the backroom, where policy makers express concern about the impacts such deliberations might have. The effect of the Russell Vietnam War Crimes tribunal affected Swedish-American relations in 1967 and it has been the model for subsequent tribunals. While publicly shunning the tribunal, the officials of the Johnson administration took measures, such as visa rejections, to prevent the members of the tribunal from convening.

The challenges posed here are writ large in discussions of global governance and who the stakeholders in that process should be. 'We're trapped in a debilitating paradox,' argue Richard Samans et al. (2011). The global community is perceived as interconnected and interdependent. 'Yet governance at all levels – public and private as well as global, national, and local – is struggling to adapt.' Countries might have become more economically and environmentally interdependent, but

so have individuals. Political expression is being made 'outside formal national governmental channels', be it through 'NGOs, business trade associations, international media outlets, or virtual professional and social networks on the Internet' (Samana et al. 2011). The problems of governance pointed out by these authors are not merely economic but juridical in terms of remedying injustices.

There is another aspect of this discussion that deserves attention. In the views of such deconstructionist theorists of jurisprudence as the Finnish legal scholar Koskenniemi, international law can never be seen to be an objective practice, marred as it is by its structural indeterminacy (1989: 500). The debate on whether the creation of international war crimes tribunals are, in fact, examples of political fiat rather than legal acumen continues to rage (Zolo 2009; Meernik 2000; Minear 1971). Any international legal experiment, certainly one fronted by citizens, has to be seen in that light. International conduct is simply not subject to the standard rational rules, being rather a combination of morality, politics and self-interest. In that case, the international citizens' tribunal is a fitting instrument for tapping into public consternation at the alleged high crimes of officials otherwise outside the scope of standard prosecutions. It is a means of tackling those 'impossibilities' Harnecker discusses; an approach that reflects community standards in an 'a-legal space' of political action.

There are also arguments that official international tribunals are impediments to peace and stability (Akhavan 2009; Posner & Yoo 2005). The corollary of this is that peoples' tribunals are not as disruptive, given their non-binding character and flexible program of examination. In fact, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson argued that any international war crimes trial after World War I should have no punitive powers to try the arraigned leaders of the Central Powers, most notably the ex-Kaiser, Wilhelm II (Kampmark 2008: 519). Instead, any measure seeking to expose the Kaiser's illegal conduct during the war should rely on 'moral execration', something which a citizens' tribunal does aptly.

International citizens' tribunals also suggest an active framework of deliberations that broaden the focus of justice. Far from being necessarily parochial expressions of legal sentiment, such tribunals can sharpen issues, focus discussion on salient points, and shed light on matters in a broader way that bypasses self-interested states. Their effectiveness can be gathered from the sheer hostility of critics who would rather dismiss them, but find significant threat in their potency in affecting public opinion. It is precisely in such protests that their effectiveness can be gleaned.

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Exploring the Subjective Concept of Migrant Native Citizenship: The case of two Japanese migrants in Australia

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While the political and legal dimensions of citizenship are widely recognised, subjective features of citizenship are not fully understood. This paper underlines the emotional element of citizenship that is beyond merely holding a passport or having particular rights and obligations centring on the narratives of two Japanese migrants in Australia. It draws attention to the way citizenship signifies identity, a sense of belonging, and a metaphorical home for diasporic subjects. The paper advances the existing yet limited literature on subjective understandings of citizenship from the viewpoint of migrants.

Contested Concept of Citizenship

Citizenship is considered a significant element of modern nation states (Castles and Davidson 2000) and is generally understood to consist of rights, duties, and obligations (Batrouney and Goldlust 2005). It 'represents a relationship between the individual and the state, in which the two are bound together by reciprocal rights and obligations' (Heywood 2004: 204). Defining this concept is complicated because it contains different constituents and political traditions, and also because of the contested nature of the concept itself (Lister 2003). The notion of citizenship also fails to address subjective or psychological components and how subjects feel about their 'citizenship'. It has been argued that there is no universal definition of citizenship (Kivisto and Faist 2007) and the concept of citizenship has historically been contested and continuously modified (Isin and Wood 1999; Faulks 2000). This concept of citizenship was originally created in Ancient Greece, however, the nature of citizenship in Ancient Greece varies from modern citizenship. While Ancient Greek citizenship was more exclusive, being obtainable for certain members of society only, modern citizenship is more inclusive for all and is construed as egalitarian (Faulks 2000). Voices from anti-racist and feminist theorists that insist on more inclusive citizenship echo the current debates on citizenship (Yuval-Davis 2006).

Various forces, principally globalisation, have challenged the concept of citizenship. In a traditional framework, boundaries between citizens and non-citizens are clear and distinct because the idea of belonging is reduced to being associated with one nation state. Notwithstanding, increased human mobility and transnational migrant practices, both of which are consequences of globalisation, have reduced the significance of national boundaries (Castles and Davidson 2000) and have

shaken the traditional concept of citizenship (Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006). In response to the contemporary interconnected world and a depiction of cosmopolitan subjects, diverse interpretations of citizenship were introduced, including transnational citizenship (Bauböck 1994) and flexible citizenship (Ong 1999). These new approaches of conceptualising citizenship enable us to understand the concept of citizenship taking the social, economic, and cultural transitions that globalisation has introduced into consideration. Even though it is stated that 'the nation-state is still the key reference point for citizenship' (Castles and Davidson 2000: 19), the circumstances surrounding citizenship suggest that the traditional concept of citizenship is no longer adequate, and that the essentialist view of national and cultural identity has a limited ability to describe cosmopolitan subjects who share more than one nationality, culture, and language.

Although the understanding of citizenship has advanced, citizenship is often discussed chiefly through political and legal aspects (Marshall 1950; Turner 1993). Despite the fact that 'citizenship must always have a subjective or psychological component' (Heywood 2004: 207), its subjective aspect is often disregarded in citizenship studies and is not integrated as a constitution of citizenship as Ho (2009: 788-789) claims. Several studies attract attention to the subjective nature of citizenship for diasporic subjects. For instance, Brettell's (2006) research on migrants' naturalisation in the US illustrates that this process is an emotional one, on the grounds that for the migrants giving up their homeland citizenship means betraying their own identity. Brettell (2006: 96-7) states that a link exists between the country of origin and the sense of identity and belonging. That study concludes that citizenship has subjective significance for migrants beyond legal and political factors. In studying dual citizenship in Sweden, Gustafson (2002: 475)

also identifies that naturalisation for migrants who are forced to renounce their original citizenship becomes an emotionally trying process because native citizenship represents their 'emotions, roots, origin, and identity' (Gustafson 2002: 475). Thus, naturalisation causes internal debates and emotional struggles for migrants on account of the subjective nature of citizenship (Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006).

These studies throw a light on the fact that citizenship from the country of origin represents an 'important symbolic marker of personal and emotional heritage' (Batrouney and Goldlust 2005: 81) and demonstrates that renouncing citizenship is a metaphor for eliminating various constituents of a migrant's life path. Following these works, I understand migrants' subjective citizenship to be shaped by one's subjectivities towards their citizenship. It consists of one's emotions and feelings for their homeland.

Narratives Left Behind: Route to Research

Qualitative research can be summarised as 'unstructured, open, shaped during the course of data collection, and able to capture the unforeseen' (Corbetta 2003: 41). An important feature of the openness and flexibility of qualitative research is that it allows researchers to encounter unexpected areas and themes of their research topic. This also means that data collected in the course of a study may raise issues beyond the scope of the initial research project or that the importance of data generated during a research project may not appear meaningful to the researchers at the time of the study. Such situations are relevant to my research.

While researching migration and settlement experiences of female Japanese migrants involved in international marriage with Australian men, I conducted fieldwork in Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast area of Queensland, Australia during 2007. The participants in this research – nine Japanese migrant women – were mainly recruited by acquaintances. Their ages ranged from 20s to the 80s, yet most participants were in their 30s and 40s. Semi-structured interviews were performed in Japanese lasting from 40 minutes to two hours. As part of the study, I enquired as to the participants' citizenship because I sought to know their visa and citizenship status for demographic purposes. At the time of the interviews, all participants except one in my research held Japanese citizenship while also holding Australian permanent or other temporary visas. The one participant who did not fall into this category was a war bride, who had migrated to Australia upon marrying an Australian service man shortly after World War II.

When a Japanese national gains foreign nationality, they automatically forfeit their Japanese citizenship under current Japanese Nationality Law (Ministry of Justice of Japan 2012). Accordingly, Japanese migrants

either retain their Japanese passport or derive a foreign passport by relinquishing their native citizenship. The interlocutors in my research enunciated that they would hold onto their Japanese passports. Their decision to retain their Japanese citizenship was based on pragmatic reasons. They mentioned that there is no significant reason for them to obtain Australian citizenship because Australian permanent resident visas allow them to legally reside in Australia without any problems. They further emphasised that adopting Australian citizenship has no substantive advantages other than suffrage. Comparable findings are discussed in the study of immigrants in Australia by Batrouney and Goldlust (2005); some migrants retain their passports because there are no significant benefits to adopting Australian citizenship.

Two participants, however, articulated their strong emotional attachment to their Japanese passport and provided lengthy narrative responses. The intention for them to maintain their native citizenship is beyond the pragmatic account that the other participants expressed. For these two participants, their Japanese citizenship denotes both cultural and national identities, a sense of belonging to Japan and their metaphorical home. Their response was rather unforeseen. Although I valued their answers, at that time I did not know how to handle data which was outside the main research theme, and which also did not fit into any chapters of my thesis. Consequently, I neglected to investigate the matter further. Yet, on completion of my study and thesis, I began to wonder about those two narratives whenever I was reading literature on citizenship or whenever I was talking to my Japanese colleagues and friends in Australia about their Japanese passport. Whereas a discussion of citizenship was not embraced in my thesis, the two participants' responses remained in my mind. My concerns about those two narratives eventually transformed into a desire to explore the question of citizenship to a greater extent. I also became aware that those two narratives possibly offered important insights into an understanding of citizenship.

In this paper, I especially give heed to the two participants, Yoko and Arisa, who expressed emotional attachment to their passports. Yoko is a confident young woman who pays strong respect to her own Japanese heritage while she admires Western cultures. During the interview, I could see how much she thought about her native citizenship along with her Japanese identity. For her, citizenship is tied to her Japanese national/cultural identity as well as her life story. The other participant, Arisa, is an outgoing woman in her 40s. She openly shared her deep devotion to her Japanese passport. For her, Japanese citizenship implies her belonging to Japan and further connotes links to her metaphorical home.

I do not intend to make a generalised understanding of citizenship or generate a new theory based on the narratives of two interlocutors. I simply wish to introduce

the two narratives and consider what they mean in the context of subjective understanding of citizenship. Hence, here I clarify that the approach of this paper is distinctive from standard research papers that report the research process and findings. In explaining the background of this paper, I want to share how I came to see the significance of marginal or neglected data whilst simultaneously understanding the richness of the qualitative research that allows researchers to reflect back on data. My aim is therefore to use neglected data to shed light on subjective concepts of citizenship and contribute to the existing yet limited literature on subjective understandings of citizenship.

The following section examines subjective meaning of citizenship focusing on three aspects: (1) identity, (2) belonging, and (3) the metaphorical home. Interview data that mirrored these themes are then dissected, and the subjective meaning of citizenship is highlighted. The paper delineates how native citizenship carries a symbolic meaning of identity, belonging, and home. Then, it discusses why two participants, Arisa and Yoko, have such strong feelings towards their native citizenship. The paper closes with final remarks.

Identity, Belonging, and Home

Citizenship does not simply signify legal rights and obligations, but also identity (Brettell 2006; Nordberg 2006). The assignment of identity to citizenship underscores nationality and cultural heritage (Batrouney and Goldlust 2005). According to Preston (1997: 4), 'identity is the outcome of a complex series of social processes, and does not arise spontaneously but is learned and relearned over time'. As such, migration is a social process that influences the construction and modification of migrant identity. This is because the new interpersonal relationships that people develop through migration affect the way they perceive their identities (Easthope 2009). Consequently, migration becomes a process of exploring identity (Ahmed 1999). Relevant migration literature illuminates the way the migration process mediates migrant identity (see for example, Tsuda 2000; Zevallos 2008). Such studies demonstrate how migrants' cultural and national identity relating to homeland citizenship is heightened in reaction to social exclusion as well as the marginalisation that they confront in adopted countries. Being treated as outsiders as well as facing everyday experiences of racism encourage migrants to enhance their native citizenship along with national and cultural identity. In fact, it is pointed out that 'migrant identities often incorporate strong attachment to the home of origin' (Ralph and Staeheli 2011: 522). Citizenship, therefore, represents the identity that has been built throughout life in a homeland, consisting of cultural roots, language, emotion, and memories. Post-modernist understanding suggests that identity is fluid and dynamic, and that individual identity continues to be modified and to fluctuate throughout one's course of life (Hall 1992). Migrant identity that is assigned to citizenship

reflects this fluid and dynamic nature; the cultural and national identity of migrants becomes heightened through migration and settlement experiences.

Secondly, citizenship yields a sense of belonging. Citizenship indicates an individual's inclusion and exclusion, which simultaneously denotes belonging and un-belonging to a particular community (Christensen 2009). Yuval-Davis (2006: 197) states that 'belonging is about emotional attachment, about feeling "at home"'. She maintains that 'belonging can be an act of self-identification or identification by others, in a stable, contested or transient way' (Yuval-Davis 2006: 199). This spotlights the complex and fluid nature of belonging. The sense of belonging has become a primary concern for our modern world, which is affected by globalisation and multiculturalism (Christensen 2009). With reference to migration, it is contended that migrants enhance their sense of belonging to their homeland through leaving their own country (Naujoks 2010). In a study of the emotional aspect of citizenship among Singaporeans living overseas, Ho (2009: 793-794) relates that citizenship indicates a sense of belonging for overseas Singaporeans by submitting promises to one's belonging to Singapore. In this context, migrant native citizenship provides a sense of belonging that is symbolic, as argued in Benedict Anderson's (2006) classical work of 'imagined community'.

Citizenship in one's country of origin assures a sense of belonging to the homeland for diasporic subjects. However, such sense in a new state of residence is not readily acquired as belonging is interlinked with social location, such as race, gender, nationality, and class (Yuval-Davis 2006: 199), which are factors that generate social inclusion and exclusion. Within this condition, migrants often become subjects of exclusion since various differences in culture, language, and appearance are juxtaposed with the mainstream and are interpreted as foreign (Ralph and Staeheli 2011). It is important to remember here that even if migrants derive formal citizenship status, it does not inevitably mean that they feel they belong to their host society (Nagel and Staeheli 2004). Objective citizenship does not automatically guarantee subjective citizenship or a sense of belonging (Hage 1998), because even migrants who gain new citizenship still confront alienation from the dominant culture (Hage 1998; Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006).

The third meaning attached to citizenship is the concept of home, defined here as 'a place where no one questions your right to be; a place of belonging that points to your history, your past, an archive of sorts that metaphorically documents a lineage that marks you as non-alien' (Silva 2009: 694). It is considered that home can refer to a neighbourhood, community and even a nation (Blunt and Dowling 2006). For migrants, their country of origin can mean metaphorical 'home' – a place to belong and feel at ease. Such a concept is more conceptual

and imaginary (Austin 2005) and mythologised further in their imagination (Morawska 2011). Although in a geographical sense, migrants' physical home is located in adopted nations, their spiritual home often remains in their country of origin and this also bespeaks their loyalty as well as eternal belonging to their homeland (Magat 1999). Even if they do not return home or visit home frequently, homeland still remains 'their rightful home' (Parreñas 2001: 1140). Lam and Yeoh (2004) contend that although the notion of home is unstable under intensified global mobility, home still emphasises migrant roots and belonging. Citizenship guarantees access to, and indicates links to a homeland, namely 'home', and therefore signifies a subjective notion of home for migrants, and such a notion yields a sense of security.

These three points that I have raised with reference to the subjective facets of citizenship – identity, belonging, and home – are all interrelated (Ralph and Staeheli 2011). Identity and belonging are related because identity implies one's belonging and un-belonging to a particular group (Yuval-Davis 2006). 'Home connects with and contains that major context within which identity formation occurs: the Family' and home promises one's belonging (Austin 2005: 107). Blunt and Varley (2004: 3) call attention to the interrelated nature of these concepts, asserting that 'ideas of home invoke a sense of place, belonging, or alienation that is intimately tied to a sense of self'.

Japanese Migrants' Subjective Citizenship

In this section, I will demonstrate how the three themes introduced above are expressed in the narratives of Yoko and Arisa.

Yoko

The following interview with Yoko depicts her emotional attachment to her Japanese passport and citizenship. At the time of this interview, Yoko was in her early twenties and had only lived in Australia for approximately one year. She was enrolled in a local technical college and worked as a part-time café attendant. Responding to a question of either retaining her Japanese passport or exchanging it for an Australian passport at the expense of her native citizenship, her broader understanding and meaning of Japanese citizenship emerged.

Interviewer: So, you will obtain [Australian] permanent residency through your relationship, right? Do you think that you will eventually get [Australian] citizenship?

Yoko: No, I won't get Australian citizenship because I want to be Japanese forever. As you know, dual citizenship is not allowed in Japan, and my parents told me never to abandon my Japanese citizenship. I was born in Japan and I admire my country. I am proud of being Japanese so I do not see any reasons

for me to abandon my Japanese citizenship. Although it is a little sad that I do not have voting rights, I just have to accept it ...

Interviewer: So, you will maintain Japanese citizenship while holding permanent residency in Australia? There are people who renounce their citizenship of their homeland because they do not want to keep renewing their permanent resident visas.

Yoko: It may be better to obtain [Australian] citizenship considering that aspect. But [retaining my Japanese citizenship] is more about recognising my own history. I grew up in Japan and the colour of my skin and my eyes will never change. Also, I can never change the way I think nor change my past. I want to show my life [as being Japanese] to my future children ...

Interviewer: When did you decide that?

Yoko: I never considered getting Australian citizenship.

Interviewer: You thought about your Japanese identity even before moving to Australia?

Yoko: A passport may be considered just a piece of identification, but it was given to me by my parents. I was born to Japanese parents and was raised in Japan. So, abandoning Japanese citizenship is like giving all of that up.

Yoko does not deem citizenship to be simply identification or a piece of paper; rather, it represents the trajectory of her life. Thus, by renouncing her citizenship she would deny her own biography. It moreover signifies her immutable Japanese identity, which constitutes cultural heritage, memories, and sentiments. Yoko's statement, 'I want to be Japanese forever' suggests that no matter how long she lives in Australia, she will be Japanese, and that her time spent living in Japan remains a core part of her identity. Additionally, her comment, 'the colour of my skin and my eyes will never change' denotes how the physical appearance of migrants influences how they feel about their identity in a host society. This point is addressed by a study on migrants in Australia, which showed that the racialised bodies of migrants prevents them from asserting themselves as Australians because their physical marker does not align with what is considered to be 'Australian', namely Caucasian features (Batrouney and Goldlust 2005).

It seems that Yoko's feelings towards Japanese identity are emphasised by living in Australia as a racial as well as cultural minority. Daily encounters with Australians may render Yoko aware of being 'Japanese', a cultural and racial minority in Australian society. This is particularly relevant to the regional area of Australia where Yoko lives because of the predominantly white population in that region. As a matter of fact, Yoko mentioned that she faced racial prejudice and discrimination although it was not something she anticipated. Such encounters of social exclusion remind her of being marginalised

in Australia and seem to engender robust feelings towards her homeland of Japan. In addition, the way she understands that her Japanese citizenship was inherited from her parents accords with the nature of Japanese citizenship as *jus sanguinis* (by parentage) in comparison with *jus soli* (by birthplace) (Kashiwazaki 2000). In this discourse, her heritage and family are interlinked with Japanese citizenship and heightens the significance of her citizenship.

Arisa

Arisa, who at the time of the interview had lived in Australia for 13 years and was working as a part-time travel coordinator, expressed that home visits to Japan triggered her intense emotional attachment towards Japanese citizenship.

Interviewer: Do you plan to obtain Australian citizenship?

Arisa: No, I won't get Australian citizenship because I want to remain Japanese. Well, I used to frequently travel [overseas] until I got married, but my base was always Japan so I did not really care [about this] until I got married. As you know, when I travel to Japan, I get a stamp on my passport. For Japanese citizens, we get a '*kikoku*' [returning to a country] stamp. It's not an 'arrival' stamp. Foreigners get an arrival stamp on their passport. When I go through Japanese immigration at airports and get a '*kikoku*' stamp, I realise that I am returning to my homeland. When I used to travel, I had never thought about it, but when I got married [and migrated to Australia], I started thinking like that. In the Japanese passport, it says that the bearer of the passport is Japanese and every aid and needs should be provided to the passport holder while overseas. I appreciate this statement very much. This [passport] is a proof of our belonging to a particular country. It makes me feel that the Japanese government is behind me. So, I feel there is always a home for me to go back to if I want. You know, there are people who do not have their own country. I am currently living in Australia, but if I do not want to live here anymore, there is a country for me to return to, but this is not the case for everyone. So, I am very grateful for that. I think I can live here because I have a place which I can go back to. If I did not have my homeland, I don't think I could hold up when things are not going well here. I think if there is no place to return to, I would give up.

Interviewer: Which country would you like to live in: Australia or Japan?

Arisa: Africa! [laughs] I can live in any country as long as I hold my Japanese citizenship. It's fine as long as I have my place to return to ['home'].

The *kikoku* stamp on her passport reminded Arisa of her Japanese national identity and that she has a place

where she can return – a 'home'. Firstly, this suggests that her Japanese passport provides her with a sense of security (see for example, Batrouney and Goldlust 2005) along with her awareness of belonging to Japan. Arisa stated that she can endure the times when things are not going well in Australia because she knows that she can always return to Japan. While subtle, this statement indicates her experiences of difficulty in Australia, yet she can manage such experiences because she is aware of having a place to return to if she so desires. Secondly, in this understanding, Japan becomes a metaphoric home for Arisa. Although Arisa is in Australia, her 'real' home is always in Japan. In the last question, Arisa jokingly said that she would like to live in Africa, but then she emphasised that she can be anywhere as long as she holds her Japanese passport. This statement reconfirms that citizenship renders a sense of security as well as belonging for her. Both Yoko's and Arisa's subjective meanings of their Japanese citizenship accentuate not political or legal aspects of citizenship, but their allegiance to their homeland. Losing Japanese citizenship symbolically means losing their Japanese social as well as cultural values. Japan is a 'home' in their convictions, regardless of where they are located, and remains their emotional sanctuary.

Herein, I want to consider a potential explanation for the two interviewees' devotion to their Japanese citizenship. Their motive to maintain Japanese citizenship may be explained by differences between ethnic and civic citizenship. Ethnic citizenship determines members based on a common ethnicity, whereas civic citizenship is based on political rather than cultural elements (Reeskens and Hooghe 2010). Japanese citizenship is regarded as the former; therefore, the cultural and ethnic nature imposes a strong attachment to citizenship (Murazumi 2000), which may have an impact on the naturalisation of Japanese nationals overseas. As a matter of fact, comments such as 'No, I won't get Australian citizenship because I want to remain Japanese' and 'I am proud of being Japanese so I do not see any reasons for me to abandon my Japanese citizenship' manifest the significance of ethnic identity for them in regard to their citizenship. This connotes that their ethnic based citizenship prevents them from renouncing their Japanese citizenship.

Besides this explanation, the circumstances of Arisa and Yoko need to be taken into account. Excluding their Australian husbands, Arisa and Yoko do not have family in Australia since they left their family in Japan and migrated to Australia on their own. Having family back home is one of the reasons that migrants do not relinquish their original citizenship (Batrouney and Goldlust 2005). For Arisa and Yoko, retaining their Japanese citizenship evokes the comfort that they can always return home, to Japan, to be with their family. As a consequence, their family situation may explain their wish to hold onto their native citizenship. That being said,

this also means that if their situation shifts, they may take up Australian citizenship while giving up Japanese citizenship. The longer they reside out of Japan, the more likely they are to form their own family in Australia and derive a sense of security, which may lead to their naturalisation.

Related to this point, their decision regarding naturalisation may also be mediated by being a mother. Another informant, Tomomi, was the only interviewee who expressed an intention to naturalise, saying that she does not mind giving up her Japanese citizenship. For Tomomi, Australia was always foreign until she gave birth. Raising her child changed her perceptions of Australia since it became her child's home. Tomomi felt that she needed to assimilate with Australian society as a mother and she was concerned that if she continued to feel foreign towards Australia, such a feeling might pass on to her child. Whereas Tomomi did not articulate the link between her motherhood and potential naturalisation, it seems that motherhood mediated her way of thinking about naturalisation. A study of Indonesian women in transnational families in Australia reflects this point (Winarnita 2008), reporting that motherhood is related to the choice to forfeit Indonesian citizenship for the sake of their children. Arisa and Yoko did not have children at the time of the interviews, but if they have children in the future, then the way they feel about Japanese citizenship may be different. Accordingly, they may consider naturalisation as a viable option for the sake of their children.

Conclusion

The presented narratives of Arisa and Yoko provide an illustration of the subjective features of citizenship, drawing particular attention to identity, sense of belonging, and the conception of home, which are all associated with the notion of citizenship. For Arisa and Yoko, their citizenship signifies Japanese identity, renders a feeling of belonging to Japan, and represents home in a fundamental sense.

Multiple and reflexive social realities grounded in an interpretivist perspective indicate the complexities, multiplicities, and fluidity of diasporic subjects' identities, attachments, and notions of home. While I focused on two participants' emotional attachment to Japan, I want to stress that some migrants may identify themselves more with their homeland and others with their host society. Alternatively, they may be caught in a liminal place between both countries (see for example, Zevallos 2008). This means that although Arisa and Yoko expressed their identity, sense of belonging, and conception of 'home' concerning Japan, such attachment may be more or less important now than it will be in the future. The way they feel about their citizenship could shift over the course of their lives, thus instead of essentialising migrants' identity, belonging, and 'home', I continue to emphasise the fluidity of these aspects with reference to citizenship.

Future research can further investigate the subjective meaning of citizenship, as identified in this article, with a larger and more representative sample of Japanese migrants and also a comparison with other migrant groups in Australia. Moreover, further studies could be conducted on the gender element to cast light on how men and women have different connections to their original or native citizenship.

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Waihihi

in the mine's dark holiness
nothing could be lissome

it takes devoutly
like stealing collection plates
from an empty church

creates incomes
plants natives on the perimeter
hosts rare dotterels
on the tailings dam

when there's a slump
work stops
it makes the papers

we fall
three hundred feet
the cavern reaching
like a gulp to the stomach

earth vomits ore
and giant trucks the size of match toys
clean up the mess
spiral out of the pit
like the stairs of St Paul's

whisper here
and your voice will vanish
in the dry town

Note: The name Waihi is a contraction of Waihihi, place of gushing water. The de-watering of the gold mining process operating in Waihi, Aotearoa, New Zealand is believed by many to have led to subsidence in residential areas.

OWEN BULLOCK
DOWNER, ACT

A Persisting Fascination: German interest in Aboriginal Australians

OLIVER HAAG

*This article examines the German translations of Jeannie Gunn's *The Little Black Princess* (1905) (*Die kleine schwarze Prinzessin*, 2010) and William Peasley's *The Last of the Nomads* (1982) (*Die letzten Nomaden*, 2007). The focus rests on the translation of Australian historical and political contexts into the foreign context of German target culture. It argues that the specifics of inter-racial Australian history evident in the two books have been rendered invisible, without the very contexts having completely disappeared. Rather, the translations have reproduced Australian racisms and German ideas of Aboriginal authenticity and traditionalism, as reflected in the notions of the harmonious *Naturvolk* (natural people). Both translations, the article ultimately contends, testify to the persistency of German ideas of Aboriginal Australia, construing Aboriginal people as timeless, unchanging and pre-modern.*

German interest in Aboriginal Australia seems to be quite considerable: Germany is the largest market for Aboriginal art in Europe, and no other European country has produced as many translations of Aboriginal literature as Germany (Haag 2009). Studies of the German reception of Aboriginal-related literatures constitute a relatively new yet burgeoning field, including literary analyses of translated Aboriginal texts, studies of the marketing of German translations, teaching Aboriginal literature in German classrooms and bibliographies of translations (Brewster 2009; Gerber 2009; Haag 2009; Haag 2011; Haag 2012). Most of these studies concentrate on techniques of rendering intelligible the contexts of Australian culture for a German-speaking readership.

Little, however, is known about the ways in which historical and political contexts, especially inter-racial history and racism, are made intelligible in German translations of Aboriginal-related literature. The present article examines the ways in which inter-racial Australian history has been translated. The translation of inter-racial history, I argue, does not merely require an explanation of the historical contexts of the source text but also of the historical contexts of the target text, in this event, the explanation of both inter-racial history within Australia and the history of German perceptions of Aboriginal Australians.

Drawing on Jeannie (Mrs Aeneas) Gunn's *Die kleine schwarze Prinzessin* (2010), translated by Leni-Tschüdi-Rüegg (original title: *The Little Black Princess*, 1905), and William Peasley's *Die letzten Nomaden* (2007), translated by Johanna Ellsworth (original title: *The Last of the Nomads*, 1982), the present study demonstrates that

inter-racial history and the history of German perceptions of Aboriginal Australians have been rendered invisible in the German translations. Yet instead of having been completely erased, the historical contexts have been left in palimpsests, 'overwritten' by the use of seemingly neutral terminologies and German ideas of Aboriginal authenticity. Both texts are thus a good source not only for examining how the historical contexts of the source texts have been translated but also for inferring the persisting nature of German interest in Aboriginal Australians.

What makes the two books worthwhile for comparison is their focus on Aboriginal traditionalism. Moreover, both translations have been published by the same publishing house, a Leipzig-based company which focuses on German and Aboriginal-related literature. Both books have been issued almost contemporaneously (2007 and 2010) and advertised as 'Aboriginal literature' in stark contrast to Aboriginal self-definitions according to which Aboriginal literature needs to be either authored or co-authored by an Aboriginal person in order to be designated as 'Aboriginal'. The two books are written and marketed in different genres: *Die kleine schwarze Prinzessin* is a children's book, whereas *Die letzten Nomaden* is adult literature. Despite this genre difference, ideas of Aboriginal authenticity are so tenacious that they affect both translations fundamentally. Both translations reveal the power of perceived traditionalism on the politics of German publishing of Aboriginal-related literature. Translating literature is not a merely linguistic endeavour of copying a text from its source language into a target language, but involves complex processes of cultural transfer, adaptation and renewal (Lecerclé 1999: 19; Venuti 2008: 15-20; Limon 2010).

As André Lefevere argues, translations entail a rewriting of original texts, influenced by mechanisms of patronage which lie mostly outside the literary system (1992: 5, 15). Patronage, Lefevere furthers, is determined by status, economy and ideology (1992: 16-17). All three components exert an influence on which texts are being translated, thus entering a foreign language market. As for the books under this study, German images of Aboriginal authenticity constitute the most obvious form of patronage. The very images mirror a popular discourse, or ideology in Lefevere's sense, that have impacted on the publisher's considerations to issue this literature. The considerable time difference in the publication of *The Little Black Princess* – 105 years – is far from pure coincidence. Rather, as this article expounds, the images of Aboriginal people contained in the original version reflect contemporary German ideas of Aboriginal traditionalism, explaining its 'revitalisation' after more than a century.

This article will first elaborate on how the historical contexts of the source texts have been made invisible and then discuss to what extent the two translations represent the persisting nature of German interest in Aboriginal cultures. All back-translations from German into English are the author's.

Omitting History in Historical Texts

The translation of the texts has resulted in an omission of their historical contexts. In *The Last of the Nomads*, the translation has remained close to the original. The following source text (ST) passage shows the idiomatic translation, as employed throughout the text:

They reached the low hills of Kata Kata and turned to the north-west to enter the land of the Budidjara. Mudjon followed, past Paragoodingu rock hole and on towards the permanent water at Moongooloo. Early one morning he cautiously approached a waterhole situated in an area of low gravelly undulations, with scattered mulga trees providing shelter for anyone camping near the water. This was the rock hole known as Birrill, deep in Budidjara country (Peasley 1982: 16–17).

This passage has been translated thus:

Schließlich erreichten sie die Hügel von Kata Kata und wandten sich in Richtung Nordwest, wo das Gebiet der Budidjara begann. Mudjon folgte ihnen. Er kam an der Felshöhle Paragoodingu vorbei und ging auf das Gewässer bei Moongooloo zu. Eines frühen Morgens näherte er sich vorsichtig einem Wasserloch, das in einem Gebiet voller Kieselhügel lag. Hier und dort streckten sich Mulgabäume in die Höhe und gewährten Schutz für jeden, der sein Lager in der Nähe des Wassers aufschlug. Dies war das

Felsloch Birrill, das sich tief im Inneren des Gebiets der Budidjara befand (Peasley 2007: 23).

In English, the German target text (TT) passage may be back-translated as follows:

Finally, they reached the hills of Kata Kata and turned to the north-west direction where the area of the Budidjara began. Mudjon followed them. He passed the rock cave Paragoodingu and approached the waters near Moongooloo. Early one morning, he approached cautiously a waterhole, which was situated in an area full of pebble stone hills. Here and there, Mulga trees stretched into the heights and offered protection for everyone who took up his camp near the water. This was the rock hole Birrill, which was situated deep in the interior of the area of the Budidjara.

The German translation has preserved all Aboriginal place names and has departed only in a few instances from the original. Conspicuously, the central term 'land' has been given as 'area' which has a different connotation from 'land': the former is seen as a place without necessarily denoting the ownership of the very place, whereas the term 'land' would have emphasised the ownership and not merely the inhabitation of the respective land. Another difficulty rests with the enumeration of different place names which, without any contextualisation, makes little sense for German-speaking readers: in the original, the detailed description of places illuminates the history and cultural ownership associated with these places. In the translation, lacking any proper contextualisation, the description of geographical names renders impossible any association of places with history and culture but merely denotes the listing of names. The cultural and historical significance of the very passage is thus being lost in translation, ironically because of the direct method employed in the translation which would have necessitated establishment of the cultural and historical contexts in question.

The translation of *The Little Black Princess* is more problematic. There are debates in Australia as to whether the portrayal of Aboriginal people in the book can be termed – in hindsight – as racist (Ellinghaus 1997; Larbalestier 1990). Mirroring the racial discourses at the time of its production, the book describes Aboriginal Australians paternalistically as good natured yet childlike. The German translation has maintained the unidiomatic language style and most racist terms, such as 'lubra' and 'piccaninny', have been left as in the original. The meaning of these terms is not widely known among German speakers. Rather, in German, the diminutive form of 'piccaninny' has the ring of 'cuteness' and harmlessness, reminiscent of children's language. Significantly, only the term 'nigger' has been replaced by Eingeborene (natives) which, however, is outdated and carries a colonialist denotation.

The dust cover of the German translation directly addresses readers with the informal personal pronoun *du* which is usually used either for children or for close friends. Thus, the book is overtly advertised as a children's book, containing no explanatory references to its contexts of production as well as racist terminologies. The source text is simply copied into German as if there had not been a century lying between the original text and its translation. The following paragraph illustrates this historically insensitive translation:

Bett-Bett must have been a Princess ... she didn't sit – like fairy-book princesses – waving golden sceptres over devoted subjects, for she was just a little bush nigger girl or 'lubra', about eight years old (Gunn 1905: 1).

This opening paragraph has been rendered into German thus:

Bett-Bett war bestimmt eine Prinzessin... allerdings saß sie nicht auf einem Thron, wie das Märchenprinzessinnen zu tun pflegen, und sie schwang auch kein goldenes Zepter über die Häupter ihrer ergebenen Untertanen. Sie war nur ein schwarzes Mädchen, eine kleine Lubra aus dem Busch und sie zählte ungefähr acht Jahre (Gunn 2010: 7).

Translated back into English the German TT says as follows:

Bett-Bett was definitely a princess ... but she did not sit on a throne as fairy-tale princesses usually do and neither did she wave a golden sceptre over the heads of her devoted subjects. She was only a black girl, a small lubra from the bush counting approximately eight years [in age].

In German, the text differs from the original in the replacement of 'nigger' with 'only a black girl' as well minor details, such as 'wave a golden sceptre over the heads of her devoted subjects' instead of 'waving golden sceptres over devoted subjects'. The relevant racist passage has been rendered 'milder' ('lubra' is not widely known in German), but the expression 'only a black girl' can be read not just as 'only a girl' (i.e. only a child) but equally as 'only black'.

The original expression 'bush nigger girl' carries a negative connotation not only in relation to the term 'nigger' but also to the conception of the bush as a synonym for devalued Blackness (the bush equals the 'nigger'). The German use of the terms 'lubra' and 'bush' entail a neutralising effect on linguistic level, for 'bush' and 'lubra' sound harmless, yet without neutralising the historical contexts of both terms. Inter-racial Australian history has thus been rendered devoid of its racist and

violent meanings, with the book being rewritten as seemingly free of racist contexts.

The German translation thus reproduces a paternalistic discourse of the early twentieth century by employing racist terminology, such as *Missus* and *Gebietter* ('master') for white people, and unidiomatic language in relation to the Aboriginal protagonists. Without any contextualisation of the complex nature of Aboriginal English, the consistent use of faulty German construes Aboriginal people as incapable of speaking 'correct' language and thus intellectually inferior. As the use of prejudiced words shows, the source text has been written out of its historical context. History has been omitted, without having disappeared.

Persisting Interest in Aboriginal Authenticity

Historically, German interest in Aboriginal cultures is characterised by the persistency of Aboriginal authenticity, encompassing German ideas of *Naturvolk* (natural people). The term *Naturvolk* was coined by Johann Gottfried Herder in the late eighteenth century to designate a people thought to live in a state of nature without governmental constitution and thus culture (Löchte 2005: 100). The concept of *Naturvolk* also encompassed Aboriginal Australians and is nowadays largely banned from academic parlance. Despite construing Indigenous people as unchanging and devoid of civilisation, the idea of *Naturvolk* did not necessarily have a devaluating connotation. In contrast, *Naturvölker* were often, but not always, idealised as healthy and pristine races, thus used as a trope to criticise the scourges of German civilisation (Dürbeck 2008: 173). The imagination of the unspoilt *Naturvolk* drew on ideas of Indigenous authenticity which portrayed Indigenous peoples as diametrically opposed to German civilisation and thus perforce as pre-modern, pre-industrialised and 'traditional'. What Kevin Keffe has termed 'Aboriginality-as-persistence' (1992: 46–52), a perception of Aboriginal cultures distinguished by unchanging cultural continuity, corresponds, although slightly different, to the very German idea of the traditional *Naturvolk*.

The romantic idea of *Naturvolk*, this study contends, is not part of a past discourse. It can still be discerned in the two translations under study. This becomes less obvious in the modes of translation than in the nature of both stories. *The Little Black Princess* is outdated and evokes interest in historical rather than current representations of Aboriginal cultures. Once heralded as a classic of Australian children's literature, it had seen re-publications and re-editions especially during the 1930s and 1970s, but the number of re-editions petered out in the early 1980s, with the last re-publication appearing in 1987. That the German publisher still deemed the book marketable in the year 2010 is less astonishing than it first appears, but it can be explained with reference to its accounts of seemingly traditional Aboriginal themes. In the afterword, Gunn's observation of Territory culture

is, after all, described as a true account of a people that is conceived of as diametrically opposed to Europeans and linked to nature:

The present book is the first authentic report published on the odd mores and customs of the Australian Aborigines. It was written more than a hundred years ago ... but lost nothing of its initial value and freshness ... it was possible for her [Gunn] to give us insight into a world that is completely alien and fascinating for us ... There are only a few communities in remote areas who can live their rituals and Dreamings. But what actually is this Dreaming? It describes an intense physical, emotional and spiritual interaction with magical places in their land in order to bring the past into the present so that the future can take place. Only those people can dream who are born into this landscape and are part of this landscape and nature (Gunn 2010: 120, 124–125).

Aboriginal Australians here are portrayed in line with the German conceptions of a *Naturvolk* that had still preserved its innate traditional relationship with nature. Gunn's story is praised as a true account even for the current understanding of Territory cultures. It takes on discourses that equate Aboriginal authenticity with remote communities which are seen as the only communities that had maintained traditional heritage, thereby implicitly excluding urban Aboriginal people from the status of 'true' Aboriginality. The vagueness and romantic undertone in the explanation of 'Dreaming' and the idea of 'being part of nature' further cater to German ideas of *Naturvolk*, negating any cultural expression outside the realm of nature.

In German, the term *Natur* (nature) has the meaning of an antipode to everything that has not been shaped by humans. This stands in stark contrast to Indigenous conceptions of Country which cannot be separated from human culture yet which is described in the German version under the disguise of 'nature'. This is not only a matter of language but also one of consciously incorporating Aboriginal ontology into a German idea of traditionalism associated with a *Naturvolk*. The recent translation of Gunn's book may indicate that German ideas of equating Aboriginal Australians with a *Naturvolk* are still in discourse and actively used by German publishers to commercialise translations of Aboriginal-related literature. It is the book's main theme of traditionalism and assumed closeness to nature that has incited the German publisher to take on its translation and advertise the book exactly along the discourse of *Naturvolk* in order to make the book palatable to German-speaking readers.

Die letzten Nomaden caters in a similar fashion to German discourses of Aboriginal authenticity. The book tells of the rescue of a couple regarded to have

been the last members of the Mandildjara to lead a nomadic life. In this event, the notions of a *Naturvolk* are forged through indirect reference to 'traditional' Aboriginality. The emphasis on the *last* of the nomads represents Aboriginal people as being part of the past and again caters to an interest in the original and pure. Significantly, the book closes with the words, 'Ein Kapitel der australischen Geschichte war abgeschlossen, eine Ära war zu Ende gegangen' (167), meaning that with the end of the last nomads, 'a chapter in Australian history drew to a close, an era came to an end'. While this may have been the case with the two protagonists, the trope of the 'last people' nonetheless implicates notions of a vanishing race, representing Aboriginal cultures as a fixed and essentialist category (Birch 1993; Lattas 1993).

No text is free of its socio-historical contexts. As it stands, the translation of *The Last of the Nomads* reciprocates the ideas of 'true' Aboriginality as rooted in a pre-contact past which is perceived explicitly as vanished ('a chapter drew to a close', 'the *last* of the nomads'). This idea of Aboriginal cultures belonging to the past is also discernible in the publisher's marketing strategy for the book:

The journey leads to Australia's past when the desert was still alive, full of oases where humans and animals gathered, where artists left their indelible signs and cultural ceremonies took place. Now she [the desert] is dead, desolate and dried-out.

Although the original story relates the cultural change to the two protagonists and the Mandildjara, the German translation does not contextualise the alteration of Mandildjara culture as a process of *partial change* but speaks of a *complete vanishing* of an entire culture. The dying desert stands as an allegory for a dying culture (cultural ceremonies and rock art are seen as much 'dead' as the desert itself). Lacking any proper explanation of the policies of assimilation, dying race dogma and European ideas of Aboriginal traditionalism, the theme of the last nomads becomes conferred upon Aboriginal cultures as such, suggesting the association of the last nomad with the 'last' and 'true' Aboriginal.

Die letzten Nomaden does more than reproduce the original story of the Mandildjara but construes the very German idea of a once harmonious yet dead *Naturvolk*. As the text suggests, German-speaking readers can only lament the inexorable triumph of civilisation, but they can rest assured: the seemingly harmonious and idyllic life has to yield, cannot be resurrected. Civilisation, the subtext comforts, at least has a future.

German interest in Aboriginal cultures has been the strongest in Europe and evinced a considerable tenaciousness to reproduce ideas of Aboriginal traditionalism, timelessness and harmonious relations

to nature, all reflecting the persisting idea of *Naturvolk*. This persistency not only takes away the complexity, fluidity and dynamic nature of Aboriginal cultures but also reproduces images of a dying race, passivity and racial backwardness. German interest in Aboriginal cultures, well intentioned as it seems, is still permeated with prejudice.

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Guilty – another Massacre at Myall

George Anderson was new,
Mr Hobbs was sturdy. How do you confect heroes?
Lock'n'load rock'n'roll colonial jig territory clearing
the battle for the cattle -
land is time
blood is money
more complicated sure
as problematic black skin
is snipped away from landscape.

Work never stops,
through to the 20th century.
The ground is so clean you can build history.
Kwiambal work alongside these strange new hands.
Bridges are aroused, islands open to the winds of genteel
squire-ish boats. We pour culpability on our cereal -
generate wealth like inexhaustible, exhausted gyro tyros.
It will all be written down, thereby forgotten

LES WICKS
SYDNEY, NSW

Liquefactions: River floods and tides of memory in Anne Michaels' *Fugitive Pieces*

CATALINA BOTEZ

In my article on Anne Michaels' fictional work Fugitive Pieces, I introduce the critical concept of liquefaction as thematic leitmotiv that connects psychological, transgenerational trauma to large-scale environmental catastrophes (like floods and hurricanes) across time and place, and across international, national and domestic spaces. Through this central trope, I show how psychological post-traumatic healing in Holocaust survivors and geologic post-traumatic healing operate in tandem in the novel, more precisely how the figurative unearthing and working through of traumatic memory across generations parallels the literal unearthing and re-situating of archaeological artefacts across geologic time. The interconnectedness of psychological wounds with geological wounds demonstrates the ethics of nature – a kind of co-healing of persons and places across generations and landscapes (both transgenerational and transhistorical). I also point out the restitutive ethics of nature and maintain that floods manifest themselves as counter-historic agents able to reveal and restore historic truth through obscuration and disclosure.

'Redemption through cataclysms; what had once been transformed might be transformed again.'
(Anne Michaels, *Fugitive Pieces*)

'He who controls the past controls the future.
He who controls the present controls the past.'
(George Orwell, 1984)

Introduction

This article engages with the notions of historical and natural catastrophe as interwoven occurrences in the context of Canadian writer Anne Michaels' work *Fugitive Pieces*. I advance the concept of *liquefaction* to depict cataclysmic metamorphoses of landscape which involve floodwater, perceived alternatively as a medium that obscures and subsequently reveals the historical truth across generations and continents. By emphasising the dramatic liquefactive impact of floods onto layered urbanscapes, I lay stress on the relativity of time and historicity in the novel, as well as on the restorative ethics of nature involved in the periodic obscuration and revelation of truth.

I further argue that there is an intrinsic connection in Michaels' work between the gradual development of global environmental forces and the psychological disruptions caused by war and Holocaust trauma. I interpret this connection in terms of the rich liquefactive imagery deployed in Michaels' work, which opens up possibilities for similar geological and psychological healing. Since the instances of liquefaction addressed here involve both fast, violent aquatic motion, as well as prolonged liquid stasis, spanning across minutes or even

years, I dwell on comparisons between psychological trauma and geological cataclysms: while both seem to occur suddenly and unexpectedly, their aftermath always involves slow gradualness. That is to say, post-catastrophic healing (human and geological alike) is possible, albeit conditioned by the slow tidal movements and specificities of personal traumas, on the one hand, and of the aggressed natural landscape, on the other.

I specifically argue that the historical-epistemological disaster approached in Michaels' novel, namely the Holocaust, is quintessentially rendered through liquefaction, that is the transformative liquid imagery of meteorological disasters, equivalent to instances of psychological upheaval and gradual, post-traumatic changeover. Natural calamities such as river floods, storms, hurricanes and earthquakes, and their archetypal, transhistorical impact on the geological landscape resemble the assault of Holocaust trauma on an individual's psychological balance. Much like environmental aggression involving floods, I argue, psychological aggression consists in a type of liquid, transformative evolution sometimes conducive to healing. I call it liquid trauma, a term by which I denote the liquefactive factor involved in the ability to continuously change the shape of trauma in order to accept loss, to mourn and potentially (and eventually) recover from it.

Anne Michaels' novel features Jakob Beer, a Polish child survivor from the so-called '1.5 generation' (Suleiman 2002: 277)¹, whose family falls victim to Nazi persecution. He escapes death by hiding in a closet and taking shelter in the moorlands of Biskupin, where the

Cambridge geology scholar Athos Roussos finds and rescues him. They flee the archaeological site of this flooded city in Poland and travel down to Greece. During the German occupation of the island of Zakynthos, the two live in hiding, and subsequently move to Toronto after the war following an invitation addressed to Athos to teach at a Canadian university. Years after Athos's death, Jakob – now a poet, translator and writer – with his young second wife Michaela moves back to Greece to the island of Idhra, only to die tragically in a car accident in Athens.

The second half of the novel is dedicated to Ben, the son of Polish-Jewish émigré Holocaust survivors from Toronto. Ben carries his parents' traumatic burden long after their death. An academic by profession, he researches the interconnection between biography, history and meteorology. He undergoes a terrible crisis after discovering that his parents had taken to the grave the secret of their wrenching loss, namely the death of both of his younger siblings during the Shoah. This prompts him to leave Canada and travel to Idhra in search of the late Jakob Beer's journals and presumably the meaning of Holocaust survival. At the distance of one generation, loss and grief unite these two fictional figures through their sustained efforts to comprehend calamities of war, (individual) history and nature.

Ben and Jakob are featured in the novel as Polish-Canadian male identities marked by first- and second-generation Holocaust trauma. They tell parallel, yet similar, stories of psychological harm carried across continents, both their life stories being rendered more eloquent by explorations of geologic and meteorological disasters across time that are so relevant to the notion of liquefaction proposed here. As dialogic characters, their damaged lives touch upon each other both directly and indirectly. Even though they meet only once and do not interact, their destinies seem to communicate deeply with each other via the written word. I argue that this strengthens the idea of intergenerational exchange through empathic channels among Holocaust survivors who are equally confronted with the liquefactive energy of their personal traumas.

But what is the result of Jakob and Ben's struggles to overcome psychological distress in the aftermath of atrocity? Anne Michaels' fine-tuned study of characters conveys the impression that Ben and Jakob's choice of professions reflects the way each of them works through trauma, which entails an engagement with either steady solidity or fluxing liquefaction. As Paul Malone points out, 'where Jakob's ongoing passion for archaeology and geology contributes to solidify his identity, Ben's interest in meteorology and association with flood [...] make clear that his identity remains in flux' (2000:95). While agreeing with that, I further argue that a clear sense of identity is contingent on *liquefaction* in Michaels' because there is a necessity to balance

solidity and fluidity in order to master one's sense of self when confronted with trauma. Ben's final trip to Greece, as illuminating as it is to him, remains inconclusive in terms of settling his emotional life. In that regard, as Kelly argues, 'the speaking of the trauma', far from determining meaning and closing a 'familial, cultural, or historical chapter' 'opens meaning, is productive of meaning, and necessitates a willingness [...] to bear witness to the catastrophic event [...] which takes precedence over any desire for finality' (Kelly 2010: 102). That is to say, lingering in liquid trauma, in the (self-)exploration of the development of personal and environmental trauma, helps towards understanding catastrophic occurrences and prospective self-restoration. By acting as Jakob's proxy witness, Ben filters and re-evaluates first generational trauma through the lens of the second generation, which reassesses catastrophe and healing through empathy.

On both chief characters, the Holocaust as an historical cataclysm leaves, directly or indirectly, an indelible mark. Etymologically speaking, the notion of 'catastrophe' is central to 'Shoah' (the Hebrew term for 'catastrophe'), while the Yiddish name for it denotes 'destruction', and the Greek term 'Holocaust' suggests 'complete burning'. As Shoshana Felman indicates, the word 'Shoah' used without a definite article points to 'the very foreignness of languages, the very namelessness of a catastrophe which cannot be possessed by any native tongue and which, within the language of translation, can only be named as the *untranslatable*' (Felman and Laub, 1992: 213-14). In my interpretation, the term 'Shoah' defamiliarises an event that is impossible to be owned, comprehended and clarified. Its cataclysmic impact that spans across generations requires, therefore, a necessary distance.

The same dilemma of incommunicability is addressed by Derrida in *Of Grammatology*, where he refers to the writing about the Holocaust as 'the place of unease (lieu de malaise), of the regulated incoherence within conceptuality' (1976: 237-38). This horrendous event brings logical understanding to a halt. Beyond the world of theory, literature is the medium where facts 'encounter strangeness' and where the reader is compelled to meditate on the relationship between history and narrative by 'bearing literary witness to the Holocaust' (Felman and Laub 1992: 7, 95). This is, I argue, precisely the role intended and played by Michaels' narrative.

Jakob's Drowned City: Biskupin in Poland

In *Fugitive Pieces*, Biskupin is the site of a drowned city in Poland, the spot where geological liquefaction brings about political controversy and subsequent obliteration. When the Gasawka River receded in 1933, it revealed an archaeological treasure, namely an ancient civilisation believed to be the oldest in Europe. As of 1937, Athos became involved in preserving the original infrastructure

of the flooded city, which soon enough antagonised the Nazis' ambition to proclaim, against all odds, the Aryan civilisation as the oldest in Europe. What liquefaction revealed, ideology forcefully decided to conceal.

Unlike the natural catastrophe leading to the submersion of Biskupin, which first obscured, then revealed through *liquefaction* an invaluable cultural asset, the disaster inflicted by the Nazis is final and intended to obliterate all traces of this site. In a savage political act of ideological liquidation meant to complete the unfinished work of natural liquefaction, the Nazis and the Ahnenerbe officials destroy all findings, and kill or deport all archaeologists involved in the project. For the German Reich it is imperative that no culture superior to the Aryan survives. Significant to this vehement act of obliteration is the intentional setting on fire of Biskupin, as opposed to its natural drowning in flood water: here, Michaels seems to suggest that the natural element of fire causes far more irreversible damage than the fluid menace.

It is only through Athos' scholarly effort in the post-war years that this flagrant manipulation of historical truth is exposed in a book project called *Bearing False Witness*. In it, Athos unpacks the idea of corrupted humanity and questions the moral right of radical political regimes to falsify and control history to their advantage. In her critique of humanity embedded in the novel, Michaels suggests that such destructive attempts can be successfully hindered through concerted efforts of responsibility and goodwill, while at the same time stressing nature's liquefactive power to restore balance through gradual geologic movements that both conceal and reveal, inter and excavate historic truth across time. Thus, floodwater becomes the exponent of the ethics of nature that triggers the outward motion of buried historic truth.

I further argue that natural disasters such as the flooding of Biskupin (and their centuries-long aftermath) work as counter-historic forces that bring to light traces of historical evidence deliberately and abusively elided from mainstream historiography. Thus, the restorative ethics of nature can initiate collective healing by rehabilitating historical truth. Just like empathic love, nature makes a compelling case for regarding catastrophe as catalyst to healing. The receding waters of Biskupin, Michaels claims, stand proof to that.

Natural calamity, especially relevant to Athos' interest in archaeology, involves material metamorphoses from solid to liquid and vice versa: flood water and sea tides turn into mud and solidified dirt, before another liquefaction takes place. There is constant movement, transformation and structural change in nature, which involves elements like fire, air and wood, as well. In Michaels' narrative, these overlapping changes and alterations in geo-history

span across time and impact on human history beyond pre-established national and geographic boundaries. Most significantly, they 'act as intertexts that decentre nation, subject and history', and 'advocate diachronic/synchronic identities, multiple subjectivities which, by heavily relying on spatial considerations, transcend the Canadian panorama' (Rodriguez 2003: 12). Michaels shows how the transnationality of emotional liquefaction works towards alleviating Holocaust trauma.

As shown in *Fugitive Pieces*, two different places (Biskupin and Weston) and two different characters (Jakob and Ben), although spatially and temporally removed from one another, experience comparable destinies conditioned by analogous historic and geologic changes. Clearly, the contribution of extreme global natural phenomena to local historic events highlights similar patterns, which shores up the need to regard historiography transnationally and translocally, and to scrutinise traumatised identities of different generations as sharing similar manifestations of psychological damage and possibly similar healing choices.

Matter, Catastrophe and the Holocaust: Solid vs. Liquid

Throughout Michaels' narrative, the matter imagery is rich and inscribed within the dialectics of fluctuation and stasis characteristic of geological upheavals and human trauma alike. This liquefaction imagery usually consists of upward earth movements and violent or subtle water motion. Michaels' obvious concern with matter, dealt in a phenomenological manner in this novel, stands in stark contrast to the Nazis' disregard of matter and their treatment of Jews as mere objects: '[it] was beyond racism, it was anti-matter, for Jews were not considered human [...] but [...] "figuren," "stücke," – "dolls," "wood," "merchandise," "rags" ' (Michaels 1998:165). The vilification of Jews and their reduction to matter is consistent with the Nazis' self-exemption from responsibility, and with their placing genocide beyond morals: 'Humans were not being gassed, only "figuren," so ethics weren't being violated' (Michaels 1998: 165). This abusive act of dehumanisation presumably absolved the perpetrators of ethical conscience. It partially explains how the catastrophic barbarity of the Holocaust could occur in a seemingly 'civilised' Europe – a point of view articulated with much irony in Michaels' critique of decaying humanity in the novel.

Just like the formerly mentioned 'figuren', the figure of the golem is described as anything but human. In the novel's first scene, Jakob, the runaway child, emerging from the bog with tears cracking open his mud-covered face resembles a golem brought back to life. The moment has cosmic dimensions and is depicted as legendary rebirth or 'afterbirth of earth': 'I surfaced into the miry streets of the drowned city. For over a thousand years, only fish wandered Biskupin's wooden sidewalks' (Michaels 1998:

5). The boy rising from the pit is an image of mythical force, an archetype: 'I squirmed from the marshy ground like the Tollund Man, Grauballe Man, like the boy they uprooted in the middle of Franz Josef Street while they were repairing the road, six hundred cockleshell beads around his neck' (Michaels 1998: 5). According to this description, Jakob is nothing short of an archaeological artefact that survived millennia, defying both time and his oppressors with his mud-covered face, a perfect embodiment of the unhindered ethics of nature. As Michaels suggests, there is panhistoric hope to invest in catastrophe: what a geologic age covers with violent speed, another uncovers gradually over time.

By eroding the boundaries between the material and the human, Michaels restores the life-giving quality of matter: mud is not only an element of internment, but also a vehicle of rebirth. In fact, Annick Hilger claims that the 'golem' 'has come to stand for an imperfect being, for informed matter', but also for 'Adam, the man made of clay' (1999: 38), which takes us back to the beginning of humankind. According to Anne Whitehead, this is a profoundly cabbalistic image:

At the heart of kabbalism lies the notion that it is with nature, rather than with God, that the Jews are to be reconciled; [...] healing or redemption comes through the contemplation of nature, which contains within it the scattered sparks of God. [...] the first act of Creation became a gesture of hiding or withdrawal. [...] For Michaels, the world after the Holocaust is a world of hidden spaces, which is characterised by acts of concealment and withdrawal (2004: 58-59).

This image strengthens the idea that Jakob's voyage of survival and self-preservation is essentially defined by the dichotomy of concealment and revelation, which stands at the heart of my proposed liquefaction imagery.

Later Athos, his master or koumbaros, explains to Jakob in healing words that the paradoxical reason why the bog men are so serene upon the excavation of their bodies is that having been 'asleep for centuries, they are uncovered perfectly intact; thus, they outlast their killers – whose bodies have long dissolved to dust' (Michaels 1998: 49). This case of symbolic retribution is in no way compensatory, but ironic and rendered useless by the numeric realities of the Holocaust. Attempting to link his adoptee's fate to that of the mythic bog men, Athos projects Jakob's life onto a transnational, cross-temporal background in order to highlight the importance of his existence (unjustly diminished by persecution) and give perspective and meaning to a life almost crushed by the Holocaust. What saves Jakob from self-destruction, Michaels argues, is a mixture of temporary abstraction from one's destiny, and sustained affective support.

Liquefaction or the aquatic imagery deployed by Michaels in relation to natural catastrophe and the Holocaust also involves the water-wood imagery, as transparent in the description of Biskupin as the 'magnificent timber city' with wooden sidewalks now covered in mud (Michaels 1998: 6). In contrast, it is the water-air imagery that provides an eerie first glimpse of the reality of Jakob's trauma, envisaging a possibility of recovery: 'From the other bank, I watched... The dead passed above me, weird haloes and arcs smothering the stars' (Michaels 1998: 7); 'I leaped from the streets of Biskupin; from underground into air' (Michaels 1998: 12). In the process, however, it seems that Jakob is no longer able to distinguish between the world of the living and that of the dead, between what is real and what is loss-related fantasy. The description of his disorientation, marked by sensorial interaction with natural elements such as mud, water and air involved in catastrophic imagery, provides us with a vivid picture of Jakob's emotional distress and lays the ground for his healing.

But healing is not possible without subduing traumatic memory. Since water and air are carriers of memory, remembrance is entrenched in every contact with nature: 'Human memory is encoded in air currents and river sediments'; 'everywhere nature remembers' (Michaels 1998: 53, 211). Therefore, healing occurs only in as much as a certain balance is reached between the memory of the offence and the working through of trauma, which often involves partial forgetting. Liquefaction tackles exactly this tension between remembrance and forgetting.

The combination of water and fire completes the spectre of natural elements deployed as recurrent tropes in my argument based on the interconnection between natural calamity, historical trauma and gradual healing. Fire, beyond its destructive connotation in relation to the Holocaust, is also a natural force involved in the dynamics of destruction and survival. It is by fire that Biskupin is demolished by the Nazis, after surviving the flood: records and relics are burnt and Athos' fellow workers are shot by gunfire. What liquefaction as aquatic catastrophe isn't able to achieve through gradual dissolution in time, arson and bullets accomplish within minutes, turning Biskupin into the 'Polish Pompeii' (Michaels 1998: 104). Thus, controlling the historical time was on the Nazis' agenda just as much as the *lebensraum* expansion.

Yet fire is also a metaphor for suicide, not a rare peril among Holocaust survivors. Athos deploys it to stress the 'I can't save a boy from a burning building. Instead he must save me from the attempt; he must jump to earth' (Michaels 1998: 45). Thus, the stable, rescuing ground is offered as preferable alternative to the harmful force of fire. Unlike water and mud, which have ambivalent qualities in the novel, both positive and negative,

fire is exclusively connected to final devastation and total calamity. The natural element earth is offered as alternative to survival.

Instances of Liquefaction

Forms of liquefaction and various instances of elemental transgression are used to convey loss, damage and the isolation and estrangement during the hiding years. On Zakynthos, 'I [Jakob] sat near him [Athos] while he wrote at his desk, contemplating forces that turn seas to stone, stone to liquid [...] Two lost souls alone on deck on a black and limitless ocean' (Michaels 1998: 20, 22). Here, liquefaction helps depict geological processes of fascinating magnitude that depict our planet as a living, breathing entity able of constant renewal and reversed transgressions, which is precisely the kind of global change that Athos knows Jakob needs to envisage in order to recover from his devastating trauma. The vast ocean imagery also translates into the true dimension of their alienation in a war-torn world, in contrast to the closeness of their empathic bond.

The sea water is also instrumental in conferring the liquefactive imagery that conveys Athos' own trauma after the loss of his wife in World War I: '[Athos] is like his limestone. The sea will dissolve him into caves, dig holes into him, but he lasts and lasts' (Michaels 1998: 78). Thus, water erodes stone just like trauma bites into the human psyche. Being a damaged soul himself, Athos understands Jakob's frailty and offers him solace from his recurrent nightmares, which lure him for many years into the liquid underworld of the dead. Jakob's dreams are replete with liquefaction imagery:

They [the dead] waited until I was asleep, then roused themselves, exhausted as swimmers. [...] They floated until they grew heavier, and began to walk, heaving into humanness; until they grew more human than phantom and through their effort began to sweat. Their strain poured from my skin, until I woke dripping with their deaths (Michaels 1998: 24).

Thus, the liquefactive medium of nightmares occasions the identification with the Holocaust victims through marsh waters and dripping sweat. Liquefaction functions as a remembrance channel between the survivor and the victims and it perpetuates trauma. The bog from Jakob's past resurfaces in his nightmares as catalyst for the repeated rebirth of his dead relatives.

Collective trauma, as touched upon in Michaels' work, also involves liquefaction as a medium of inflicting genocide. As such, natural and geographic elements (specifically the Aegean Sea) become instrumental in mass murder. The Jewish population from the city of Hania, a two-thousand-year-old ghetto on the island of Crete, was sent to sea by the Nazis and wiped out a hundred miles off Polegandros (Michaels 1998: 43).

Liquefaction and fire imagery is deployed here by Michaels to show how the victims' fate was sealed: 'The water rose [...] bullets tearing the surface for those who took too long to drown. Then the peaceful sheen of the Aegean slipped shut again' (Michaels 1998: 43). The bodies become one with the sea water, they liquefy, and the sea turns into a memorial site, a synecdoche for the drowned victims of the Holocaust.

The wrapping up of dead bodies by the sea water does not signify forgetting. It marks instead the beginning of remembrance and healing as a form of gradual closure, with the sea water involved in the symbolic funeral² ceremony: 'We threw camomile and poppies into the cobalt sea. Athos poured fresh water into the waves, that "the dead may drink" ' (Michaels 1998: 75). Paradoxically, the ritualistic quenching of thirst as a symbol of perpetuating remembrance of the dead involves liquefactive imagery (fresh water), yet a different kind of water to the one in which they drowned (salt water). This shows the differentiated role of liquefaction in the act of mourning, of dealing with trauma and healing.

However, according to Athos, the solid ground as memorial site is preferred to sea water, because earth has a memory of its own. This prompts Jakob to travel to Zakynthos to bury Athos' ashes in ground that will remember him, i.e. under the stones of their hiding place during the war, according to his koumbaros' wish. Yet later in Toronto, after Athos's death, '[Jakob] pour[s] fresh water into the sea, recalling not only the Greek lament [...] but also the covenant of the Eskimo hunter, who pours fresh water into the mouth of his quarry' (Michaels 1998: 121). As such, the act of memorialisation becomes transnational, transcontinental and pantemporal. Honouring the dead through similar practices across the Atlantic speaks for the communality of mourning: grief is inherently human, it involves liquefactive practices and does not know national boundaries.

Catastrophe and Affect

Michaels insists throughout her novel that catastrophe, be it natural, historical or psychological, is a slow event: 'Nothing is sudden. Not an explosion – planned, timed, wired carefully – not the burst door. Just as the earth invisibly prepares its cataclysms, so history is the gradual instant' (Michaels 1998: 77). That is to say history, trauma, love and healing are all based on the same principle of slow accumulation, in spite of us perceiving them as sudden events. Michaels further explains that the loss of both siblings and romantic love in a catastrophic event takes time to work through because 'destruction doesn't create a vacuum, it simply transforms presence into absence' (Michaels 1998: 161). Coming to terms with the heaviness of absence stands at the core of tackling trauma, and liquefaction is central to the evocation of loss.

To Jakob, the instinctive knowledge of his sister Bella's death in the Holocaust is conjured up through unsettling imagery of tidal floods: 'At this precise moment, Bella becomes flooded ground. A body of water pulling under the moon' (Michaels 1998: 12). The river flows and their turmoil become a powerful image of death, brotherly loss and devastation. In fact, all his relationships with women are perceived by him as either violent or calm forces of nature. For instance, his first marriage to Alexandra is experienced as a sudden cataclysm that disrupts his inner, fragile balance, arduously restored by his koumbaros after the Shoah: 'Athos replaced parts of me slowly, as if he were preserving wood. But Alex – Alex wants to explode, set *fire* to everything. She wants me to begin again' (Michaels 1998: 144, my emphasis). In contrast, his encounter with Michaela, his second wife, is experienced as '*the catastrophe of grace*' (Michaels 1998: 175, my emphasis). This cataclysm, unlike the previous one, restores his inner peace like a homecoming:

In Michaela's face, the loyalty of generations [...] a thousand intimacies, dreams of foreign lands, first nights of love [...] after long years of marriage. In Michaela's eyes, ten generations of history, in her hair the scents of fields and pines, *her cold smooth arms carrying water from springs*' (Michaels 1998: 178, my emphasis).

Thus, healing feels like fresh liquefaction. What Jakob needs is continuity with his past, not complete rupture, because happiness, like catastrophe, 'is wild and arbitrary, but it's not sudden' (Michaels 1998: 185). The gradual instant is crucial in experiencing love as comfort, purge and healing, and Michaela seems to be able to provide him with the peace to liberate himself from the past without destroying or abandoning it: 'When we wake [after tenting in the birch wood during an April storm], there is a pool of water by our feet. It is not on Idhra or on Zakynthos but among Michaela's birches that I feel for the first time safe above ground, earthed in a storm' (Michaels 1998: 189). This paradoxical comfort in a storm, this liquefaction imagery of sorts best describes his cleansing of troubling memories, and particularly the moment when he abandons grief for the sake of love.

Ben's Drowned City: Weston, Toronto, Canada

The novel's second half is devoted to Ben, whose story commences with yet another drowned city. During Hurricane Hazel in October 1954, when Ben was only five years old, the Humber River rises and floods the Weston neighbourhood of Toronto, including his parents' house, which is swept downstream: 'My river was unrecognizable; black, endlessly wide, a torrent of flying objects. A night planet of water' (Michaels 1998: 245). Luckily, though, the family is rescued before the house is taken away by the torrent: 'One might say my parents were fortunate, for they didn't lose the family silverware or important letters of heirlooms however

humble. They had already lost those things' (Michaels 1998: 245, 246). But one thing they did not lose on their transatlantic journey was fear: fear to cash their post-catastrophe restitution money, fear to even take the neighbour's warning before the flood: 'They banged at the door and shouted at us to leave. For your father, that was the worst [...] Who dares to believe he will be saved twice?' (Michaels 1998: 247). Michaels' keen meditation on the depth of post-calamity, post-liquefactive loss, is thus subtly punctuated with a touch of irony.

Many years after the flood, just like Biskupin back in Poland, Weston resurfaces from the Humber River to reveal yet another instance of temporal layering:

Four wooden knobs, evenly spaced: excavate an inch or two and the legs of a chair will emerge [...] a dinner plate [...] sticks out of the bank horizontally like a shelf. You can slip a silver spoon out of the mud like a bookmark [...] The buried tables and shelves, lamps, dishes and rugs remain. The river washes over pebbles of crockery. Fragments of a ceramic flowered border, or of the words "Stratfordshire, England," are underlined by reeds (Michaels 1998: 202).

While Biskupin preserves traces of an ancient European settlement, the Humber River obscures a modern history of emigration from Europe to Canada. Both cities develop a palimpsest narrative of overwritten life stories, as well as a discourse of submersion and excavation across time, a story of liquefaction. Even though they belong to two different spatial and temporal spheres, the items that emerge from the waters after the floods bear witness to former lives preserved intact in the river beds. The superimposition of past over present is almost surreal, as it poses questions about the relativity and simultaneity of time. As Michaels repeatedly states, every moment is two moments.

Yet the drowned city of Ben's childhood is not his only reason for grief. As a second-generation Holocaust survivor, he is confronted with his parents' silence, their incomprehensible restrictions and aberrant deeds. The walls of silence are only rarely taken down for the sake of fleeting explanations occasioned by present-day catastrophes: a Texan tornado reminds his mother of mounds of apples, onions, jewellery and clothing amassed from the Jews on the camp grounds, while the lightning sign in the sky resembles the SS symbol embroidered on the Nazi uniforms. After the father's death, his face appears to Ben in contorted and disintegrating shapes of liquefaction: 'My father's face [...] a reflection in the still surface of a lake smashed by a stone. In dreams, I can't stop his disintegration' (Michaels 1998: 249). This further illustrates the son's despair at being born too late, at not having been able to rescue his parents from catastrophe. To his parents, Ben – which

in Hebrew means nameless son – is not a 'separate individual but a symbol of everything the parents had lost in the course of their lives' (Wardi 1992:27). They deny his right to singularity by typifying his existence and by making him stand for something that he is not, which deeply damages the son's sense of self.

The final blow for Ben comes after his parents' death, when he discovers a photo of his siblings who had died in the Holocaust. Kept as a well-hidden secret by his parents, this picture strikes Ben like lightning of catastrophic proportions:

The past is desperate energy, an electric field. It chooses a single moment, a chance so domestic we don't know we've missed it, a moment that crashes into us from behind and changes all that follows (Michaels 1998: 253).

This photo violently fills in the gaps of postmemory, which was denied to him when his parents were alive. According to Marianne Hirsch, 'postmemory is a powerful form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation' (Hirsch 1996: 662). For Ben, postmemory has devastating effects. This is not only because he cannot fully understand or recreate his parents' past, but mainly because of the way he was left out of it, and forced to make do with an absence or with what Hirsch dubs 'empty postmemory' (1996: 664). Unlike full postmemory, the empty kind refers to the lack of stories and images that would have stimulated Ben to imagine the world of his parents before he was born, and thereby understand them better and empathise with their suffering.

Yet his parents' decision cannot extinguish Ben's need for bonding and empathic kinship: 'full or empty, postmemory seeks connection' (Hirsch 1996: 664), which he explores in Jakob's memoirs and poetry. Intrigued by Jakob's persona, and despite being his foil character, Ben is, or strives to be, in many regards, Jakob's double. His narrative discourse is mainly a dialogue with Jakob, who he attempts to understand and whose road to healing he tries to retrace for himself. Even though their traumas are inherently different, they both seek comfort in love to counteract absence, isolation and the spectres haunting their lives.

Their connection, though, is part of a more complex pattern of male adoption and transfer of influence. As Stephen Clingman claims in *The Grammar of Identity*, for 'Athos, Jakob and Ben: the syntax runs through the male line, almost a form of male parthenogenesis' (2009: 165). There is a process of adoption and influence taking place between both Athos and Jakob, and further from Jakob to Ben. Since motherhood is quasi-absent from the novel, fatherhood as male custody compensates

for the gap and confers relief and alleviation of trauma. Moreover, as Meredith Criglington observes, 'the novel's fundamental structure is based on the non-biological, patrilineal transmission of memory from Athos to Jakob to Ben through their work as writers' (2006: 95). Thus, the postmemorial communication of experience is achieved outside the blood line, and according to an inter-generational pattern.

Arrived on the island of Ithra in Greece, where Jakob wrote *Groundwork*, (his auto-biographical collection of poems) while sharing a simple, happy life with Michaela, Ben meditates on the analogy between catastrophe and life-writing, and notes how the latter betrays the original life, since so much of it eludes the biographer's awareness: 'Never trust biographies. Too many events in a man's life are invisible. Unknown to others as our dreams' (Michaels 1998: 141). A gaze at that man's house says more than any biography, since 'a house, more than a diary, is the ultimate glimpse [...] a life interrupted. A thought of the families frozen into stone by the eruption of Vesuvius, with their last meal still in their bellies' (Michaels 1998: 266). Catastrophes cut biographies short in most brutal ways, but buried cities around the world and across time – such as Biskupin, Weston/Toronto or Pompeii – resurface as 'counter-monuments' to the established history amending it according to the ethics of nature; they resurface as counter-memory, i.e. the hidden version of truth (Criglington 2004: 141).

Essentially, each of these drowned cities and the liquefaction imagery they project expose the kind of counter-memory that proposes 'an alternative historiographic model' that recontextualises historic events (Criglington 2004: 141). To evoke 'the broken and buried forms of the city' and the Benjaminian topography of the ruin is to critique the 'monolithic, teleological modes of history that are premised on purity of descent' (Criglington 2006, 189). This new position on the past stresses the historian's role in assessing the records, depending on background, time and place, which is conducive to a relativised, experience-specific standpoint on historical catastrophe. The concept of liquefaction helps nuance this standpoint through a complex understanding of geological and psychological change as intrinsic to healing trauma.

Conclusion

In this essay I have introduced the concepts of liquefaction and fluid trauma, and have discussed the ethics of nature in the context of the necessity to interconnect (personal) traumatic histories with mainstream historiography and natural catastrophe. These concepts mark the lives of Jakob and Ben, the two fictional protagonists who, although belonging to different generations, nations and cultural spaces, still face similar issues of coping with traumatic memory and loss in the aftermath of historical disaster. I have also explored questions of ethics of nature and the integrity of scientific research, and have

analysed the ways in which nature can both obscure and reveal traces of veridical history, through concealment and revelation, fluidity and solidity.

From the standpoint of Holocaust trauma and transnational survivorship, I have stressed the importance of connecting liquefaction as tidal movements to the workings of memory, mourning and memorialisation, and to notions of transhistoric progress. I have also examined calamity as elemental co-work between floodwater, earth (mud), fire, air and wood, all of them seen as both agents of damage and (with the exception of fire) reconstruction and healing. As part of this dual impact, I emphasised the connection between love and catastrophe, and also highlighted the dialectics of love and liquefaction, memory and fluidity. Finally, I have highlighted counter-memory as alternative historiography, as an essential tool for reinstating counter-histories when dealing with catastrophe narratives in general and the Holocaust, in particular.

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End Notes

1. By 1.5 generation, Susan Rubin Suleiman means 'child survivor of the Holocaust, too young to have an adult understanding of what was happening to them, but old enough to have been there during the Nazi persecution of Jews' (2002: 277). The term is controversial in its relative use of the term 'generation', but usually encompasses children of different ages who survived the Holocaust in hiding or by being transported to England during the Kindertransporte in 1938-1939.
2. To that same memorial service belongs the urge to do good on the dead's behalf, an act of proxy witnessing that William and Polatinsky reflect on as a 'surrogate action [...] The call is to live as they might have lived, or as their descendants would have wished them to have lived. Yet again, traumatic memory requires substitution' (2009: 11). I would argue that this advice goes beyond substitution as means to alleviate trauma, in that it reinforces and carries on the traditional life of a Jewish community as it was before the tragedy.

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Pyramid

These things of stone, all the plans, so necessary -
lines of slaves
they blind us. Fundamental issues –
bread & gutter. This war
was over something, then
over.

A regency of weeds
new palaces of clump.
We rub shoulders with the bitch & powerful.
Beside a spent bullet casing
two frogs, a silence
& the orphans of our page

LES WICKS
SYDNEY, NSW

Society as a Patient: Metapathology, healing and challenges of self and social transformations

ANANTA KUMAR GIRI

The article is a transdisciplinary effort bringing sociology, philosophy, psychology and spirituality together in understanding health, social suffering and healing in our contemporary world. It discusses the concept of society as a patient, which challenges us to go beyond an individualised notion of healing. It links this understanding to the contemporary discourse of social suffering. But to transform this it is argued that we need both political and spiritual transformations. In order to transform suffering of self and society, we need to undertake creative suffering on our part. This involves critiquing the existing distinction between normality and pathology. Metapathology, offered by Abraham Maslow and Chitta Ranjan Das, critiques the social construction of pathology and deliberately accepts a mode of life which may be considered pathological by the existing society but bears seeds of critique and transformation.

In order to speak of a social pathology [...] we require a conception of normality related to social life as a whole. The immense difficulty involved in this project has been made evident by the failure of social-scientific approaches that have sought to fix the functional requirements of societies solely through external observations. Since what counts as a developmental goal or as normality is always culturally defined, it is only by a hermeneutic reference to a society's self-understanding that social functions of their disorders can be determined. Thus we may have a defensive possibility of speaking of social pathologies within a culturally contingent notion of normality, since we can limit ourselves to an empirical description of what a given culture regards as a disorder. [...] **A paradigm of social normality must, therefore, consist in culturally independent conditions that allow a society's members to experience undistorted self-realization.** [...] The question then becomes crucial whether it is a communitarian form of ethical life, a distance-creating public sphere, non-alienated labor or a mimetic interaction with nature that *enables individuals to lead a well-lived life* (Honneth 2007: 34, 35, 37).

The patient of our time is less concerned with the state of his morals than that of his finances (Frankl 1967: 112).

A dynamism would have been the norm and routine of our life. To tell you the truth, that spontaneous dynamism is the health of our life [...] With our sacred conservatism if we bound ourselves only to what is there then there would be lots of mud in

the pond of our life. So there should be a continued process of cleaning up mud which means we would have to continuously widen the paths so that new streams of waters can enter there (Chitta 2010: 2-3).

Introduction and Invitation

Hhealth and healing are perennial challenges of life but in modernity our approach to it is predominantly atomistic, reductionistic and one-dimensional. We reduce the problems of health, ill-being and disease to individuals and do not relate to the wider environments of culture and society. We adopt a bio-medical approach to health and do not realise health as a multi-dimensional journey of wholeness which includes body, mind, soul, society, nature and cosmos. As Hans-George Gadamer (1996) challenges us in his *The Enigma of Health: The art of healing in a scientific age*, we do not realise that health is something that cannot be simply made and produced, rather it is intimately linked to the way we live our lives. Our life is a journey of wholeness even when, for existential reasons, it is lived in parts. But when parts do not realise the integral connection among themselves, it creates a condition of pathology at the levels of self and society.

A holistic engagement with health challenges us to realise that health is not just a matter of the individual. The health of an individual depends upon the health of a society as the illness of an individual is crucially shaped by the pathology of society. Unfortunately in sociology, social work and social welfare the discourse of social pathology has been dominated by the reigning discourse of social deviance which puts the blame squarely on

the individual for his or her condition of disease and disruptive behaviour. Fortunately for us there is the rise of the discourse of social suffering in sociology, anthropology and social theorising which seeks to relate social suffering and illness to wider systems of self, culture and society.

Society as a Patient: With and Beyond Social Suffering and Social Pathology

Recently, scholars such as Pierre Bourdieu, Arthur Kleinman, Veena Das and John Clammer have challenged us to understand the work of social suffering (Bourdieu et al. 1999; Clammer 2012; Kleinman, Das and Lock 1997). Before we discuss briefly this discourse of social suffering, it is helpful to relate this to the concept of society as the patient as it was articulated by Lawrence K. Frank a long time ago. In his initial essay on the subject and then the book with the same title, Frank challenges us to realise:

There is a growing realization among thoughtful persons that our culture is sick, mentally disordered and in need of treatment. This belief finds expression in many different forms and from a variety of professions [...] Anyone who reflects upon the present situation [...] cannot but fail to see that we have passed from the condition in which deviations from a social norm were to be regarded as abnormal. Today we have so many deviations and maladjustments that the term "abnormal" has lost almost all significance (Frank 1933; also see Frank 1948).

In his work, Frank challenges us to understand the shifting contours of social normality and abnormality. He also challenges us to realise how a particular organisation of society makes society a patient. He suggests that 'the competitive system and distortion created by the ineptness of our practices for socialising in the home and the school' makes society a patient (cf. Frank 1933). A system of society which produces large-scale poverty and impoverishment makes a society a patient. Without wholesale *a priori* characterisation and condemnation, it is helpful to keep the concept of society as the patient as a work of investigation to find out what kind of organisation and consciousness of society makes it a patient. In the contemporary Indian context, the persistence of caste discrimination and caste-based violence makes Indian society a patient. Similarly, the reign of neo-liberalism with a brutal policy of extraction of resources for profit making and accompanying cut of expenditure on health care and social well-being makes many contemporary societies all over the world patients.

In their work on social suffering, *The Weight of the World: Social suffering in contemporary societies*, Pierre Bourdieu et al. (1999) tell us how societies are being made patients under a neo-liberal regime. They

present us other instances of social suffering in their own society, i.e. France. In this edited work Bourdieu and his colleagues tell us about different ways in which social suffering is produced. In his essay, 'The View from the State', Patrick Champagne writes: 'The "meditatisation" of "social malaises" has the effect of proliferating all sorts of publications and reports to describe, explain and "treat" these "malaises", so bringing them into the open' (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 213). About the way the school system produces outcasts, Bourdieu and Champagne write: '[...] the school system turns into a permanent home for potential outcasts' (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 422). About the way social suffering creates wasted lives, Bourdieu writes: 'Malik is nineteen and has already "lived a lot". When we met him he was doing – without many illusions – an unpaid internship, giving him minimal training, that he had to find for himself to fulfil a poorly defined path of study at a nearby, low-ranked suburban high school' (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 427). Bourdieu here points to institutionalised violence. He also speaks about 'poisoned gifts' which are 'Superhighways that turn out to be dead-end streets' (Bourdieu et al. 1999: 511). Bourdieu tells us how with social suffering public streets become a desert street.

Such an articulation of social suffering can be related to reflections by psychologists, sociologists and philosophers. In his classic work on suffering and healing, Victor Frankl (1979) tells us about the collective neurosis of our times which has the following main symptoms: a) an ephemeral attitude to life; b) the fatalist attitude toward life which 'misinterprets and misrepresents man as a product of environment' (1979: 115); 3) 'conformist or collectivist thinking' (1979: 115); 4) denial of one's own personality. For Frankl, the neurotic who suffers from the fourth symptom, fanaticism, 'denies the personality of others' (1979: 116). For Frankl, '[...] all the four symptoms can be shown to derive from fear of and flight from freedom and responsibility; yet freedom and responsibility together make a man a spiritual being' (1979: 117).

Frankl's pointer to issues of freedom and responsibility also remind us of the reflections of Eric Fromm who tells us how escape from freedom constitutes a pathology of our times. To this problem of escape from freedom, we can also add the problem of escape from responsibility. Building a sane society challenges us to realise both freedom and responsibility and create an institutional and personal context for both. In this journey we can walk with both Gandhi and Levinas and strive to embody both freedom and responsibility which contributes to building a healthy self and healthy society.

To these reflections on social pathology, we can also invite the insights of sociologist Richard Sennett and philosopher Soren Kierkegaard. In his *The Corrosion of Character* and other works, Sennett tells us how contemporary organisation of work and time, especially

the valorisation of 'no long term', 'corrodes trust, loyalty and mutual commitment' (see Sennett 2000: 127; also Sennett 2006 & 2012). Kierkegaard tells us about despair which constitutes a 'Sickness unto Death' (1849). For Kierkegaard,

So to be sick unto death is, not to be able to die – yet not as though there were hope for life; no, the hopelessness in this case is that even the last hope, death, is not available. [...] So when the danger is so great that death has become one's hope, despair is the disconsolateness of not being able to die (1849: 345) .

Kierkegaard very insightfully links certain aspects of contemporary despair to the working of the state:

The minimum of despair is a state which (as one might humanly be tempted to express it) by reason of a sort of innocence does not even know that there is a such a thing as despair. So when consciousness is at its minimum the despair is least [...] (1849: 348).

Kierkegaard's pointer to the working of the state in creating despair and then asserting that there is no such thing as despair can be recognised in the way the modern state sees and ignores like a state and does not shed tears for this suffering (cf. Scott 1998). The state creates large-scale displacement but its conscience is least developed to acknowledge the pain and suffering it creates.

But while the state creates despair, this condition of despair can also be transformed. In fact, creative selves, association and social movements do transform such conditions of despair. They seek to heal the wounds of self and society. This is both social healing and social therapy which calls for a new realisation of meaning in the lives of individuals and societies. Frankl had spoken about logo therapy, a soulful therapy which can contribute to healing. We need an accompanying social logo therapy which can contribute to healing the wounds of society.

Social Healing and the Calling of Metapathology

Social suffering creates social pathology; society becomes a patient. But to transform social suffering we need transformative social actions, institutional transformation and transformation of what Bourdieu calls 'institutional bad faith'. We also need creative suffering and voluntary suffering on the part of individuals and social institutions for transforming conditions of suffering. As Goethe said a long time ago: 'There is no condition which cannot be ennobled either by a deed or by suffering' (quoted in Frankl 1967: 123; also see Murty 1973, Toynbee 1956). In creative suffering and voluntary co-suffering we identify with, and take part

in, the suffering of others which involves self-sacrifice, renunciation and consequent sharing and solidarity with others. While social suffering is produced by society, transformation of suffering calls for voluntary co-suffering on the part of both self and society. Gandhi, Victor Frankl and Chitta Ranjan Das have urged us to realise the significance of voluntary co-suffering for transforming suffering in the lives of both individuals and societies.

The calling of voluntary co-suffering challenges us to transform an existent social distinction between normal and pathological. We know social and cultural movements challenge the existing definition of normality and pathology in the direction of dignity and co-realizations. Along with the work of socio-cultural and socio-spiritual movements, we also need the creative self who can undertake suffering for the sake of realising beauty, dignity and dialogue. Their work may be considered pathological by others but this is not a normal and conventional pathology. This is metapathology as Abraham Maslow (1971) challenges us to realise. Transforming social pathology and social suffering calls for the embracing work of metapathology on the part of creative selves, associations and social movements in a society. Such movements create a condition for fuller self, and social and cultural realisation on the part of participants (cf. Honneth 2007). While existing distinctions of normality and pathology block fuller cultural realisations, a voluntary embrace of metapathology creates a space and condition where self and society can fully realise themselves.

This also creates conditions for social healing. Social healing and social therapy calls for being together in vibrant communication and deep meditation whilst helping each other heal our wounds, listen to our stories and realise our potentials. It depends upon creating what Vygotsky called 'zones of proximal development'. Recently, Louis Holzman has insightfully applied Vygotsky's insights in creating performative circles of social therapy where the participants become each other's therapists and going beyond a dual model of the doctor and patient (cf. Holzman 2009). Such 'going beyond' is an instance of holistic and collaborative social therapy.

Healing and the Challenges of Self and Social Transformations

In the context of a perfected art of killing, where we kill not only reality but also possibility, we need a new art of healing which is multi-dimensional – political, spiritual, medicinal as well as meditative. In our society, the pursuit of a short-term time perspective and the work of what David Harvey (1989) calls 'space-time compression' creates a fleeting and impoverished relationship with time. Our contemporary organisation of time creates anxiety and stress which are produced by structures of politics and economy so that we remain perpetually anxious and lose our spirit of creativity and resistance.

A new art of healing has to address this question of temporality and create a new pregnant spatiality and temporality where we can breathe with ease and love and can give birth to each other's dreams, and a new being and a new society (Giri 2012b). This becomes an act of new self-creation, co-creation and birthing of a new consciousness and society.

Health as a Journey of Wholeness

Health is not just absence of disease; it involves an all-round development of individual and society. Good health depends upon a good life and good society. While healing is both noun and verb, health is a noun. But for realisation of health we need to realise it as simultaneously noun and verb. As a verb, health is not only activist but also meditative. Realisation of health depends upon both appropriate action and meditation. Action and meditation help us realise health as a continued journey of wholeness.

In his work on health and healing, Hans-George Gadamer (1996) challenges us to realise and restore wholeness for the sake of health. Chitta Ranjan Das, a creative thinker from India, also presents us similar and added challenges. For Das (2010), realising health is a continued journey of climbing towards peaks of self and society in the midst of disease, illness and ugliness of various kinds. For Das, to oppress others is a disease as it is to tolerate oppression. So, for a healthy self and society, we would have to resist domination and oppression. A healthy person does not just adapt to society, especially its systems of domination and disease; rather one tries to transform such conditions (see Giri 2012a). A healthy person does not betray themselves and the potential of society which awaits a fuller realisation.

Resonating with the spirit of Lawrence Frank, Das raises a number of questions about wider structures of society and modes of thinking which produce illness and social pathology. For Das, caste systems and a sense of fatalism that one cannot change one's fate contribute to production of illness and pathology in self and society. Similarly, the use of science and technology for profit-making and warfare without concern for human wellbeing and social welfare contribute to production of social pathology. Das does not believe in an absolute distinction between health and disease as he challenges us to realise that every diseased person has a deeper yearning within himself or herself for being healthy. Similarly, he challenges us to transform the one-sided hierarchical relationship between the doctor and patient. For Das, 'One is not just either a patient or a doctor; it is not just the case that the doctor would prescribe and the patient would obey. Both have to listen to each other' (Das 2010: 157).

The reflections of Das and Gadamer on health and healing also remind us about the classic work of Alfred Korzybsky (1933) on science and sanity. For Korzybsky,

Until recently we have had a split medicine. One branch, general medicine, was interested in the "body" (soma); the other was interested in the "soul" ('psyche'). The net result was that general medicine was a glorified form of veterinary science, while psychiatry remained metaphysical. However, it has been found empirically that a great many "physical" ailments are of a semantogenic origin (1933: xix).

Korzybsky pleads for an integration of the body and soul for realisation of health. This also calls for a new grammar of life in which we realise health as simultaneously a noun and verb of action, meditation and transformations which include both the horizontal and vertical dimensions of our lives – intension as well as extension. It calls in short for a new art of integration.

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Give Me

convenience or give me
 death; a cacophony of wisdom
 no longer my objective correlative. Still,
 words reverberate
 through time contemplating
 creepy fish shaped soy sauce with sushi.

Christ, I think (try hard not to think)
 of actual fish forced swimming in
 swirling toxic gyres which even He
 couldn't conjure a live one from –

forget dinner, forget
 feeding the masses: the detritus
 of our bloody convenience is grotesque!

(An albatross baby, fed death
 by plastic, distended abdomen slit
 spilling Dadaist intestines in a tableau
 exciting more pathos than the mariners';
 scientists soothsaying, through megaphones on soapboxes,
Beware the Ides of the Millennium they moan
 as we pelt them with apples of disconnect;
 and greed, rising hooded, from the gloaming of our desires,
 the portentous spectre of jellyfish multiplying like cancer
 in the stagnant chakras of this world)

are visions
 that numb the mind and stir
 panic in the guts, make me
 shudder with foreboding
 and curse
 convenience benign lethal allure,
 want to strap on
 my old boots and stomp
 feeling fear into
 deer dazzled head-lighted heads.

But
 what's that?
 Too late you say?
 The clock has tocked;
 no time to play.

It's jellyfish for tea
 for tomorrow is today:
 so go ahead
 Have A Nice Day.

MICHELE SEMINARA
 MANLY VALE, NSW

The Myth of Femininity in the Sport of Bodysculpting

JAMILLA ROSDAHL

Women with muscular bodies have long been objects of public scrutiny and social contempt. Critical to the problematic of the muscular woman is the question of how femininity fits on a female body that is strong. The muscular woman is said to occupy spaces outside of accepted gender binaries because she challenges the assumption that men are naturally masculine and that women are naturally feminine. This article highlights the fraught and complex project of becoming a woman with muscle. It argues that femininity denaturalises the muscular female body by demanding feminine comportment and spatiality. To highlight the contradictory relationship between muscle and femininity, it examines the sport of bodysculpting. Bodysculpting generates problematic meanings for its participants. The idea of femininity as central to 'womanliness' dictates values that become continuous with women's experiences of their bodies and in the end with their own ideas about who they think they are.

The Problem of the Muscular Woman

There is something profoundly upsetting about a proud, confident, unrepentantly muscular woman. She risks being seen by her viewers as dangerous, alluring, odd, beautiful or, at worst, a sort of raree (*sic*) show. She is, in fact, a smorgasbord of mixed messages. This inability to come to grips with a strong, heavily muscled woman accounts for much of the confusion and downright hostility that often greets her (Chapman and Vertinsky 2010: 11).

The above quote highlights the bewilderment, shock, outrage and profound confusion that a muscular woman rouses with her much bigger, stronger and bolder body. The building of muscle by women generates a number of controversial discussions about the 'nature' of femininity and its complex relationship to muscularity and masculinity (Balsamo 1994; Bolin 1992; Daniels 1992; Guthrie and Castelnuovo 1998; Heywood 1998; Klein 1990; Schulze 1997). Because muscle is associated with people with male bodies and therefore with masculinity, women who participate in male-dominated sports such as bodybuilding, do not conform to standards of 'feminine' identity and displays of 'womanhood' or 'femaleness'. The muscular female body challenges Western understandings of the traditional female body as being 'naturally' feminine in appearance and physique. It problematises the notion of what it means to be a real woman or a real man. A muscular female body challenges the assumption that all men are big, strong and powerful and that all women are naturally smaller, weak, passive and dependent. Thus the combination of muscle and femininity produces wildly perplexing effects.

Women who build muscle: 'femininity or muscularity, what is it to be?'

A fascination with the corporeality of women who build muscle has left contemporary feminists debating the extent to which the muscular woman challenges or reinforces dominant ideas about femininity. Feminist writers such as Bartky (1988: 79) and Heywood (1998: 39-55) argue that muscular women resist normative femininity because they challenge the cultural association of muscularity and strength with masculinity, and the building of muscle by women should therefore be seen as an empowering practice. Bartky (1988: 83) sees women's 'pumping iron' as an oppositional and resistant practice because, she argues, some women bodybuilders seem to have 'little concern for the limits of body development imposed by current canons of femininity'. In a similar move, Heywood (1998) claims that women lifting weights is a specifically third wave feminist strategy that challenges patriarchal control. Women who 'lift' embrace physical power and independence and this makes women feel empowered.

Others have argued that women with muscle paradoxically represent both resistance and compliance to dominant femininity (Bunsell 2013; Bolin 1998; Miller and Penz 1991; Obel 1996). Authors such as St Martin and Gavey (1996), Guthrie and Castelnuovo (1998) and Choi (2003) contend that female bodybuilding is a contradictory social practice which should be considered both as a site of resistance and as a site of femininity's recuperation. The display of 'female hypermuscularity', they argue, challenges assumptions about what is considered to be a naturally female or male body (Choi 2003; St Martin and Gavey; 1996). The female bodybuilder who chooses

to take on this 'look' is deemed to be able to disregard society's ideals. As a result of this, it is assumed that the female bodybuilder is empowered (Wesely 2001).

Writers such as Bolin (1992) argue that women who have larger musculature challenge norms of acceptable femininity because they display female bodies that are much heavier and bigger than other female bodies. However, female bodybuilders are only accepted once they are 'tamed' by beauty (Bolin, 1992). Women are never presented only as resistant and powerful athletes but are instead ambivalently portrayed through sexualised images that trivialise their athletic abilities. Others such as Dworkin (2010: 314-315) maintain that women who build muscle actively define and negotiate the glass ceiling on muscular size and therefore the current condition of normative femininity 'might be tipping toward muscularity rather than away from it'. In other words, because we are seeing and hearing more about women who lift weights and build muscle, we should assume the glass ceiling on muscular women is being pushed upwards.

An overconcentration on the woman's muscular body as a problematic is often expressed through questions such as, 'Beauty or Beast' or 'femininity or muscularity, what is it to be?' (Hargreaves 1994: 146). From these different feminist positions it is straightforwardly assumed that a muscular female body either lacks femininity, challenges femininity or simultaneously does both. These tensions surface further in ponderings such as, 'how far can a female bodybuilder go and still remain a woman?' (Schulze 1990: 9). From this way of thinking, a muscular female body 'blurs' dominant understandings of the body, and 'destabilises' feminine bodily identity to ultimately 'confuse gender' (Sawicki 1991: 64).

What is of particular interest, however, is the way both frames of theorising figure femininity as rather incidental to how the muscular woman is spoken about as a problem. Curiously, it is assumed that femininity is simply a by-product or a consequence of speaking about the muscular woman. I want to ask, is it possible for a muscular woman to transcend a normative definition of 'woman' if, in fact, it is femininity that has made her visible as a deviant cultural identity in the first place? Far from being marginal to this process, I argue that the discourse of femininity has played a pivotal role in constructing and reinforcing the muscular woman as a distinct problem. In other words, femininity has worked to naturalise the idea that a real woman carries a female body which is non-muscular, round and soft in shape.

Much of the feminist literature incites discussions about a crisis surrounding the muscular female body that problematises the oppositional categories of man and woman. One of the effects of this is that theorising about the muscular woman has continued to secure rather than loosen the boundaries surrounding the meanings of the body and gender. This has consequences for how

we have been able to think about women with muscle. By employing the conceptual framework of feminist genealogy I want to fracture the 'normalising' knowledges that shape the historical and social logic surrounding the muscular woman. Here, I draw on Judith Butler (1999) who developed one of the most recent influential critiques of sex and gender. By utilising theoretical and conceptual frames of techniques of power/knowledge regulation and the production of subjectivity, and the theoretical concept of performativity we can understand how the muscular female body becomes regulated in the subject's own attempt to embody femininity.

Butler's theory on gender performativity helps to explain how a woman's sense of self comes to be constructed and regulated by the discourse of femininity made into a truth about woman. In this way, gender performativity reveals how gender only exists insofar as it is ritualistically and repetitively performed (Butler 1999). Femininity, as a historically specific and singular form of human experience, includes a complex system of rules which help create a distinct conception of what it means to be a woman. This system of control functions through various impersonal relations of power that dictate the values, beliefs and behaviours taken up and internalised as a type of normativity experienced by the body (Butler 1999). For women, this ethics of self or the moral codes that explain how they are supposed to constitute themselves as moral subjects of their own actions and desires, have been accepted as natural, normal and real. In other words, women's bodies are primary sites of sexual desire and cultural consumption used as a central cultural resource to live out ideas of self-identity through the deployment of femininity.

The study

Between 2008 and 2011, I undertook ethnographic fieldwork at a local gym. Although I had previous experience of weight training and various sports and exercise, I had never trained for competitive bodysculpting, nor had I ever had any contact with professional trainers, female bodybuilders and bodysculptors. This next section is based on my observations, conversations and reflections both inside and outside the gym on the practice of bodysculpting and the women who decide to train and participate in this competitive and highly contradictory sport. The conversational interviews included here draw our attention to how complex and fraught a project it is to be a muscular woman (names have been changed). They also highlight how femininity as a normative and ideal 'identity' category structures women's experiences inside and outside of training and the 'Ms Figure' bodysculpting competition. This is a competition held in a number of states in Australia and America. Femininity becomes inscribed and ensured through different techniques of power and forms of knowledge about woman, and these envelop the female body through disciplinary codes, norm-governing behaviours and processes of normalisation.

This system of control functions not through repressive practices but through various impersonal relations of power that dictate the values, beliefs and behaviours taken up and internalised as a type of normativity and a mode of relation to self in the experience of the body. For women who build muscle, this ethic of self, or the acts and moral codes that explain how they are supposed to constitute themselves as moral subjects of their own actions and desires, have been accepted as natural, normal and real. Therefore, women's bodies work as arenas for the complex production and reproduction of gendered subjectivities. In the sport of bodysculpting, the implications of these effects are troubling.

The sport of bodysculpting

Bodysculpting is a peculiar sport that emphasises the illogical and contradictory relationship between muscularity and femininity. It can be used to expose femininity as a myth that prevents women from becoming muscular and physically capable. For women involved in bodysculpting, the building and sculpting of muscle is a particular problematic and ambiguous practice (Boyle 2005; Chapman and Vertinsky 2010). It is also a sport where we can clearly see the performativity of femininity made into a truth about woman. Bodysculpting is a sport practiced particularly in Australia and America. It is a sport in which only women can compete. Bodysculpting or body 'figure' competition is an offshoot from bodybuilding where women are required to minimise muscularity on their bodies. In bodysculpting, women are expected to display smaller muscles.

In bodysculpting competitions, women are often penalised for displaying muscles that are too big. Instead they are advised to emphasise femininity, symmetry, proportion, tone, definition and grace rather than physique and muscle mass. The competitive guidelines within the sport are saturated with contradictions (Bolin 1998; Heywood 1998; Hargreaves 1994; Boyle 2005). Writers such as Bolin (1998: 198) have discussed the impact of Western beauty ideals on the sport's judging of female competitors. Various femininity markers, including the display of the female body as youthful, glamorous and sexy, are invoked and even expected in the judging of women (Bolin 1998: 198). Judges have also been found selecting women who are 'athletic, slim, graceful and pretty and ... whose muscles don't show unless flexed' (Bolin 1998: 198).

The emphasis on 'femininity', as specified in the judging criteria, is generated by and deployed towards a system of rules that demands, amongst other things, an hourglass female figure with graceful gestures and 'soft' movements beautified with decorations, high-heeled shoes, and bikinis. These requirements refer to femininity as a factor or as 'a mark' said to differentiate the female body to that of her male counterpart. The sport encourages and reinforces the performance of femininity through beauty adornments, suggestive bodily

forms, the display of submissive gestures and controlled postures as well as restricted movements. For example, whilst men use close fists to display their strength and muscularity, the women are required to use open palms. Fingers and palms are associated with femininity and grace. This bodily display is clearly softer and less aggressive in appearance.

The ideal Western female body is one of display, sexiness, youth and even bloneness, and the effects of these ideas and expectations are clearly visible on the women who compete in bodysculpting. As Bolin (1998: 205), herself a female bodybuilding competitor and cultural researcher notes, 'we are in the midst of somatic history where muscle density is debated by athletic beauty contests and where glamour and sex emerge as champion qualities'.

Female bodysculpting is therefore very different to that of male bodybuilding. In bodysculpting, the expectation of the female body is a combination of not being as big and bulky, having more symmetry and paying more attention to grooming such as hair, makeup and nails. Women have to perform femininity. Often women do this by wearing lipstick, by bleaching their hair, by appearing less muscular, by enhancing their busts and by altering how they walk, move and carry themselves. In male bodybuilding, the male body is simply judged on overall muscularity including structure, proportion, balance, symmetry and definition of each muscle group. Men are not judged on their masculinity or their 'maleness'. When a woman becomes muscular her body confronts the idea that strength, power and other ideas associated with masculinity only emerge 'naturally' out of male bodies. In other words, there are some clear tensions between the judging criteria specification for an ambiguous feminine quality said to exist within the female body, and between a female form that displays muscularity and strength.

'A real woman is decorative'

When I met Jaimee she was 33 and busy raising two children and working as an aerobics teacher five times a week. The following dialogue comes from a conversation that we had about her experience of bodysculpting and how this has impacted on her sense of self and her feelings about her body. For Jaimee, femininity is very closely connected to her sense of being a woman and 'looking better'. It is interesting to note that just before the conversation, Jaimee revealed to me that sculpting her body made her feel more attractive to her husband, and that sculpting and toning her body made her feel beautiful and that this was important to her. For Jaimee, femininity is intimately connected to the bodysculpting sport and also to her own sense of 'feeling' like a woman.

Jamilla: Ok. The next question that relates to these feelings surrounding your body is, what does the word femininity mean to you?

- Jaimee: Umm ... basically being ahh, a woman and being proud of it. Umm, yeah that's a pretty broad question (Laughs). Umm, basically looking like a woman, yeah.
- Jamilla: And does that ever come into play as you're sculpting your body?
- Jaimee: Yeah it did, definitely. Because the whole thing about the bodysculpting is, it's based on looking feminine. So umm, there's other levels that you can take if you want to look masculine and muscular, that's basically physique training. So I was in figure training. So, the figure training was, in the rules that they stipulated, that you had to have muscular definition, be toned, but still hold the feminine look. Ok? They actually even state in the rules that you are to wear high heel shoes on stage and jewellery is permitted. Whereas in body building you don't wear shoes and you don't wear any jewellery. And even with the bikinis that you wear, they like to fancy them up a bit, add a bit of bling.
- Jamilla: Ok. A bit of bling? Yeah so, so this feminine look is this something, an aspect that you enjoyed about the figure competition?
- Jaimee: Absolutely! Absolutely ... because I still looked quite feminine even though I looked quite muscular at the same time, so I didn't feel like I'd lost any of my femininity by building muscle, but just look ... like, I looked better actually!

Although Jaimee struggles to articulate exactly what this femininity is, she does specify that, on the day of the competition, it involves wearing high-heel shoes and jewellery. Here we are reminded that the judging criteria specifies femininity as something that necessarily involves decorating the bodies for the purpose of being judged in the competition. Jaimee understands that femininity is used as a marker for being classified as a 'woman' and she recognises that being identified as a woman is important for her sense of self. The ideas surrounding femininity, as specified by the guidelines, are part of that same grid of cultural intelligibility through which the female body becomes naturalised. For the female body to make sense as a woman, there must be a stable sex that is expressed through the decoration of the body that is oppositionally defined against a non-decorated male body, through the compulsory practice of femininity.

'A real woman doesn't have muscle'

The cultural sex/gender codes that signify womanhood can only cohere when they are situated against notions of a dimorphic sex that in turn specify the signs that denote manhood. These signs are held together by very specific

ways of conceptualising the body and determined by a particular system of knowledge and power. Within this system, muscularity is said to belong only to people with male bodies. Although my first question in the section below appears relatively straightforward, Jaimee struggles to articulate exactly what meaning the term 'muscularity' brings to her.

- Jamilla: Ok, alright, so having spoken a bit about femininity then, I've also got some questions on this term, muscularity. Does the term muscularity mean anything in particular to you?
- Jaimee: Umm ... not too much. Umm, well it did a little bit in the start 'cause (sic) I had to focus a lot on when I was building muscle. But I didn't look too much like ... because the rules state, you now, symmetry and all that sort of thing. Umm, I didn't want to get too bulky and look masculine.
- Jamilla: Ok and so, so how did you then go about avoiding being too masculine? And also what would you consider too masculine then?
- Jaimee: Umm ... basically size that would fit a man more than a woman.

There is a very strong sense here that whatever femininity means to Jaimee, she feels that muscles that are bulky are not desirable since muscle is seen as a natural attribute to a body that displays the cultural signs denoting maleness. To Jaimee, there is a fine line between building muscle and appearing too bulky. The latter threatens how Jaimee is perceived by those around her. Femininity is a discursive regime that operates by speaking about coherent stable biological bodies that do not exist. Therefore embodying muscularity requires a 'private struggle' where women have to comply with their own personal standards while embodying a much lower bodily standard to that expected of femininity. Here, femininity serves to protect and preserve an archaic vision that is said to represent a real woman. The body of this 'real' woman does not carry muscle.

'A real woman is sexy'

Below, Eve draws the discussion into the complex grounds of how femininity forms a certain mode of relation to the self in the experience of the body. In her reflections on her participation in the body sculpting competition, Eve highlights the contradictions and confusions surrounding the bodysculpting judging criteria that are currently in place. It is here that we see much clearer the effects of this normative system on the techniques of the self:

Eve: And I was really disappointed with that (the placing in the competition). Because, I mean, if I had just stepped on the stage and done it, without any conversations beforehand, I would have been probably happy with third.

Jamilla: Ok.

Eve: But I had been to some workshops and a couple of the head judges were there, and they were all like ... oh my gosh we have never seen anyone so striated and so lean and all that stuff, and one of the guys got me thinking about, even the possibility of me winning the natural universe ...

Jamilla: ah yes?

Eve: And it really got my expectations up here, and I said, when I got back, I don't want to be told that you can possibly win, you wanna (sic) be told that there could be anyone out there who is better than you and you gotta (sic) stick to the diet. So well, it filled my head with all this, you know: *how good you are*.

Jamilla: Yes.

Eve: and then on the day when I didn't win, I was really disappointed by that. I went in the novice category and got on the stage with twenty-two other girls and competed and didn't even get a placing, but then I had someone come and find me and say, 'uhm, I really wanted to see you before you left. Don't be disappointed, Out of all the girls you were the most striated lean and hard', and that stuff. But I was told that in body sculpting they are looking for a bit of muscle, but they still want them to look womanly and have a *peachy arse*, he said.

Jamilla: Really?

Eve: And so I suppose it's a really hard thing because you know, in a running race, with the first person across the line it's obvious who the winner is.

Jamilla: Yes.

Eve: whereas in sculpting, it's all a matter of the expectation of what they are looking for on that particular day, and since then my trainer and I have decided that I will enter into 'physique' bodybuilding instead ... But the thing is, I still like the sculpting with the bling and heels. I do like that girly stuff. But to be in sculpting I should come to the stage two kilos heavier and I don't want to train like that I wanna (sic) train in a way that makes me stronger.

Jamilla: To have more body fat and less muscle (in body sculpting)?

Eve: Yeah. They don't want kind of (pause) ... like I was told that my abs were too obvious and too muscly, and they want someone more slender through the abs. Even in the sport itself they are still looking for something else (pause) you know, very feminine, thin.

Eve constructs a sexual ethic of the self that is related to an aesthetics of existence through which she constitutes herself as a moral agent. Eve believes that if she takes on board the judges' comments, works on her body further and moves into another competition category, her 'feminine' self will be given to her and hence, she will win the competition.

Jamilla: What do you think they mean by feminine? What do you think they are looking for?

Eve: To be honest, I don't kow (laughing). 'Cause (sic) I thought on the day, I still looked feminine. But I obviously don't see in the mirror what they see!

Jamilla: Do you think that will change when you do physique?

Eve: I hope so.

What is apparent in this conversation is the tension between the judging criteria specification for an ambiguous 'feminine' quality said to exist within the female body, and between a female form that displays muscularity and strength. On the one hand, Eve was told that with such clear muscularity, structure and definition she had the potential to win the competition, but on the other hand, she was told that, within bodysculpting they are also looking for something else: a rounder, and more 'womanly form' with less muscularity. When Eve did not win, she was confused and upset since she had worked very hard to develop muscularity and strength. She also felt that she had displayed enough femininity.

The expectation of femininity has generated a deep-seated belief that women possess a distinct quality or some authentic womanliness thought to be unique to a body said to be female. The myth of femininity has real consequences for women competitors. Women must work on the 'idea' of what constitutes a 'natural and beautiful woman'. Competitors such as Eve do this by minimising extreme muscularity, aggression, power, strength and control since these elements are associated with maleness, masculinity, and the male bodily form. These requirements function as normative modes of feminine comportment, expression and spatiality that together, and

over time, appear as seemingly 'natural' expressions of the female body on the stage. These expectations are closely tied to ideas on sexuality and desire surrounding the female form forcing the attention and exaggeration of the woman's body as a fleshy erotic and sensual field.

In bodysculpting competitions women cover up their muscular physiques and calm the public outcry by emphasising a hypersexualised femininity posing in stiletto heels, lingerie and even fetish wear. Sex sells. Sexualised representations of the female body legitimise and work as a buffer against the otherwise overwhelmingly strong and powerful female body that stands strong and firm next to a strong and powerful male body. This has consequences for how the female competitors train, use and experience their bodies. In order to win, the women not only have to pass femininity's operating principles, but ultimately, they will have to pass as *natural* women.

The women who compete in bodysculpting are defined and valued based upon their capacity to embody and perform femininity. This is a female form with an hourglass figure, large breasts, a slim waist and, as one judge specified, a 'woman with a peachy arse'. Femininity also operates through more slippery markers such as, softness, grace, thinness, beauty and attractiveness. Femininity is a complex yet fictitious ideational construct upon which the sport's guidelines rest. As a discursive device, it both normalises the non-muscular female body as it renders the muscular female body unnatural (Rosdahl 2010). Femininity very effectively extends and disguises the power relations that are responsible for its own genesis.

In the sport of bodysculpting, the ideas of what constitutes a woman give the female competitor a limited number of choices or functions. She will need to perform as a beautifully decorated object of desire. This means that she must control, cover-up and even work to minimise, through the deployment of femininity, that which is said to make her into a beast: her very own muscularity. As Felkar (2012: 46) argues, the muscular woman becomes 'strategic' in ways to take on femininity. A woman cannot just show off a muscular body. Her muscularity must be paired with conventionally feminine styled hair, make-up and wardrobe to create an idea that she resembles a 'real' woman.

Conclusion: confronting the myth of womanhood

Cultural ideas about womanhood result in the highly problematic messages and the contradictory expectations of the sport mentioned here. Women are told that they are judged on their muscularity yet their own development of 'too much' muscularity will compromise their femininity. If femininity is not displayed, this will affect women's

placing in the competition. The judging of femininity is an ideational construct and a subjective positioning, and therefore completely in the eye of the beholder. This judging is part of a larger domain of knowledge that necessarily conditions and limits what women can do (Rosdahl 2010). The above arguments demonstrate the central problem, not only for the sport of bodysculpting, but for women generally – namely the idea of 'femininity' as a marker of woman.

Femininity forces the female body to operate within a closed space, in a state of inhibited intentionality and with restricted movements that do not allow the full physical capacity of the woman's muscles, power and strength. As Young (1980: 59) suggests, many 'women are trained to perform inefficiently'. A body that performs femininity well, underuses its real capacity both as the potentiality of its physical size and as the real skills and coordination available to it. Following feminists such as Burns-Ardolino (2003), I call for a critical eye towards femininity and those practices that limit bodily intentionalities and to reduce its capacities. There is nothing unnatural about a muscular and strong female body. What is unnatural is preventing and discouraging women from creating their full physical potential in the name of femininity.

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god has left the building

I

god has left the building
we are all boat people now

II

god has left the building
we are all boat people now
we sons & daughters
of the expansive wave
by which empire slashed out &
slaved us into the mirror as shadows
as said by borges in *los seres de los espejos*

III

no god has left the building
but we modern are all boat people now

IV

nothing i can say about
gods & ancestors nothing
i have to learn it from those whose being
has being transformed into shadows
these are the limits mine
these are the limits of my language

V

everything else remains to be seen
i mean to actually be able to see
everything then is outside language
i mean our western languages
i mean our imperial languages

VI

god has left the building
please don't request autographs

VII

one good thing about it
let him go spiritual life is about to begin

SERGIO HOLAS
ADELAIDE, SA

A Feminine Double-Bind? Towards understanding the commercialisation of beauty through examining anti-ageing culture

ANOUSHKA BENBOW-BUITENHUIS

Recent global statistics (<10 years) reveal a steady climb in consumption of cosmetic goods. This is an outcome of the globalisation of capitalism and furthered by the international homogenisation of advertising ideological standards. Embedded within this cultural spread is the individualised skin-care project and objects of beauty consumerism.

The 2013 qualitative study discussed in this paper reveals beauty culture's narrative of self-care through display. Australian women (18-60) display complex attitudes of both pleasure and anxiety towards the corporate ideal of what they call 'flawless perfection' in the media imagery.

To critically analyse these results, the Critical Theory of Frankfurt School, in particular Marxist Herbert Marcuse is utilised as a means to discuss how women may experience conflicting emotions towards dependencies on skincare products and the associated symbolism of ideal Western beauty. Technological media advances also sees consumers confronted by impossible beauty standards, which further problematises ageing in a globalised universal culture.

Introduction: Does Beauty Culture Personify Contemporary Social Constructions of Femininity?

In contemporary times, mass capitalism and its advertising have become a socially embedded institutional figurehead in the ways that moderns live. Within the visual and textual narratives of advertisements, the passerby or viewer is actively hailed via a dose of recognition. To illustrate this point, French Structuralists such as Louis Althusser (1970) and Roland Barthes (2009 [1972]) discuss the notion of a modern 'mythology' circulating within current media and explore how it may approach the social actor confronting the image. For these theorists, myth is socially accepted via the conditioning processes of society via state-mandated institutions. Althusser (1970) uses the concept of 'interpellation' to illustrate this point. He describes a scenario wherein individuals are continually socialised to recognise themselves within the dichotomy of labour power relations as the objectified. This is accomplished via the instruction of state social institutions, such as school and church, and is an ongoing social condition that the individual lives within, thus slowly learning how to 'master' the social practice (or *praxis*) of being a worker or citizen. Speaking or acting in the correct manner – as either a capitalist or a worker – requires social practice, as does the way in which a contemporary individual seeks to find themselves within the consumption of a mass commodity as a 'consumer'. Here, Althusser (1970) argues that 'ideology' – or the institutionalisation of an idea – can be seen as an important actor in social practices. This theory envisions society as a recipient

of instruction and the social individual as primed and expectant; for orders, suggestions and socially recognisable action.

Barthes (2009 [1972]) explored similar conceptual ground when he argued that myth was not an old-fashioned idea confined to historical periods such as the Middle Ages; rather, it was 'a type of speech' which operates symbolically within image-driven communications. He uses the idea of analysing an image of a French-African saluting a French flag to expound on this. In this example, he argues that common photographs can support nationalism when underpinned by socially agreed narratives such as French imperialism, race, social order and dominant history. This challenges the matter-of-fact acceptance of an ideological image, deconstructing it into artificial fragments to be thoughtfully sorted. The man in the photograph has been 'signified' to operate as an image – or to further signify him and others like him – which leads to 'natural' social segmentation and the widespread acceptance of what appears to be (Barthes 2009 [1972]: 142-143).

This paper intends to approach 'beauty culture', an important sociocultural apparatus of the image-saturated and advertising-driven beauty goods industry, in a similar manner. However, instead of solely utilising Structuralism as a lens to appraise advertising and the subject's relation to it, I will explain how the Frankfurt School Critical

Theory of Herbert Marcuse (1991 [1964]) supports my contention that a 'false consciousness' dominates media communication, problematising the individual's relation to it. The beauty industry emerged from humble beginnings in the nineteenth century to become a massive global market comprising several multinational corporations (MNCs). In 1849, a small industry worth US\$349,000 was situated mostly in small chemists and discreetly sold skin correcting creams to middle class consumers. This history strongly differs from the contemporary global beauty market, which saw consumers spend US\$290 billion on skincare products in 2008 (Weller 2008).

Furthermore, due to the unwieldy size of the beauty industry, the 2013 empirical study examined in this paper needed to specify some boundaries to properly study how women respond to beauty cultural messages within advertising. The anti-ageing skincare commodity, a relatively new addition to the beauty market, occupies my main concern, as it suggests that women can naturally look 'young' – despite the imagery displaying models wearing makeup in the photography that commonly accompanies the marketing text. This notion troubled me as it assumes a socialised individual ready to consume an intangible and questionable good that relies on its own stories to assist buyers in making an informed choice.

In this paper, I intend to explore three problems associated with the dominant commercialised beauty narrative. This will draw upon my empirical study, which interviewed nine Australian women on their attitudes towards 'anti-ageing' beauty creams and four full-page colour advertisements located in glossy magazines. First, I will ask whether media does play a significant role in the spread of beauty culture and its dissemination. Does the directive to look young and fit within commercial ideals of beauty sit well with my sample? In this, I will critique beauty advertisements that suggest anti-ageing can be achieved via Marcuse's 'false consciousness' theory. Marcuse (1991 [1964]) posits that ideology is an immaterial object wielded by state – and other powerful interests such as capital – to achieve desired outcomes, such as the widespread acceptance of mass consumerism. Expanding on Marcuse, I will explore whether beauty, as an immaterial object circulating within media and society, can be regarded as a 'false consciousness'.

Second, I will analyse how beauty is rationalised by the individual if she 'knows' she is being potentially duped by luxury imagery in advertisements. The women in the study discuss their personal regimes as well as how they feel towards the selected imagery, which I felt were strong examples of beauty culture advertising with a focus on a youthful face. I will draw upon these data to evaluate how much agency the feminine consumer may experience when choosing commercial beauty regimes – and I will

explore whether the women have used, or considered, other alternatives to skincare mass consumerism. This inquiry hopes to see whether women's personal intentions towards the care of their skin, or their extended selves, are suppressed due to the dominance of the commercial means to work towards achieving the social standard of beauty.

Third, I will return to Marcuse (1991 [1964]) to use his theory about evocative language and mysticism in advertising. His concept of culture being 'one-dimensional', thus easily hammered into the collective social mind, will be critiqued via the findings of the study. Does individual obedience suggest wide-scale female subservience to beauty consumerism? Or is there room for agency – or what is thought of as free will – within consumer beauty practices? Marcuse's argument that social actors have an 'insoluble core' that questions external social constructions may be helpful here to explain how a consumer can both believe, and not believe, in a socially upheld practice.

'Beauty False Consciousness' or Symbolic Displays of Agency? Examining the Binaries of Women's Position to Advertising

Marcuse (1991: 2) defines false consciousness as the imposition of 'alien needs and alien possibilities'. Here, he argues that state and capital merge into a powerful apparatus that instrumentally controls individuals in late modernity. 'False needs' are rationalised as social requirements for public participation and these needs are socially reproduced to the extent that the individual may believe that the needs are their own (Marcuse 1991: 5). For Marcuse, advanced industrialisation has seen a new authoritarianism emerge, a superstructure that wields immense power and control over society and commands complete conformity to its ideals and norms. This conceptualisation of late modernity challenges democratic notions and also problematises the commonly held lay-notion that consumption is a voluntary and pleasurable act.

For example, in literature reviewed for the discussed study, Gimlin's UK and US study (2002) found that beauty, and other commercially mandated acts of self-care, could be seen symbolically as female agency. Consistent with this, Black (2004) argued that the women in her UK study saw their beauty regimes as pleasurable moments in modern mundane realism. Both authors use performativity frameworks for their position, underscoring that beauty is an informed act undertaken by a wise consumer. Both authors do concede that gender power relations play a part in beauty normativity. For example, Black (2004: 2) shows this well when she discusses how working class males would joke about gift vouchers for wives being for 'scaffolding and filling'. Here, the gendered aspect of beauty is well-considered – yet other concerns, such

as the individual being dwarfed by wider sociocultural influences such as power and class are minimised.

Tracing the historical roots of beauty to contextualise from where the industry grew begins to assist our understanding. Nineteen-twenties Americanised conceptions of what a 'New Woman' could be assisted the emergence of a feminised mass consumerism, as beauty products came to symbolise female freedom and Western political emancipation (Banner 1983; Peiss 1998). This coincided with the mushrooming of print media, which saw the mass circulation of information, advertising and also, flattened idealisations of how someone with upward class mobility might live.

Importantly, in this period, imagery of lovely women were commonly appropriated for commercial or political means. The idealised picture of beauty, already somewhat conflated with femininity, increased its social circulation within commercial print media and mass consumerism. Within it, particular values and morals about race, class, gender and nationalism underpinned directives to consume and be patriotic in Western countries (Kitch 2001: 5-7). The beauty consumable, such as makeup or skincare goods, came to be seen as a means of assistance for women to reach the ideal of New Womanhood and also, as a way for working class women to transcend long-held ideas about class and race.

Technological advances, such as the introduction of photography in print media, movies with sound and colour, saw 'professional beauties' being hired as models and spokespeople for business. The infiltration of new media with sophisticated and well-groomed women had a pedagogical influence, where the normal woman was encouraged to actively associate their favourite stars such as Clara Bow and Janet Gaynor with cosmetic use, such as a specific brand of facial beauty soap (Sherrow 2001: 4-7). This suggestion of class mobility via consumerism was new, as was the synergy of the multiple media. These advances saw cosmetics' use explode in popularity and in 1929 the relatively new industry was worth US\$700 million per annum (Peiss 1998: 97). To further problematise the situation, media publications, particularly ones aimed at women, and beauty corporations often acting symbiotically, saw editorial cooperation and a purposeful blurring of the lines between reporting and advertising. This was due to the beauty industry being a major source of revenue for these magazines (Kitch 2001; Peiss 1998:124).

In contemporary times, advertising remains problematic, as editorial cooperation and representation of women in the media sees similar power struggles. The normal woman is strongly encouraged to see herself in beauty culture imagery. An excellent example of this is the 'Dove'

'Real Beauty' Campaign; which Johnston and Taylor (2008) call 'feminist consumerism' – however, they use this term with cynicism due to recognition that Dove, a large MNC, has appropriated a version of feminist discourse alongside images of models that slightly deviate from beauty norms to sell products. Johnston and Taylor (2008) draw upon varied sources to argue that this message is morally repressive because it targets those who may identify with alternative discourses, seeing an outcome of gender being produced and reproduced by commercial interests.

In this instance, the beauty capitalist is attempting to capture female consumers who profess distrust at misleading beauty imagery by constructing a countercultural advertising campaign that resembles social activism. A study conducted by Scott and Cloud (2008) reveals that Dove's campaign was semi-effective, with their subjects identifying more with the models, despite expressing distrust at what they called Dove's 'generic diversity'. However, a fixed dialogue of 'that is beautiful' but 'that is not me' occurred when women outside hegemonic beauty standards viewed the images. Women who identified with supposedly subversive traits, such as 'aged', 'freckled' or 'overweight', did not physically resemble the models in the Dove campaign and were unsettled by this misrepresentation. The authors argued that the subjects took the 'disidentification' personally, despite their display of sarcasm and distrust in the focus group setting. The subjects analysed the advertisements as the corporate world's misguided attempt to appeal to 'feminist consumers' and perhaps finding this tact more insulting than the standard theme of airbrushed flawless beauty.

In this vein, 'the face' in beauty culture that sells women reified and flattened imagery next to goods with arguable effectiveness is seen to many women as a co-conspirator in the continuation of unrealistic gendered ideals. In 2004, the Dove Corporation commissioned a scholarly study for market research to build their 'Real Beauty' campaign, which resulted in an unpublished research discussion paper the authors concluding that current global definitions of beauty are one-dimensional. Etcoff, (in Etcoff et al. 2004: 4), one of the authors, contends that the global-social definition of 'beauty' has been reduced via the sieve of culture in the last 30 years to mean 'ethereal weightlessness and Nordic features'. Orbach, (in Etcoff et al. 2004: 5) argues that since the 1950s, beauty has become something not only generated by the 'Hollywood dream factory' but placed as a responsibility upon ordinary women of all ages to achieve. This re-defining of beauty as a commercial good to be achieved sees most women labelled as deviant, or exterior to the social norms of what can be considered 'perfect' or 'beautiful'.

Moreover, an analysis of the space where the beauty product is sold allows us to fully understand the romanticism, mysticism and reification of beauty in commercial contexts. Beauty spaces can be critically seen as Foucauldian (1984) heterotopias, created spaces unlike the usual lived world. For Foucault, the heterotopia exists in different incarnations and in the instance of his mirror image, it can be a space of otherness that is mentally and physically represented. I intend to appropriate this concept to argue that beauty retail spaces are heterotopias where the real, the imagination and the image collide. This sees the individual confronted with otherness via an environment dominated by specific image, consciousness and ideology. The beauty retail space is brightly lit, full of unusual scents and overwhelming colourful images of beauty. It removes the individual from the moment of their time-space and thrusts them into an introspective moment of physical and mental representation, convoluted by a strange mix of both the real and unreal. The heterotopia of the beauty retail space aligns with the beauty false consciousness, creating harmonious reiteration of magical concepts such as beating the ticking clock and reversing ageing through the consumption of a cream or potion.

Is Beauty Accepted as a 'Rational Norm'? Thinking about Non-Commercial Alternatives

The results of my 2013 study suggest that strong pressure exists for women aged 18-60 to conform to ever-changing beauty ideals and standards. My qualitative study interviewed two women individually and ran two focus groups to examine attitudes towards commercial beauty culture and their beliefs on dominant anti-ageing discourse. As underscored by Mulvey (1998: 200), since the 1970s, the age management paradigm underpins skincare routines as notions of 'new skin' daily, and potent anti-ageing creams promise results for consumers. Beauty markets have now expanded to include older consumers – the so-called 'grey market' – but the ideal of flawless youthful beauty has not shifted to reflect this.

The prerogative to emulate beauty culture ideals via consumption, regardless of age, suggests that if one adhered to skincare regimes, they could evade ageing and not have to 'hide' behind makeup. The average woman sees 5000 digitally manipulated photographs of models a week, an alienating experience that normalises unnatural beauty standards and insinuates these images into the public consciousness as *right beauty*. Often, women do not feel victimised by the images – they strongly aspire to them, determined to reach them through modifications and branded items. In this case, the notion of liberation is extended to mean one's right to change their face. Thus, in the case of gendered commercial ideals, third-wave feminism has been hijacked to mean the right to pursue, attain and display hierarchal social goods – such as an adeptness to beauty culture norms. This gendering of

externalised 'success' silences alternatives and rewards the compliant (Orbach 2010: 36).

The above suggests that via delegitimising non-commercial alternatives, the dominant beauty culture narrative self-justifies. Challenging the norm by ignoring it, or exploring other options, is often socially misconstrued as 'moral laxitude' (Coupland 2009). The display of 'bad ageing' has become external and deviant to strongly held ideas about social and moral good. Via appearing not to discipline and coerce embodied ageing, the subversive female social actor is judged harshly (Clarke and Griffin 2008: 653-655). Rachel¹, a subject who did not use beauty products, still identified with the idea that ageing could be altered, managed or stopped via personal beauty regimes:

I used to be really dry. I used to have to moisturize every day. But ... twelve years ago (I stopped using products) ... I started drinking this water that was ionized and drinking three liters a day and having olive oil in my diet every day, more avocado, or some form of positive fat.

The above phenomena of the subversive female actor still identifying with beauty ideology messages was also found in Gimlin (2002). Here, the feminine double-bind remains strong – even women who actively reject the products and the culture cannot completely disregard the sociocultural importance of beauty culture.

However, considering dominant social narratives, the importance that these women place on anti-ageing seems rational. In contemporary times, the media constructs old age as 'failure and breakdown', inattentiveness and sloth. Beauty culture has created expectations of 'perpetual youth' and contempt for ageing processes, something that is also highly feminised and ridden with moral difficulties (Tanner et al. 2013: 88-99). For example, in a discussion about age management, Ashleigh, an 18 year old subject, announces her intention to begin surgical interventions at age 23:

Andrea: Or your other option is plastic surgery or chemical peels or face needles, stuff like that.

Ashleigh: I am going to start getting Botox when I'm twenty-three.

(Silence)

Rachel: Why? Why?

Ashleigh: You know I would too, that's the sad thing.

As we can see, the older participants condemned Ashleigh's choice as extreme when counter-posed against their interventions of sunscreen, water intake, 'right' diet and skincare products. However, Ashleigh shows distrust

at the advertising images and acknowledges that real anti-ageing only occurs with surgical intervention. This attitude exposes the false ideology of skincare culture, however morally troubling that it might be. Ashleigh displays status as a rational agent as she argues for the manipulation of photography present in beauty culture – but also indicates the personal importance that avoiding the signs of ageing poses to her.

The imperative of anti-ageing underpinned the interviews with all nine subjects, regardless of age. Eight out of the nine women regularly use commercial skincare products, with two showing an obsessive identification with beauty regimes. Liz (40s), spends \$200 a month and is highly brand conscious. In the sample, her attitude possibly leans the closest towards agentic – but dualistic attitudes towards distrusting beauty ideology and also being drawn into it shows that even Liz was not immune to arguments of false consciousness.

Nonetheless, the profits enjoyed by beauty industry MNCs are often ignored in discussions about feminine pleasure, narcissism and beauty. In 2005, the beauty industry was globally worth US\$160 billion, showing steady growth of seven per cent per annum, with some MNCs such as Nivea and L'Oreal growing at 14% (Orbach 2009: 107). In global terms, US\$400 billion per annum is spent on general advertising, generating desire and need for commodities. This cultural engineering sees massive conglomerates generate historically high profits, often outperforming previous year's takings (Miller 2009: 48). In Etcoff et al. (2004: 27), 68% of the women interviewed agree that 'the media and advertising set an unrealistic standard of beauty most women can't ever achieve'. As Brumberg (1997: xxiii) dryly notes, for the beauty capitalist 'elevated body angst is a great boost to corporate profits'. Consistent with this, all my subjects displayed distrust, caution and hesitancy towards beauty ideology claims, advertising and imagery. The younger women (<40) displayed a dual attitude of aspiration and loathing towards the beautiful face-object in the advertising, simultaneously wishing for physical traits of the model whilst actively hating that the model resembles the beauty ideal more so than they do.

Interestingly, all of the four younger women chose a favoured image, something the women over 40 did not do. For example, Amanda (20s), held a Lancôme advertisement of an enlarged face-object in her hands for about ten minutes, commenting, 'I think she has flawless skin ... I do think, what a bitch.' She chose this image as her favourite, desiring skin like this and noting that she knows girls that have 'flawless skin'. For Amanda, her belief that she knew 'people that look like that' affirms the realness of the beauty image, despite her admitting that the picture held in hand was little more than a mirage. Further to this, most subjects express suspicion about

beauty ideology claims – perhaps most interestingly, by Michelle (30s), a subject who showed high identification with beauty and anti-ageing culture. She rationalises her product use via discourses of 'hedging bets' and taking care of oneself, arguing that 'there (is) no actual proof that these anti-wrinkling creams work' alongside professing that a week without moisturising products would be 'out of the question!'. Additionally, Deborah (50s), a critical subject who largely rejected beauty culture, used a full anti-ageing product range, contradicting her assertion that beauty was irrelevant to her. However, a strong trend of distrust of advertising claims and acceptance of beauty as feminine duty was observed across the sample. This dialectic was underpinned by notions of beauty as self-care being a moral good and concerns about the visibility of facial issues such as dryness or acne spoiling personal image.

In this data, the use of beauty products was often rationalised via dermatological terminology and, sometimes, by social concerns. It was also found that the *avoidance of deviance* from beauty norms and also, the contention that if other women are utilising beauty as a tool to potentially look better and garner improved sociocultural capital, then it would be irrational for an individual not to. That is, the individual symbolically profits from the social display of the right items, such as makeup or beauty (Bourdieu 1984: 378). This contextualises some of the reasoning why women use cosmetics such as skincare products but, from a Marcusean perspective, it also highlights the problem of implanted false needs.

'Magic Ritual Language', Beauty Culture and the 'Insoluble Core'

Returning to critical theory arguments about false consciousness and the implantation of alien needs, I now intend to analyse what Marcuse (1991: 88-103) calls 'magical ritual language'. Within the capitalist false consciousness that operates in the media and public discourse, propositions are hammered into individuals' minds and familiarity is firmly established via repeated advertising, which sees recipients form personalised associations and identifications with products and corporations. In this vein, advertising becomes magical and powerful. It is common to observe incongruous and incompatible propositions accompanying hypnotic and beautiful imagery that overwhelm the recipient, who is dominated by the harmonised message and ignores any contradictions. The images communicate concepts symbolically, seeing linguistic control achieved through language, image and myth. This magical ritual language, replete with flashy imagery and impressive words, sees individuals comply, even if they exhibit suspicion or distrust. This theory can be seen as compatible with beauty ideology, particularly the flattened, still, beauty images of face-objects often found in contemporary women's

magazines. When subjects were shown examples of these advertisements for comments and attitudes, subject hesitancy was experienced, as each individual was reluctant to appear culturally duped by the powerful combination of beautiful imagery and interpellative words. Throughout the sample, the words 'flawless' and 'perfect' were repeatedly used to describe the beauty imagery – sometimes in tandem, often repetitiously like a mantra. Liz (40s), who highly identified with the imagery, raves about a Lancôme advertisement:

Well, it's beautiful. Again, its *flawless*, its striking, the model that they have used is gorgeous, she is *flawless*, again, the skin is *perfect*, no wrinkles, no freckles, no broken capillaries, no scarring, no nothing. She is absolutely *flawless*. It is *perfect*. Looking at it would make you want to go out and buy the product. I actually have bought Lancôme from advertisements in the past, myself, because I have looked at an image and thought, oh that looks good and read the little blurb and thought oh I will try it, and I have, so yeah ... very powerful ... the glow looks so beautiful and shiny and everything. It's *perfect*.

Here, Liz shows excitement and engagement with the beauty image, highlighting the flawless nature of the beauty ideology face-object in the advertisement and also showing how she has been moved into purchasing Lancôme products due to effective marketing. Unlike other participants, Liz did not position herself as an imperfect image reader relational to the perfect face-object. Instead, Liz displayed high self-esteem and interest in how products could maintain her appearance. As previously noted, she provides us with the closest example of an agentic beauty user. But, considering Marcusean notions of hypnotic magical advertising language, Liz appears to be duped by the mystical elements touted in the beauty culture. Earlier in the interview, she admits that expensive branding does not mean better results, despite maintaining a habit of consistently purchasing luxury products. This problem returns us to the issue of whether women would participate in beauty culture without a monolithic advertising superstructure constantly feeding imagery, instruction and prescription through media. Idealised beauty personified by supermodels, coupled with beauty being compulsory feminine work, 'dominate[s] women's consciousness' (Peiss 1998: 4). Here, it can be argued that advertising and consumer markets have subordinated women to elite interests. Additionally, the beauty industry selling 'moods' and types rather than just commodities complicates this matter. For example, Englis et al. (1994: 50) unpack beauty types to mean 'girl next door' or 'vamp' – or even a personification, like Marilyn Monroe. The prosthesis of culture built onto the commodity confounds the individual's decision to partake or reject this embedded, and gendered, social norm.

For Marcuse, there remains a possibility that the individual might reject this dominant paradigm and invoke personal critical thinking towards what are troubling and incompatible propositions. Here, the individual is reliant on an 'insoluble core' to find truth in the images and messages. However 'in the fully developed industrial society, this insoluble core is progressively whittled down by technological rationality' (Marcuse 1991: 66). Therefore, the one-dimensional culture, with its false consciousness, intensively socialises the late modern individual from an early age as to how to behave, consume and live. To resist the false consciousness, and the dominant paradigm in sociocultural environs, Marcuse (1991) argues that one would need to 'negate' the messages discursively and visually circulating in late modernity via insistent critical questioning.

This concept of the 'insoluble core' shares some theoretical grounding with the display of agency, but the top-down nature of beauty culture alongside capitalist authoritarianism in media presents many problems for women, or men, wishing to dissect consumerism ideals or avoid the pursuit of symbolic attainment within a commercial environment.

Conclusion: A Gendered Double-Bind?

This article has underlined the many challenges that confront women in late modernity. Since the 1970s, the notion of a deviant beauty identity has been grown to include ageing and non-adherence to commercial regimes. Regimes of self-care, such as the use of anti-ageing creams, has been reshaped in public discourse as 'rational citizenship' rather than a feminised false consciousness (Tanner et al. 2013: 87). Advertising has also grown in this period, seeing sociocultural ideals reinforced and demand for commodities, such as beauty products, culturally engineered. Furthermore, mobilisations against beauty have been appropriated by the Dove brand, which cleverly used 'feminist consumerism' and critiques of false beauty imagery to sell their products. Their hugely successful 'Real Beauty' campaign saw increased profits and much media attention to their brand (Johnston and Taylor 2008: 942). However, as the subjects in my interview data discussed, the cost of deviance from beauty norms is high. Feminine ageing and the perceived degradation of beauty is seen as a socially damaging loss, as an individual finds herself increasingly visually incongruous with youth beauty ideals. Moreover, the social display of ageing suggests physical undesirability as the dominant discourse asserts that youth is good and old is bad and ugly (Clarke and Griffin 2008: 660). The cultural capital framework also allows us to see how social actors utilise their physical appearance as symbolic power in social environments (Bourdieu 1984).

It can be seen here that the cultural privilege attached to beauty provides compelling reason for women to participate in beauty culture (Donohue and Stuart 2012: 100). That is why I argue that rationality can be found in the individual woman's decision to adhere to beauty norms. However, the *irrationality* of beauty culture suggests that one can transform her appearance through the application of an anti-ageing cream, even though tenuous evidence exists that these creams are as effective as they claim to be (Sherrow 2001; Weller 2008). Congruent with Marcusean notions of false consciousness, beauty culture has constructed a magical ritual narrative that creates false needs, disorders and desires through the imposition of instructional media and prescriptive commodities. Via singling out the individual and arguing for agentic beauty as an act of self-love or self-creation, oppositional thought dismisses the power disparity between the individual and the superstructure. It misunderstands the full impact of the social cost of deviance from beauty norms and discredits the beauty imperative as trivial. By constructing a critique on the reification of beauty through commercialisation, one can begin to understand the extent of this uniquely feminine double bind – and the problems associated within it.

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End Notes

1. All names in this article have been de-identified to protect privacy. Ages of the subjects were also generalised in order to conceal identities.

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Workchoices – Characterisation, Effects and Resistance: An AMWU perspective

BRETT HEINO

This article seeks to explore how the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU) represented the Howard Government's 'WorkChoices' legislation in its official journal, AMWU News. Applying Kelly's (2008) study of industrial relations 'frames,' this paper seeks to explore the AMWU's characterisation of the legislation, the modalities of resistance it encouraged, and the level and nature of support given to the Australian Labor Party (ALP). It is argued that a consistent, total but untheorised vision of the negative impacts and key players of the WorkChoices legislation is forwarded, along with a campaign of resistance that is largely oriented to the political arena. When viewed as part of a broader timeline, both positions represent a marked departure from a historic tradition of critical political economy and industrial mobilisation, and are intimately tied to the political and economic transformations of Australian neo-liberalism.

In 2005, the ruling Liberal Party/National Party Coalition introduced the highly controversial 'WorkChoices' legislation, which radically recast Australian industrial regulation. The trade union crusade against WorkChoices was a key factor in the removal of this government from office in 2007 (Brett 2007; Woodward 2010). Conducted under the auspices of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), the 'Your Rights At Work' campaign simultaneously focused public opposition to WorkChoices and '... placed unions once again at the forefront of public consciousness' (Bramble 2008: 235-236). The movement's success, sheer size and its centralised ACTU leadership easily leads to the conclusion that the campaign was monolithic. Focusing on the image of unity projected by the union movement therefore runs the risk of being blinded to the different, perhaps competing, visions of WorkChoices held by various unions. This tension between the general and the particular representations of WorkChoices is one which has not been adequately mapped and explored. Whilst a general account of the trade union response to WorkChoices is well-sketched (see, for example, Bramble 2008; Wilson and Spies-Butcher 2011), the perspectives of individual unions are poorly understood. If left uncharted, we face real difficulties in understanding the obstacles and opportunities presented to efforts at building union solidarity, particularly insofar as these take legislative form. Given the election of a Coalition government in September 2013, along with strong indications that industrial relations reform is on their agenda (Wyborn and Vautin 2014), these questions of union solidarity and cooperation, key dynamics in the struggle against the neoliberal disempowerment of workers and resulting social inequality, will be particularly pressing in the coming months. It is thus an apposite

time to explore the characterisation and representation of WorkChoices from the perspective of a union we can expect to be in the vanguard of opposition to a conservative industrial relations agenda; the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU).

The AMWU came into complete being in 1995 after a long series of union amalgamations. Many of its historical component parts, such as the Amalgamated Metal Workers and the Food Preservers' Union, were firmly located in the left-wing of the union movement (Bramble 2008). Today, the union is still considered left-wing, most notably in its Victorian branch, with a fairly militant industrial record and a generally progressive stance on a range of issues. The contours of the left-right political spectrum are malleable through time and space, but for the purposes of this paper, Knapp and Wright's (2006: 6) definition of the distinction between left and right is adopted:

The politics of class is the single most important factor dividing Left from Right...with the former seeking social justice through redistributive social and economic intervention by the state, and the latter committed to defending capitalism and private property (and, it would argue, prosperity) against the threats thus posed.¹

Given its left-wing political orientation, a tradition of militancy amongst its constituent parts and a large membership base (over 100,000), we could expect both a strong resistance to WorkChoices and an ability to mobilise this resistance at the industrial and political level.

To determine how the AMWU leadership ‘framed’ WorkChoices (Kelly 2008), I have turned to the official organ of the union, *AMWU News*, in particular focusing on the thirteen issues released over the lifespan of the legislation (from Summer 2005 edition – Summer 2008 edition). We can thus ascertain if AMWU attitudes changed over the lifespan of the legislation, particularly vis-à-vis certain temporal markers, such as the growing electoral fortunes of the political wing of the labour movement, the Australian Labor Party (ALP), in the face of public opposition to the laws.

WorkChoices: An Overview

Before we can move to the particulars of the inquiry, however, we must explore the WorkChoices legislation itself. Although this analysis will be necessarily cursory, it will serve to identify and contextualise the main points of controversy whilst locating the legislation historically.

For the majority of the twentieth-century, Australian industrial regulation was based upon compulsory conciliation and arbitration. This system could broadly be described as a set of quasi-judicial arbitral tribunals that could compulsorily determine disputes between employers and unions, with the resulting determinations called ‘awards’. From 1904 (when the original federal *Conciliation & Arbitration Act* was passed) until well into the 1980s, this structure was paramount in determining industrial outcomes. The system was highly collectivist, presupposing the existence and efficacy of trade unions (see, for example, Higgins, 1915). Importantly, the metal unions which would eventually form the basis of the AMWU were crucial to the architecture of the award framework; industrial strength was used to gain concessions from employers in the leading Metal Trades Award, which then typically flowed through to other awards (Cochrane 1988: 188-189).

Consequent upon the economic crisis and transformation that gripped Australia in the 1980s, this structure increasingly came under strain, especially from business quarters where it was regarded as overly centralised and inefficient (Heino 2014). In response, the Keating Labor Government began in the early 1990s to sideline the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC) and the award system through encouraging enterprise bargaining, and plant or firm-level bargains between employers and workers that, whilst subject to a public interest test, could diverge from the underpinning award. Importantly, the ALP government also established ‘Enterprise Flexibility Agreements’ that could be negotiated without union involvement.

These trends were intensified in the years of John Howard’s Coalition Government, which ruled from 1996

until 2007. A qualitatively distinct act was the introduction of statutory individual contracts, known as Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs). By breaking the collective nature of agreement-making, AWAs were highly effective in eroding union power, particularly when inserted into the more general strategy of de-unionisation engineered by many major employers in the 1990s; particularly in sectors such as mining and telecommunications (Peetz 2006). Moreover, responsibility for the overview of these agreements did not lie with the federal tribunal, but was vested in a separate body, further expediting the displacement of the AIRC as the dominant institution of industrial regulation.

The crushing victory of the Howard Government in the 2004 election, and its ensuing Senate majority, allowed for the passage of further legislative change, which had been previously stymied by Senate opposition in the late 1990s. *The Workplace Relations Amendment (WorkChoices) Act 2005*, which became known simply as WorkChoices, was complex, but the most important practical changes were:

- The removal of the ‘No Disadvantage’ test which had hitherto prevented AWAs from offering poorer terms and conditions than would apply under the relevant award;
- Removing access to unfair dismissal protections for employees who worked in a small business employing one hundred or fewer employees;
- Sideline awards through not updating them;
- Stripping the AIRC of its power to determine minimum wage rates, which was vested in a new body, the Australian Fair Pay Commission.²

According to the Howard Government, WorkChoices was a necessary bundle of reforms premised on a fundamentally consensual view of employer/employee relations. This view, combined with the legislation’s emphasis on productivity improvements, workplace flexibility and decentralised bargaining locates WorkChoices firmly within the neoliberal paradigm that has dominated Australian public policy since the 1980s (Fairbrother et al., Svensen and Teicher 1997).³ Essentially advocating the extension of the market principle throughout the social body (including the labour market) and the elimination of government intervention in economic life, neoliberalism has been one of the most powerful responses to the internationalisation of capitalism that had intensified since the 1970s (Ivanova 2011).

By contrast, the trade union movement correctly sensed that WorkChoices entailed both further individualisation of workplace relations and the effective sidelining of the AIRC and unions, both of which struck at the heart of

declining union power. Mobilising against the legislation was thus necessary if unions were to mitigate or reverse its damaging implications.

With this account of the content and historical context of WorkChoices in hand, we can move on to the crux of this paper; the framing of the legislation by the AMWU.

'Framing' and Union Politics

A thorough survey revealed no prior research that specifically investigated AMWU representations of, and attitudes to, WorkChoices. The conceptual genesis of this paper is owed to an article in this journal by Diana Kelly, 'The 2007 Federal Election in Australia: Framing Industrial Relations' (2008) and Tom Bramble's *Trade Unionism in Australia: A history from flood to ebb tide* (2008). Of key significance in Kelly's (2008) article was her understanding of the processes by which industrial relations are 'framed' by the media and major political parties. Kelly defined framing as,

The patterns of selection of issues, of exclusion and emphasis, of what is covered and how much coverage is given to an issue or concept or value frame, what is seen and what is hidden, and what is important ... Framing is thus a twofold process – it offers (selected) information or ideas and indicates the ways in which these should be evaluated (2008: 34).

Although Kelly does not focus specifically on trade unions, there is not a *priori* reason why her methodology can't be employed in assessing their approaches, both collectively and individually, to representing WorkChoices.

Bramble's book (2008) elegantly identifies and systematises the left-wing/right-wing divide in the union movement and its historical significance from the 1940s through to the present. The AMWU, and its collection of predecessor unions, largely come down on the left-wing of the movement (Bramble 2008; Kuhn 1986). Kelly's model, anchored in Bramble's historical matrix, is thus a potentially fruitful line of inquiry into how political orientation impacts upon a union's construction of WorkChoices. In the present case, a study of how the AMWU frames WorkChoices must place this frame within an understanding of the union's political orientation and industrial history.

Methodology

The analysis, underpinned by Kelly's (2008) frames, proceeds on three fronts; how *AMWU News* characterises the WorkChoices legislation, its effects and who is

responsible; what opposing actions it advocates; and what level and modality of support is offered to the ALP.

The decision to concentrate on the official organ of the AMWU is obviously limited in a number of ways. Through focusing on the journal we gain a thorough understanding of the official stance of the union, but at the cost of neglecting informal but perhaps equally important indicators of union attitudes, such as strikes, demonstrations, radio interviews etc. Moreover, it must be remembered that the nature of the representations we see in the journal may in themselves serve a political agenda. For example, Bramble (2008: 225-226) suggests that from the outset of the WorkChoices campaign, union leaders of all political persuasions sought to avoid direct industrial confrontation. A deliberate show of restraint in the union journal may therefore serve the image of a willingness to abide by the law, rather than reflecting the true perspectives of union members. If this were the case, however, it is in itself a valuable insight into influential factors shaping union framing.

Suffice it to say here that space constraints do not allow for a more holistic analysis. Such work is of course necessary in comprehending the full gamut of union perspectives, and is in the author's scope for future research.

AMWU News

Before a more specific interpretation of WorkChoices is proffered, it is worth noting that the union's left-wing political persuasion is quite obvious from the language of the journal and the implicit values that underlie it. The phrase 'solidarity' is oft-used, and the back-page editorial of each issue often introduces political opinions of members and delegates that exceed the bounds of the workplace. For example, in the Summer 2005 edition (12), Paul Gunner, an AMWU delegate, comments that the Government instils fear in the public of people who challenge the **status quo**, extending the legitimate trepidation surrounding terrorism to other issues such as immigration and collective action in the workplace. Moreover, the journal publicises community events that are often of a distinctly left-wing political character, such as the 'Advance Australia Fair-Building Sustainability, Justice and Peace' meeting, the explicit aim of which was to 'Unite against economic rationalism, corporate globalisation and war' (*AMWU News* Winter 2005: 11).

The journal also has a distinctly internationalist segment, usually towards the rear of each issue, which tells of struggles faced by foreign manufacturing unions and international labour coordination and cooperation. This is quite telling considering the long association between left-wing ideology and working class internationalism,

beginning with Marx and Engels' (2002: 258) historic exhortation for working men of all countries to unite.

Characterisation of WorkChoices

On the whole, *AMWU News* presents a comparatively total (though, as we shall see, untheorised) vision of the causes, actors and consequences of WorkChoices. The union is quick to fit the industrial relations reforms into a longer pattern of behaviour evinced by the Howard Government. As early as Autumn 2005 (2), Doug Cameron, the National Secretary of the AMWU, contends, 'The Howard government is not likely to want to sit down and talk to us. Howard and Costello, in particular, have never made any secrets about their pathological hatred of unions.' In the following edition (*AMWU News*, Winter 2005: 2), Cameron builds on this characterisation, talking of Howard's, 'deep-seated desire to take away people's rights in order to give business more power to exploit workers'. Often, this impression is reinforced visually: the journal frequently used satirical cartoons to demonstrate the Government's anti-worker agenda.

Key to Kelly's (2008) process of framing is the legitimatisation of a value frame by selective emphasis and a pattern of exclusion/inclusion of data. The attempt to show WorkChoices as one episode in a long history of conservative government attacks on workers is central to the AMWU's framing of the legislation. The value frame, a government ideologically opposed to trade unionism, is validated by a deliberate pattern of undermining the stated policy justification for the legislation. This is apparent as early as Autumn 2005 (2), when Doug Cameron describes Howard's silence on industrial relations in the 2004 election, and then contrasts it with Howard's intent for it to be a central plank of his fourth term in government. The Spring 2005 edition dedicates an entire article to identifying government lies, debunking eight apocryphal claims the Coalition used to legitimise its reform policies. The attack on the government's credibility is bolstered by an objective identification of the faulty economics on which the laws are founded. A range of articles are produced proving that the stated economic justifications for WorkChoices are not only fallacious but will be done a disservice under the legislation.⁴ This approach is Kelly's (2008) framing par excellence; offering selected information whilst also structuring the interpretation of that information in desired ways.

Importantly, the AMWU does not always limit itself to workplace issues in its charges of dishonesty. A piece in the Spring 2007 issue draws a visual timeline of perceived Howard Government treacheries, placing WorkChoices in the context of other abuses, such as the war in Iraq, the introduction of the GST, the squandering of the fruits of the resource boom, and the Wharf Dispute of 1998

(Anonymous, 'We must continue to fight for our rights at work beyond the election: 6-7). This is demonstrative of a perspective that relates the economic and political moments of neoliberalism, conceiving it as something much more than a narrow set of economic prescriptions.

Importantly, the AMWU acknowledges that the government is not alone in its crusade, and is aided and abetted by business interests. Cameron states in the Winter 2005 (2) edition that, 'John Howard is not operating in a vacuum. The employers are right in the thick of it, providing him with all the ammunition he needs to go to war with working people ... The government and business have lined up against workers.' In Winter 2006 (2), Cameron adds that 'Big Business and the wealthy elite have supported Howard's wage and condition cutting laws.' The AMWU construction of the causes and key actors of WorkChoices depicts a government/employer conspiracy, in which both are portrayed in an overwhelmingly negative light. Employers seem to be lumped together as a (untheorised) class whose interests are in profit maximisation irrespective of worker rights and conditions.

It is, however, important not to overstate this point, particularly in light of the AMWU's militant past. Bramble (2008: 117-119) notes how up until the late 1970s, class analysis and class struggle were central to AMWU (Amalgamated Metal Workers' Union) publications, while the Communist Party of Australia remained a force in leadership positions within the union (Kuhn, 1986). As late as 1979, an AMWSU (Amalgamated Metal Workers & Shipwrights Union) publication entitled *Australia Ripped Off* forwarded a thoroughly Marxist conception of surplus value (without, however, using the term 'Marxism') and discussed the desirability of Australia's transition to a democratic socialist state (AMWSU 1979: 10-11, 56). By the early 1980s, however, this ideological tradition had waned almost completely, at least in official union literature (Bramble 2008: 119). At no point in any of the journal issues studied here is the analysis framed in terms of explicit class struggle and combating capitalism. The AMWU analysis of the causes and actors of WorkChoices, although comprehensive, does not go to this depth. It is in this sense that I describe the AMWU's characterisation of WorkChoices as untheorised. Whilst crying out at government and employer excesses and their crystallisation in WorkChoices, it does not place this critique within a political class theory. Rigorous class analysis has collapsed into the broader populist treatment of the economic system noted above, which is itself symptomatic of the neoliberal stultification of the concepts of class and their substitution by more general notions of fairness and social justice.⁵ This is evidence of the AMWU abandonment of a historical position over the past several decades, and further gives a temporal aspect to 'framing'. The exclusion of a class value-frame that

previously structured the intended audience's responses in specific ways both informs and limits AMWU responses to WorkChoices.

The effects of the WorkChoices legislation are portrayed as overwhelmingly negative. As early as Autumn 2005 (4), the union develops a schematic of likely workplace consequences, including increased use of guest labour to drive wages down, cutting back the award system, restrictions on industrial action and union right of entry, and increased individualisation resulting through the diffusion of AWAs. A comprehensive outline is provided in the Winter 2005 (6-7) article 'Taking Away Our Rights' which also describes the pernicious strangling of union rights and health and safety laws. Emphasis is placed upon the wage-reducing and union-destroying aspects of the legislation.

The AMWU's tendency to internationalism is apparent in its comparing the Australian experience of WorkChoices to other countries utilising similar laws, with parallels drawn with New Zealand, the Philippines and particularly the US. WorkChoice-esque styles of industrial relations are the target of their ire and are placed in the framework of international threats to worker and union rights, particularly in relation to manufacturing. By broadening the frame to include the experiences of labour in other countries, the negative characterisation of WorkChoices is further legitimated.

The impact of WorkChoices is primarily discussed at the workplace level, but the AMWU does delve into the effects of WorkChoices outside of the employment relationship. Cameron outlines the effect the legislation has on family economic life, making tasks such as buying petrol, mortgage repayments and providing health and education services for children all the more difficult (*AMWU News* Winter 2006: 2). The Summer 2006 (8) edition includes an article (Work-family balance set to get worse) detailing the detrimental effect WorkChoices will have on employees' work/family balance, while elsewhere they link the kind of contract and casual labour that is given predominance under the Howard Government to a declining birth-rate (anonymous, 'Casual and contract labour are contributing to decline in childbirth', *AMWU News* Autumn 2005: 11).

Resistance to WorkChoices

Key to the AMWU framing of WorkChoices is the need for a collectivist, inclusive struggle against the legislation. In almost every issue, reference is made to the utmost need for members, delegates and the wider union movement to co-operate and become involved in the campaign. Collective strength and efficacy is emphasised, with Cameron stating at one point, 'Let's stick together in 2006 to fight these laws and help each other. Collectively

we are strong' (*AMWU News* Summer 2006: 2). The National Days of Action (NDAs) are advertised in the journal, while an AMWU 'Help Desk' is established to answer employees' concerns and provide a vehicle of empowerment. Photos of the NDAs are utilised, whilst campaigns in all sectors of AMWU activity, from rural workers to employees of large and small corporations, are documented to totalise the impression of resistance. Readers are assured in every issue that the AMWU is at the forefront of the campaign.

The actual mechanics of resistance, however, are harder to identify as definitively. The rhetoric seems to be an admixture of advocating removal of the Howard Government, and participation in campaigns to this end, and strong 'on-the-job' unionism. The balance appears to be fluid through time. The first issues manifest a somewhat vague desire to fight. Cameron writes that the AMWU intends to fight the Howard Government '... every step of the way' in the summer of 2005 (*AMWU News* Summer 2005: 2). In the following issue Cameron is more powerful in his editorial, maintaining that '... we have no intention of lying down and doing nothing. Unions exist to fight for the interests of working people and if we are faced with different conditions then we will adopt different strategies' (*AMWU News* Autumn 2005: 2). The article 'What to expect after July 1' emphasises the necessity of workers belonging to the union, with strong, on-the-job unionism being the only way to 'demand and achieve respect from the boss' (*AMWU News* Autumn 2005: 4). As late as Summer 2006, a piece entitled 'Taming the Beast' maintained that one aspect of resistance was to, 'Be Strong – these laws are repressive and we could face harsh penalties for going about our business. This should not stop us doing what is right' (*AMWU News* Summer 2006: 7).

Over time, however, the *AMWU News* seems to focus less on the rhetoric of on-the-job unionism (with its implicit undertones of industrial struggle) in favour of a more electorally-based campaign of resistance. The emphasis shifts, subtly but perceptibly, to the primary goal of removing the Howard Government from office. By Winter 2006, Cameron argues that, 'The only solution is to remove Howard from government' (*AMWU News* Winter 2006: 6). In subsequent issues, this message is reinforced, with the NDAs and community protests aimed at discussing means of defeating the Howard Government electorally. By Autumn 2007, organiser Dave Oliver suggests, 'The most important thing we can all do as workers at the next election is vote for parties that have promised to restore our rights at work' (*AMWU News* Autumn 2007: 4). To this end, a 'Union Marginal Seats' campaign was established, investing the efforts of union activists in marginal electorates.

This noticeable change in emphasis is significant, as it evinces the dominance of a mentality dedicated to working within the political system. The frame of resistance subtly changes from admitting a certain, somewhat vague, confrontationist attitude to one which strongly emphasises a political fix. This shift is particularly significant when read in a broader historical context. Bramble (2008: 41-45) shows just how different the metal union mindset used to be when it was at the forefront of a massive industrial campaign to secure the release of union leader Clarrie O'Shea and the defeat of the Penal Powers provisions of the *Conciliation and Arbitration Act* in 1969. Whereas industrial strength was an antidote to government intransigence at the height of union strength, the situation described in the pages of *AMWU News* is evidently different. In no issue was industrial action encouraged as a means of combating the laws. WorkChoices was thus framed largely as an issue which must be dealt with politically rather than industrially, a marked shift in historical perspective.

Role of the ALP

The support given to the ALP was more reserved than one might anticipate. Although there are definite pro-Labor articles, they tend to be qualified by a call for the ALP to regain a working class character and are, at times, subsumed into the wider task of removing the Coalition from office.

The first distinctly pro-Labor articles appear in the Autumn 2006 issue.⁶ In the following issue, the AMWU approves of Kim Beazley's plan to abolish AWAs and cites with approval his statement that, 'We need you to carry Labor's message ... so that when Australians cast their vote next year they'll be convinced that only Labor can stand up for them and only Labor can make Australia the kind of place they want it to be' (*AMWU News* Winter 2006: 4). By Spring 2006, the systemic association of the ALP with fair collective bargaining rights and the Coalition with cost-cutting individual contracts is starting to take shape. Cameron turns implicit support into an explicit endorsement in a Summer 2007 (2) editorial entitled 'Core values must underpin new leadership' insisting that, '...we will work tirelessly to assist the ALP to win the next election and reinstate social justice, fairness and equity, as the underpinning values of Australian society' (interestingly deploying the more vague populist notions of social justice and equity noted above). It is clear that as the election draws closer, AMWU support for Labor becomes more substantial. In the penultimate issue before the country went to the polls, *AMWU News* makes a direct comparison between the ALP and Coalition, explaining why the former offers a far superior industrial relations package (*AMWU News* Winter 2007: 4).

This construction of ALP support is certainly instructive as an act of framing, particularly insofar as it excludes certain material which could support an alternative conception of WorkChoices. There is a considerable body of scholarly literature which sees in the Howard Government's approach to industrial relations a continuation of policies initially conceived and executed by the Hawke and particularly Keating ALP governments (see, for example, Fairbrother et al., Svensen & Teicher, 1997; Quinlan, 1998; Ludeke, 1998). Indeed, the freezing out of unions from industrial relations actually began in a formal sense under the Keating government with the previously discussed 'Enterprise Flexibility Agreements'. This history of policy is noticeably absent from the pages of *AMWU News*, an omission that directly affects the capacity of the audience to develop alternative conceptions of the provenance of the WorkChoices legislation.

This act of framing does not imply, however, that support for the ALP is unqualified or total. At certain points this support seems to be subsumed under the broader task of removal of the Coalition. Although the practical effect of this may be to draw support to the ALP, the conceptual distinction is nonetheless significant. A case in point is the article 'Taming the Beast,' which provides that one answer to the legislation is, '... to toss out every Coalition member and Senator who supports it and elect replacements, *from whatever Party*, who still believe in a Fair Go [my italics]' (*AMWU News* Summer 2006: 7). The back page editorial of the Autumn 2007 (12) issue sees union delegate Colleen Gibbs maintain that, 'We really need to get rid of our MP and get someone in our area who wants to do something for the workers. So I'm doing everything I can to convince people *not to vote Liberal* so that we can get rid of these laws'.

As the election draws closer and the ALP's prospects of winning firm, a sense of returning the Labor Party to its mission is inflected. Cameron states this unequivocally: 'Kevin Rudd must restore the ALP as the defender of working families and this can only be done if the ALP's traditional values and branding are restored' (*AMWU News* Summer 2007: 2). He reaffirms this position upon his entering the election race for a Senate seat with the ALP, arguing that 'I think there are more than enough voices in parliament for Australia's wealthy and business elites, both in the Liberal Party and in some parts of the Labor Party' (*AMWU News* Summer 2007: 4). In Spring 2007 (6-7), the AMWU makes a veiled criticism of the ALP's industrial relations programme, noting that, although superior to Howard's agenda, it is only a first step and needs to be strengthened in some areas. Moreover, the need for continual AMWU campaigning even after the election of a Labor government is stressed, largely in the form of pressuring the ALP to improve the protection of working families (*AMWU News* Spring 2007: 6-7).

There thus seems to be a generally pro-Labor frame over the course of the thirteen issues, but one that is qualified at points and is not always linked to the removal of the Howard Government at the conceptual level (although this may be the practical effect). In light of the rightward drift of the ALP since the 1980s (Bramble, 2008), this qualification is perhaps not surprising, and speaks of an awareness of underlying tension between the industrial and political wings of the labour movement.

Conclusions and Future Research

This paper has explored the framing of WorkChoices in the pages of *AMWU News* in terms of characterisation, the need and methods of resistance, and the level and modality of support offered to the ALP. A consistent, total but untheorised vision of the negative impacts and key players of the WorkChoices legislation is forwarded. Initial hints at strong, 'on-the-job' unionism as a mechanism of resistance are quickly subsumed to a predominant tale of struggle through electoral mobilisation. Both of these elements of the frame tell a story when placed in a broader historical context. They represent a marked departure from the perspectives of the predecessor metal unions which constitute a large part of the current AMWU. In the 1970s in particular, these unions explicitly employed a critical political economy in explaining social phenomena (as seen in AMWSU publications such as *Australia Up-rooted 1977* and *Australia Ripped Off 1979*) and evinced a marked willingness to resort to industrial strength (as opposed to political intervention) to secure desired results. Both of these elements are noticeably absent in the AMWU framing of WorkChoices. Moreover, support for the ALP, whilst qualified, is unchallenged by a cogent alternative.

The process of framing clearly does not occur in a vacuum, and the current weakness of the trade union movement, a collapse in a viable left-wing alternative to neoliberalism and the declining fortunes of Australian manufacturing have all changed the parameters upon which this process occurs. Such an understanding is particularly crucial today, given the election of a Coalition Government in 2013 with one eye on industrial relations reform (indeed, a major review into the workplace laws is due to commence in the near future; Massola and Lucas, 2014). How individual unions characterise the Coalition's policy and ensuing legislative change will have a major impact on the mechanics of solidarity.

To this end, future research can further canvass the articulations between the general union campaign against WorkChoices and the representations and perspectives of individual unions. Inclusion of other left-wing unions in such a study, such as the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union and the Maritime Union of Australia, would allow us to ascertain if there is a cogent left-wing

union representation of WorkChoices. Moreover, if we encompass traditionally more right-wing unions, such as the Australian Workers' Union and the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association, differences in attitudes can be compared and contrasted. Applying the three assessment criteria used for the AMWU, it could be determined if there was a causal relationship between the nature of WorkChoices framing and political orientation/ideological heritage. Further research could also address the related issue of how the relationship between political and industrial mobilisation more generally is framed, and how this construction changes through time.

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End Notes

1. This definition has the advantage of being broadly acceptable for people on both the left and the right.
2. For an excellent overview of WorkChoices and its place in the history of Australian industrial regulation, see Creighton & Stewart (2010).
3. For a useful example of how the Howard Government justified WorkChoices, see Abetz (2005).
4. See, for example, anonymous, 'Did you hear the one about interest rates and industrial relations?', *AMWU News*, Autumn 2005: 7; anonymous, 'Making it easier to sack people won't increase employment', *AMWU News*, Spring 2005: 6.
5. Primarily a product of the fact that modern neoliberal societies, by both design and accident, 'have a declining capacity...to produce social identities around economic interests' (Leighton, 2011). Having been co-opted into the nascent neoliberal policies of ALP governments of the 1980s and 1990s, unions were thus not in a position to fight for a rigorous class-based identity.
6. See, for example, anonymous, 'Labor Governments act on manufacturing strategy': 9; anonymous, 'Labor pledges no fees for apprenticeships': 11.

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Standoff

The crowd of what remains unspoken
 rustles restlessly —

 static crackle drowning out those words
 that rise to our lips, falter,

 go no further.

DAVID ADÈS
 PITTSBURGH, USA

Thank you for your submission

thank you for the opportunity to consider it
 very sorry to have kept these so long
 please accept our apologies for the delay
 I normally reply within 12 months
 regrettably, I am unable to place your poem
 I'm afraid we haven't used them
 we are unable to use the enclosed material
 we receive a very large number
 all of which are refereed blind
 many of them of very high quality
 yours haven't been selected
 it's impossible to reply more specifically
 it's either too obvious or too obscure
 lines 5-6 let it down
 it's a bit too long
 it isn't right for us
 it isn't what we're looking for
 it wouldn't fit with our editorial policy
 it wouldn't 'fit', if you know what I mean
 please submit again in the future
 we look forward to reading future submissions
 I encourage you to continue to submit your poems
 unfortunately, the next issue is full
 there is no more space for the next 12 months
 there is definitely no space in the coming year to
 publish your work
 good luck with your writing

CHRIS PALMERA
 EVATT, ACT

Permanent Residency in Caravan Parks: Alternative and acceptable housing for some¹

JANICE NEWTON

In 2009, housing scholar David Clapham called for concept building to develop a theory of housing that links the material aspects of houses and environment to human agency. In an effort to produce such concepts, this article specifically aims to demonstrate that caravan parks provide an alternative but vulnerable form of housing divorced from the general cultural norms of privacy and space. Interviews with 10 managers and 50 residents from outer metropolitan and rural Victorian caravan parks reveal particular social patterns. 'Propinquity', or close living, and 'permeability' resulting from the thin walls in caravan park living, give rise to enhanced exposure to the environment and other people. Given effective management or gate-keeping by caravan park managers, this living situation allows scope for greater sociality and pressures towards the imposition of social boundaries and privacy.

Although emblematic of a type of homelessness (Chamberlain 2005; Wensing et al. 2003), making one's home in a caravan park, can be a satisfactory solution for some people. It is an alternative to normal suburban living that, in spite of significant drawbacks, may suit social adequacy and financial circumstances (Beamish et al. 2001). The article acknowledges the resilience of residents and the lower material lifestyle they have created without suggesting this as a panacea for the contemporary dearth of affordable housing.

In 2009 housing scholar David Clapham called for the building of concepts towards a theory of housing. Such a theory would look at the 'relationship between an individual and their house and its environment', in a way that recognises the embeddedness of such relationships in society and with a view towards elucidating the world of the researched (2009: 5). In attempting to achieve these two aims my research generated two concepts that are useful in helping to analyse the material and spatial factors that interact with home occupants. These are firstly, 'porosity' or 'permeability' of the thin walls of dwellings and, secondly the close juxtaposition or 'propinquity' of the dwellings. These concepts are offered as stepping stones towards a theory of housing appropriate to permanent residency in caravan parks or in similar housing estates that have closely and flimsily built dwellings.

Permanent residency in caravan parks is controlled by the managers who have the power to gate-keep and evict. Their face-to-face relations with residents are essentially different from relations between tenants and government and landlords in that they have a semi-permanent presence. Good managers may encourage an environment conducive to a reasonable quality of life

and housing that involves more social interaction than a typical suburb as well as social strategies to manage this greater openness to social mixing.

Under the general aim of producing concepts useful for a theory of housing, this article specifically aims to demonstrate that caravan parks provide an alternative form of housing divorced from the general cultural norms of privacy and space. When good management allows, particular social patterns, such as scope for greater sociality and exposure of the private, arise from the apparent negative of thin walls (permeability) and close living (propinquity). This may lead to cooperation, sociality and a focus on tolerance, but also to concerns about social boundaries and privacy.

Previous reports (Manderson et al. 1998; Wensing et al. 2003) have given indication of disadvantage among residents (e.g. Connor and Ferns 2002), rather than signs of supportive communities appreciated by residents. We know that the unemployed, disabled and divorced older men, in particular, patronise caravan parks and that sometimes they are used as intermediary housing for women escaping domestic violence, although both park managers and government services prefer to house mothers and young children elsewhere. Coastal parks, especially, are seen as havens for retired working class couples (Newton 2014).

In depth qualitative studies giving the point of view of residents, without a social problem focus, are rare. The voices of caravan park dwellers have been relatively silent and under-analysed but their actions and ideas offer a unique opportunity to observe the raw edge of basic living/housing. Managers have an investment in presenting their

parks in a positive light and this colours both their own opinions and the points of view of many of the residents who had been encouraged or recommended for interviews by a manager. Nevertheless, the quality, apparent honesty and richness of the data inspire faith in its validity.

Between 2003 and 2008, a total of ten managers and 50 residents were interviewed in outer metropolitan and western Victorian caravan parks. The managers who were interviewed came from parks in the outer urban area which varied in physical appearance from grim, security-fenced, cemented spaces, enclosing densely-packed vans or small units in geometric streets, to small, bushy parks with landscaped lawns, gardens and aviaries. They housed between 19 and 275 residents. Homes varied markedly from new elaborate manufactured homes, costing up to \$100,000 to small, weather-beaten vans, usually with a temporary or semi-permanent annexe. Ground rents varied from approximately \$60 to \$110 a week.

Residents interviewed from outer urban and rural parks ranged in age from 19 to 81 but most were aged in their fifties, sixties and seventies. The gender ratio reflected ABS data from the 1996 census of the population of caravan parks in that 60% were male (30) and 40% female (20) (ABS 4102.0 2000). Thirty-four per cent were married/defacto, 34% separated /divorced, 18% single and 14% widowed. Similar to some other studies (Barclay and Mawby 2006: 7-8), 60% of all permanent residents were single-person households. Almost all of the residents interviewed were Australian born, unskilled, were no longer working and had not completed high school.

To delineate the central features of this alternative form of housing defined by propinquity and permeability, the article firstly underlines factors which make this a less than ideal housing situation: physical vulnerability, gossip, and tenuous, superficial friendship. At the outset it must be acknowledged that residents' tenure in caravan parks is precarious. In urban and coastal areas in particular, where land values are high, parks may be sold and residents forced to move out of caravans or cabins which are too old and fragile to be relocated, leading to a possibility of homelessness. Furthermore, the walls of vans and cabins are thin and not intended for long term use.

Inhabitants are also vulnerable to the excesses of nature (Yeo and Grech 2006) and it is possible they may also feel insecure in relation to home invasion. Owing to the lack of insulation, several residents commented on the need for extra cooling or warmth saying, for example, 'It gets too hot in summer' ... 'the walls are a little bit thin – you could just push your hand through the wall.'

Wind, rain and hail are also problematic with threadbare annexes giving inadequate protection. Two interviewed residents had been flooded, with one stepping out of bed into water, and having to replace all of her carpet. Another

resident found a fabric wall too insecure for safety:

I just had enough to buy the caravan, but it had a canvas on it. And I thought, I didn't feel safe with a canvas on it. When I go in, with lock up, I'd have to put a chair behind the door, so that if I heard anybody coming in ... (Vernon).

Thin walls and close living also exposed residents to private matters becoming public with ensuing gossip. A couple said that perhaps they should not have got involved with other people, because 'gossip and peeping', 'everyone knowing your business', is a problem (field notes 6 November 2006). Another manager spoke of previous problems with single mothers. 'It's not so much them, but the blowflies (unsavoury male visitors) that hang around them'. A young woman who lived with her father was reported to have begun a sexual relationship with an older woman living next door. The girl's father moved away to another part of the park, so he could not hear them (field notes 25 March 2008).

Three people had been living separately from their partners within their parks and therefore had to adjust to potentially conflict-ridden, daily contact. Relationships between park residents could be painful when ending. Andrew had an intimate female friend for two years but she wanted to give him 'the flick'.

Like, we've been together for two years. She takes me out for my birthday and I take her out and ... we've been out together ... probably five times. She says she loves me. She's hurting here (points to heart). And it's sort of killing me in a way.

The negative consequences of thin walls and propinquity did, however, provide an opportunity for the germination of roles that supported increased harmony in community living. A divorcee who helped administrate a park positioned himself as having the integrity necessary to combat possible gossip.

And people know that they [can] be anywhere in the town, and they can come through here, and I'll be available for them. And whatever they say to me, is said in confidence and doesn't get spread (Evan).

Another older male resident was affectionately esteemed because of his knowledge of gossip.

I get called, 'The mayor of Sunnyside caravan park'. [name changed]

Oh really? And why's that?

Yeah. I know everything that's going on here, and (laughs). Not everything. I just ... pick up the little bits and pieces of gossip (Vernon).

Friendship within parks could be experienced as fragile. A few men had no friends or only one friend in the park. A divorcee said he had no particular friends. Most residents, however, knew his name and greeted him. Fiona described 'passing associates' who you 'just said hello to'. Mandy had no particular friends in the park and was able to elaborate on the superficiality of some of the friendly atmosphere.

Like, because ... you don't see them much. You, of course ... you just say, 'Hi'. You know them, but you know, you're not really ... close (Mandy).

Others noted losing a friend as relationships altered, people died or moved in and out of the park communities. Keith and Katherine were concerned that their friendship with a younger resident had now broken down as he had been asked by a new manager to leave on the grounds that his dog was a danger to other residents.

In spite of the negative aspects of caravan park living noted above, there are aspects of permeability and propinquity that enhance living situations and these will now be discussed around the themes of friendship, work and health. The structure and design of caravan parks creates a social porosity where it is easy to invite social interaction. Where residents sit or walk within a park marks their willingness to be open to social interaction.

Because when you live like this, you don't live inside all the time ... when you have a house, you're inside. You only go out and do a bit of gardening, but here, because there is other people around and if you choose, you go talk to them people (Betty).

In summer it's pretty good. You can usually just sit out the front of like a caravan ... We've got the pool next door as well (Vicky).

No, there's no particular (preferred) spot. I mean you can sit outside the kitchen and watch people come and go (Pamela).

I think you might have said how you can sit outside and say, 'hello' to people and stuff?

Yes. Just go outside and talk to them, and all the time, there's people walking past (Theresa).

Do you see people going past?

People go past. Stop and talk to you. You know? You meet a hell of a lot of people (Ursula).

The design of some parks, with a central common area, contributed to a focus for viewing or participating in social life. Barbeque areas and pools were meeting points for socialising and were appreciated by at least five residents in three different parks.

I can sit down there and talk to people as they do any cooking, or ... people ... will come through and they'll stop and talk (Vernon).

We go over there each night and if it's warm, you get a bit of a cool breeze off the pool ... because when it's warm, it's open, there's always someone in there (Harry).

Residents were asked directly about their friends and what they might do together. Although it was recognised that a sector of residents could be described as 'loners', this was not the picture for the majority. Managers noted a number of contexts when small groups of friends met together in the parks. On 'nice summer days' a group would gather at the seats under a gazebo or visit a local lake for a barbeque (Manager 1). Manager 10 believed there was a stronger sense of community than 'living in a normal street, the way I do'. Residents crossed paths in the laundry and small groups gathered to walk around the park, to share a barbeque, to go shopping or to church, to watch or play a game of football or cricket (Manager 3, 7, 8). 'Guys might go down to the RSL together or they might go out to lunch for somebody's birthday ... Two or three play bowls from here' (Manager 2, 5).

A number of residents had made friends within the park community or come to a park to be with friends. The friendship could be generalised to a whole street, or park. Residents said, 'We're friends with everybody really, aren't we? It's really a tight-knit little community' (Nigel); 'I'd like to think that most of the people in the park are friends (Evan); 'They're a lot of friendly people here, you know' (Vernon); 'None of us have had a bad word ... There's no animosity here (Phil); and 'It's just the friends and ... it is an important part or otherwise, you can't live in a situation like this' (Barry). The generalised friendly atmosphere was paralleled by several instances of helping out. This varied from small polite acts (carrying someone's rubbish to a collection point, offering unused parking spaces, walking a neighbour's dog and helping a young man to go for his driving licence) that 'don't sound much, but it's all friendly', to sharing transport, leisure and strong reciprocal bonds.

A friendly, co-operative atmosphere and a cluster of friends who chatted and /or joined for some social activity obviously improved the quality of life for some in caravan parks. Work was also a domain where fluidity, propinquity and permeability sometimes operated as positive adaptations to new styles of life. For those still working, caravan park living is accommodation that allows for workers to flow in and out in response to job relocation. Don recognised it as a possible way of living for future generations.

If I was married or not married, I wouldn't build my own place. I'd rent a place. Because then if you get a job, say a good job came up with a construction

company, I can go and I can rent another place. Also I can have my vehicle and my cruiser or whatever on my trailer. It's a lot more flexible for work. You meet a lot more different people (Don).

The need to ameliorate the effects of thin walls with air conditioning, carpet and so forth; the continuing centrality of work to identity; and identity building in response to status challenge may each also become more salient in an environment of close living where most residents have limited means. Although it was on a smaller scale than a typical suburb where renovation can be widespread, park residents often 'worked on' their houses and gardens, undertaking small modifications and renovations that were achievable, with a little help. Canvas annexes were replaced by solid annexes, porches and verandas constructed, en suites installed and gardens, borders and shade areas created. Quite a number of the renovations were designed to ameliorate the consequences of 'thin walls': extra glazing, carpet, trellis and shade cloth and the installation of air conditioners.

Renovations often met purposes beyond material need or comfort. Although a few of those interviewed had very basic, weathered vans and canvas annexes, most residents attempted to beautify their site with at least some flowers or a plant. Two men had created, in their own words, 'palaces'. Jack had built his 'palace' environs from scratch – an aesthetically pleasing garden, with pavers, solar lighting and garden art works merging with surrounding bush and a semi-enclosed outdoor area heated by a pot belly stove.

I've done the whole thing. This is all mine. This was just bare ground when I came here.

I should take a photo of 'The Palace' (name of home) (laughs).

It is 'The Palace' (laughs).

Referring to his home as the 'Taj Mahal' of the park, Tom explained that he paid \$95,000 for this pre-fabricated unit. Located at the perimeter of park grounds, it had a 'cathedral ceiling, ceiling fans, ceiling lights', a 'fantastic air conditioner', and a heater, a log-gas fire while Tom had added ceramic, glossy tiles in the kitchen and laundry, and two skylights. In the garden he had planted eight fruit trees. Homes were thus 'worked on' by almost all of those interviewed. The home and the work were each as important as meaningful and methodical work could be seen as continuing a work-based identity in circumstances when this had been challenged by workplace injury, unemployment and forced redundancies. Close living also provided a favourable environment for some co-operative activity in small building projects.

Odd jobs and building projects were also contexts for supportive friendship.

I've got a nice friend down there called S. He's a really nice guy. He often tells me if I need anything. Like, he done all this (covered in porch) for me.

... he does odd jobs around the park. He helped me to do all this. I bought the material, he put it all (up) for me... (Vernon).

Nigel said of other permanent residents, 'If any of them have got a project on, we all sort of pitch in and help each other ... So, you know, it's good'.

Friendship also involved shared work at leisure activities. Quentin was brightening up his own site by planting flowers and vegetables. A gift to his neighbour and friend may have given them a shared interest in gardening. He 'had a few plants left over. So, I went over to H's over there. Stuck a few petunias in, and got him going'.

Close living also enhanced potential for cooperation and production of a form of social capital when illness or accidents occurred (Szreter and Woolcock 2004:655) When a permanent resident fell seriously ill or was injured, family and government services played a part, but managers and co-residents were even more important. Managers were often called upon to lend a friendly ear to sad life stories and may take it on themselves to help to cheer them up. They also were available for emergencies. Managers explained how they often acted with residents when informed of an emergency or of residents who appeared not to have left their caravan or unit for several days. Residents noticed when cars or blinds were not moved and alerted managers. Managers might also play a deciding role in the management of chronic conditions. For example, Sam was on dialysis five nights a week and needed a large tank of water outside the unit. Although he and his wife were concerned that they may not get permission to install this in the park, the manager was cooperative and very happy, as the water was available to be recycled for washing the cabins and watering the garden.

The type of concierge manager arrangement appears to suit many residents, but it does not replace the support that many can give each other when needed. The strongest evidence for advantageous propinquity in social relations within a caravan park setting concerns the support the residents gave to each other in times of sickness and injury. Managers and residents reported residents checking on each other, helping out other residents with lifts to doctors and hospital, helping out with meals and even persuading a resident he needed hospitalisation. Ursula explained how if she did not see someone around, she would go and check. She and another woman insisted on taking a man to hospital.

I know there's a friend across the road there. I went over to see him one Saturday morning. And he didn't

look right to me. And, I says to him, 'You should be up at the hospital. I'll take you'.

'No I'm not going'.

'Right'. So K went over later on ... She said, 'What do you think of R?' I says, 'To me, he should be up at the hospital'. She says, 'Yeah, that's what I think.' I says, 'But you can't force him to go'. She says, 'Maybe if we both went over and nagged him', she says, 'he'll go'.

So we both went over to him, and we nagged him. 'You've got to go'.

'Don't want to go.'

Well, if anything happens to you, K and I do not want to be getting up every two hours and coming over here to check on you'. So, we ended up talking, (then) taking him up to the hospital. They took him in. His blood pressure was 260 over 150.

'I'm not staying in hospital'.

That's when we says to him, 'You're staying. We are not coming over here every hour to see that you're all right'.

The closeness of living situations and a community where at least some look out for the interests of others may act as a balancing corrective for the health challenges faced by a relatively large proportion of park dwellers.

In terms of friendship, work and health there appear to be advantages in the type of communality allowed by the physical structure of caravan parks. This was, however, a managed communality in that managers had the power to remove undesirable people while residents themselves felt the need to create boundaries and limits. Most managers modified the portrait of friendly sociality and cooperation by stressing privacy as well. Not many residents go to the Christmas party because 'not a lot of them are drinkers and, as I said, they like their privacy' (Manager 4). People live 'pretty separate kinds of lives, like any other neighbourhood' (Manager 9). Moreover, a number of managers were able to articulate the type of balancing act between sociality and privacy that they and the residents found necessary to negotiate in order to achieve a liveable community. Each had to draw boundaries to avoid the ruptures caused when being 'over-social', or too involved, led to a breakdown in sociality. (Some phrases have been italicised to underline this interpretation.)

There is not a lot of intermingling between all of them. Most of them know each other and will wave and say hello as they go past, but *as far as everyone in and out of everyone's cabins, it doesn't happen*. They prefer their privacy (Manager 4).

Sometimes residents become 'over social' then one wants to back off. There is a bit of a breakdown. But

they sort it out themselves (Manager, field notes 26 September 2008).

Residents, too, are able to articulate the guide or rules for living in a close community that help them survive.

Most people who have been around a while, don't have much to do with the others. They say hello to them and they don't get involved because, as some people have told me, they never invite anyone in the park into their van because it usually backfires. So it's just, 'hello, how are you?' pass the time, and move on (Albert).

Holly said she was not anti-social but,

'I'm not (a) live-in-someone-else's-house sort of person. I wouldn't say I'm private but I just think because of the situation we live in, that maybe it's better not to get too friendly with anyone.'

Dianne explained how she drew boundaries on interaction within the park.

We might go down there and yack and have a cuppa every now and then but not often. I don't like living in(side) people's doors, living in their lives. I like (to) say 'hello', go and have a cup of tea if they ask, and ... keep it at that, at the moment.

Dianne's comments effectively illustrate aspects of how the thin walls and close living of caravan parks allow an opening out to passers-by, and friendly interaction, as well as sometimes necessitating a drawing back and boundary making to protect oneself.

I'll talk to people that are talking to me. I'll stand and talk to (female neighbour) or (female neighbour), when they come up past. If I'm sitting out there or the door is open and they see me, I'll go out there and have tea for a little while. But I don't like going and intruding on other people's lives.

A barrier to sociality could be a physical structure. Vernon constructed a barrier between himself and other residents as the close living was too intrusive.

Well, the reason I closed myself off (with a porch and lattice work), because I didn't want people walking past. You can be sitting down there watching TV ... and they're standing there watching TV with you (laughs). So, I thought, 'No. That's it'. I decided. Close it all off' (Vernon).

Although there were definitely a number of 'loners' who had withdrawn from social interaction, most residents were able to negotiate a liveable existence with friendly

but not over intensive relationships with other residents. Nevertheless, tolerance was required by residents, particularly when some tourists stayed and wanted to 'party' all night.

So, you know, there's a lot of give and take. There's a lot of times, you've just got to close the eyes and close the ears and think 'Well, they're going to be going anyway in a couple of days' time'.

Evan was a resident and had been a caretaker as well. He spoke of the reciprocity required to live within a community, also reiterating the social action people took to draw boundaries.

'I treat people the way I like to be treated'. I like to give them a hand, without being ... without interfering in their lives (Evan).

Although there was considerable variation, there was evidence to demonstrate that many benefitted from friendship ties with at least a few other residents within park communities. Furthermore, thin walls and propinquity created potential for greater porosity or permeability in social interaction and the potential for the private to become quite public. Residents and managers alike respond to this by setting boundaries, constructing plant and structural barriers, protecting privacy and acknowledging the need for tolerance.

Although there are limitations with the representativeness of the sample, the evidence confirmed the general satisfaction of most residents with their caravan park homes and the significance, for several, of social interaction to this assessment. Furthermore, there was some evidence of enhanced quality of life deriving from the community of parks. Some managers and residents articulated the concept of community, using phrases such as 'part of a family', 'a real big family', and 'a little village'. Evan appreciated and tried to foster the community way of life in his park. 'People think of it as a family place. The whole lot is a family.' Bianca said, 'It's like a community ... there's good and there's bad and there's trouble and ... it's interesting'.

To conclude, this article began with a broad aim of contributing to Clapham's (2009) call for concepts that may be used as building blocks in the construction of a theory of housing. Specifically, the concepts of permeability and propinquity have been derived from the empirical data, and it is argued that they are useful as stepping stones towards a theory of housing appropriate to permanent residency in caravan parks. Close living and thin walls may be acceptable as a viable housing alternative for some, albeit in a situation of sometimes precarious tenure and fragile shelter. There was evidence that propinquity and permeability enhanced the scope

for greater social interaction than in most suburbs and that this sociality was managed by a focus on reciprocal tolerance and strategies to construct social boundaries and maintain privacy. Of special note, worthy of further research, is that this situation was also 'managed' by the managers of caravan parks who have the power to gate-keep and evict to a far greater extent than private landlords and government bodies who have relations with tenants. Interviews with managers and residents reveal that porosity and permeability can offer unanticipated advantages and, in turn, demonstrate the stubbornness of sociality, the resilience of work-based identities and the ability of challenged human beings to survive.

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End Notes

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Post Whackademia? Putting the brakes on the neoliberal university juggernaut

RICHARD HIL¹

In an article published in the online magazine *The Conversation*, Professor Simon Marginson, formerly at the Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne, and now at the Institute of Education, University of London, made a few interesting remarks about the current state of Australian higher education – remarks that would surely make many a senior administrator wince. ‘In the current policy context’, Marginson asserts:

... world class universities are not those who provide the best programs or educate the most diverse set of citizens. They are not necessarily the most intellectually creative or far sighted institutions, and are not the most socially equitable. Nor are they those that best address the common problems of humanity. World class universities pump out the most global science, attract and hold the top scientists, generate lucrative research applications for industry, and lead in the rankings. For better or worse that is the present global standard (Marginson 2013).

Elsewhere, Marginson (2011) has questioned the neoliberal values of modernisation and economic enrichment that now drive university policies, and asserted that in real terms university education is somewhat less than golden: ‘Universities have lost rationale, and need to reground themselves in the social ... If higher education is emptied out of its public purposes we can no longer justify its survival. The 21st century University needs to redefine itself as a creator, protector and purveyor of public goods’.

We could of course spend a lot of time debating what is meant by ‘the social’ and ‘public goods’ but reading between the lines Marginson seems to be arguing that the modern university’s links to the ideological imperatives of economic growth, GDP, productivity and so forth have dramatically altered how educators, students, administrators and policy makers think about higher education. In contrast, Marginson’s reference to the public good infers a utilitarian world view that takes stock of more than business and balance sheets and instead thinks more expansively about the health,

welfare and wellbeing of citizens both in this country and beyond. His call is for a return to the ‘social’, rather than continued immersion in the economic.

But if we are to have a meaningful debate about the future of universities both in Australia and elsewhere (because globally, universities are looking very similar in terms of policy directions and pedagogical practice) then this needs to be driven by academics, students and the broader public who, collectively, have serious concerns over the current direction taken by Australian universities. Many want to reclaim universities from one-eyed market triumphalists who regard higher education as nothing more than a product to be traded on the open market. However, as I’m going to suggest, there’s a long way to go before any such meaningful dialogue can occur. With academics caught in a web of client-service relations, and variously reporting increased levels of work intensification, over-regulation, excessive top-down administration, less collegiality, discontent and ill health, then it’s difficult to see over the corporate parapet at this juncture.

But before I am accused of harking back to the grey elitist past, or of being the purveyor of terminal misery let me say this: of course universities are incredibly complex, diverse and fascinating places. They are comprised of over 1.2 million students, 55,000 full-time equivalent academics and a vast pool of 67,000 largely marginalised casual employees. Universities generate billions of dollars in revenue and employ many talented and even brilliant teachers, scholars and researchers who, as research by the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (2001) shows, are committed and passionate about their work. Universities also continue to produce thousands of knowledgeable, highly skilled and adaptable graduates who make significant contributions in various walks of life. I could go on.

But, there’s one thing I think we can all agree upon: the university system has changed markedly over the past quarter of a century and much of this can be attributed to the reforms under the neoliberal Hawke government during the late 1980s. The upshot is the 3 Ms: marketisation, massification and managerialism. These

interlocking developments have ushered in an entirely different set of workplace practices and professional relations, as well as a stifling institutional culture of excessive regulation and bureaucratisation. They have also radically altered how and what is delivered in the classroom. While universities like to claim there is now more consumer choice, flexibility and better quality than hitherto, the reality is a little different. The assault on the liberal arts, growing emphasis on profitable courses and vocationalism has turned universities into what resemble training centres for the twenty-first century economy. The notion of a 'rounded education' in which the liberal arts play a central role in preparing students for active citizenship; where students have the time and space to leisurely ponder ideas and participate in what Professor Stuart Rees refers to nicely as 'intellectual promiscuity' is a fading vista.

Also, something has happened to the ways in which students experience the university. More and more of them are reporting a sense of disconnection with peers, academics and institutions in general. Most now work for lifestyle and survival reasons, and many struggle with 'work-life balance'. Online technologies have led to growing numbers of students studying at home, further isolating them from the on-campus university experience – a development gleefully encouraged by a number of vice chancellors. For many students, the spark, soul, relationality, passion and play has gone out of universities, replaced by a pervasive and dour sense of vocational functionality. Many yearn for more than today's universities can provide, despite all the talk of choice, excellence and innovation. Somewhere along the line, it seems, universities have forgotten about the purpose of higher education as a contributor to the public good, irrespective of career, salary packages, productivity and so forth. Economy has superseded the social as the driver of higher education policies. Universities have forgotten also that in an instrumental, functional culture the soul withers and what we are left with is the appearance of a 'community of learners' and a parodying of the past. Nothing seems quite real: talk of community, engagement and connection seems out of place, contrived and somewhat at odds with the lived realities of most students. Hyper-connection in a cyber cloud or simply wondering through one of the many university villages, hubs or collaborative spaces feels like a scene straight out of Truman Show. All that remains for the university is to ensure a compliant, productive, brand-conscious workforce, centralised educational delivery, effective marketing of the almighty brand – and, hey presto – here comes the latest conga-line of satisfied customers.

The problem of course is that the customers are not always satisfied – far from it. And it's not just me saying this: read the many student surveys that are out there, talk to students rather than hand them evaluation sheets,

and there emerges a worrying picture of isolation, loneliness and disconnection, as well as a sense that the university experience is an expensive and largely functional journey. It's not all doom and gloom though: most students talk glowingly about the quality of teaching, course content and the support they receive from their universities, at least in the initial stages. And, depending on your financial circumstances, you can avoid work and enjoy all the benefits of living in a university village or one of Melbourne's resplendent colleges. Under such circumstances university life, at least for the few, can be very satisfying indeed. But for most – and especially international students – the university experience is considerably less than glowing. Poverty, hardship, stress and isolation are the lot of many of these students. Many also feel short-changed by lack of contact with their peers and teachers, and complain of having to do more of their studies online. Others consider that although their teachers are dedicated to the task of content delivery, it feels like a process driven more by contractual imperatives than intellectual curiosity. The majority of the 100 or so students I have interviewed for an upcoming book say that the university experience feels too functional, too geared towards job training and therefore lacking the deep and critical learning that derives from having the time and space to consider the world and one's place in it. Many also view universities primarily as businesses whose main concerns are brand promotion and income generation. They are acutely conscious of being treated like customers rather than students and consider their 'choice' of courses is being shaped by the job market. And yet, as reported recently in a US study, students want more from their education (see Lederman 2014). They seek a greater focus on critical thinking, and a broader and richer curriculum that includes many of the disciplines that universities are disappearing in favour of more job relevant courses: philosophy, government, history, art, and literature.

Many academics, like me, oppose what universities have become. Predictably, we are quickly dismissed as fuddy-duddies, lefties, elitist troublemakers, and worst of all, impediments to progress. But what we're after is an open and honest public debate about the role and purpose of universities in the context of a rapidly changing world. We want to examine the consequences of the 3 Ms and whether and how universities can remain truly public institutions dedicated to the public good; and to ask whether, as supposedly independent institutions, universities should consider distancing themselves from the influence, say, of corporate donors and cashed up philanthropic alumni. We also want to revitalise teaching and learning, research and scholarship, to free them up from market constraints and to insert values based on social justice rather than job or industrial relevance. We seek to regard students like active citizens and globally savvy, critical thinkers rather than customers. And like students, parents, employers and others are telling us,

we want to reinvigorate the idea of a rounded education.

These aspirations are worth fighting for, but what worries me most these days is how academics themselves are responding, or not, to these various institutional challenges. Here are some uncomfortable truths:

- Only about 25 per cent or so of academics belong to the National Tertiary Education Union.
- There is no professional association representing academics as a whole.
- There is widespread fear and powerlessness among academics brought on by a stifling top-down, regulatory culture.
- Many academics have retreated into a no show, no tell bunker mentality that does little or nothing to question the current hegemonic order.
- The default position of many academics is, at best, to write critical articles for scholarly journals that will gain them brownie points rather than airing their views to a wider audience.
- Or, most commonly, academics tend to retreat to the sanctuary of corridor complaint, wine drinking and private expressions of discontent, often manifesting in mental and physical health problems.

It would of course be ridiculous to assert that all academics are basket cases or that they all naively embody the values of the corporate university; or indeed that no-one ever speaks out. I can think of many brave and principled Australian academics that have done just that: Simon Marginson, Raewyn Connell, Nikki Sullivan, Nick Reiner, Andrew Whelan, and Simon Cooper, to name a few. I also welcome the petitions drawn up by sections of the professoriate in 2010, calling for radical change to tertiary policies, and the many academics who try as best they can to resist the tyranny of workload formulas and the further bureaucratisation of higher education. But for every one of these academics there are dozens of others who feel reluctant to speak out or who simply go along with the *status quo*, often to avoid the unwelcome attentions of management. Personally, and notwithstanding those who occasionally sign petitions, my greatest disappointment in relation to the academic fraternity has been in respect of those seasoned, senior academics – the ‘lumpen professoriate’ as one commentator calls them – who know full well the realities of higher education yet hesitate or refuse to air their grievances beyond the confines of in-house committees. Many have simply given up and opted for the quiet life, while others are shameless apologists for a system that bedevils their academic colleagues.

That said, I recognise, as was pointed out to me by no less than a radicalised professor of accounting, that some senior academics try as best they can to shore up

academic autonomy and freedom in various university committees, and for this they should be commended. Indeed, the accountancy professor spends much of his or her time in senate gatherings, submitting lengthy discussion papers and arguing the case for retention of the more traditional aspects of the academic profession. This is tough but necessary work that can reap benefits both for academics and their students. And yet, as we see on an almost daily basis, depending on the state of the market, academics and management are not always the best of friends as numerous redundancies, campus closures and the often bitter struggles over enterprise bargaining agreements testify.

It is against this backdrop that we have witnessed the emergence of many interesting developments that offer up both critiques and re-imaginings of the modern university. Such developments include: the Council for the Defence of British Universities, the US Campaign for the Future of Higher Education, the courage shown by academics at the University of Warwick in the UK and here, at the University of Sydney in protesting against cuts, the student protests in Chile, Germany, Australia and the UK, and the rise of free universities, and independent, progressive colleges in the US and Europe. Leaving aside my earlier comments, I also see hope emerging from a gathering scholarly discourse unfolding in the splendid *Australian Universities Review*, *Arena Journal*, in online sites like UniAdversity, and in many books about the vagaries of today’s higher education system, inducing the spectre of institutional ‘zombification’.

So what do academics in particular need to do in order to promote public debate and defend themselves from the onslaughts of the corporate university? Minimally, I would suggest the following:

- Academics might consider how they can develop a credible public narrative about the role and purpose of universities in democratic, socially just and civically engaged society in the context of what Marginson refers to as ‘global public space...in collaborative networks, NGOs, cyber-space’.
- They might also set about debating more assertively the values that underpin today’s universities and argue the case for the re-centring of the liberal arts.
- They might further seek to develop a counter-institutional narrative that speaks of cooperation, collegiality, communality, civic engagement, citizenship rather than simply acquiescing to the competitive ethos of the market.
- Academics might also seek to reclaim their role and purpose as public intellectuals rather than continuing to operate as service providers and income generators.

- Academics should of course continue to highlight the negative impacts of work intensification and the exploitative nature of casualisation.
- Routinely, academics might consider turning private discontents into public dialogue.
- They should consider joining a union, and discuss the possibility of establishing a professional association that has clout and invites respect. For some reason, professional associations strike fear into the hearts of autocrats.
- Academics might seek to build alliances with student bodies, radicalise their students whenever possible, and build links with academic activists in Australia and overseas.

There are many other things that academics can do to promote public debate on the parlous state of our universities. They can highlight the many disjunctures between all the marketing hype and the reality of what goes on in these institutions. They might engage their students in a dialogue about what is meant by a university education and how things could and should be very different. That at least would be a start.

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End Notes

1. This article is based on a keynote address delivered at the Australian Learning and Teaching Fellows National Forum, December 5, 2013.

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Hospital

A pervasive hum, invasive lights,
white gown swooping hairy legs,
a skinny ghost whose nest-like-head
buzzes with static and stinks of cigarettes.
A woman afraid to be sent home
convinced that death is imminent,
and from a key locked room a wail
ascends the air to crest the brutal
surface of sedation.

While I drink tea
with an amiable addict, his pain denied
the lush Lethe of morphine, vigorous
doctors, on the upright side, rush to quell
the Pandora of unleashed cries, and my own
stricken daughter, behind her scarred
face hides, appearing oddly
unperturbed by it all.

MICHELE SEMINARA
MANLY VALE, NSW

a slew

the air narrows here

thin wires may be taut or tame,
visible or invisible
at neck or shin level

'not all of the violated wish to violate others'
was something learnt long ago
before what are now known as 'the changes'

a non-existent government of nested abstractions,
a controlled haunting

so we rent an animal & ride out the light,
resigned to living on weeviled grain,
thankful we can see so little

whiskygrass outgrows us

some bow down with their backs to the gods

a tree grows out of the house

STU HATTON
MELBOURNE, VIC.

Sharing a Vision: Intentional Communities in Australia

ELISSE KLEINER

It is the end of a long day at work, and I am ready to collapse upon arriving home. My housemate invites me to join a gathering of neighbours around the fire, and slips a plate of steaming lasagne into my hands. It is made with fresh produce from our shared permaculture garden, which she looks after. Our resident fix-it man walks by and excitedly tells me about the upgrades that he has been making to my leaky roof while I have been out. I thank him, promising to treat him to some pizza cooked in my recently built clay-brick oven on the weekend. I smile and join my friends around the fire, listening to the beautiful sounds of soft music being strummed.

Living in community is a truly magical experience. Care for one another is paramount in community life, and individuals with diverse skills find ways to trade and share tasks in order to live harmoniously. Daily life is full of interesting adventures, and there is support at hand when you need it. I have a dream to create a rural community near Melbourne where that special care for one another is combined with artistic development and a deep respect for nature. I feel the call of the land, and believe that to live in community is a return to tribe, where lives are more meaningfully connected than they are in the city.

Community living has been the prevalent way of life in cultures across the globe, throughout human history. Villagers in many different societies would live in a kind of big extended family, helping each other to provide food and shelter, and raising families with many hands to help. Unfortunately, it is unusual to see these practices thriving in Australia today, and they appear to be actively discouraged under contemporary legislation. There are, however, a small and fascinating collection of cohabiting groups around the country which could be described as Intentional Communities. This is an umbrella term which encompasses ecovillages, co-housing communities, residential land trusts, and alternative cooperative living, and suggests that participants share an intention or common vision. Many of these communities are located in the lush climate of Northern New South Wales, which has been a hub for alternative living since the 70's.

Inspired to learn from the practical experiences of others about the possibilities, problems and adventures of community living, I and another aspiring community builder embarked on a journey through New South Wales and Queensland in December 2012, visiting and exploring 12 Intentional Communities.

What is an Intentional Community?

An Intentional Community can describe anything from a handful of friends living on a property to a thousand-strong village, as found in the Israeli Kibbutz culture. While I was aware that they varied dramatically in size, it wasn't until I visited several communities that I realised that they can also look and function very differently. There are many variables, such as the core reasons for bringing people together, the allotment of land, individual or shared food production, community facilities, the level of interaction between members, and measures for dealing with conflict and the wellbeing of members.

Sharing a Vision

Early on in our journey, it became clear that communities which support a well defined vision stand out as being more harmonious and better functioning. We found the communities that are strongly united in intention or vision possess ample amounts of 'social glue', a magical ingredient commonly discussed amongst Intentional Communities. Many communities prioritise an alignment with the group's vision in their member selection process, in order to attract a group of like-minded people. A strong vision can give a group purpose as well as direction in making decisions and moderating conflict.

Some visions that we encountered include care for the environment, the wellbeing of community members, or the following of particular teachings or spirituality. Other, seemingly less organised groups, had little more than the notion of affordable housing to unite them, or a general disgruntlement with society at large; having joined together to escape established rules. In asking a community member what their group vision is, it became easy to gauge the level of commitment and connectedness of the residents.

One particularly memorable visit was to a beautiful community that had plenty of 'social glue'. Guided by meditation practices, members live with a balance of privacy and group interaction, and hold daily meditation events, weekly community meals and seasonal retreats for the wider public. The small community (around 15 shareholders) invited us to join them at one of their dinners, where we had the opportunity to speak to members and residents over a delicious meal. I was taken aback by the warmth of the people, their keen engagement with visitors and willingness to share information. Several individuals offered to take us on a tour of the property, and many of the members spent quality time talking with us. These residents are proud of their community and it showed with the care taken in the beautifully kept grounds and shared facilities, and their knowing smiles.

Legal Options

At present, the legal requirements in Australia make it a particularly difficult and exhausting task to create an Intentional Community. Antiquated planning legislation dictates that only one home can be built on 100 rural acres in New South Wales. In order to get around this, it is necessary to acquire Multiple Occupancy (MO) or Community Land Title status, which is a complicated, expensive and time-consuming process. Many communities have struggled with a council's multi-layered bureaucratic process for over a decade to gain their MO title. In the interim, some individuals have resorted to building illegal dwellings while waiting for their paperwork to be approved.

Many Intentional Communities in New South Wales are registered as a Cooperative, and apply for MO or Community Land Title status. Membership in a Coop is through the purchase of an equal share, and the organisation functions to serve the mutual benefit of its members. This often makes the buy-in to an MO attractive due to the affordability of that arrangement. We encountered one community that offered each member an acre of land for the Coop buy-in price of just \$3,000.

One drawback of the Coop structure is that as a shareholder you do not privately own your house or land, so you cannot take out a mortgage against your house, and cannot sell it on the open market. This means that many people invest a lot of funds and energy in building their dream home, and become financially bound to the community. There have been many instances of people effectively becoming trapped in a community, since they can't easily recoup their money and move on when they desire to leave. This has been the cause of some very serious social problems.

Other alternatives to a Cooperative legal structure are a Charitable Organisation, Trust Fund or Company. No matter what setup is employed, we learned that it is important that the legal framework is firmly in place before money changes hands. Current residents of one community are presently facing serious legal action stemming from administrative blunders of the community's original founders thirty years prior, who have long since moved on.

It is essential to do thorough research and seek professional advice before starting down any of the legal pathways of creating an Intentional Community.

The Individual and Community

We observed a range of responses to a crucial question in community living: How are the needs of the community balanced with individual freedom of choice? One community places a great deal of importance on working together to grow, prepare and eat all of the food communally, while another believes it essential for everyone to have the freedom to eat whenever and whatever they like, with no shared farming or organised meals. One community requires a minimum of 15 hours of work on site plus attendance at three meetings each week, whereas another does not enforce any community commitments beyond optional attendance at an annual meeting.

We noticed that none of the groups choose to impose what we would consider excessive minimum standards of individual contribution, on average only a few hours work per week. Even those that we would deem extremely communal – sharing most meals, partaking in daily rituals and work on the land – allowed for individuals to contribute in a variety of ways, and to take time out if needed. In the more functional communities, people were contributing significantly more work than required, by personal choice. We also observed that when a community places a high value on the importance of individual freedom of choice, this detracts from the strength of the community and shared ideals, and often these groups appear less functional, more disorganised and prone to unresolved personal problems amongst members.

Brought together by the attraction of affordable living, one large community (approx. 100 people) had initially divided the land into smaller blocks, and sold shares for the ownership of each block. Because members of the coop highly valued their own privacy, life there came across as being very quiet. It appeared as though the residents didn't know the other members living outside of their own little hamlet. With few compulsory meetings

and no accepted decision making process, personal problems and negative gossip amongst the community seemed prevalent. Although the affordable shares and ability to grow food on the block of land meant that the cost of living was cheap, the lack of shared facilities and overall disorganised, reclusive atmosphere made us question the true value of living in this community.

Working Together

In community living, everybody is expected to contribute to the group. In some communities, there are individuals who don't have the time or ability to commit to manual labour or administrative work. One community addresses this by issuing a monthly levy, which can either be paid in cash, or worked off through dedicating time to a working party or committee. This gives the opportunity for the keener members in the community to contribute more time and be compensated with reduced fees.

The levy at this particular community is invested in the communal facilities, which benefit all members. They have built an impressive hall with a large kitchen and performance facilities. They often host passing bands who barter for their accommodation by giving a performance. This community also boasts outdoor sports and recreational areas, a meditation hall, a daycare centre, a workshop space, a camp ground for guests, outdoor entertainment areas and beautiful art installations. The community have various active interest groups such as their own choir, martial arts classes and a weekly food coop which is open to the public. We saw all of these offerings as treasures that are testament to the strength of the group, and their commitment to creating a stimulating and enjoyable life together.

Two other smaller communities that we visited (around 20 members) shared meals together at least five nights a week. Because of the constant use of common spaces and facilities, a certain amount of daily work was required from members for tasks such as cooking, cleaning, restocking and tending to the garden. Both of these communities had considerable 'social glue', and in joining them for a meal, it felt as though we had been welcomed into a big, diverse family. The nightly meals were a joy at both of these communities, where members took great pleasure in eating the delicious food that they had grown and prepared together, and shared stories amongst themselves.

Relationship with the Land

Many communities choose to section off land and entitle shareholders to their own private lot, saving a portion for communal use. Building a home on these empty lots seems to be done at wildly varying paces and with many different approaches. While some people are

quick to erect temporary or simple accommodation such as a caravan, shed or bus, it takes some people a very long time to realise their dream home designs. At one community which was over 30 years old, there was still much construction taking place. Some lots were still completely vacant, having been purchased by people waiting to amass the resources to build their retirement residences. In many of the communities where there is buy-in for a plot, so much energy goes in to building the individual's own house that the development of shared community resources is often sidelined or abandoned altogether. This also appears to cause issues in meetings, where the owners of the lots advocate for their own rights over the interest of the community as a whole.

By contrast, other communities consider themselves to be caretakers of the land, on a spiritual and practical level. In these cases, priority is given to working together to conserve the natural environment. They have employed specific legal structures such as a Charitable Organisation or Company to establish the members not as property owners, but as impermanent residents. Renting spaces to members, either temporarily or indefinitely, allows for a lot more flexibility, with members coming and going. This keeps the group refreshed by ensuring that members are truly interested and invested in living in the community. We noticed that these communities put more of their energy into working collectively, sharing food and resources. On the properties where accommodation was rented rather than member-owned, we sensed a more focused and communal vibe than at the other communities which we visited.

The Community in Society

Most of the communities that we visited prefer keeping mainly to themselves, treating their home as a sacred haven with an occasional open day or special event. A few are keen to reach out to the wider community by providing regular public events or learning programs. We observed many harmonious communities that function well regardless of how much interaction with townfolk that they choose to have.

Two of the communities which we visited offer an impressive range of activities and opportunities available to the public, and even operate successful businesses on site. One group runs a cafe and a commercial plant nursery, and hosts weekly yoga and dance classes in their large warehouse space. This community seemed to be heavily focused on running these enterprises, and all of the residents were either employees or volunteers.

Another community lets their leisure hall and dormitories to business conferences and retreats that are aligned with



the community's values. They also have a commercial kitchen with one community member providing catering for events on-site, particularly for the groups who came for conferences and retreats. These businesses give a source of income to members involved, with some of the profits invested back into the community.

Decision Making

In order that an Intentional Community may grow, a group of people must work together to carry a shared dream forward. The more members or shareholders involved in the decision making process, the better. Involvement is commonly organised through working parties or committees, and appears to be most effective when a certain level of autonomy in decision making is granted to each group or the head of the committee. In this way, many of the small issues are able to be resolved without having to bring them up at whole-group meetings. We witnessed many resilient communities where residents trust each other to make good choices for the group. This is a very special aspect of community living.

Regular group meetings are essential to ascertain the needs of residents, and to ensure the wellbeing and positive development of the community. We heard many stories of how group meetings can rapidly decline into an exhausting mess of emotional conflict if not well

managed. Different decision making processes have been employed by communities in order to streamline meetings, and to ensure that all of the voices are heard. Sociocracy or dynamic governance was mentioned in several sites as well as consensus, which ironically, there was some confusion on how best to use. Some groups employ creative decision making solutions, using coloured cards to represent their level of agreement, or even bidding monopoly money on projects that they consider worthy.

One community that we visited had given up on group meetings altogether, as they were struggling to deal with personal differences of opinion. The site had a sad, neglected feel, and the community vision had ceased to function for the benefit of its members. Neighbours sharing the land had very little interaction with each other. Despite the state of this community, we were very fortunate to spend time with some residents who opened their hearts to us, and painted a very informative picture of what *not* to do when building a community.

Inter-personal Relations

Personal issues are a major problem that inevitably arise in community living, and often lead to the breaking point for unsuccessful communities. Living in such close proximity and intimacy with a group of people highlights differences of opinion, transforming small issues into much larger, ongoing problems. Some communities that we visited have taken strong initiatives in dealing with personal issues, approaching the matter through continuous group learning.

One community which we visited prides themselves in an evolutionary approach to conflict resolution, and addresses personal issues as top priority when they arise. One member has made it their mission to study different decision making processes, and directs the residents in mandatory 'training sessions' on conflict resolution once every few months. The results of their work were breathtaking, and when we shared morning tea at the community, it was clear that all of the residents were speaking the same language. A disagreement between members arose in our discussion, and the two people confidently and respectfully addressed each other, agreeing to disagree right in front of us. The conversation was concluded, and no tension was left in the air.

Another community that invests in conflict resolution holds two *different* resident meetings every week – one for community and business matters, and the other for emotional and personal issues. In the 'emotion circle', members are urged to express their feelings and bring up any personal issues that they have with other members

of the community. We were told that separating personal issues from business decisions is very rewarding, and allows the meetings to be more productive. It also encourages members not to keep emotional issues to themselves, instead offering a safe space to release any pent up feelings on a weekly basis.

Among the Intentional Communities, there seems to be a common story of a character turning up who, for various reasons, becomes the focus of a plethora of personal and emotional issues. One community that we visited – that was otherwise extremely beautiful and inspiring – had been entrenched in a serious legal battle with a particular member. The community had taken the individual to court to try to evict them as they were refusing to leave, but had lost in a procedural technicality. Therefore, they couldn't evict the individual and they are now forced to live with a person who cannot cohabit harmoniously with others.

We learned of the importance of drawing up coherent legally binding agreements for community members, so that when major personal issues do arise, there is a process for dealing with them. Well crafted by-laws are an example of legally binding documents that can play a large part in reducing unnecessary conflict. Some communities also apply very serious trial periods for potential members, requiring them to stay as a guest or wwoofers for up to a year before they are approved by the members.

The Spirit of Community Living

Despite the constant hard work and many challenges that community living demands, we witnessed the astonishing beauty and inspiring innovation of people who commit to a shared life and care deeply for one another. Away

from the stress and pollution of the city, we were able to question how best we can live together in community, and saw some astounding examples of individuals investing their energy, passion and working hours in a wonderful shared dream.

On our journey we encountered an abundance of sparkling eyes, were witness to deep and caring friendships, sacred rituals that enrich daily life and the sharing of so many things – food, space, work, love and joyous moments. Every site that we visited had a special something to offer, and each new encounter augmented my passion for creating a holistic life that unites nature and community.

One thing that all of the communities had in common was that the people we met at every location were especially warm and welcoming, and offered us valuable, focused time for discussion and sharing. People opened their homes and their hearts to us, unafraid to tackle the good, bad and ugly, offering us tea, dinner or lodging for the night. We are so humbled and grateful for all that was shared with us. Witnessing the remarkable efforts of these pioneers has inspired me to step away from the well trodden path, and work together to forge the life of our dreams.

Author

Elisse Kleiner is a professional musician who works on a number of projects focusing on children, sustainability and community development. She has spent 10 years living abroad researching programs that effect positive social change. Elisse is part of a group of people working to establish Dreamfarm Eco-Arts Village, a community arts, education and environment centre in rural Victoria. To contact Elisse, shoot her an email at elisse.kleiner@gmail.com

telepresence

You professed to undertake a study of 'the increasing consolidation of the dominant', which, you said, 'risks becoming a tradition'. But you conceded (and I quote), 'the field is far too vast for anyone to master.' I'm sure that's exactly what the masters of statecraft are thinking to themselves in boardrooms while their trembling hands make spoons clap on saucers! They know how to be forgotten, laughing on the far side of their faces, forever seeking shortcuts. I can imagine them saying 'Now that this front is in play, it's likely that some of these long-rangers will hit'. A life's very continuance may have been no more than a nod, shrouded within some anachronism of privacy, via some telepresence or other.

*STU HATTON
MELBOURNE, VIC*

Blue on Blue

CORINE FEGAN

Saturday. Break of dawn. Australia.

Parking is chaotic as usual. Carla and Jordan unpack their boards and sprint towards Granite Bay. The sinuous path is busy with bright joggers, three wheeler prams and febrile surfers. Beyond, the ocean is glittering and the horizon hugs the water like a jealous lover.

Carla feels that embrace each time they come here. She remembers when she first saw Jordan a few years ago. It was a glimpse that changed her life. Jordan's freckled salty skin and the eucalyptus scent are inscribed in a special section of her memory. Now they work and share a flat in Brisbane, but often come up the coast to visit Jordan's parents and go for a dip in the ocean.

The surf has been great lately and the weather forecast is excellent. The tide has receded so far away that an unfamiliar sight is revealed at Tea Tree Bay. The continental shelf has never been so exposed. A cluster of people scrutinise what Carla and Jordan will later call The Great Wash Out. Jordan gets her phone out and calls home. 'Norman! You better come and check this one out. We're at Hell's Gate. Hurry up. Bring Mum too'.

Norman is pleased to interrupt his weekly gardening session. His father bought this lush bit of land bordering the National Park in the 1950s. If left unchecked in this climate, the luxuriant vegetation takes over like toads in a cane field. He walks to the house, into the kitchen and gets to the boatswain whistle that hangs from a beam. Two short blows is the signal for Jenny to come up from the bottom garden where a wooden shed rests, a bit like a derelict trawler sitting in a muddy cove. Grass refuses to grow around it. Inside, there is a neat studio full of tools and the walls are covered with sketches and plans. Jenny is a yacht's interior designer. Norman is her personal gofer, specialised in the art of finding things. He is a qualified hoarder. Born to serve is his motto. So he just gets on with it. He is a poet. He is a larrikin, witty and irreverent. He belongs to another era, when outlaws were bushrangers and sailors were salty dogs. Jenny is the industrious one. You can see it in her demeanour. She walks and talks straight to the point. Nowadays she treads water at her leisure. After all, they are seafarers emeritus, members of the Turtle Society, humble mariners, lovers of space, and tough nuts in civil life.

They decide to walk the three-kilometre track from their house to Hell's Gate. At this time of day, it only takes half an hour to get to the headland.

On the edge of the bluff, a group of codgers ponder in silence at the unusual panorama. Excited teenagers are ready to get the 'guns' out. Down below, the surf is forming on a new platform. Nobody has ever seen such a spectacular barrel at that spot. A few daredevils are paddling out through the white water with great difficulty. The tide is strong. Furious troughs are rippling towards the shore.

Jordan greets her parents with frantic gestures and comments. Carla gives her some water to disrupt her verbal over-flow. Then she deciphers Jordan's babbling to Norman and Jenny who are baffled. In their washed-out blue eyes, there is a hint of fear that reflects the progress of their thoughts.

'Tsunami. Somebody said tsunami'? murmurs a spectator.

'We'd better get home, darlings,' says Norman. 'I don't like the look of this. Let's find out what the experts have to say about this tide'.

'But we want to have a coffee in Hastings Street.'

'Forget about coffee in low land, Jordan. You are such a voyeur. And look at Carla. She's pale. Come on. We've got phone calls to make. We're comin' back with you in the car. Don't forget your boards'.

Norman holds Jenny by the shoulder and steers her towards the coastal track. The onlookers' slow progression clogs the footpath. It compels the foursome to force their way through, like salmon swimming upstream to spawn. Large slabs of sand dunes are exposed in Laguna Bay and the beach looks like the Bay of Fundy at low tide. When they reach the car, the traffic is already hectic with gawking weekenders and clued-up locals. They see familiar faces that may show up at the house later on.

It is already midday. Back at the house, Norman hoists the orange pennon. The flagpole is used to indicate the dwellers' mood: green flag stands for

'you're welcome', red is 'we're busy' and orange warns 'at your own risk'. Then he starts to investigate. Radio stations and television news programmes reveal vague information. Journalists are still expecting a statement from the authorities. 'There is no tsunami alert. There is no reason to be alarmed', they say. The Extinction Protocol internet site confirms there has been no underwater quake or volcanic eruption detected in the region.

Annoyed and frustrated, Norman drives down to have a snoop on the riverside. The Coast Guard volunteers have nothing official to say; they are debating the matter over a cup of tea. The yachts in the marina are trapped in the sludge. Their masts point at awkward angles, like threadbare trees in a forest devastated by a cyclone.

A few of their friends come and go through the afternoon. They were edgy and decided to go home for the evening. At six, Jenny rings the bell. The bar is open. So a first bottle of red wine is sacrificed. Carla and Jordan prepare dinner in silence while the two Sea Lords log-on to Skype and contact old friends in the Pacific region.

'Solomoni, bula! How's your family, Solo? How's Tavarua?'

'Bula vinaka, Norman. Ni sa bula. We are well. Norman, you should see Cloud Break. It's gnarly surf out there! Can't even get there. The bommies are sticking out everywhere, they're sticking right up I tell you.'

'How come? We have very low water here as well. I was callin' to ask about that. So can't you get out at all? Do you know what's goin' on?'

'I will try to know, Norman. When are you coming over?'

'Nothing's planned yet, mate. Maybe next year I'll come with Jenny. Listen, I'll call you back tomorrow. Is that ok?'

'Yes Norman. Bye, bye. We miss you. We love you. May God bless. Give my regards to your family. Bye.'

'Bye Solo. Same to you. We miss you too. Bye.'

Jenny decides to trace the eccentric Frenchman who lives on his fifty-foot yacht somewhere around the Rim.

'Allo, allo, little Jenny. How is Australia? You are looking very well!'

'Hey! Pierre. Thank you. How's it going? I'm sorry

to call you so early.'

'I am good, very good. It is OK, but I am still in Panama, anchored at Las Perlas.'

'Great. That's what I wanted to hear. Tell me, is there anything weird happening your way?'

'It is funny you are saying that, but I have never, never seen so many ships that are waiting to enter the Canal. And not one is coming out. Why? You have problems in the country of Oz?'

'Aaaah, the tide's very low and the swell's playing tricks on us. I was wondering if you knew anything?'

'No. But I will keep my ears and eyes open, as we say...'

'Right. We'll keep looking as well. I'll call you tomorrow same time. Ciao Pierre. Salut.'

Dinner is served in the living room. Another bottle of wine is opened. Carla remains subdued. She is rubbing the darkish scar on her arm that looks like a shooting star in daytime. Her gloomy attitude puzzles Jordan who is trying to lift her spirit with a delicious cheese sample.

'I'm sorry,' Carla says, 'I think I owe you all an explanation. Even Jordan doesn't know about this'.

'Go ahead, darling. It better be good', says Jordan while holding her hand in support.

'It's not a story I like to tell. Do you really want to hear it?'

Norman pours Jenny another glass.

Carla takes a deep breath and blows it out to deflate her anguish. 'Well, I spent Christmas in Banda Aceh in 2004. I'd just turned twenty-one'.

'Wasn't that the year of the tsunami?' says Jordan.

Carla nods and continues. 'Well, that morning I'd borrowed my friend's Ford Transit because I was supposed to join a diving party at Gapang Beach. All my scuba gear was in the back of the van, as well as some food I'd packed for lunch. So I was driving to Ulee Lheu to catch the 9.30 ferry to Pulau Weh when the earthquake hit. It went on for at least ten minutes. I had to stop the van in the middle of the street. People were running out of buildings covered with dust. They were shaking and crying. There was rubble everywhere. A lot of houses had collapsed'.

She pauses to recollect her thoughts. 'After a few minutes people began searching for survivors. I was stunned and scared. People were shouting and I heard: the sea's coming! The sea's coming! And there it was, storming on the road'.

Carla manages to keep the plate of pasta sitting on her knees. 'There was a loud humming. People were bolting left, right and centre. I didn't know what was going on. I rolled up the windows. I jumped in the back. I grabbed the air tank and the mask. I was shaking but I managed to fit the regulator. I crawled back in the cabin. Fastened my seat belt. The van was already floating. I was riding along debris. I spat in the mask. Don't ask me why,' she says, shaking her head and rolling her eyes. 'And I put it on. I clamped the tank between my knees and shoved the regulator into my mouth. I opened the valve'.

They all reach for a sip of wine and she carries on. 'Then a mountain of dark water picked me up and carried me further away at great speed. The noise was horrific and ear splitting. The water was entering fast in the van. Stuff was floating in the cabin, including a cold chook and my tobacco pouch. My ears were buzzing. Then a second wave swept me towards the hill above town. I had water up to my neck. I was still holding onto the wheel, riding towards the unknown. There was a mosque just on the corner; I implored Inch Allah! And then, the windows exploded, and the van rolled over. I was thinking: slowly, just breathe slowly. Then the van sank. I was stuck on the bottom. Somewhere. It was completely dark. My ears were pounding. I was sucking hard on the air like a beginner. Then the water receded. It took forever. The van was entangled in a huge pile of debris. I was shaking. I was waiting. Still hugging the wheel. Still clamping the air tank between my knees. I couldn't move. I couldn't hear anything, but I could see some kind of light. The water started to drain from the van. I spat the regulator out and ripped the mask off. I then saw the deep gash in my arm and the apocalyptic desolation around. That's why I get edgy when Nature is playing up. I just can't forget the people who didn't make it. I still think of the friends I lost. I was so lucky.'

They are sitting on the edge of the sofa, with eyes like Ulysses's when he first met the Cyclops. Their pasta is cold. Carla shrugs and looks at Jordan with an apologetic grin, hoping for forgiveness and maybe a bit of compassion.

Jenny twirls her arms to dissipate the heavy atmosphere and says, 'Let's have one more glass of wine, or maybe something stronger. Let's have a scotch. We need a night cap.'

'Sure do. Carla, you're a legend. You perfectly fit in this family. Cheers to you. And let's hope for the best tomorrow. At least we're safe here,' mumbles Norman.

They carry on and rave on for a while, exposing their erudite and practical knowledge, speculating on causes and outcomes. Then satisfied with their opinion and location, they go to bed, legless and worriless.

Norman is up before the kookaburras' call and walks through the bush to Paradise Cave. Instead of the rumbling surf, there is a moonlike expanse from which a nauseating stench hovers towards the coast. Some dogs are howling. The bush spawns swarms of flies. Back at the house, he shuts all the fly-screens and fiddles with the radio to no avail. All day long they wait for information. Jenny calls Solo and Pierre back. It sounds like they are just as ill-informed and anxious.

By Sunday night, they are frantic. Carla, on the contrary, has locked herself in a shell. When an official announcement interrupts the TV programmes, they sigh. The Australian Prime Minister's address to the Nation is solemn. Even the possums playing in the roof stop their ruckus. '... The French Government has communicated the following information: a vortex has formed in Mururoa Atoll in the Tuamotu Archipelago. It is believed that the decades of nuclear testings in the Pacific Region have damaged the crust of the Earth. The crust is barely five to ten kilometres thick in the ocean basins. A fissure through the crust opened a passage to a vacant pouch in the upper mantle. This vacuum is absorbing masses of seawater. The consequences of this catastrophe are still undetermined but French President, Francois Hollande, has declared a state of emergency in all French dominions in the Pacific Region ...'

'I wish the Frogs were going Dutch on this one. Bloody nuclear testings. I told ya. They're going to end up blowing the whole show', Norman roars.

'Come on Dad, don't sneer at the French,' ventures Jordan, 'we're selling uranium all over the world.'

'I know, Luv. I'm just angry and a bit tired. So what's next? Jenny? Do you know anybody at University who could tell us something'?

'I might. I'll check tomorrow.'

Carla and Jordan decide to stay on at Sunshine Beach. Better to be safe here than going back to Brisbane's beehive. Over the next few days the ocean continues withdrawing. Army helicopters screen the disaster. On the radio, they can hear the population's apprehension and discomfort. Shrewd comments on land boom and mining opportunities horrify the audience. It is a shambles.

A week has passed. Until now, nobody has been able to disclose any further information or at least a hint of hope. When Professor Schmittberg, from the

American Institute of Oceanography, is interviewed on CBS, the curtain falls. A chart of the Pacific is displayed on the screen to support his theory. He looks confident while explaining that the Pacific Trash Vortex, which is travelling clockwise in the middle of the ocean, has altered its course towards Mururoa's atoll. It carries thousands of tons of man-produced pollution. This mass of solid fragments and petro-sub products may obstruct the crevice and stop the massive inflow.

A few days later, Professor Schmittberg's predictions are confirmed. The Earth has patched its wound, like Carla's body had once. Mururoa's entire population had been evacuated to Tahiti before the collapse of the atoll. The military base has vanished under the sea.

And so has the ocean from the Australian east coast.

Carla keeps a clear vision of unspoiled scenery and spicy sensation. Occasionally, she wonders why Earth and humankind's powers engage in such violence. Are we not both made of 70 per cent water, mere creations of the universe?

Norman and Jenny now live on a ridge overhanging a landscape they fear to look at. Their panorama glitters no more in the morning light. The rhythmic rumble of the breaking waves does not soothe their nights. The travelling swell does not bring the surf. Their home by the sea faces a desert swamp where no one is welcome, not even builders or frackers. Unusual vegetation spurts up here and there. A resurrection is taking place underneath the coffee rock and dead coral. Still, if icecaps and bergs and glaciers all melt away, Norman and Jenny may recapture the scent of iodine, the roar of the ocean, and the majestic sight of the episodic passage of the whales.

Author

Corine Fegan was born in 1957 and educated in Brittany (France). As seawater runs in her blood stream, she became a yacht skipper at 21, turning the Mediterranean Sea into her courtyard and the Atlantic Ocean into a highway to the tropics. Corine then developed a real interest in human interactions and their relation with the environment. She lived in Australia for 20 years where she brought up two children and just completed a Bachelor in Social Sciences. Corine lives in Brittany now, writing novels and reading her favourite authors: Joseph Conrad and Erik Orsenna.

BOOK REVIEW

Tony Moore 2012, *Dancing with Empty Pockets: Australia's Bohemians, Miller's Point, NSW: Pier 9*. ISBN 978 1 74196 144 7 by Caitlin Noakes.

The self-stated aim of Tony Moore's *Dancing with Empty Pockets: Australia's Bohemians* (2012) is to illuminate a tradition of bohemia in Australia. This is done by revealing the influences, interactions and relationships between seemingly disparate generations of self-identified 'bohemians'. While studies into the lives and work of Australian artists have been nothing short of comprehensive, the attempt to link generations of artists through a previously unidentified tradition of bohemia is innovative and ambitious. Moore, a lecturer in Communication and Media Studies at Monash University, traces these connections by offering a detailed definition of 'bohemian', as well as providing character studies of famous Australian bohemians to show how their biographies overlap with each other. Moore defines 'bohemias' as communities of artists such as writers, painters, musicians and film-makers. Further to that, however, Moore sees bohemianism as a tradition of strategies designed by artists to resist economic pressures that would devalue their work. The bohemian constructs and performs an identity which marks him or her as an elite in their field, with authority to attribute cultural capital (and, in turn, economic capital) to their own and others' cultural products. By reading bohemianism as a set of responses to changing economic climates, Moore unifies different communities and generations of Australian bohemians into a tradition, whether the climate they emerge from is the Depression of the 1890s, or the emergence of transnational markets in the late twentieth century.

The use of biography to meditate on different personalities also helps reveal a tradition of bohemia. The book begins with the life of Marcus Clarke, and shows how he introduced bohemian practices learned from his time in Paris to communities of writers in Melbourne. Comparisons and connections between European bohemias and Australian bohemias are often drawn, contextualising Australia's bohemian tradition as emerging from a European tradition. It is shown how Clarke's writings influenced the artistic and social practices of later artists, such as Hugh McCrae and Tom Roberts. The book frequently demonstrates how later generations of artists are influenced by the work of previous generations, resulting in the formation of traceable artistic lineages.

While Moore demonstrates how traditions can be read into successive generations of bohemia with consistent success, there are some opportunities for greater investigation that are missed. The focus of the book is Sydney and Melbourne with only occasional excursions into places like Adelaide and Brisbane. This choice directs

the scope of the text at the cost to a greater cross-section of Australia's bohemians. Furthermore, the sections of the book covering nineteenth century bohemianism have a heavy focus on male, white Australians. While Moore explains the bohemian communities of the era tended to make exclusions based on race and gender, there are by Moore himself only passing references made to female artists like Louisa Lawson and Constance Roth. Among consideration of the communities of writers who gathered around the *Bulletin* and the *Argus* there is a brief nod to the *Chinese Australia Herald*. Including some discussion of how popular, masculine, white Australian bohemias may have been translated into feminine and/or Chinese-Australian bohemias might have provided a more panoramic consideration of the Australian bohemianism of that era, as well as keeping in the bohemian spirit of embracing countercultures and the underdog.

Moore's style of writing is entertaining and easy to read, and the argument is clearly explicated. It may serve well as reading for an undergraduate-level university student. However, there is some prior knowledge of theoretical concepts presumed of the reader. For example, Bakhtin's literary theory of the carnivalesque is applied to the reading of the constructed bohemian identity. The true value of *Dancing with Empty Pockets* lies in its capacity to interpret the social phenomenon of artist communities by innovative definitions. Moore provides a new way of imagining the lives and works of Australian artists, which will serve as a basis for further research.

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BOOK REVIEW

Ivana Milojević 2013, *Breathing Violence in Peace Out*: University of Queensland Press ISBN-13:9780702249693; ISBN-10:0702249696 by Cate Morriss.

How can we better understand peace as a concept with multiple meanings? This is a challenge that Ivana Milojević confronts throughout *Breathing Violence in Peace Out* (University of Queensland Press, 2013). The book examines the impact of trans-generational trauma as a barrier to peace. It does so from both individual and collective perspectives. This is achieved by tracing various events associated with Stalinist repression in the Soviet Union, the Second World War and the 1990s breakup of the Yugoslav Federation. The book asks if peace is possible, and if so what is required to achieve it? The author argues that to attain peace we need to take a holistic approach to understanding what drives and sustains conflict. Revealing personal experiences of state violence and trauma, she demonstrates how these

directly and indirectly shape life trajectories for people impacted by war and violence. Theoretical discussion explores deeper understanding of this phenomenon at the collective level and, how that in turn, shapes and informs opportunities for peace.

Milojević uses the symbolic analogy of inhaling and exhaling to reflect the way we "take in" life and the world, but also what we 'give out' to the people around us' (p4). The text is organised into two separate yet overlapping voices. Breathing violence in (revealing and exploring the personal) and peace out (reflecting and analysing on the collective) is representative of the personal and academic discourses. The interconnectedness between the two is profoundly challenging. While one discourse could make sense without the other, the thought-provoking question of whether they should be studied separately hangs in the air. It is unspoken but implicit. For Milojević, the process of connection appears necessary, and even cathartic. On one hand she is deconstructing violence and war in order to find paths to peace, and on the other reconstructing her life story in order to imagine a future free from the constant fight for breath.

Employing this device to personalise time and locale, Milojević analyses the past to explore how peaceful global futures might be imagined. She draws on personal family history and collective community/state experiences of violence to inform and shape concepts of sustainable peace. The text is at times disorientating – it is difficult to overcome the urge to read ahead, particularly so with the family history as one engages with the struggles and emotions of this family. This is a seemingly deliberate strategy; in a sense pulling the reader continually back and forth from theory to lived experience. The alternating narratives within each chapter challenge orderly flow, mirroring the author's personal difficulties with breathing.

Milojević examines links between raising children and the cultivation of peaceful worldviews in the first chapter. This provides readers with a platform for understanding the relationship between intergenerational traumas in the context of political upheavals and violence, and the lived experiences of individuals. Moving into the realm of human behaviour in Chapter two, the text shifts from debate on the failure of the utopian pretext of the communist ideology, to reflection on processes of othering within the communist movement. The discussion underlines parallels between a marginalisation of pacifist action and peace movements within communist norms of the Stalinist era, and those within contemporary global society.

The contributions of feminist scholarship are prominent within the text, positioning the analysis within a feminist peace studies frame. Chapter three specifically addresses feminism, eutopia and challenges to patriarchy and androcratic masculinities, and feminist influences

resonate throughout the entire text. Locating the text within a feminist framework highlights the evolutionary and inclusive nature of peace studies. Women peace scholars have examined the way in which violence is reproduced in the home, and linked the behaviour of individuals to broader political contexts in which they are actors impacted by, and in turn impacting on, state and societal violence (p34). This has had a dual impact on the trajectory of peace studies, widening the frame for future understanding and unhinging the narrowness of previous political, and international studies, focus that tended to separate the private sphere from the public domain.

The importance of understanding and acknowledging the impacts of post-traumatic stress disorder, and furthering our knowledge about pathways for healing intergenerational trauma, are illuminated in the final chapter. Examining the personal ongoing trauma of violence reveals the public risks of leaving societies vulnerable to manipulation. This discussion is an important one often overlooked in broader texts relating to peace and conflict. The integration of personal issues such as mental health, with debates around the shaping of worldviews and cultures of peace, is indicative of the trans-disciplinary approach advocated for by many peace and conflict scholars.

The book therefore makes an original and valuable contribution to peace and conflict studies. Significantly, it does so because the author frames the narratives of both within a feminist context. The use of genealogical storytelling to 'breath in violence' is particularly innovative. It enriches the academic critique, providing balance and opening new spaces for inspired scholarly discussions on 'breathing out' peace. As a teacher of peace and conflict I would advocate for more of this style of work, and applaud the author on her generosity for sharing intimacies from her family history. This type of case study is critical to deepening scholarly knowledge.

The complexity of the text may be a struggle for some readers in that this book is not an easy read. The content is confronting as one cannot avoid a feeling of struggling with the author through events that have shaped her past. Scholarly discussion is repeatedly and deliberately disrupted by personal stories of collective and individual violence experienced by her family. This is personal, it is political, and it is now public. The reward for the reader is that this stimulates and pushes boundaries. It is a text of relevance to scholars of the discipline and particularly those more generally interested in the psychology and/ or sociology of peace and conflict.

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DEATH BY STONING

A small cluster of rocks
less than ten kilometres wide
is all it takes
to wipe out Earth.

In the moments preceding impact
we would be as busy as ants
nosing crumbs homewards
halfway up hills
seeking fulfilment
in work
 in home
 in others.

What a documentary that would make!
Each life a tiny drama
unfolding into itself
mirrors in mirrors in mirrors...
shattering slow-mo into the luminous
Somethingness
 the Big Black.

CARY HAMLYN
NORWOOD, SA

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