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Editorial: Journal of Public Pedagogies

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Welcome to the first edition of the Journal of Public Pedagogies. This journal is a publication of the Public Pedagogies Institute (PPI). The focus of the journal is to publish articles that engage in discussion about learning and teaching outside formal educational institutions. These areas include arts, community engagement, social pedagogy, public history, work in and research on public institutions like museums, libraries, neighborhood houses, community centers, practice, research and evaluation in public pedagogies. The intent of this journal is to actively promote multiple ways of knowing and being in the world speaking *within* and *to* the public sphere. This journal celebrates the transformative articulations that express multidisciplinary conceptions of the public while challenging how these ways of being and knowing are pedagogical within the everyday.

The whole notion of what constitutes Public Pedagogies is something the Institute and this Journal sees as evolving. In our call for papers for our 2015 conference we were deeply informed by the work of Mike Burdick, Jennifer A. Sandlin and Michael P. O'Malley (2014) in their edited collection *Problematizing Public Pedagogy* and *The Handbook of Public Pedagogy* (2010). We were fortunate, through funding provided by Victoria and Deakin Universities, to have Jennifer Sandlin as one of our keynote speakers. Perhaps because of the neo-liberal and conservative times we find ourselves in or because the best 'work' occurs beyond the remit and often constraints of formal sites of learning and teaching the Public Pedagogies Institute has continued to grow. At our 2015 conference we collected responses to the question what is public pedagogy? This exploration takes us into other questions such as what is learning and what is the relationship of learning to the term pedagogy.



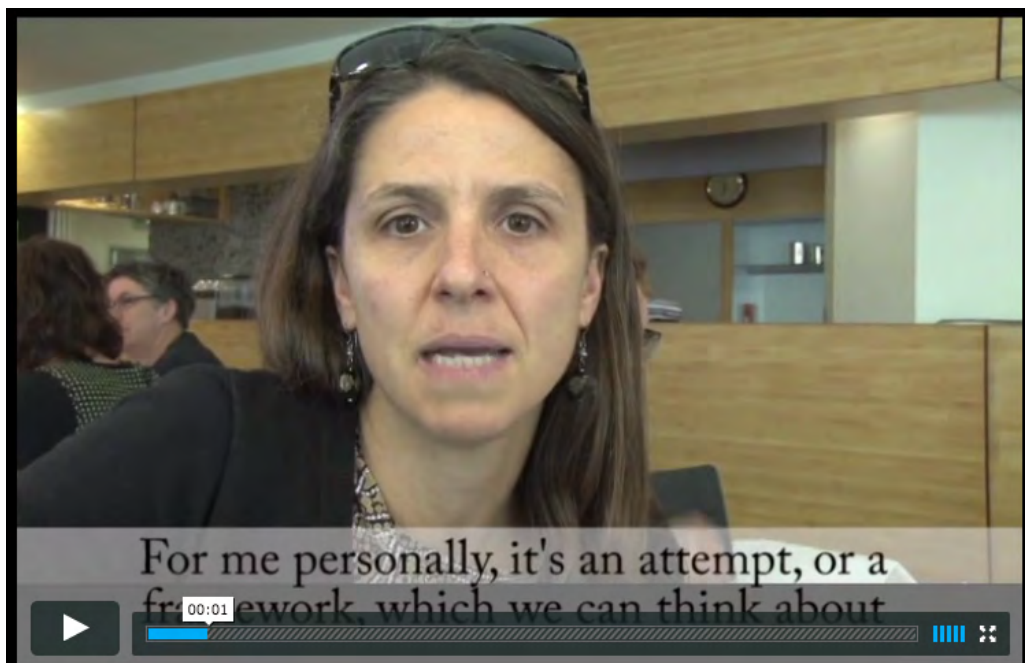
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In some instances the very irreducibility of public pedagogies is what is engaging about the term.



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What effect is neo-liberalism having on the term public? Can thinking educationally through the term public pedagogies create a space or an intervention?



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Whose knowledge is valued in more formal institutions? It could be argued that an increasing shift toward vocational education within formal institutions of learning is completely reductive in the generation of other forms of knowledge.



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In this inaugural journal issue you will find articles that reflect the breadth of our 2015 conference—*Turning Learning Inside Out*. Meghan Kelly engages the sometimes false binaries between institutional and community learning in a project undertaken in Kelabit Highlands. In her article ‘Public learning derived from institutional learning: the case study of the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum development’, the focus is on the reciprocal learning that occurs through studies abroad programs. Belinda MacGill in ‘Public Pedagogy: representational shifts in Indigenous political narratives’ looks at the problematics of the representation of indigenous people through contrasting murals painted by indigenous artists at the Geelong Powerhouse, and material culture in the South Australian Museum. She suggests the Geelong Powerhouse potentially offers meaningful micro encounters and within these encounters new notions of citizenship.

Debbie Qadri in ‘Public Art, public pedagogy and community participation in making’, argues for the recognition of community involvement in making public art. Often negated or considered less than other public art, this article attends to the richness and multi-layered experience of community art in public spaces. ‘Pocketing prayer, pedagogy and purple hair: A Story of Place and Belonging 2010 – 2015’ Flossie Peitsch problematizes knowledge bringing to the fore what may not normally be considered of value.

In ‘The deep end: pedagogy, poetry and the public pool’ informed by new materialism Lucinda McKnight explores causality and design in the public space of the swimming pool. Her expression of this pedagogy, perhaps the pedagogy of new materialism, is expressed poetically. In ‘The phenomenology of monologue writing as pedagogy’ Scott Welsh looks at the playwright’s practice of writing as an act of public pedagogy. In this article he looks at the use of monologue to create empathy in teacher education classes.

I hope you enjoy reading these articles, as we are extremely pleased with this first edition. Thank you to the peer reviewers for their work in supporting this first edition! I would also like to give a big thank you to Dr. Jayson Cooper, Assistant Editor and Claire Rafferty Editorial Assistant, for all of their work and for making editorial meetings fun. Lastly, a note of thanks to the College of Education, Victoria University, Melbourne Australia, for their generous grant that enabled us to get this edition up and running.

Dr. Karen Charman
Editor
President, Public Pedagogies Institute

Public Learning Derived from Institutional Learning: The Case Study of the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum Development

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Abstract

In this article the author shows how institutional learning can become a site of public pedagogy when conducted on location. This article refers to the 2015 study abroad program for the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project, located in the Highlands of Borneo, to highlight numerous examples of informal learning for academic, student and community participants based on the five categories of public pedagogy as identified by Sandlin, O'Malley and Burdick (2011). Of particular importance, however, is the public pedagogy that occurred once the study abroad program was complete. Students and academics, invited to assist in the development of the community museum, facilitated the community's own agency in learning as the community learnt from the engagement and adapted this learning to suit their unique cultural requirements. In doing so, this article reveals that not only do study abroad programs enforce the strong intersection of public pedagogy and collective agency, they demonstrate how informal learning can be derived from formal learning.

Keywords

public pedagogy, community, collective agency, study abroad programs

Education literature refers to the differences between institutional and non-institutional, formal and informal learning, moving comfortably between the definitions. Learning that occurs in a study abroad experience has been celebrated as a space of intersection between institutional and non-institutional learning, constructed and situation learning, formal and informal learning (Howard & Gulawani 2014; Shin Yu, Harris & Sumner 2006).

Public pedagogy, on the other hand, is defined as learning that occurs outside of the formal learning context. Public pedagogy, as a broad, complex area of research, is limited in its investigation of the intersecting space between formal and informal learning practices. This article examines the study abroad program, namely that of the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project, to highlight the public pedagogies that occur within the framework of a study abroad construct. It argues that institutional learning, when conducted on location and outside of the 'classroom', becomes a site-enhancing mode of public pedagogy: learning outside the formal, constructed learning environment.

The article will begin with a brief outline of the differences between institutional learning and public pedagogy, identifying study abroad programs as an educational context that sits at the intersection of both fields of study. This will be followed by an overview of the case study example of the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project, outlining the aims and ambitions of the participating groups. The author will use as a structural framework a summary of the five categories of public pedagogy as defined by Sandlin, O'Malley and Burdick (2011) to demonstrate the many areas of informal learning generated from a study abroad experience. In particular this included the learning that occurred once the academic and student cohort had returned to their home country. Learning did not end on the completion of the study abroad program, and the ongoing legacy was the empowerment to the community who used this knowledge to enhance their own wellbeing as they continued with the project. Community members, adapting their learning to suit their unique cultural environment, were able to continue with the development, demonstrating their collective agency in learning. This project, led by the community yet informed by participants working within the formal framework of the educational system, demonstrates the valuable intersection of institutional and non-institutional learning.

Formal and Informal Learning with Study Abroad Programs

Institutional modes of learning are defined as learning that occurs in schools and universities; environments that are formally constructed. Commonly referred to as intentional learning, institutional learning is typically evaluated through formal assessment procedures, is classroom or off-campus based and is strongly structured (Younes & Asay 2003). Hull (1981, p. 65) explains that classroom-centred learning is usually more controlled and controllable, being easier to plan and somewhat predictable. The educator knows what has and must be considered in the classroom by supplying specified readings and materials. Informal learning, a category that includes incidental learning, is typically not classroom based or highly structured and the control of the learning rests in the hands of the learner. Informal learning can still occur in a formal learning environment, however it is defined as a 'byproduct of some other activity', such as interpersonal interaction, through sensing, trial-and-error or learning from others (Younes & Asay 2003, p. 142).

Incidental learning also takes place in everyday experiences and learners are not commonly aware they have learnt (Marsick & Watkins 2015, p.12). Incidental learning extends from concepts of social learning theory and experiential learning theory (Younes & Asay 2003, p. 142). Social learning theory understands we learn from and with other people and this is predicated by our relationship with the teachers and between the learners themselves.

There is also a social purpose for learning; to advance interests, raise awareness or improve effective participation in society (Jarvis, Griffin & Holford 2003, p. 37). Experiential learning is, quite simply, learning from experience where learners actively construct their own learning experience within a social and cultural context. It can also be defined as the process through which individuals transform experience into knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and beliefs (Jarvis, Griffin & Holford 2003, p.46). 'Experiential education breaks down any classroom and non-classroom distinction' (Hull 1981, p. 65).

Public pedagogy, on the other hand, refers to the forms, processes and sites of pedagogy happening outside of the formal schooling system (Sandlin, O'Malley & Burdick 2011; Sandlin, Wright & Clark 2013, p. 4). It is a field of research with broad areas of investigation that examines the educative force of libraries and museums, media, popular culture, commercial spaces, society and the diverse ways in which culture functions as an educative entity (Biesta 2013). Learning can occur anywhere at any time and is determined by the physical setting, the social interactions, personal beliefs, existing knowledge and attitudes of the person. This may include devices that send messages to individuals through television, movies, games, books and magazines; or spaces that shape a person or are locations of learning such as the home, family and community. In addition to this, activist sites and social movements fit the framework of public learning as all hold an educative responsibility beyond traditional schooling, impacting adults, community and popular culture, by influencing outlook and opinions (Sandlin, Schultz & Burdick 2010, p. 14). Dentith and Brady (1998) state public pedagogy is a grassroots and community based occurrence, encouraging concrete advancement in neighbourhoods, health and social services.

Public pedagogy is an area of investigation that 'opens a space for contesting conventional academic boundaries and raises questions about the capacity for citizens to engage as critical educators in their present everyday lives' (2006, p. 58). This expansion of sites of learning from constrained classroom boundaries to public and private domains presents a new territory of the space between theory and practice, encouraging social action and working together for a common good. It also challenges concepts of who the educator is and who is being educated. Learning leadership, therefore, can transfer from formally recognized constructs to cultural activists, individuals and community groups. In addition, there are no clear definitions of the term public or of the boundaries that separate the idea of public from the private. The public, for instance, does not exist without private citizenship (Roberts & Steiner 2010, p.21). Savage posits that the term public in public pedagogy refers to the accessible general population; those citizens who either by choice or through incidental exposure are able to consume what is available to them (Savage 2010, p. 106).

Sitting at the intersection of formal institutional learning and informal learning are study abroad programs. In some contexts, study abroad programs may be called education abroad, learning abroad, international learning mobility, outbound mobility, or student exchange, however in this article the term study abroad program will be used. A study abroad program is a form of experiential learning where students spend a portion of their academic year in a different country while remaining enrolled and receiving credit toward a degree at their home institution. They sit within the framework of overseas program options available to students, short or long term, and generally contain a rigorous academic content overseen by teachers and professors to ensure quality and transferability. 'Around the world, higher education institutions and governments are developing new policy goals to internationalize student learning by promoting learning abroad and increasing access to funding to support participation' (Potts 2015, p. 442).

Study abroad programs produce a tension between abstract conceptualization (theory) and experience (practice) (Shin Yu, Harris & Sumner 2006, p. 56) presenting a means for students to learn by doing (Howard & Gulawani 2014, p. 104). Kutner (2010) recognizes university based study-abroad programs now include a focus on project-based and service-learning activities intended to directly benefit to their host countries. Learning which takes place on a study abroad program is identified as 'more natural', often unconscious, and contains a mix of experiential and situational learning (Shin Yu, Harris & Sumner 2006, p. 56). To expand on this further, experiential learning is defined by teaching a person to participate in the process that makes possible the learning rather than by achieving predetermined outcomes (Bruner 1968, p.7 2). Learning is 'grounded in experience, and knowledge is continuously derived from and tested in the experiences of the learners'(Shin Yu, Harris & Sumner 2006, p. 56). Situational learning is defined as a form of learning through participation in communities of practice and results from the activities, context and culture in which it occurs (Shin Yu, Harris & Sumner 2006, p. 56).

The intersecting and overlapping nature of institutional learning and public pedagogy is exposed when examining the case study of the Kelabit Highland Community Museum project, situated in Bario, the highlands of Borneo. This study abroad program, created to directly benefit the host community, also serves as an agent for change through project-based learning that benefits all participants; students, academics and community members. Numerous examples of informal learning can be identified in the complexity of the project outlined below. However, of significance was the continued learning that occurred in the community once the Deakin University group returned to their home location.

The Kelabit Highlands Community Museum Study Abroad Program as a Site of Public Pedagogy

The Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project was initiated by the Kelabit people's strong sense of need to preserve their cultural heritage. This understanding was bought on by an awakening of how their traditional tangible and intangible knowledge is being lost in the transformation of the Kelabit people by progress and could be preserved by the development of their own community museum. Although one of the smallest Indigenous groups in the Sarawak region numbering approximately 6,000 people, the Kelabit community has become renowned for their economic and professional accomplishments (Amster & Lindquist 2005, p. 5). They are well educated and have come to understand how marketing, tourism and education can contribute to their own development goals. The aim of the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project is to provide the opportunity for the Kelabit community to assert their authority over the representation and commodification of heritage and associated knowledge of their region 'while also creating environs inclusive of new and diverse voices of expertise and authority' (Padmini 2010, p. 96).

Initially the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project was developed as a result of discussions between the Kelabit community and Ms Jan Drew, an educational consultant based in Malaysia. Representatives of Rurum Kelabit Sarawak (RKS), the governing body of the Kelabit community, through Jan Drew, contacted Dr Jonathan Sweet and invited him to visit the region to discuss how a community museum may be achieved. The project related to Dr Sweet's cultural heritage research and development interests in the region. This led to an invitation to conduct a study abroad program in June 2012, with Dr Sweet leading a small team of Deakin University students to assess the feasibility of establishing a community museum in the Bario region (Sweet 2012). It was essential to determine the level of community

support for the development and the process by which data collection and documentation of the community's interests and cultural assets could be managed.

The success of the first study abroad program led to subsequent community consultations and study abroad programs (Sweet & Kelly 2013) that consequently reveal a number of examples of public pedagogy and 'natural' learning. This article will structure these examples using the framework established through the extensive work of Sandlin, O'Malley and Burdick (2011), each well-respected commentators of public pedagogy. Sandlin et al. mapped the authors and themes of public pedagogy scholarship from 1894–2010 to identify five categories of public pedagogy research. This structure can be used as a foundation for the demonstration of study abroad program learning outside of the institutional environment. These include:

(a) citizenship within and beyond schools, (b) popular culture and everyday life, (c) informal institutions and public spaces, (d) dominant cultural discourse, and (e) public intellectualism and school activism (Sandlin, O'Malley & Burdick 2011, p. 340).

This article will not recreate the work of Sandlin et al. but instead will draw on the concepts most relevant to the discussion. Working through each category, with demonstrated examples of how the study abroad program for the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project acts as a site of public pedagogy, it becomes apparent there is great diversity and complexity to the informal learning that is evident. The examples described below are not the only examples that may be considered in this discussion, however, they are the examples exemplifying the categories as defined by Sandlin et al.

The first category recognizes an education that aims to develop identity creation and sense of citizenship. *Citizenship within and beyond schools* recognises informal learning agencies as a resource for the development of cultural identities. Citizenship within the school may involve bringing public concepts from outside the formal teaching spaces to inside the classroom such as drawing on examples of popular culture in teaching or reflecting on the impact of popular culture on mainstream practices. Citizenship beyond the school may involve the learning as it occurs in the home, through families, peer groups, communities, media and other non-school groups. This can be seen in the role of family defining acceptable boundaries through to the cohesion of community dynamics (Sandlin, O'Malley & Burdick 2011, p. 342–343).

The Kelabit community initiative to enhance their cultural and social responsibility through the clearly defined aims of the community museum development demonstrates citizenship learning within and beyond the school. The community sought the assistance of advisors, who in this instance were external to the community, to inform and recommend a process to preserve their cultural heritage. Deakin University student and academic participants very quickly had to learn the customs, rules and understand the boundaries of the community expectations. As welcomed members to the community, students were expected to participate fully and respectfully in activities even if those activities were sometimes challenging to their cultural understanding. Learning for all participants came from specific discussions of cultural heritage and Indigenous knowledge, however, in addition, simple glances, quiet comments and gentle guidance between participants and community members would signal if someone had missed the cultural cues or moved beyond the acceptable boundaries of the community expectations. These cultural expectations were discussed in pre-departure meetings prior to the study abroad program, however, it is not until students and academics are immersed in the environment that they fully appreciate the citizenship responsibilities they are expected to follow.

The second category of *popular culture and everyday life* intersects with the concepts of citizenship beyond the school to include the impact on learning of popular games, television and magazines. The progressive Kelabit community, well educated and engaged in all forms of popular culture, has identified through this transformation the need to preserve their traditional cultural heritage, yet wish to do so engaging with popular culture technologies. Yet they have experienced first hand how the power of the media and control of content creation overlaps with political discourse, raising the question of who controls the representation and how they control the dispersion of information. For the Kelabit community the definition of ethnic identity is complex: in law it is most sharply defined as 'native' but most are also practising Christians, a minority religion in the predominately Islamic Malaysian state. The location of their home village, Bario, close to the border of Kalimantan, further accentuates the perception that they passively exist on the peripheries of the modern Malaysian nation state, even though many Kelabit are active in contemporary Malaysian society.

Historically, the Kelabit have been represented in ways in which they have no real agency (Harris 2009, p. 131). The process of creating an environment to construct their cultural representation has empowered the community to contest their position in a complex Malaysian culture: 'By organizing collectively to challenge zero tolerance policies and replace them with community-determined alternative practices, community activists are discovering their power to contest state power' (Sandlin, Schultz & Burdick 2010, p. 431). For this reason the focus of the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum involves the community's choice of media and imagery, and the surrounding communication strategies to construct and take ownership of the desired representation of Kelabit lifestyle and community values. Each touch point of visitor engagement with Kelabit identity aims to support the representation as identified by the collective community members. Moreover, a priority is to create the resources to develop a sense of social agency for future Kelabit community members as they respond to advancements with popular culture and its impact. Navigating this space and resultant representation is a process of ongoing evaluation and reevaluation through formal and informal community discussions as expectations are clarified.

The third category of *informal institutes and public spaces* as sites of public pedagogy includes research into other institutionalized sites of learning including museums, galleries, libraries and public parks. Learning in these spaces may be subtle, contained in an educational space within the public domain. Design plays a large role in this category of public pedagogy as 'these public spaces of display have been crafted toward an educational end, but one that is conscientiously decentered and improvisational, dependent on the learning subject as much as on the spaces' design' (Sandlin, O'Malley & Burdick 2011, p. 349). Museums, in particular through their structure, content and exhibits, act as a symbolic communication device with a negotiated, agreed meaning. Understanding is drawn from the signs and symbol arrangements representing the public collective memory in a visual form.

The symbolic nature of communication was a central focus to the design based study abroad programs in this project. As an example, the design of the building and reflection upon the cultural values of the community, the focus of the architecture study abroad program, was a significant phase in the project development. Although only conceptual, the designs presented led to in-depth discussions of the signs and symbols that may be used to represent the Kelabit community and surrounding highlands. The architectural designs that were generated brought forward ideas not previously considered and opened discussion as participants debated the issues of project site, building requirements and structure.

The final museum conceptual design presented to the community paid strong homage and respect to Batu Lawi—the mountain peaks sighted upon entry to Bario region that plays

an important role in the mythological and modern history of the region - and its surrounding natural environment. It captured the spirit of the local vernacular 'padi hut', the Lepoh and the essence of the Longhouse. As a result, the design concept was an amalgamation of Kelabit history, identity and culture, whilst at the same time delivered a vision for the future identity and connection to the younger generations of Kelabit community members, ensuring the building as a site of public pedagogy for future visitors.

The fourth category identifies *dominant cultural discourse* as public pedagogy and is defined as how culture is taught and learned through public transmission of broadly communicated governmental, legal and medical discourse (Sandlin, O'Malley & Burdick 2011, p. 352). Pedagogy is deeply rooted in constructs of power and authority, and in the organization of knowledge, desires, values and identities impacting teacher authority (Giroux 2004, p. 69). For this reason, dominant cultural discourse includes policymaking acting as a public pedagogy. 'Symbolic and institutional forms of culture and power are mutually entangled in constructing diverse identities, modes of political agency, and the social world itself' (Giroux 2004, p. 59).

The power structures are altered when a study abroad program is created to directly benefit the host community it serves. In this instance the dominant discourse and the driving influence of the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project is derived from the governing body, the RKS, and the community itself. This was clearly evident when, in an attempt to structure ideas and concepts for the museum exhibition space, the academic team proposed, as a starting point to document the annual events of the community including farming, festival and seasonal happenings. This planned approach for gathering information was quickly proven to be not as the community wanted. Instead, the community changed the script, devised their own groupings and brainstormed their ideas in the manner they chose. The community initiated their own framework and through a process of trial and error, emerged with a number of ways to look at the content structure. Significant progress was made as community representatives identified key moments in history, debated the impact of these evolutions, drew diagrams of change and advancements made in the community and charted the impact this had on the governance, living and economic considerations of the region. The power remained in the hands of the community who respectfully determined the direction of the meetings.

The Positive Impact of Collective Agency through Public Pedagogy

Finally, and of significance to a project-based, on location, study abroad program, is *public intellectualism and social activism*. The project, being the creation of a community museum, involved 'public intellectuals as academics or other individuals in positions of cultural or economic power, with the capacity to translate social issues for a public audience and the public good' (Sandlin, O'Malley & Burdick 2011, p. 354). This served as a motivation of all participants who were endeavoring to explore collective agency to achieve the desired result of a sustainable community museum to generate income for a remote region in Borneo. The aim of academics disseminating knowledge to the general public for a set purpose is linked to the concepts of social change with the view that a public educated with appropriate knowledge will influence the public towards collective change.

Giroux, a dominant figure in the development of the term public pedagogy (Sandlin, Schultz & Burdick 2010, p. 2), analyses the intersection of cultural studies and education. Giroux introduced the notion of public intellectuals based on the idea that academic intelligentsia have the opportunity to educate the public and disseminate expert knowledge to the general public for public good (Sandlin, O'Malley & Burdick 2011, p. 355). Giroux argues it is the obligation of intellectuals to be open to communities and connect the education en-

vironment with the community by communicating in a language that is understood by the general public (Giroux 2004, p. 71). In short, intellectuals should connect their theories to practice and make them valuable to the general public. This premise links democracy with social change, distributing knowledge for the purpose of public adoption of ideas. This may be through a transformative engagement addressing a social problem, a process of critical change or in the instance of the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project, a means of empowering a community to make decisions.

The concept of public intellectualism and social activism is a topic of debate in academic literature. On the one hand, Whitlock (2010, p. 461) argues the two concepts, theory and practice, cannot be combined as Giroux proposes, and instead they argue theory will remain a thinking process written and documented while practice will be practice. Whitlock suggests intellectuals do their thinking mindful of the impact this may have on the everyday lives of people and the potential for their agency. On the other hand, and taking an extremely positive approach, Curtis talks inspirationally of the need for universities to revise pedagogy and 'embracing the task of creating hands-on learning around civic agency' (2012, p. 359). This would create a culture where participants believe change is possible and communities understand their ability to craft change. Having intellectuals construct an environment where community organizing is encouraged, challenges the usual flow of teaching and learning so that the learning dynamics are interactive. Curtis identifies that mutual learning generates a sense of hopefulness in collective action and shared responsibility, moving people away from a sense of isolation and privacy. This article argues a study abroad program focused on project-based activities intended to directly benefit the host community can also be seen as a positive engagement with hands-on learning aimed at civic agency. The intersection of theory with practice, the active problem solving and the transparent intent of generating change for a community is a powerfully positive experience for all participants.

Significant to the success of the project was the extensive participation and involvement of the community and consequently this research relies on the concepts of collective community agency for the project to be sustainable. Ahearn takes the position that agency is defined as the 'socioculturally mediated capacity to act' (2001, p. 112) but acknowledges this definition is open to interpretation leaving many details unspecified. Ahearn also addresses narratives of agency (2001, p. 128-129) in relation to place making and identifies the ability of creating empowerment through linguistic exchange using words and texts that are socially and geographically situated. These notions of agency are strongly aligned with the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project where 'interpreting events, establishing facts, conveying opinion, and constituting interpretations as knowledge are all activities involving socially situated participants, who are agents in the construction of knowledge and agents when they act on what they have come to know, believe, suspect, or opine' (Hill & Irvine 1993, p. 2). Lave and Wenger (1991) refer to the term 'community of practice' to define a group of people who come together around an agreed endeavour. Seen as different from a traditional construct of community, a community of practice is defined by a sense of purpose and by the practice in which that community shares mutual engagement.

The Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project can be defined as a project exemplifying collective agency and communities of practice. For each study abroad program, the methodology of participatory action research was followed; a methodology for change and development and an approach that integrates social investigation, education and action with the sole aim to support the Kelabit community in their development. It is an iterative process, whereby enquiry leads to action, which leads to a reflection on the action and opens a new line of enquiry (Greenwood & Levin 2003, p. 149). 'At its most participatory, researchers

engage with participants as collaborators who can inform project design, propose methods, facilitate some of the project activities, and importantly review and evaluate the process as a whole' (Mackenzie et al. 2012, p. 12). It is a research methodology known for its intent to integrate research into practice, inclusive of the diversity of participants, to ensure agreement with both the process and findings. With this in mind, participatory action research ensures the research activity responds to the needs of the stakeholders as it provides options to address real world problems (Mackenzie et al. 2012, p. 13).

In the case of the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum development, having originated in the community, this project has been defined by the community, and is analysed and solved by the community (Hall 2001, p. 175). The Deakin University academic and student teams proposed ideas to the Kelabit community who subsequently, once the academics and students had left, collectively decided on the best course of action. As an example, having offered ideas for the building structure based on community consultation, the community progressed and, at the time of publication, started construction on the museum building in Bario. The design of this building is a modified version of the two-roof structure proposed by the architecture students, taking reference from the mountains, Batu Lawi. The community took into consideration the intangible heritage of the region such as performance and craft activities, and considered the opportunities for expansion in the future, also as proposed by the students. The community consultations and drafts of the proposed structure were used as a learning tool by the community to create the design of the building in the revised location. There was a direct connection between the consultation process, the ideas presented and the culturally specific revised design created by the community and enacted by the community. The academics took the role of intellectuals empowering the Kelabit community to make decisions and collectively the community are agents in their construction of knowledge to enact social change.



Image 1: Kelabit Highlands Community Museum building under construction, Bario, December 2015 (Kelly, 2015)

Conclusion

At the intersection of formal and informal learning are study abroad programs. The case study of the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project highlights the depth and diversity of public pedagogy that occurs in a project-based, service driven program intended to directly benefit the host country. Reflecting upon the five categories established by Sandlin,

O'Malley and Burdick (2011), the learning varied from simple, informal guidance through non-verbal signals for students to adhere to culturally accepted behaviours, to the collective activity to manage and control the representation and identity of this small Indigenous group. The formal structures established by the governing body of the Kelabit community, RKS, drove the policies and direction of the project, while the museum construct itself, acts as a communicative device to visitors and community members.

In addition, designs presented to the community demonstrated options of how the museum may be constructed and function. In essence, the study abroad program offered the community ideas for them to discuss, adapt and learn from to guide their decision making. The community, empowered by the academic and student visits, collectively made decisions regarding how to progress the development and as a result, a grand building is under construction in the central township of Bario. The student and academic participants facilitated the community's own agency in learning as much as they were able to learn themselves. For this reason, the Kelabit Highlands Community Museum project is a significant example of informal learning derived from formal learning, demonstrating how study abroad programs in practice serve as a catalyst for collective agency in positive change.

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Images

Image 1: Kelly, M 2015, Kelabit Highlands Community Museum building under construction, Bario, Borneo, December 2015, photograph taken by the author.

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Public Pedagogy at the Geelong Powerhouse: Intercultural Understandings through Street Art within the Contact Zone

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Abstract

This paper wrestles with the possibilities of a new representational field emerging through street art in Australia. It highlights the intersections between public space, curated space, street art and representations of Indigenous culture in order to contribute to conversations concerning public pedagogy. The Geelong Powerhouse site is used to examine how the public engages with Indigenous political narratives in contact zones. This is juxtaposed with museums and text mediated sites in order to examine the possibility of an emerging visual and digital literacy in Australia. Considerations of how context shapes meanings for audiences are explored with the aim of moving beyond the tensions that set limits on dialogic intercultural understandings of intersectionality.

Keywords

intercultural understanding, public pedagogy, street art

This paper brings the concept of the 'contact zone' (Boast 2011; Pratt 1997) into conjunction with recent research in public pedagogy. The aim is to explore the limits and possibilities of intercultural understanding through street art. The contact zone is a concept used in Education, Indigenous studies and Cultural studies to describe the space of encounter of difference that shapes the experience of an individual and their subsequent learning within that space. This paper examines contact zones, such as the Geelong Powerhouse; a dilapidated building covered with street art, as well as, museums and Instagram. These contact zones offer a diverse range of learning encounters as a result of their distinctive affordances. Explorations of curated and semi curated contact spaces are considered in relation to how knowledge is assembled depending on contexts.

The paper begins with an exploration of public pedagogy through a personal encounter with the Street Art of Rone, Adnate and Urbanmonk (JMC, Josh McCrimmon) at the Geelong Powerhouse. Coupled with the subsequent following of these images on Instagram and the possibilities of learning within digitally mediated contact zones. Following on from the works of Giroux (2016), Burdick and Sandlin (2013) and Manovic (2016) questions are raised regarding 'the role of educational agents in stimulating or unsettling what appear to be 'spontaneous' learning processes in relation to living with difference' (Schuermans et.al 2012, p. 280). The affordances of digital and visual literacy are considered in relation to new fields of intercultural understandings through text-media representations of Indigenous issues throughout this paper.

Contact Zones

Contact zones (Pratt 1997) operate as metaphoric spaces that provide opportunities for intercultural understanding. Contact zones have been cited as educative spaces within schools and universities to explore divergent standpoints. Pratt's (1997) theorisation of contact zones is positioned to be a decolonising space. These spaces offer opportunities to assemble new understanding of intersectionality through dialogic exchange. Arguably, contact zones can be any site where there is interaction and dialogue. The encounter within the contact zone shapes the learning experience due to the metaphors used in dialogic exchange that are 'governed by a single set of rules or norms shared by all participants' (Pratt 1997, pp. 68-9). Contact zones provide a space for public pedagogy to emerge, but the learning experience is contingent on context, location and audience.

Public Pedagogy: The Geelong Powerhouse, Street Art and Postcolonial Receptivity within Contact Zones

Public pedagogy (Biesta 2012; Schuermans et.al 2012) is a well-explored field, but there are variations in its definition. One of Burdick and Sandlin's (2013) frame for public pedagogy 'centres on a concern with relation and the dimensions of subjective experience through an emphasis on embodiment, affect, and the psychic dimensions of the teaching and learning encounter' (Burdick, Sandlin & O'Malley 2013, p. 55). The impetus for this paper was the embodiment and affect of a learning encounter at the Geelong Powerhouse.

I began exploring the possibilities of the Geelong Powerhouse as a site of public pedagogy as a result of my subjective experience at the site. It was an unguided experimental learning encounter (Gaoralnick, et.al. 2012, p. 419). The semi-curated space of Geelong Powerhouse enabled a kinaesthetic experience, as there was no curatorial voice guiding me as the audience, but instead the space offered me the freedom to photograph any image without surveillance; it was unleashed voyeurism. I had agency to capture any image, but was drawn to the paste-

ups of Indigenous political narratives by Urbanmonk. (See the paste up on the pillar called *Sorry-Play that Card Again* (by Mini Graff) and the two paste-ups of Aboriginal children on the back wall below called *Great Antidote to the Inner Critic. Who is Always Whispering Sweet (you're) Nothings in my Inner Ear*).



Figure 1: *Great Antidote to the Inner Critic. Who is Always Whispering Sweet (you're) Nothings in my Inner Ear* by Urbanmonk, and *Sorry-Play that Card Again* by Mini Graff. Photo by author Oct 2015.

It was the first time I had seen these types of representations within a constellation of mixed texts. I read these texts as political protests, but they were not presented as instructive, instead they appeared as purposeful protests with the intention of raising public consciousness. This is where:

The political and the educational dimension come together in the idea of 'public pedagogy'. Although much work on public pedagogy has focused on the analysis of how media, culture and society function as educative forces... [T]he idea of public pedagogy can also be understood in a more programmatic and more political way, which is as an educational intervention enacted in the interest of the public quality of spaces and places and the public quality of human togetherness more generally (Biesta 2012, p. 684).

In this sense the public pedagogy in creative contact zones, such as the Geelong Powerhouse enhance a postcolonial receptivity (Bignall & MacGill 2016) to Indigenous political narratives. As Goralnik et al. state 'the experimental domain of knowledge occurs when learners encounter a subject, person, place, or thing personally and directly. There are kin-aesthetic, cognitive, and emotional connections we make when learning becomes personally experienced with multiple senses' (2012, p. 419). Learning is a constellation of events where we build understanding through assembling knowledge that is shaped by the particulars of the lens presented. In this case, *Sorry* (Mini Graff) and *Great Anecdote* (Urbanmonk) re-po-

sitions the debate of structural inequality through his paste-ups and thereby sets a tone for receptivity. Nik Kompridis states:

receptivity as a form of normative responsiveness that is both spontaneous and reflective, which is to say a form of agency through which we are responsive to something or someone in an attitude of answerability. The spontaneous moment of receptivity is what we commonly refer to when we speak of openness, openness to that which is unfamiliar or unsettling, a spontaneous readiness to follow a line of flight or descent. Conceiving of receptivity in this way allows us to think of our epistemic and normative agency, our mindedness, if you like, as involving and requiring exposure to human vulnerability—the vulnerability of a being that can be marked, struck, impressed by experienced reality, by what and whom it encounters in the world. It involves and requires a willingness to risk self-dispossession, and thus it is not so much about becoming open as it is about becoming unclosed to something or someone (Kompridis 2013, p. 20; see also 2011; 2006).

Arguably, this street art enhances receptivity as a public pedagogy. The context of the Geelong Powerhouse provides the space for openness as it invites the audience to a ‘mindedness’ about ‘human vulnerability’. Howitt (2011) argues public pedagogy is not neutral, but is hinged on location, context and use of spatial metaphors that are inclusive or exclusive. Askin and Pain (2011) state that ‘spaces of interaction’ offer possibilities for ‘transformative social relations’. The Geelong Powerhouse is a contact zone that offers interesting possibilities for learning through offering intercultural understanding of Indigenous political issues as outlined below.

Contact Zone 1: Geelong Powerhouse

Geelong Powerhouse is a ‘vibrant arts precinct’ and ‘Australia’s largest indoor legal space to create ephemeral street art’ (Geelong Powerhouse). The Geelong Powerhouse is an impressive monolithic space overlooking Corio Bay. The entrance to the site parallels the magnificence of a mansion estate, but flavoured with industrial architecture and colourful street art that vibrates with creative life. It is a site for opportunity and agency for street artists. The space provides legitimization of the genre as an art.

The gates are open to a paying public, including tourists, cultural theorists, youth and street artists. Walking around the building before entering I recognised Rones’ photorealist piece aptly titled *Broken window theory* (fig. 3). This astonishing work captures a woman’s forlorn face on the façade of the abandoned factory and he uses the shattered panes of glass to create an etched dissipating face. Rone’s clever title *Broken Window* is from the theory espoused in criminology that broken windows induce crime.

Moving into the building and wandering around the site, avoiding the drips from the ceiling and side stepping the seemingly septic puddles, there was a sense of freedom. People physically engaged in the space, spoke loudly, took photos and meandered randomly. This was in contrast to a viewing experience at a gallery or a museum where the viewer is under surveillance by the guards and moves furtively throughout the space. The physical space of the Geelong Powerhouse offered a contact zone to engage with the texts on the wall, and to a degree, own them through capturing selected images.

The texts representing Indigenous political counter-narratives included works by Urban-monk, and @jmunz549 and @loweairbrush. These works sit alongside a range of stylised, sexualised, politicised and inane texts, however these appeared as ‘active political interventions’ (Schuermans et al. 2012, p. 677). Do these images that are juxtaposed on the walls provide a counter-narrative to the omission of Indigenous themes in the public space, apart



Figure 2: Entrance to the Geelong Power House. Photo: by author, 2015



Figure 3: Rone, *Broken Window Theory*. Photo by author, 2015.

from those numerical narratives of disadvantage in the media? Does this street art provide a new tonality (Manovic 2016) that informs a visual literacy that moves the audience to the desire for 'relatedness' through intercultural understanding?

Martin (2008, p. 28), who is of the Noonuccal, Quandamookah and the Bidjara peoples states 'to know who you are in relatedness is the ultimate premise of Aboriginal worldview because this is the formation of identity'. Does this enactment of relatedness by the artists reflect a movement within street art operate as interventions against the State regarding in-

equality towards Indigenous people in Australia? In the act of viewing, photographing and uploading these Indigenous political narratives onto Instagram or Facebook narrow the 'us and them' (Biesta 2012; Said 1978) divide? If so, what are the possibilities of unmediated learning encounters in terms of assembling a new postcolonial receptivity and how is this different from traditional sites for public pedagogy, such as the museum?

Contact Zone 2: Museums

When examining contact zones there is a notable difference on how one experiences space and how knowledge is produced for the audience. Museums produce knowledge that are assembled within the colonial archive. The rules of presenting knowledge are set within established cultural norms within cultural institutions (Bourdieu 1977, p. 72 cited in Freishtat & Sandlin 2010 p. 516). Material culture from Indigenous communities have historically been set within a localised section within the museum (and or gallery), rather than integrated throughout the museum.

The Aboriginal gallery section in the South Australian museum, for example, displays material culture from various cultural and linguistically diverse groups within South Australia, such as the Ngarrindjeri people from the Coorong, Lower lakes and Murray River and Kurna people of the Adelaide plains. Does the use of the past tense in the descriptions of the material culture, the authorial voice of the anthropologist, coupled with the construction of the display cabinets and absence of names of the images of Indigenous peoples represented, shape meaning?

Gough (1977) states it is the curatorial voice that shapes the reading of the images as of the past, rather than as a living culture. This dimmed educative space shapes learning through navigating the viewer through established methods of display common to museum practices around the world. There is a significant shift towards representing Indigenous cultures as living and enduring, such as the Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Melbourne Museum that works in collaboration with Indigenous community members. However, Boast (2011) argues that regardless, museums as contact zones, remain problematic, particularly when museums represent their inter-cultural exchanges as neutral. Bennet (1998) and Boast (2011) maintain that the inherent power relations of museums sit within governmentality where 'might' wins in any negotiation and thereby asymmetrical relations of power remain entrenched.

The point of interest in this paper is how intercultural understanding of Indigenous and non-Indigenous content and knowledge are made manifest in these complex contact zones. When there is an intractable power relation mediated by governmentality (Foucault 1991) museums as contact zones remain trapped by their colonial heritage and routinely reproduce manifestations of the 'Indigenous other'. However, do technologically mediated spaces offer hope within its ephemeral, un-curated and dynamic representational field to overturn the play of binaries?

Contact Zone 3: Technologically Mediated Spaces: Instagram

In most western museums learners furtively observe the curated material culture presented as their learning experience. Generally, taking photos in these spaces is banned. Conversely, in the Geelong Powerhouse the audience is free to wander, takes photos, post them on Instagram or Facebook to share their experience and interact with other net users. This interactive engagement is a public pedagogy as it 'becomes a place of enculturation into the logic of personalization' (Luke 2005, p. 6 cited in Freishtat & Sandlin 2010, p. 509) where one's

identity is marked by the selection of images chosen personally. Agency to choose images that reflects self becomes an opportunity for 'a pedagogy capable of building new political communities and drawing attention to anti-democratic structures throughout the broader society' (Giroux 2016).

Grossman (2006) has defined the internet as 'the new digital democracy' (cited in Han 2010 p.201). Have new intercultural understandings of Indigenous issues emerged from Instagram? Adnate currently has a following of 57.2k and his audience photograph and upload his hand at the Geelong powerhouse and his faces of Aboriginal children pasted on buildings across diverse landscapes, including sheds in the Kimberley where he worked with Indigenous youth on a Hip Hop Project (ABC news, n.d.).



Figure 4: Adnate at work. Photo: Jam project, 2015.

Instagram is a site for observing and selecting images that one is interested in and thereby creates identity markers that the individual constructs. It also contains a range of semiotic elements that have to be read, therefore informs visual and digital literacy. Whilst there are caveats regarding Instagram and the audience/follower, the contact zone remains useful for 'charting broad cultural preferences' (Honig & MacDowall, 2016) and for reading new trends in digital and visual literacy (Manovic 2016).

The affordances of visual literacy are instantaneous accounts of experience. Manovic (2016) argues there is new poetic design emerging from this practice of photography. He states that the 'best images created by young Instagrammers practice something we can also call 'poetic design' (referencing here 'poetic realism' movement in cinema, minus the narratives)' (Manovic 2016).

Moreover, the affordances of digital literacy include historical recount that can be packaged as a genre. It is visually orientated text, it provides an information report of 'self' engaging in an experience; it is immediate and engages an audience. In this future orientated and spontaneous interactive multi-modal platform exchanges take place. The mode of the text is visual, written and digital. There is a materiality that emerges through the digital image and the accompanying script provides the context. Through this offering and sharing of experience, others can critique and engage with the script.

Urbanmonk's paste up the Aboriginal children, for example, has an extensive script offering a new reading of the failure of the state to deal with Indigenous human rights. His challenging self-critique of his work regarding representations and Indigenous protocols is worth examining in the following (see Fig 1):

Speaking of low self esteem, a photo someone took of these two paste ups...got about 135 likes on the Powerhouse Instagram Feed. And while it's nice to be noticed, my primary drive in doing these works is to communicate something about the ongoing, largely ignored, suppressed, continually swept under the cultural carpet of Australia's societal fabric fact...the systematic oppression of indigenous people and the dismantling of their identity. An old, but highly contemporary truth.

There's inner conflict about these drawings. A conflict that has gone on for more than a year. They are drawings I have done of deceased aboriginal people. Which is highly offensive to Aboriginal spirituality. In a sense, I have like so many other white people, potentially walked all over their identity and spirituality by creating these works. Yet I haven't intended this. I really haven't. I've wrestled with the ethics. These are Real People. Children, who lived in Victoria, and had their photo's recorded by white people in the 1860's.

At the time of their recording, they were probably seen as an anthropological record. Like exhibits of extinct fauna. The prevalent attitude of white colonists of the time was that indigenous culture and life was dying. Doomed by manifest destiny of the superior white man to become nothing more than an ethnographic record. Well, these images are so much more than that. And we know now, of course, the tenacious nature of indigenous identity in the face of our bloody minded (and handed) attempts to clear it like the land for profitable crops and livestock.

Right or wrong, maybe both, I have attempted to communicate something more than just a cool picture. (or have I?). There's a story behind these children's eyes, faces, posture, clothing, that perhaps isn't immediately apparent when you snap something for your Instagram feed, yet if you look, or reflect deeper, is very confronting and loaded with meaning. It's communicating a glimpse of that that is my intention...If I failed, I hope I am failing upwards.
Urbanmonk (JMC, Josh McCrimmon)

This is political intervention that challenges the State's policy on the Stolen Generation and an enactment of receptivity. It is a narrative that moves towards educative practice in a public space, yet, the past-ups of Indigenous children moves into dangerous territory. Whilst his intent is to comment on the failure of the State to address dispossession and the Stolen generation, without context it may re-enforce the very thing he attempts to deconstruct. In this sense 'public pedagogy scrutinizes the educational process involved when issues and interest are made 'public' (Schuermans et al. 2012, p. 677) despite his refreshing honesty of 'failing upwards'. The unpredictability of Instagram followers cannot guarantee that his message is read politically, if at all. However, arguably it is the 'failing upwards' that reveals the very place where the majority of non-Indigenous people should move towards as the alternative to public erasure of these narratives.

Contrast this work to Blak Douglas aka Adam Hill's installation of crates stacked with the word Stolen embedded in the text. This is the same theme regarding the Stolen Generation, but highlights the contemporary situation where more Aboriginal children are removed from their families today than those removed throughout the whole Stolen Generation period (Stopstolengenerations, 2016). Whilst Moreton-Robinson's (1999) contests the ethics of non-Indigenous artists representing Indigenous issues there is something at play in the field of representation that offers hope. Artists, such as Reko Rennie's work on sovereignty (as per image below) and Blak Douglas' work on the Stolen Generation highlight a standpoint that cannot be usurped, but Urbanmonk's and Adnate's work contribute to the debate by offering the audience an educative address on postcolonial receptivity.

Does the work of non-Indigenous street artist such as Urbanmonk that 'fail upwards' lead us out of the intractable binds of otherness within representational fields when located within the cyber scape of Instagram that is shared with Indigenous street artists, such as



Figure 5: Reko Rennie, *Always Was Always Will Be*. Photo: Aboriginal Art Directory, 2012.

Reko Rennie and Blak Douglas? Do tech mediated sites offer hope in the contact zone of multi-modality where images share the representational field more democratically? Is this the nexus of representation and agency that works towards a shift in power/knowledge/control and ownership of knowledge production? Whilst the narratives and their standpoints vary, the fight for justice is shared and thereby new allegiances form that work towards a renewed vision of hybridity.

Conclusion

This paper has explored the representational field of Indigenous narratives mediated within contact zones and the emergence of new intercultural understandings. Examining curated, semi and un-curated contact zones has revealed how these sites contain risks, as well as possibilities for public pedagogy. The paper focused on how curated educational institutions freeze Indigenous art and cultural identity as a result of the limitations of the museum as a contact zone.

The semi-curated space of the Geelong Powerhouse offers an alternate educational experience through an embodied learning encounter that led to an exploration of the parameters of intercultural understanding within contact zones. As a site for public pedagogy Instagram further extends this learning encounter and moves it towards a convergence of Indigenous and non-Indigenous texts that are not demarcated by difference, but instead democratised by the same bandwidth.

Reko Rennie, Blak Douglas, Urbanmonk and Adnates' work is shared with a global audience within the democratic cyber field. These works offer opportunities to 'scale up' meaningful micro-public encounters to a new notion of citizenship which respects difference' (Schuermans et al. 2012). Learning experiences scaffold on emergent visual and digital texts that inform a literacy that offers hope for intercultural understandings of Indigenous political narratives. Whilst running the 'risk' of 'romanticisation' (Schuermans et al. 2012, p. 676), Instagram offers a new tonality (Manovic 2016) that may reflect an emergent but uncharted postcolonial receptivity within the genre of street art.

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What Does Public Art Teach Us? Public Art, Public Pedagogy and Community Participation in Making

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Abstract

What does public art teach us? Although the meaning of any artwork is not directly received but instead refracted by people's personal responses, experiences and understandings, it can be argued that the artwork plays a pedagogical role. Public art teaches us in two ways, firstly, through the narratives and knowledge it projects and secondly, through its authorship and placement it teaches us who has the right and the power to place art in public space. Furthermore in the instance of permanent public art, duration and time endorse, and normalise these narratives and pedagogical meanings. This article utilises this perspective to explore how community involvement in the making of permanent public art might create a different type of pedagogy through providing opportunities to offer other narratives to its audience and a more democratic alternative to the authorship of art in public space. Within the concept of cultural democracy, these artworks not only enable community members to individually express themselves in public space, but also to collaboratively produce meaning and knowledge in public space.

Keywords

public art, community art, public pedagogy, cultural democracy

This article explores the idea that permanent public art has a pedagogical role and that this exists in two areas: the subject matter and narratives offered by the artwork, and also a pedagogy about whose role it is to facilitate, author and place artwork in public space (e.g. commissioners, artists, community?). I raise concerns about the pedagogical meaning of permanent public art and the inclusion or exclusion of different genres of art in its discourse. Community involvement in making permanent public art is a practice that invokes cultural democracy both in the process of making the work and the physical outcome of the art object. It has a capacity for creating different types of pedagogy, through providing other narratives. This perspective stems from my experience as an artist who has worked with community groups and schools to make permanent public artworks for many years, and also voices my concern for the need for research in this area which brings together theory of community participation in making art with that of 'permanent public art'. There is a lack of research into the practice of community participation in making permanent public artwork, its meaning, outcomes and pedagogy. There is more to learn about how community participation in making contributes to our understanding of public art and what we learn in public spaces.

What is Public Art?

The term 'public art' is leashed in a strange space between the art world, architecture and landscape. It can be broadly defined as permanent or temporary artworks on sites that have open public access and are located outside museums and galleries (Zebracki 2011). In Western culture public art became popular in the late twentieth century following the memorial movement after the First World War (Holsworth 2015), and its advent as art and use as political ideography (Miles 1997) after the Second World War (Zebracki 2011). This is evidenced in the host of memorials and artworks that were erected all over the world to commemorate lost lives and to confirm national political ideology, including democracy and communism. In the USA in 1967, the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts, Art in Public Places program is cited as the probable beginnings of public art as we know it today (Cartiere & Willis 2008). In Australia public art commissioning has become largely the domain of local councils and the few organisations that manage public spaces such as roads and waterways, and generally refers to artworks that are officially placed in public space (Cartiere & Willis 2008, Fazakerley 2008).

Public art also claims many roles and functions—and these are largely devised by the planners and creators of public art, and rarely the public (Zebracki 2013). Its purposes include; urban revitalisation (Pollock & Sharp 2012), economic development (Schuermans et al., 2012), the attraction of tourists and investors to the area (Schuermans et al., 2012), social benefits such as civic pride, social interaction, a sense of community and local identity (Schuermans et al. 2012) or the public good (Holsworth 2015). These ideas are evident in many council and government policies and guidelines. Also evident in many policies is a growing trend to justify funding of permanent public art, in terms of economics and industry (Creative Victoria 2016). Keeping in mind that public art has its origins in ideological purposes, that of consolidating a particular version of history and a set of values, and many of these works are permanent and remain prominent in our urban landscapes and part of our heritage, we might well ask what is the ideological purpose of public art now?

Often traditional ideas about art objects are part of public art discourse (Gablik 1995), for example public artworks are often celebrated as the works of renowned artists and as part of a city's public art collection (for a good example of this read the Auckland City Council Public Art Policy 2008). Public art generally differs from an artist's studio practice because it is caught in a web of stakeholders, being formed by committees, the needs and

desires of individuals in positions of power to commission it, and the pressure to engage or consult with the local community. Far from working in a traditional autonomous art practice, artists working in public space have multiple and often complex roles (Phillips 1995). The artists who work on commissions need to work in collaboration with architects, engineers and a committee and their work is made to serve a specific purpose, which has left the idea of 'public art practice' open to much criticism (Holsworth 2015). It is very difficult, if not impossible, to develop a legal art practice through which you can work and develop your ideas in public space.

My Experience of Community Participation

I am situated in my research by my practice as an artist who works with communities to make permanent artworks out of hand-made ceramics and mosaic. I work mostly with schools and kindergartens to make artworks where everyone contributes to the making, and in these settings this collaborative process seems a common-sense and natural thing to do. I also initiate my own collaborative art projects with communities which attempt to document a broad range of experiences, values and stories. But I rarely have the opportunity to do these sorts of works on a larger scale or outside of educational environments.

I derive the meaning of making permanent artworks with communities from the initial reasons offered by those who employ me, my experiences with the community during the making of the work, and the feedback I receive afterwards. I have experienced this type of collaboration as a powerful way of developing and expressing community ownership, values and identity. From this experience I see two functions emerging: on one hand it pays attention to, and represents individuals and diversity, but at the same time through the collaborative process of making the art, it develops and celebrates 'community'. These polarities of the individual and the community are both represented.

Community Engagement and Public Art

The focus on community participation in cultural initiatives is increasingly on the agenda in arts funding guidelines and policy (Zebracki 2011). There is an interest in how participating in arts and cultural activity intersects with other areas of public concern including education, health and well-being, community identity and development (*Stage Two Report, Social Impacts of Participation in the Arts and Cultural Activities*, Commonwealth of Australia, 2005). This interest in participation, community identity and ownership of public space is also evident in many documents such as guidelines, statements and policies, of local councils and national and state art departments and organisations (Pollock and Sharp 2012). However, there seems to be a differentiation, that regards community participation as useful in ephemeral projects and activities but not appropriate for larger permanent public art commissions. Larger public art commissions usually include community consultation, but not participation in making the artwork. In actuality, many examples of small scale permanent projects exist that involve community members as makers. These projects can be found in parks, schools and community centres, but are rarely described as public artworks, recorded on council websites as part of their public art collection, entered into the history of public artworks, or documented and theorised in academic literature.

My argument and research, however, is more interested in why and how community-made permanent public artworks are absent from the discourse about public art, and when community making is included in this discourse, it is relegated to the ephemeral, temporary or short term projects. The term 'community art' provides a way to 'catch' community par-

ticipation as a good 'process' and to ignore the value and phenomenon of community participating in making permanent public art objects.

Unfortunately most theorising of community participation in making does not address concepts of permanence and what this means, nor the pedagogical roles of the work both as process and end product. My research explores permanent public artworks made by community within the discourse of permanent public art. This is important because we need to explore what community participation in making permanent public artwork can offer and contribute to our understanding of public art and what we learn in public spaces.

Current Theorising of 'Participation'

In Western art culture there is a current push for participation in both local government and institutional arts policies (Pollock & Sharp 2012, Melbourne City Council 2015). At the same time there is a parallel turning towards the audience and participation, by some areas of contemporary art practice. These approaches which emerged from the 1990's onwards are described in various conceptual frameworks include: The Social Turn (Bishop 2006, Boros 2011), New Genre Public Art (Lacy 1995), Relational Aesthetics (Bourriaud, 1998) Dialogical Aesthetics (Kester 2005) Dialogue-based Public Art (Finkelpearl, 2000), New Situationism (Doherty, 2015) or Spatial Aesthetics (Papastergiadis 2006). These theoretical stances share a common interest in process, using public space and the involvement of the audience or public as part of the work. With the emphasis on participation and the de-emphasis of object-based work (Jacob 1995) this philosophy champions community participation but it tends not to include permanent public art. Both Kate Crehan (2011) and Mark Dawes (2008) discuss the impact of community involvement in making as an alternative to consultation, but neither refer to permanent artworks. There are many case studies and reports of ephemeral participatory public artworks (Lacy 1995, Bishop 2006, Beyes 2010) but very few about permanent works made by communities.

Claire Bishop (2006) asserts that both governmental policy on participation and the new social art use the same rhetoric. Joanne Sharp (2007) agrees that public art's use of participation as a tool for urban renewal 'reflects the influence of "new genre public art" approaches which privilege art as process over art as product' (p.274). But Pollock and Sharp (2012) express their concerns about the rhetoric of participation, pointing out that through processes of consultation and token 'participation', communities may become increasingly aware of their powerlessness to affect their environment. According to Arnstein (1969) consultation is ranked as tokenism.

Paul O'Neill (2010) suggests that although participatory art does not often place emphasis on the end product, it is this end product which is often documented, written about and experienced. This dilemma of object versus process, as explicated in contemporary participatory movements, remains an area that needs further interrogation, particularly since participatory practice, more often than not, leads to ephemeral or short-lived works, and permanent artworks tend to involve consultation or participation in design of the artwork, but not actual participation in the making. It's like there is a divide, an imaginary sweeper that relegates the artwork as either a permanent public artwork or a participatory non-permanent object. If the artwork is both community made and permanent public, then it becomes called 'community art', not 'public art'.

This (perhaps unintentional) act of making community made artworks into 'not public art,' also makes them less important and powerful. Firstly it takes people out of the equation as possible makers of the permanent or durational visual imaginary in their public space and secondly, it informs us that un-trained or un-professionals can't make art that's worthy of

being permanent in public space. If they do participate in a community made artwork, this is referred to as 'community art' instead of 'public art'. Little choice remains if you do want to make your mark in public space, except to do it illegally. As Halsey and Young suggest: 'Increasingly, the ability to "legitimately" (that is, legally) leave one's mark is becoming directly related to one's capacity to buy or rent space' (2002, p. 180).



Figure 1: *Intermeshing*, Debbie Qadri, 2016



Figure 2: *The Two-Fold Action Of The Artwork*, Debbie Quadri, 2016. On the one hand it creates meaning whilst being made by a community and on the other, it creates a second stage of meaning as a permanent artwork in public space (Quadri 2016).

Public Pedagogy

Public art creates knowledge and learning in public space, and it can challenge or confirm particular cultural narratives. The audience may choose to receive these ideas or not. The idea of public pedagogy offers a position from which to speculate about the role of public art. In this paper I am focusing on the intermeshing of three things: 1) visual public imagery and how permanence and duration add power to the artwork and its means of conveying messages to more people, 2) community participation in making, and 3) the concepts of public pedagogy and cultural democracy.

But after the work is made in public space it takes on yet another life of its own in which new meaning is developed by the audience. I am very interested in this two-fold action of the artwork. On one hand it creates meaning whilst being made by a community and then on the other, it creates a second stage of meaning as a permanent artwork in public space.

Communication

Despite the intentions of its commissioners and makers, art objects say different things to different people and it is difficult to generalise how and what they say. Particular to art is its openness to interpretation. We cannot all experience art in the same way—its meanings are refracted by our own experiences and understandings. Each person's interpretation and response to an artwork is different and may not be even knowable to themselves. When we approach an artwork we may have no inkling of its history and purpose. Without its context what can the artwork tell us? What knowledge and understanding does it impart to the audi-

ence? How is an object absorbed and its meanings transferred? Schuermans, Loopmans and Vandenabeele suggest there is a problem in that 'the actual agency of public art—that what happens when art is 'out there' in public space—is barely understood' (2012, p. 676). Even in the absence of answers it is important that we consider these questions. Michel de Certeau (1988) suggests we are not just consumers, instead we pick and choose, adjust and manipulate things—we are users. He is interested in the 'secondary production', how those who are not the makers, use the image (Certeau 1988, p. xiv). This has to be kept in the back of our minds, that though the purposes of making particular public artworks might be identified, this does not prescribe their meaning after they are placed into public space.

The artwork has a communication advantage when it is made by a local community as it means they can develop the meaning of the work and create dialogue about the work as they are making it. Afterwards, when the work sits in public space, there is a contextual dialogue already circulating about the meaning and making of the work and how this is couched in the artwork's location.

Broadened Definitions

When we talk about public art, we tend to think about official and sanctioned public art that gets commissioned and installed by those who are in a position of power and have the responsibility of placing art in public space. In many public art policies written by councils the definition of public art is quite clearly articulated as only commissioned and permissioned work. This is the type of definition often found in guidelines and policies, so that the term 'public art' becomes defined by the official bodies that make it. It creates a circular turn, like a snake eating its own tail, a creature that doesn't need to consider the outside world when it has its own tail to eat.

Graffiti is often clearly discussed as 'not public art'. However, a broader definition of public art would consider how permanent commissioned public art sits within the wider field of art practices that occur in public space (such as community art and interventions). Much of this practice is not brought into the same contexts as the official 'public art' but nevertheless is public art and has a strong relationship with official versions of public art. Permanent public art is not placed into public space without the knowledge or effects of these other genres. For example, when a permanent public artwork is commissioned, graffiti is acknowledged and included in the process as the designers propose how the artwork will withstand or avoid being vandalised by graffiti.

Other forms of art in public space, though illegal or un-commissioned, reside in the same spaces and are often made using the same materials. However, the discourse of public art shouldn't differentiate commissioned work from street art, graffiti, tagging, throw ups, craftivism, guerrilla kindness, murals, artworks by community members, ephemeral works and the visual imagery of advertising. These genres are sometimes utilised in permanent public art commissioning, for example a mural might be spray painted or yarn-bombers hired by a council to decorate an area, or craftivists commissioned to make community engaged ephemeral artworks. There is a fluid interaction with different genres moving in and out of the public space over time (and into permission, commission, intervention and illegality). I see this as a push and pull scenario, as a space of tension and interaction where permanent public art might sit importantly in the middle (as it is the official art of public space) but be tugged to and fro by the other genres around it. Commissioned permanent public art could be perceived as the most powerful player, if budget, size and duration give an artwork more power to make meaning for itself, but its adversaries are plentiful and resilient and often offer more compelling politics or narratives.

We often witness perforations and permutations of these separate categories, for example when a street art mural becomes permanent (*Keith Haring Mural*, Collingwood, Melbourne) or when artworks made by communities are large, permanent and public (*The Tree Project*, Vicotria, *The Great Wall of St Kilda*, Melbourne). Some artworks are considered important to retain and have been in prominent positions for decades or centuries, whilst others, more fleeting (like graffiti), may present strong visual imagery because of their persistence in repetition and claiming short-lived but great amounts of physical space. Literature on public art usually addresses one particular field of art in public space with little reference to the others and this wider web of practice is rarely considered as a whole. There is an opportunity for more attention to be given to the interaction between these fields or genres in public space and how they interact.



Figure 3: *Public Art*, Debbie Quadri 2016

Public Art and Cultural Democracy?

My perspective of community participation in making permanent public art is as a positive action for delivering meaning under the flag of cultural democracy. Involving people in the making is a step towards ensuring that the meaning of the work resonates with a larger group of people, and creates an opportunity for dialogue created by the work to move into the local community. Not always but often, community made artworks include 'others', they make visual the narratives and meanings that are often absent from this landscape and enable the spirit of positive discrimination. Most importantly, they have the capacity to do this.

If you approach public art through the perspectives of critical theory, feminism or post-colonial theory, you can find many things to criticise about public art, particularly in its early twentieth century appearance as memorials to great men, events and role in support of political agendas. It has been argued that public art has the ability to communicate ideology. Permanent artworks are powerful because they 'endure' over long periods of time and can create, inform and shape narratives of history and culture. Public art plays a role in informal education as a form of public pedagogy, particularly in its enactment of citizenship within public space and as an educative arena in which norms of public space and dominant social discourse are challenged (Sandlin et al. 2005).

Patricia Phillips claims that public art's position outside general art history, provides it with a 'border' condition, from where it can 'frame and foster a discussion of community and culture' and provide a view of the 'relation between institutionalised culture and participatory democracy' (Phillips 1995, p. 60). Likewise Rendell (2006, p. 4) suggests that public art has a possibility as a 'critical spatial practice' to 'work in relation to dominant ideologies but at the same time question them.' Chantal Mouffe (2008, p13) situates the work of artists in public space as a crucial dimension to democracy, in that they 'disrupt the smooth image that corporate capitalism is trying to spread', they play an important role in subverting dominant hegemony, and they contribute to 'the construction of new subjectivities. This is an optimistic view in which short term, small, mainly ephemeral works that appear in public space are figuratively hurled against the larger and longitudinal visual proponents of public space – permanent bronze colonial statues, national war memorials, enlarged examples of high art by famous people, art married to architecture, and an ongoing visual stream (and now digital streaming) of billboard advertising.

Public art also highlights issues about the ownership, control of, and rights to public space. Any artwork outside the private home has to contend with a negotiation about how it is placed in that space. Whether commissioned, un-commissioned, intervention, paste up, stencil guerrilla kindness, throw ups, tagging, murals, ephemeral installations, yarn-bombing. Advertising imagery often has to negotiate its way in the space financially and has to be approved by authorities that have control over the space.

Positive Action

Whilst not negating public art and sculpture made by artists, it is useful to contemplate the types of narratives they offer. One of the narratives is that public art should be made by artists. What do public artworks where communities have been involved in the making, offer as an alternative? Primarily they offer a collaborative attitude to making historical objects. These works are evidence of people working together, and agreeing on a communal voice, or presenting many different voices. They also offer the possibility of the choice to represent individual community members and their ideas in public space. Examples of artworks made by community can include many voices such as the *Great Wall of St Kilda*, (St Kilda,

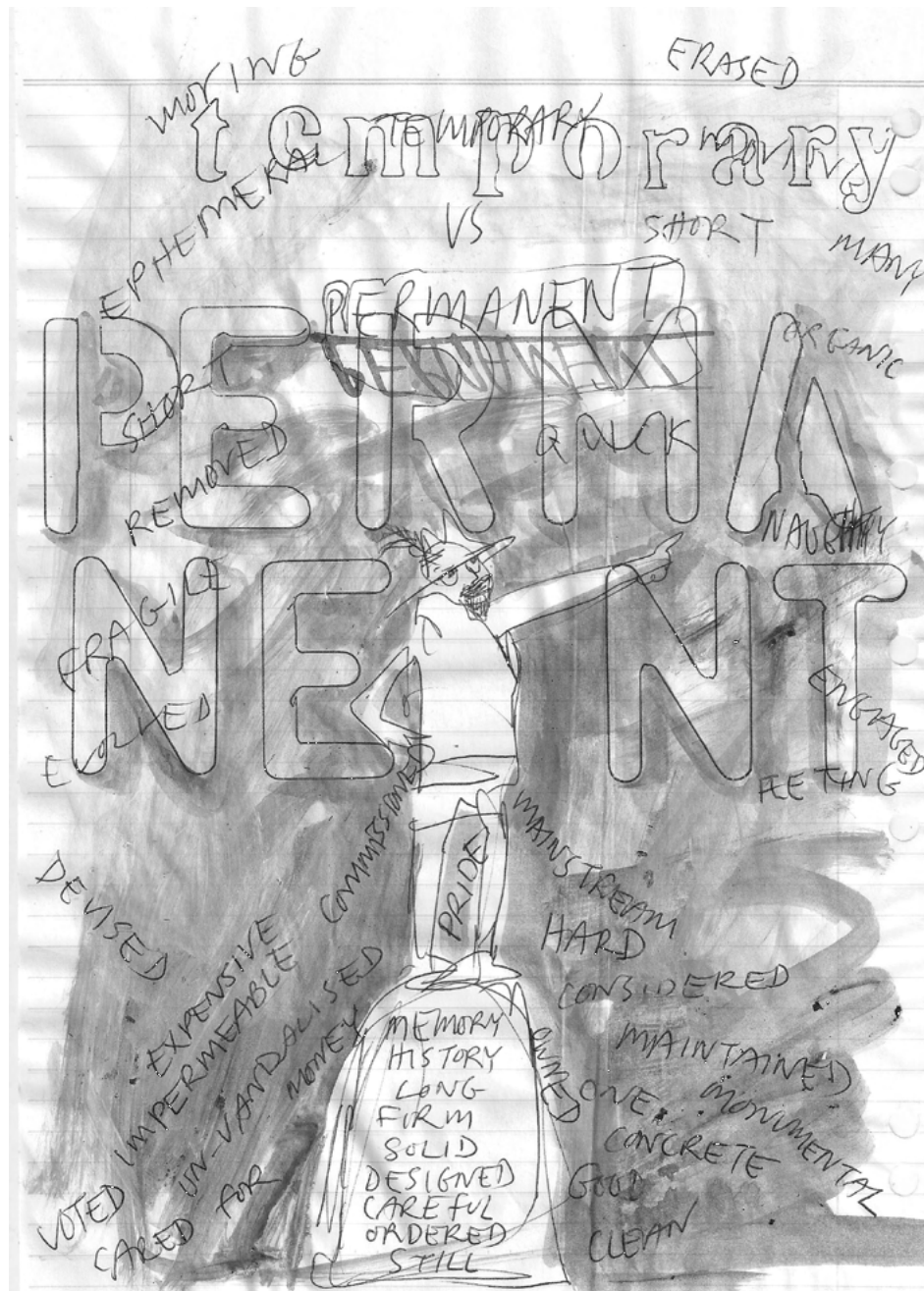


Figure 4: *Temporary vs Permanent*, Debbie Quadri, 2016.

Melbourne), the *Great Wall of Los Angeles* (North Hollywood, CA), the work of the Chicago Public Art Group, and the Belfast Murals. These artworks place importance on the ideas and contributions of local people in the meaning of the artwork, but also the exaltation of the ordinary citizen to the status of someone whose voice and creative efforts are important.

Likewise my approach to public pedagogy does not involve pointing out the way existing public art supports particular narratives, but instead takes a positive approach in a manner similar to Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot's search 'for what is good and healthy' (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Hoffmann-Davis, p. 9). Furthermore, Schuermans et al. (2012, p. 677) deviate from the 'dominant analytical approach to public pedagogy... in focusing on the study of media, popular culture, and society as educative forces'. They draw from literature that aims at delib-

erative active political interventions in society and emphasise that there is 'educational work' to be done in and for the public sphere.' They suggest they are 'encouraged to shift their focus from the artists and artworks per se toward the way audiences engage with art' (Schuermans et al. 2012, p. 677). Their theory stresses action in preference to analysing the past. I use the idea of public pedagogy as a vehicle to explain public art as a participant in expressing cultural knowledge. Its various genres converse or argue with each other. I see the permanent public artworks that I make with community members and writing about this genre of artwork, as the type of action that Schuermans et al. encourage.

The intent of this article has been to open up the ideas of public artworks as players in pedagogy. There is a need to balance the durational power of official public art with permanent participatory and collaborative works. These can offer other narratives and knowledge in public space. Considering the role art plays in public pedagogy, further research is warranted in the areas of community involvement as makers of permanent public art.

Notes

Many of the policy references in this article are Australian and this reflects my current research using three case studies located in Australia. This article is concerned with public art discourse within Western Culture, and particularly Australia. I feel that the issues that the article raises have something to contribute to the global discourse of public art, but also recognise the arguments are biased towards a very local experience and research site.

Community participation in making art has been theorised as part of the community arts movement in the 1960s-90s mainly across the USA, Canada, England, Ireland and Australia. Contributors to academic literature in this movement include; Gaye Hawkins, David Throsby, Kirby, Owen Kelly, Tony Bennet, Sandy Fitzgerald. Given the limited scope of this essay, this history and theory has not been explored here, but certainly has much to offer in terms of knowledge about what community participation is and does.

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About the Author

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Pocketing Prayer, Pedagogy, and Purple Hair: A Story of Place and Belonging, 2010–2015

Flossie Peitsch

Abstract

The Prayer Pocket Place, is the ideal public pedagogical outcome of visual artistic practise. Its historical links, practical progressions, and successful teaching and learning processes are framed using narration, testimonials and the initiator's reflections. These outline Pockets' transformative articulation of its tricky subject matter – spirituality in the public sphere – and disclose how its widespread public endorsement and lasting place / belonging were gained.

Keywords

public art, spirituality, visual art, art practice, local history



DESCRIPTION:

The Prayer Pocket Place, (Fig. 1) is a multi-sensory installation featuring over 300 hand-sewn fabric, 'stand-alone', sealed pockets containing prayers—women's deepest wishes of wellbeing for their families, communities and the universe. It presents as a sanctified space sheltering an interwoven soundscape. The pockets are made in monocolours—either whites, blues, or greens; or a combination of these.

DIMENSIONS:

A 3D work standing 1m x 1m x 1m encompassing over 300 motifs, wrapped with a subtle soundscape.

MEDIUM:

Mixed assemblage of aluminium, textile, wicker, with soundscape and audio equipment.

Figure 1: *The Prayer Pocket Place*, 2011

The Prayer Pocket Place (Fig 1) is not just 'something', but rather, it crafts a sensory-rich personal 'someplace' to contemplate the enduring facets of life's bigger picture. This public art project involved hundreds of women making *Pockets*. It literally and figuratively represents women in community and in the light of public pedagogy, its creation is a story worth the telling.

This article outlines the project's five-year development starting with its local historical influences as the preliminary artistic inspiration leading to its early in-gallery fabrication. Then it suggests why the project proceeded seamlessly from the author's earliest creative days, interrogating her own unique position in society as artist, mystic, mother, activist, and teacher.

With detailed affection capturing its overall sense of participation and empowerment, each layer of *Pockets*' development is stitched into the fabric of its story. Each workshop site and setting—constructing a wide national forum—adds a new covering incorporating the participants' joy and creativity.

As a final point, *Pockets* is described in terms of finding and making a lasting place and space for community - giving value and purpose to things not normally seen or commonly cherished among 'non-indigenous' people or society at large. These include wisdom, courage, relationship building, sense of well-being and spirituality.

Significantly, these outcomes emerge external to all educational institutions and academic research, yet, it is the very foundation needed to build a cultured and compassionate society. *Pockets* is the practice essential to public pedagogical research. Nonetheless, neither this article, nor the project, is more justified by being informed—as it were—by that body of research.

The Prayer Pocket Place, For Hearth, Hand, And Heart, 2010 – 2015

Pattern Outline

After thirty-five years working as an artist within the framework public pedagogy—creating community through art-based projects, *The Prayer Pocket Place* grew spontaneously from my artistic response to local historical events in the Illawarra, NSW, while evolving into bona fide Fine Art. This Fine Art result is not to be confused with the artistic by-product of interactive ‘socially transformative’ art, newly termed ‘The Educational Turn’ (Luise, 2010). *Pockets* expanded extemporaneously through the passion the project itself generated in its devotees. One of my colleagues (Qadri, 2016) responds favourably: ‘It is lovely how the project gathered momentum and I think that’s because it provided a solution or an opportunity to write down prayers and hopes. It was useful for people and enjoyable and they saw a sense to it.’ This comment documents a rewarding teaching and learning achievement.

The achieving participants, as part of the development of my solo exhibition entitled *Sleeves & Sheets, Socks & Pockets*, (concurrently exhibited at Wollongong City Gallery and Project Contemporary Art Space, Wollongong, NSW, 2011) took part in free *Pockets* workshops organized at various public venues over a five year period. Locations for workshops include the Wollongong Art Gallery, artist run spaces such as Project, cafes, private homes, Sydney Living Museums, newly immigrated women’s hostels, Community Centres, church retreats, family groupings and many more. The partakers included migrant, stay-at-home and professional women of varying ages in temporary and discordant—due to differing interests, outlook, cultural background, spirituality, and socio/economic status—but purposeful groupings. The distinctive pockets (Fig 4) evidenced these women’s creative variations.

Like every good folktale, the story of *Pockets* begins with the familiar tag, ‘Once upon a time...’ there was no *Prayer Pocket Place*. Then, an artist came to town.

Artistic Inspiration

The first instigating historical event is Australia’s largest-ever industrial accident, the Mt Kembla Colliery Gas Explosion of 1902. This mining disaster (Fig 2) took the lives of ninety-six (96) men and boys, survived by mothers, wives, sisters and daughters. Yet, the town endured. I became interested in paying tribute to the brave women who carried on with their lives - having survived such dire personal tragedy. My goal was to gather 96 pockets.

The second instigating historical place is Meroogal (Fig 3) where the lives of four successive generations of Thorburn women living through hard times are acknowledged (Sydney Museums, 2016). These women are remembered as individuals contributing tirelessly to their well-being through their relationship to each other and to community—just as the surviving Mt Kembla widows.



Figure 2: Mt Kembla Colliery
(Source: <http://www.illawarracoal.com>)



Figure 3: Meroogal
(Source: <http://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au>)



Figure 4: Examples of pockets from workshops (Photographed by Peitsch, 2011)

Protagonist, Parenthood, Purple Hair and Pedagogy

My Dad told my prospective husband on our engagement, ‘You know, she is always going to be a force to contend with’ (Stumpf, 1974) (Fig 5). He was not wrong I have seen. Since I properly began my artistic vocation as a zealous twenty year old, I have attempted to seamlessly sew together the ideologies of home, community, spirituality, and women’s work (Peitsch 2008).

Conversely, I keenly felt first-hand the ‘otherness’ of the practising artist in her relationships to community. This ‘non-placed-person’ dichotomy became all the more poignant to me when I became a mother and, realized additionally the low regard in which this domestic station was held. I had no voice or position from which to invest in this conversation.

Eventually, I found my voice when my last baby was eighteen months and I, refusing to be the typical, speechless, coffee-clutching, doting parental unit, decided—as an artist—to articulate my notions pertaining to both spirituality and motherhood. I knew that the artist is an unexpected catalyst for change in society today. However, unlike now, the artist has long been sought out as a social prophet and altruistic protector of humanity: ‘It appears likely that poets in our civilization, as it exists at present, must be difficult... the poet [or artist] must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into their meaning [Inclusive language added]’ (Eliot, 1921, p. 289). In fact, she has been expected to fearlessly raise the call to repentance in some inherent manner.

Never one to acquiesce, I necessarily became a postgrad student teasing out cultural conundrums. As an artist undertaking a Masters of Fine Art at Monash University, I embarked on formal research in my interest areas (Fig 6). As others before me, I found domestic themes would eventually lead me to resistance within the academic world. There, strict ‘research’ is still valued far above ‘teaching and service’ (Park 1996). My areas were still the ideologies of home, community, spirituality, and women’s work—always cultivating a hands-on approach involving lay-people (Peitsch 2008).

With its close proximity to low income and migrant communities, at Victoria University, Footscray, Melbourne, I was encouraged to include collective projects in my creative PhD research. This allowed me to further explore, ‘artistic ways of knowing and being in the world speaking within and to the public sphere’ (PPI, 2016). I routinely create Fine Art projects existing outside of education programs, such as the project *Chisholm’s Homes* (2006), where the fabricators are everyday people called upon to use their everyday acquired skills for fun and the greater good.



Figure 5: Flossie Peitsch, 2012



Figure 6: Theme Grid of the author's MFA (Peitsch, 2008)

One appreciative and articulate workshop participant wrote, 'I think the presentation was a very successful juxtaposition/intermarrying of theory and practise. You obviously knew what you were doing having done the academic groundwork so were able to show us the essential characteristics of narrative through performance. Well done.' (Wollongong, 2008). This general comment seems to apply to many of the workshops I conduct. And, I do feel 'on a mission from God' to quote the film *The Blues Brothers* (Landis 1980). 'The power that can transform, redeem, unify and order has moved in continuous process from a transcendent world into the inner being of artists themselves' (Norris, 1996, p. 59) so John Cobbs has written. Even my purple hair which is worrying and in fact, alienating to some private school systems I discovered, is welcomed in the creative circles in which I nominate to move (2012). Like my unnatural purple hair, alternative teaching and learning practises and places are a natural way ahead for me (2008). *Pockets* is one such chapter in this line of thinking.

Opening Pockets

Lutheran Women's Retreats In Victoria, 2002

As the forerunner to *The Prayer Pocket Place*, the first one hundred plus (100+) pockets I facilitated were personal 'devotional aids' (Fig 7), repositories for a woman's own prayer life. I was invited to be the state-wide Leader in retreats which usually have a Bible-study-based, lecture-style delivery. Instead, I wished to assist the women in taking their beliefs 'out for a spin', sharing their everyday spiritual journeys and family situations in a non-threatening way. So, I implemented sewing circles.

Sorted into small groups, I encouraged participants at each of five Lutheran Women's Retreats to sew buttons on the pockets they had newly constructed to represent family members, while participating in 'directed conversations' about families and faith. They then privately wrote prayers about each person. The pockets were taken home and kept in safe places.

One woman named Grace placed her pocket safely on her fridge. She continued to add



Figure 7: Pockets (photographed by the author)



Figure 8: Note from workshop participant (Peitsch, 2011)



Figure 9: Sample pocket with buttons (Peitsch, 2011)



Figure 10: Design template for pockets (Peitsch, 2011)

buttons as her family grew. Years later at age 86, this woman passed away. Her pocket (Fig 9), one of the last items taken from her house, was given to her eldest daughter who was surprised to find what was inside—a prayer for each of the children wanting them to have the same happiness, simplicity and blessings in their lives that she'd had (Schmaal 2012).

This heart-warming story shows my unconventional approach for the retreats to have been well received by the women, especially considering the years of rock-solid tradition I had challenged.

People's shared personal stories are brave, enlightening, powerful, and self-productive. 'Personal experience is the source of reliable knowledge' (Stackhouse 1997, pp. 51-52). The journey sharing this knowledge is also noteworthy. 'The narrative text refuses the impulse to abstract and explain, stressing the journey over the destination, and thus eclipses the scientific illusion of control and mastery... evocative stories activate subjectivity and compel emotional

response' (Bouchner 2000, p. 745). Pedagogy in this way encourages the development of lasting closeness and a collective sense of belonging.

There are many ways in which the self-narrative journey can be valuable. 'All these creative forms exact a distancing, helping one to experience the self as other, as encouraged in postmodern ethnography' (Bouchner, 2000, pp. 520-521) but usually this kind of self-disclosure is not given a safe 'place' in our society. Writing or talking from this vantage point presupposes a difficult journey into the unknown. Cixous (1937, p. 204) describes this as travelling through 'our own marshes, our own mud...it is deep in my body, further down, behind thought.' In artistic terms, it is 'transcending the visible in one's own way, making visible the invisible' (Jung, 1981, p. 37) [inclusive language added]. This points healthily to greater self-awareness and the wider inclusive community benefit towards well-being. It is social pedagogy at its most productive.

Sleeves & Sheets, Socks & Pockets

The Prayer Pocket Place encouraged further conversations beyond the processes of artistic inquiry as the heartfelt centre of this new solo art exhibition. Referred to here as SSSP (*Sleeves & Sheets, Socks & Pockets*, 2011), this solo exhibition of installation sculpture became a productive tool for teaching and learning—gaining recognition for women's role in community well-being. I gained a heart for the women of the Illawarra and their mostly immigrant past.

The research base for its fine art derived partially from the work of noted humanitarian Caroline Chisholm, an immigrant in local Shell Harbour, and my own Doctoral research. Looking at the history of women at work in the Illawarra since the 1850s and adding in my own brief experience here in this place, I see a highly textured patchwork of dislocation, loss, and alienation covered with adaptability, diligence, and resilience—cultural transition



Figure 11 & 12: Small hut of pockets (Peitsch, 2011)

within Diaspora. My art is an interpretive sampler of women as ‘the fabric of society’ (Peitsch et al. 2011).

Women—seemingly intuitively—often deal with caring and struggle, spirituality and belonging for those they bring into the world and others. All these things are hidden in women’s hearts and in this project, in the pockets. In her published essay for SSSP, Hulsbusch (2011) writes:

It is the pockets that harbor personal secrets. Pockets keep ideological, political, spiritual and personal thoughts, items of the past and aspirations for the future. These items of clothing and household linens operate as conduits to inform us of women’s position in society... encapsulated by the ordinariness of a lived reality. Caroline Chisholm would approve.

Capturing the essence of public pedagogy through art, SSSP was seen to accomplish this: ‘Her textured studio enquiry unravelled cultural mores and belief systems, unpicked gender-based ethics, disentangled ethnic identities and started to mend the fray, darn the holes and re-weave the patches...’ (2011). Pockets are evocative of the ideas of home/community by creating a specific place holding each woman’s hand-written letter of the thoughts, hopes and prayers of all time, place and culture.

Wollongong Women’s Workshops

To initiate community interest and engagement in SSSP, I advertised pocket-making workshops at the Wollongong City Gallery (March, 2011). The flyer simply said:

A Prayer Pocket is a small, flat cloth ‘pocket’ made to hold a woman’s written eternal wishes for the wellbeing of her family and community. Created from a simple set pattern, sewn or glued, decorated and sealed shut. These works will form part of an exhibition at WCG in 2011.

This is where the *Pockets* story took its current shape, in three dimensions. I had expected to need to gently lead people into the awareness of spirituality and their possible connection with the divine. Then, I had planned to teach them how to sew a pocket (Fig. 10). This was not to be the case. The women who came to the workshops were completely comfortable in writing their own texts, in their own ways without any theological input or my insight into the eternal world.

The prayers poured from their hearts, in their own languages, in their own ways, with ease. I had clearly tapped into a deep stream. I had merely supplied the idea, the opportunity, the fabric, notepaper and sewing machines. Apart from a little sewing guidance, the women did everything without my direction. I found it miraculous to experience this accessible—and possibly universal—sense of innate spirituality and connectedness. I was being ‘taught’ in my own workshop for others.

As the facilitator, I feel a most important aspect of this project is the fact that the pockets were immediately sewn shut by their makers after the prayers were inserted. This meant that the prayers remain forever personal, private, and protected from human interference and possible interpretation or distortion.

One of the notes (Fig 8) I received was from the coordinator of an immigrant women’s hostel where she runs workshops in the Illawarra. Every few days I discovered another set of new pockets in my post box, delivered there with flying ribbons and notes attached. The note reads: ‘Flossie, Best wishes & Good luck! See you Friday. Regards Deborah xxxx Last of the groups’ pockets. PS. Sorry unable to deliver over the Easter break.’

Work'n Women Forum

Using the vehicle of public pedagogy and an additional placing of the pockets, I became the originator and director of a free two day public forum related to the SSSP exhibition. I called for the submission of presentations for and by local women. The topics were grouped into the areas: Women & History; Women & Work; and Women & Wellbeing. The all day sessions were based at both the WCG and Project Gallery and included excursions to historical Mt Kembla and the Illawarra Museum. The program included a one act play by local playwright and actor, Wendy Richardson (Latifi 2015); Social Sculpture Events by myself; talks by local museums' directors, from new migrant groups, artists, and historians, a women's fitness workout, a labyrinth experience and spiritual music performance, Circus Wow; an audiologist; a sexuality psychologist; outback perspectives; dramatized personal histories by local university students; Sharon Bird, the local MP giving her politicians' view on Women at Work and more.

As an unobtrusive witness, *Pockets* offered its sanctuary of place throughout the proceedings. Seeing the value of this forum for local history and community benefit, it was sponsored by Mt Kembla Mining Heritage and the Migrant Heritage Project, following my approach to them.

Meroogal Women's Arts Prize, 2011

The next approached stage for *Pockets* was its entry to *Made by Hand*, an exhibition sponsored by NSW's Historic Houses Trust seeking art that highlighted women's contributions to the culture of place, particularly as found at Meroogal. Meroogal, itself, is a pocket of four generations of Thorburn women's history, as mentioned earlier in this essay. Its significance is outlined with these words 'The house still overflows with their belongings – favourite books and ornaments, furniture, photographs, diaries and journals, newspaper clippings, receipts and recipes, appliances and clothes – and the garden, ... still provides fruits and fresh produce that hint at their self-sufficiency and hospitality' (Sydney Living Museums, 2016).

For good effect and fun in this part of the project, I collaborated with local musician Wendy Suiter who, pocketing the voices of the numerous community textile fabricators during the workshops, crafted an original soundscape using audio excerpts from *Pockets* workshops (Suiter 2016). One basis for the workshop recordings included using the original parlour chats initiated and recorded by one of the Thorburn sisters who did not like hand-work, doing so while the others did their embroideries. Emanating from *The Prayer Pocket Place* with an underlying quilt of sound, are the 70 individually made sound motifs of voices/sounds of the shared ritual of making the 70 external pockets. This soundscape fashioned an additional and unique inner layer to the sculpture. *Pockets* now became a remarkable audio/visual installation.

Women's Prayer Pocket Place Visits Canberra

Lutheran Women, NSW, Two Day Workshop, March 2012

I was once again invited to direct and present a workshop for Lutheran Women in NSW—similar to those in the Victoria but this time using the Illawarra theme of *Pockets* as the uniting craft. Without detailing the unique activities of the weekend, the following are some excerpts from notes and letters I received following the *Pockets* workshops.

Sample 1: Excerpt from a letter, penned on April 12th, 2012:

Dear Flossie, The Retreat is fading into the distance but thankfully, was not one of those which fades completely ...far from it. It's ripple will have moved far—for me personally—well—it removed (perhaps) the last brick from the wall of depression... I'm eternally grateful. Thank you. Love Alicia' (Alicia, 2012)

Sample 2: Excerpt from a posted letter and package received some weeks following the Retreat:

'Dear Flossie, I would like you to have *Myrtle the Mermaid* (Fig 13) whom I made from a sock after your *Pockets* event. She isn't young or beautiful, in the classic sense, but she is strong and vibrant, self-assured and probably a bit bossy. I hope she finds her place to shine. I really enjoyed the weekend at Warrambui. I have come home bursting with ideas and eager to get into creative projects. In the last week I have...[long list of art and craft projects]. Thank you so much for your inspiration and input into the weekend. You've been a real blessing at a time when it was sorely needed... May your creative juices flow eternally on. God bless you, Judy M

Sample 3:

'I thought I wasn't a very creative person, but when I looked at my prayer pocket in the end, I could see that it was not only beautiful but it also told a story about God's presence in our lives', said one retreat participant. 'I'm going to stop saying "I'm not creative", because I am.' (Schmaal, 2012)

Pictured below (Fig 14) is the installation setting of the pockets created during the Women's Retreat weekend. In this formation, the pockets were the central focus of a unique-to-this-denomination, 'all women led' worship service.



Figure 13: *Myrtle the Mermaid*
(photographed by Peitsch, 2012)

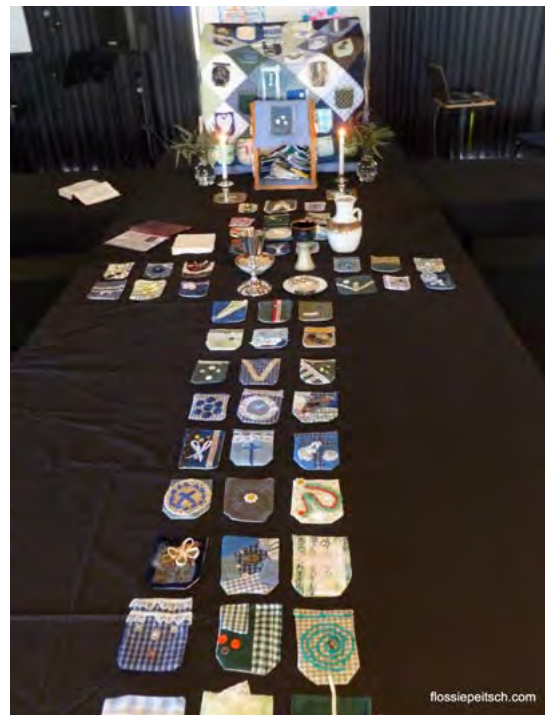


Figure 14: Cross in worship centre (Peitsch, 2012)

Canberra Belconnen Arts Centre, September-October 2012

Pockets gained a gallery space of its own at the Centre and compellingly filled its place with subtle sound and sanctity. It was venerated by those who visited it there – some being the makers of the pockets at the Canberra Retreat. People remarked on the quieting effect of entering its space at the gallery. *Pockets* seemed to emanate a sense of worshipfulness—drawing together women from all periods and places: ‘Worship breaks the boundaries of space and time’ (2016). Here are some excerpts from comments in the Guest Book from the *Pockets* exhibition:

Wow! What a lot of great pockets! I won’t forget the pockets!—Delightful, inspirational! – Thank you, a beautiful exhibition in this sympathetic space.—Amazing! Fascinating! Each so different. Just lovely!—I like all the pockets but I like my grandma’s best. Thank you for putting it here for us to see. (Georgie age 8)—Great to see all our handwork on display. Thanks.—This exhibition creates a lovely warm sense of ‘togetherness’.—A wonderful concept women’s work, hands and heart, remembering loved ones lost.—Looks like Earth! Blue-Sky & Sea, White-Cloud, Green-Land; Sound is People. Many pockets-Countries. So interesting!!! I like this—a small pocket Earth.

The last comment in the group adds that viewer’s imaginative extension to what lay in front of her. It realizes these knowing words, ‘The creative and imaginative efforts of all of us count, and nothing less than the health of the world hangs in the balance’ (Gatehouse, 2016). *Pockets* had now assumed its own presence and *raison d’être*. Helping people feel good about themselves by having their handiwork praised is good for the general well-being of society.

Mt Kembla Mining Heritage Inc Collection

Always the hoped outcome for *Pockets*, this sculpture was acquired for permanent exhibition by the Mt Kembla Mining Heritage in January, 2014, with due ceremony and officiating. It resides among collected memorabilia, staging an effective vigil to the history of Mt Kembla. It can be visited by its public at any time—and it is hoped, for all time.

Pocketing Place And Belonging

Accessibility Of Place And Belonging

Due to raised awareness towards some religions and religious people, the ‘every day’ person may consider spirituality a taboo subject. This was not the approach demonstrated within the *Pockets* project. Participants found a place of belonging usually reserved for close communities. Through the workshop community, they felt safe and supported in making a private and most personal approach to the divine. In *Pockets*, people eagerly embraced the opportunity to commit their inner selves to paper and permanency. Given that, ‘Once past the age of thirty, it is even somewhat surprising to make a new friend. It can be extraordinary and odd to start an impromptu conversation with an unknown person in a public place,’ (Botton, 2012, p. 23) this occurrence bears further reflection.

To consider the surprising effectiveness of *Pockets* as a public pedagogy artefact, one must interrogate this century’s wider situation of spirituality within the Australian setting. Lorraine Gatehouse (2016, p. 4) suggests that the cultural crisis of this decade is producing a resultant spiritual crisis, ‘...a time for reassessing just who we are, who we want to be and where we are going’.

Pockets' Provision of Place

Sadly, attitudes toward belief systems are not often realized apart from the community's usual stereotyping and demarcation of religions. So in alliance with current sensibilities, few places encourage the average person to reflect upon their own spirituality—being one of four basic human needs (Wilber, 2000)—education notwithstanding (2014). As such, the only place I found evidence of a spiritual discussion was in the stalls of the women's toilets at the University of Wollongong (2012).

We have constructed an intellectual world whose most celebrated institution [the university] rarely consents to ask, let alone answer, the most serious questions of the soul...the current subjects do not in themselves track the themes that most torment and affect our souls. (Botton, 2012, p. 121)

Pockets unilaterally encouraged the sharing of common struggles by a simple ritual joining in written supplication. Valuable activities such as these 'are what help to hold our fractious and fragile societies together' (Botton, 2012, p. 50)

A person's belief system and visual coding is affected by their period in history, their cultural influence, and social class as highly shaped by the dominant society, plus their personal spiritual journey. No one is exempt from these influencing factors. But, the artist may be a conduit or productive influence for spiritual awareness and understanding. Norris writes, 'Our task is not to convince, but to suggest, evoke, explore' (Norris, 1996, p. 55). Pockets gently facilitated an opportunity for participants to step outside their usual settings—that of the dominant society they typically embody—and enjoy a wider communion belonging with other women—from the past, present and future—knowing that through love, all women experience life's loss and gain. Through the tender art of *Pockets*, I explore the role of faith in building a harmonious multi-cultural society (2002)

Wider Provision of Place

At many art and spirituality workshops, I pose a few introductory questions. In chart form (Appendix 1) are the responses given at several workshops this year—held apart from educational institutions.

Once a person acknowledges her universal questioning of the divine, she considers what it means to be human, and a door opens to a collective consciousness where steps can be made towards the possibility of something quite new and positive within society (Fox, 2011). It is only a step—but an important step in understanding the implications of what it is to be called to life—not a new religion (Elwell, 2001).

Prayer Bookend

Achieved totally outside educational institutions, the hands-on task and self-directed sharing in small working groups led to personal healing, community building with a strong sense of belonging and solidarity, personal empowerment, realization of hope and activation for the future. *Pockets* became, quite innocently in itself, a powerful 'form of sociality and creativity' (Peters, 2015). It is newly part of the permanent display in the local museum, the Mt Kembla Mining Heritage Centre. I have been quoted by Schmaal (2012) as saying:

'Everyone is an artist. Many more things in our lives are more creative than we realise. This also applies to the prayer pockets: it's not just about what you have produced, but it's about the journey we take to make them and how we change as people. You came up with something from just old scraps of material. Like life, you are involved in the whole process,

making decisions, adding decoration according to your own personality or needs, using opportunities or difficulties and other potentials, from your earliest days to the end ... all under the grace of God’.

I feel strongly that the above as stated *is* the essence and purpose of *Pockets*. Aligning *Pockets* with public pedagogical research, problematic as even the terms of this field continue to be (Burdick, et al., 2014), is not the purpose nor intent of my article. It is not my area of research, expertise nor passion. I am an academic, but I authored this article as a practitioner. This is a consideration for the research journals—not only pertinent to me (Burdick & Sandlin, 2010). The ‘initiating’, the ‘doing’ and ‘the deconstruction’ of *The Prayer Pocket Place* project, from start to finish, gives it its rightful place. My purpose in writing this article is to bring to light and interrogate a profound public pedagogical project. It is a story of small pieces bring profound.

The last small pocket (Fig 15) to be added in *The Prayer Pocket Place* story is the one filled by participants at the conference, *Turning Learning Insideout* (Charman, 2015) during my session. It fittingly holds the prayers of those who, in many ways, engage alternately with the story of their ‘island home’ Australia, as does Tim Winton (2015) who, like the authors of these tiny supplications, sees the earth as home and so, sacred. For those who can, this means the sacredness of place and belonging is here for the taking.



Figure 15: Pocket from the PPI conference (Peitsch, 2015)

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Appendix 1

SPIRITUALITY SURVEY - CHART 3	
Completed by general public attending my Art & Soul Workshop, Royal South Australian Society of the Arts (RSASA), Adelaide, March 2016	
WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT 'THE DIVINE'	WHAT DO I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT 'THE DIVINE'
He is my guide and counsellor, he is ever present, guiding everything I do	Who he is? What he is?
Awesome	?
I am loved and have a purpose	Peace in regard to God's plan for me
Jesus	More
Of the Spirit	More
The Divine is in and interested in human endeavour	I would see the Divine in human activity.
The spiritual exists	Do we have life after death?
My comprehension of the divine and spirituality revolved around nature and the forces of spiritual forces	A learning process of the understanding of nature and the spiritual world.
Holy	Create
God is	When I lose you where are you?
Eternal	The essence of the eternal in myself.
Jesus	More
Forgiving	Know enough! Through church.
Infinite complexity	Evolutionary relationship
Very powerful	Why it is so important to us.
Faith	Clarify
Unknowable (I have a BTh I know I don't know)	Acceptance (that I don't know)
Nothing	Everything
Spirituality is our divine connectivity	God is in the everyday
Unfathomable	
Perfect	Will

SPIRITUALITY SURVEY - CHART 4	
Completed by Christian Artists at my Art & Soul Workshop, Chapel on Station Gallery, Box Hill, Melbourne, April 2016	
WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT 'SPIRITUALITY'	WHAT DO I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT 'SPIRITUALITY'
Created me and loves it dearly	How best to respond.
The concept of the divine is elusive	How could this concept be interpreted through my art
I'm known completely	More deeply
Mystery	How am I connected?
Love	How to be more loving
Loving...eternal...compassion	Where is he? So much
He is real/evident	How he thinks/his will for me
It's a force-wave that flows through everything	That says it all
What I know	More. The unfolding
God is kind.	The next thing.
Love	Love
Immense guidance	Extent
Everywhere	Why is suffering allowed?
We are on first name terms	More experiences
Creator	Certainty
Present in presence	How to be always present to presence
Love infused Cosmos	Appreciation. How earth is full of God?...but not pantheism!

About the Author

Visual artist and creative art educator, I seek the *immortal now* - seeing myself as a 'visual art' theologian with interests in contemporary spirituality and community. '*Splace*' is my PhD invented term, engaging the voice of art for the self-realization of being, researching life's ultimate questions—Who am I? Where am I? Why am I here?

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The Deep End: Pedagogy, Poetry and the Public Pool

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Abstract

Diving in to new materialist theory, this paper explores what might be learnt at a public swimming pool, through poetry as arts-based research. Writing, sitting, thinking and swimming, the learner enters new spaces and atmospheres, where learning emerges as unpredictable and involving a whole range of human and non-human bodies. Public spaces, where we can think about causality and design without the strictures of school curriculum, may emerge as key sites for new understandings of learning where abiding humanist preoccupations can slip away. While this paper cannot offer the physical and material movement, touching, flesh, smelling, silicone, cotton and water of the poem as performed at the Public Pedagogies Institute conference in Melbourne in 2015, readers can still be prepared to get changed!

Keywords

public pedagogy, poetry, new materialist theory, public swimming pools

Pedagogy at the Pool

The pedagogies of the public swimming pool may seem obvious: the strategies adopted by swimming teachers, with their stroke corrections and high fives, or the direct instruction employed by lifeguards and their whistles insisting on the correct use of lanes. There may be free seminars on nutrition and wall-mounted video broadcasts of correct lifting techniques for the gym, as at my local council-run sports complex in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. These are the pedagogical regimes of public health in action, the kinds of common sense cultural constructs of teaching and learning in institutional settings that are the focus of much educational research (Sandlin et al 2010, p. 4).

Yet swimming, thinking and writing poetry with new materialist theory, different pedagogies come into play. This arts-based inquiry into pedagogy as a pool poem was performed in 2015, at the Public Pedagogy Institute's conference, *Turning Learning Inside Out*. This paper seeks to diffract (Barad 2007) this performance, channelling it through the narrows of writing a journal article, to create new patterns, ripple effects and movements in learning. This is a submission that eschews the idea that a paper might be 'delivered' at a conference and then published unchanged, and instead incorporates words, quotations, gestures and experiences of being at the conference, drawing these into a new assemblage, along with the artistry of poetic language. It forms a practical, tangible example of what new materialism might have to offer those who wish to expand perceptions of teaching and learning, through an introduction highlighting key concepts, a series of three extracts from the pool poem, and a conclusion suggesting directions for further study.

Taking this approach is an example of 'pedagogy in the interests of publicness' as Jennifer Sandlin (2015) described in her keynote opening the conference. This is pedagogy in which we engage relations of subjects, objects and embodied interactions which is both arts-based and critical. Conceptualising learning with new materialism in this public domain shifts sedimented ideas and frees us from school-dominated understandings of learning, or the model of the world as a 'giant school' (Sandlin 2015)- this is again the common sense model defining public pedagogy at the pool as being about the human-centred dictates of how to think and act ever more like an ideal human. Instead, and this is a 'tectonic' (Snaza & Weaver 2015) change, we might move beyond the humanist project of education to recognise other, non-human bodies, and other, non-human publics in any pedagogical space.

New materialist theory, in particular that drawing on Karen Barad's concepts of intra-action and assemblage (2007) in which entangled agencies call each other into being, and Jane Bennett's tableaux of objects, for example, the 'glove-pollen-rat-cap-stick' (2010, p. 5) awaken us to the vibrant materiality of matter. Such theories encourage us to conceive of non-human agencies, to question human intentionality and to reject binaries such as that cleaving nature and culture. The notion of public versus private pedagogies is another troublesome split, complicated at the "public" pool where local schools hold their swimming lessons and sports carnivals. This paper suggests instead that learning in any assemblage, whether nominally public or private, might be realised differently through an alchemical forging of creative ways of knowing and emerging theory.

We might ask what curriculum at the pool would look like if we did not 'disavow the human's ecological entanglements' (Snaza & Weaver 2015, p. 3), if we could set aside 'the desire to plan' and instead 'revel in potential drifts' (Snaza & Weaver 2015, p. 3). What if we could relinquish the centrality of the human to curriculum (Gaztambide-Fernandes 2015)? A full genealogy of educational humanism is available elsewhere (Snaza 2015), but here we can turn instead to contemplating, if we can move beyond humanism, what is learnt at the pool,

as a space more open to other bodies, to a more 'object-oriented ontology' (Snaza & Weaver 2015, p. 6) than that of the classroom. At the pool we can begin to become animal, become earth, and become machine, embracing the three challenges that face the post-human subject (Braidotti in de Freitas & Curinga 2015, p. 261).

To achieve this aim, the paper performs the multidisciplinary incorporation of poetry, educational theory and philosophy, to think beyond curriculum as plan and pedagogy as choice in action. Instead of focusing only on human-driven strategy, we might look beyond the swimming teacher's modelling of correct freestyle and the life guard's whistle, to what else happens at the pool. This is not to present 'learning in the natural world' as opposed to 'learning in the cultural world' of the classroom, or to negate human agency, which is evident in institutional constraints that form part of any assemblage, even the most 'natural'. Instead these constraints become recognisable along with other forces at work.

This is not public pedagogy as an idealised space of freedom, a misapprehension to which Sandlin (2015) alerts us. We are not here to find out how we can be the best possible swimmers or the fittest possible rate-payers we can be, outside the constraints of school. We are here to countenance how we can think and be differently. So we do not assess squad training strategies, lap times, reward programs, outcomes, visitation figures, membership plans or income. Instead we challenge normative definitions of learning, whether in the classroom or in 'public' spaces; instead learning is always already active, decentred and beyond our illusions of control. We are aware of, and more than the 'control patterns' of local councils' public realms (Gray et al 2015).

Pedagogy is not a strategy (Dixon 2015), but instead a coalescence. Abstract instrumentalism dissolves in the pool, in water as transitional space and where, moving in a liquid medium, we become more aware of materiality. In water, our primordial home, we might see what has become invisible in the Anthropocene, notice animals, insects, ecologies. We enact Erin Manning's proposition for an entanglement, that we should 'believe not in thoughts that come from the desk, but thoughts that come from outside' (in Truman 2015), in this case outside of school learning. These ideas emerge with swimming, with the pool providing the pedagogical "pivot point" between movement or sensation and thought (Ellsworth 2005, p. 8).

I have expressed these thoughts through poetry, a disruptive medium contrasting with the familiar language of curriculum and pedagogy, of outline and lesson plan. In a more open, fragmented genre, with rules made to be broken, we might exist outside the distant intentionality of pedagogical plan-words, connect with what is more intense and urgent. Both Barad (2007) and Bennett (2010) conjure prose in their descriptions of the material world, but dense, evocative prose that, particularly in Bennett's case, leans towards poetry through the assemblage of disparate, juxtaposed elements. Inspired by these writers, I have used concrete imagery, sensory appeal and affect. As I performed the pool poem at the conference, I could see audience members grimace, shudder and smile, responding to language that is vibratory, sensitive to complexity and alive with metaphor. Personification, although a potentially humanising force bestowing human agency on animals or objects, also has the potential to bring matter to life (Bennett 2010, p. 120).

Poetry in/as research is said to be used to 'clarify and magnify our human existence' (Hirshfield cited in Faulkner 2009, p. 16). Poetry as new materialist or posthumanist arts-based research instead attempts to meet the universe halfway as Barad proposes in her title (2007), to flatten the figure of the human into the landscape of vital materiality, to challenge the emphasis on the humanist gaze in visibility ('clarify', 'magnify') and to explore other senses and capacities, including those that are not human. This poetry is open to what emerges, diffracting (Barad 2007) experience, rather than reflecting on what is seen, to enable alterna-

tive understandings beyond binaries such as culture/nature. Academic discourse, water, skin, hydraulics, weariness all create each other, co-emerging as entangled phenomena, not merely as products of human labour or attention.

Swimming in a public space, moving, breathing, kicking, with theory swirling in my blood, I thought about learning, and scribbled notes on damp wads of paper in the changing room. I sought to diffract the experiences of the pool through the strictures of writing poetry, too, even free verse, not aiming for a poem as an aesthetic achievement, but put to work to materially constitute learning assemblages, and to respond to the call for us to reconsider our understanding of 'what counts as pedagogy' (Sandlin et al 2010, p. 4, emphasis in original). In the pool, I became immersed in the impossibility of thinking curriculum and pedagogy if we attempt to move beyond humanism, wrestled with this in every stroke carving the water's resistance and indulged this very endeavour as a masculinist, humanist trope of mastery.

I emerged changed, as in typical humanist narratives, alert to the White, human-centric, Anglo-centric nature of this public space in a world of increasing human diversity and rapidly decreasing ecological diversity. In the poem I play with this figure, the swimmer, poet, teacher, narrator, protagonist "I", and the grammatical imperative to be in charge and to order the world, along with the syntax and the lesson. I invoke paradoxes and ambiguities playfully and wonder how we can set the human aside, flatten people into the landscape. This is a creative space in which assumptions about pedagogy do not hold, where matter is active and alive, where water acts on multiple bodies, changing them, where there are synergies between species that learn from each other, between machinery, ducks, earth. What humans intend does not necessarily happen here. For readers to enter this space, I include here a series of three extracts from the longer poem, and invite all to go swimming with the following words.

Extract One: Trip

Why should this be a story then, with me driving to the pool and diving in.

For an *answer*. Climax. Resolution.

How do I get matter on here, on the page. I can't throw pool water at the glass.

Smear over sunscreen, fumes, mud and feathers.

I have to write this so the nature-culture assemblage springs

up from the page so you feel it in your body, so you think the world differently.

My pixel-minstrel words with computer, phone, train, study, spaghetti in your mouth,

screaming kids, your memory of the lung-burn when you torpedoed

a whole length the first time, with theory—little finger leaves the water first (backstroke)—

and all the pools

you've ever been in and will ever be in, sun, lane ropes, insects, chlorine, concrete. So it all

Rears back as new, not a reflection, a diffraction, through a poem.

(I keep coming together as new kinds of master- here I am, meet the poet).

What learning will happen at the pool.

Still the wrong question, still too pat, why do I even need a question, cue end of curriculum.

I'm still asking it, the master interrogator, conquistador, inquisitor, find the pedagogy,
deconstruct.

Oops, I'm not to deconstruct, naughty, so many ways to slip into those old grooves, those old
lies:

anthropomorphise-lies

narrativise-lies

divinise-lies

romanticise-lies

essentialise-lies

constructivise-lies

So many eyes on me to see if I trip up. So what if I do. As if I might not.

Extract Two: Drift

Pool lane etiquette for humans insists
we-they keep to the left.

Chinese-swimmer-pool-Is don't know this though. They stop and start, cross lanes,
stand at ends. The word signs do not speak to them.

The rubber-capped lycra-men-Is swim at them and over them. At many pools
in China there is only room for standing, not swimming. So there is bemusement at the pool,
different paths, energies and purposes mapped over and over, forces and resistances that shift
and change as they navigate each other.

Foam kickboards go fast lap years, then mould
and crumble, composing speed, decomposing matter.

Swimming is exercise for lap-Is and relaxation, recuperation for other, older Is.

Resistance teaches us to move, lubricates joints
increases range of motion, without purpose

but with profound effect. Moods change, endorphins are released, chemicals
react in our water-minds. Duck-human-swimmer-Is know never to go in the shaded lanes,
water

is colder there, no waves of iridescent light shimmer over the tiles, wind ices the scalp,
slides between feathers. The chi is different there.

When squad training starts, the energy ramps up. Young swimmer-Is cluster at the pool edge,
muscle-hormone-mates, swing and stretch, dive in, chop, chop, water thrash and slosh,
ten per lane.

Duck-Is fly away honking, black flags against the sky, like those strung across the pool.
 Beside the pool, a digger-I rests by scoured earth, strata exposed.
 The digger's long arm has a shiny tendon, lax now with diesel exhaustion, but soon
 engine-adding to air soup, machine smoke inside and outside us.
 Ducks walk here too and carry ancient clay
 to the pool so the earth/water divide becomes pretence, and swimmer-Is swallow
 past-present-future molecule bodies of trees, and animals and people.
 Boroondara Council owns our pool.
Boroondara is Wurundjeri¹ for shady place. Not shady like it once was, though. Now there are
 White metal shade sail trees and thin, bare birch arms, white pocked,
 Amidst the paperbarks.
 A shade assemblage of absence, because everything was *cleared* and *planted*
 not long before after
 Child-I was born.
 The deciduous trees challenge the nature/cultured water
 lie. Their leaves clog filters, disintegrate, penetrate nets, they make engines
 grind harder, roar louder, make the man-ager-I curse. They are nature/culture, seeds
 transported to mimic
 an alien landscape, to cultivate and colonise, to try to obliterate what went before,
 what goes on
 now when we say *boroondara*, when the dust blows, that is all of us,
 when Indigenous-swimmer-I dives in. Why would those tree-Is want to thwart
 the White-Anglo-Is that brought them, and yet they do. Unintended effect.
 Ripples of their leaf-drift
 spread, like those of the voyages of other migrants, through the pool and beyond.
 Invisible, indivisible. In the houses around the pool, newcomers hate the deciduous trees,
 cut those interlopers down
 Meanwhile, man-ager-I focuses on water management, sanitation,
 adjusting acidity to that of human tears, tamping down the productive nature of elements
 driven to catalyse, calcify, metamorphise. Yet things move, change, reconfigure.
 Duck-Is mate, migrate, so do human-swimmer-Is. Human and non-human bodies
 transform the water body as it transforms them, making legs stronger, lungs fitter,
 parts weary,

¹ The Wurundjeri are the traditional Indigenous owners of the land where the pool is located.

muscles longer. We come together and apart,
 all these Is, same-different, weather, people, animals, plants, machines, chemicals, elements,
 earth, in exchange-change. Human-swimmer-Is go home
 with chlorine skin, scaly legs, an itch here and there, fungus in ears, warm,
 swim-tired, loose-limbed,
 all those molecules ingested and adhered. Swimmer-I is still the
 pump-pool-Chinese-man-leaf-diesel-dirt-hair-wee-chlorine-bird assemblage
 that types these words.

Extract 3: Curriculum

I am made a different, diffracted, watery I, channelled through a narrow space, page-wide
 Through a lane, a pipe, a hole in the ground, spreading out now.
 What does this breaking down
 binaries, flattening agency achieve. Curriculum, imbued with intentionality, tells us
 man can
 control water, that we swim in a pure, hygienic, neatly bounded pool,
 that changes us only in ways we intend,
 that swimming is a masculinised mode of straight line
 trajectories, guard-surveilled, athlete-inspired, inscribed and understood.
 The official curriculum
 is a sign on the wall that swimmers (ducks, new migrants, older people) cannot even read.
 Curriculum creates cause and anticipates effect, plans and instructs,
 swim like this, dose like this,
 according to the rule book and all will continue in order and harmony,
 human supremacy confirmed.
 Yet now we hear the tired pump valve that might close the pool, recognise the immigrant
 swimmers whose imported paths will multiply and change the way we swim.
 What will the digger build next.

A fitness centre with a foyer reminding us that the Wurundjeri are custodians of the land.

A pool with wide lanes for standing and walking and talking and swimming.

A landscape friendly for duck nesting.

(Progress, and, alas, a hope-happy humanist ending. Hard to give up on *better*).

Conclusion

This poem acknowledges an enduring humanist frame, yet demonstrably goes beyond common sense notions of learning how to swim at a pool, engaging at the deep end, with the nature of water, the politics of inclusion and the fictions to which we like to subscribe. Instead of finite human outcomes, we perceive fluid accommodation, exchange and intra-action. It is all too easy to forget that the pool pollutes, that pool water is the product of machinery and chemicals, and that the pool forms the habitat of myriad other creatures and the milieu of countless objects exerting their own agencies. We forget who and what might learn, who and what might teach.

Through poetry, we can complicate conceptions of what is learnt at the pool, in this notionally 'public' space. Art, theory and activity combine to transformative effect, creating new assemblages of pixels, computer hardware, ideas and movements, new formulations emerging now, as readers intra-act with these words, breathe and scroll down, becoming anew. Readers may take this experimental work further, critique it, notice my failures and limitations: the actions I describe at the end of the last extract above, for example, are only those that can be taken by humans, as proud custodians and explorers seeking an even better world. My attempts at multiple "I"s are inconsistent and inevitably human-informed. As the poem suggests, contradictions, binaries, reliance on pre-existing entities rather than emergent ones, human arrogance and assumption are all to be expected, as artists co-construct the meaning of a posthumanist, but not anti-humanist world, a distinction made in new materialist theory (Coole & Frost, 2010, p.8). It is not possible to reject the human, but in working with creative strategies, it is possible to challenge human dominance.

What else might come, as we grasp, albeit with profoundly humanist language, at other possibilities? How might such entanglements be artistically felt and formed in relation to other public spaces, such as botanical gardens, football stadiums, foreshores, streets, playgrounds, city squares and nature reserves? How might we look back to the classroom, and bring new awareness to intra-action there, going beyond the bodily turn, which seemed to stall with humans? While curriculum theorists have identified concepts such as the hidden or implied curriculum which go beyond brute intentionality, these are still human-focused. What else is in play? What else is 'in the making' (James in Ellsworth 2005, p. 1)? These are questions to be asked of the Public Pedagogies Institute conference, too, where I scrawled wall flowers with viscous paint to make public art and shifted hips to the tango, in response to the call to let agentive music work on listeners.

So how could this poetic approach work to reconceptualise all these other spaces, to illuminate the assumptions we make in them, make us alert to and respectful of the agencies of matter, in a world in which ostensibly inert ocean-going plastics choke millions of birds and animals each year? How can we go further, using art to countenance the vitality of non-human bodies asserted by Bennett (2010)? How can we expand our notions of 'publics', too, and include human and non-human bodies, surpassing humanist preoccupations? This is a question that seems ever more pertinent as we approach the development of intelligent machines and the ethical dilemmas inherent with the increasing agencies of connected 'objects' forming the internet of things. The sphere of public pedagogy could be the space where such discussions can generatively and creatively take place.

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About the Author

Lucinda McKnight is a lecturer in pedagogy and curriculum, and a former secondary English/Humanities teacher and museum educator. She is also a published literary poet and fiction writer, and an award winning playwright. She has a keen interest in public pedagogy and learning beyond the classroom.

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The Phenomenology of Monologue Writing as Pedagogy

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Abstract

This article explores the notion that for playwrights, actors, students of theatre or indeed anyone, the writing of monologues can be the catalyst for reflection on the nature of human existence, as well as an exercise in educational phenomenology. It also suggests that the playwright's processes, such as monologue writing, can be seen as a form of pedagogical practice and building on that, a form of public pedagogy.

The practice-led research drawn on in this article involves students participating in the process of monologue writing workshops conducted in two settings: in a secondary school with a group of drama students (nine students and two teachers), and in a university teacher-training setting (23 pre-service teachers). In the first setting the process was used to explore issues of social labelling, and in the second setting, the pre-service teachers were asked to consider the point of view of students from whom they felt a sense of disconnection. The creative process of writing monologues, traditionally confined to theatre practice and the drama classroom, was used with the aim of fostering empathy between the pre-service teachers and their students.

Keywords

monologue writing, pedagogy, theatre, drama studies, teacher training

The relationship between public pedagogies and social theatre is clearly articulated by Brecht when he identifies the purpose of theatre to 'educate'—consciously, suggestively and descriptively (Willett 1978). Applied theatre in an educational setting is the ideal context in which to crystallise Brecht's vision regarding theatre and education by engaging a form of public pedagogy, because the primary focus of such environments is to learn. In this article, I will examine the potential for theatre practice to be applied to two educational settings: one school where students used monologue writing to explore social labels in their everyday life, and a university setting, where teachers-in-training created monologues with the aim of increasing empathy with their students. These settings enabled the intertwining of practice with pedagogy in a material way. I would argue that at its core, monologue writing is an exercise in educational phenomenology, and that this is central to both the practice of monologue writing and performance, as well as its theoretical conceptualisation. We are asking who we are, how we come to be who we are, and reflecting on the meaning of our experiences—how they are incorporated into our identity. When we ask these essential phenomenological questions in relation to others, the act of monologue writing and performance becomes an exploration of the empathy we feel for each other as fellow human beings.

I will aim to show that this form of reflective practice has the potential to be utilised as a pedagogical practice both inside and outside the classroom. I will draw on practice-based research conducted in two different educational settings that used a form of monologue writing called 'real fiction'—closely related to documentary theatre making—with an emphasis on exploring participants' real experience and speech in the writing of theatre pieces. In what follows, I draw heavily on Saldaña's (2005) notion of ethno-drama and consider myself to be working within a similar, though not identical, methodology. It is indeed my hope that the work I undertake as a practitioner and as an educational theorist, like Saldaña's, will '... capture verisimilitude and universality through their primary sources for monologue and dialogue: reality' (Saldaña 2005, p.3).

Real Fiction Practice and Pedagogy

I describe my theatre-making as 'real fiction' because, like many forms of artifice, it involves representing so-called 'reality' (Welsh 2014). In this instance, we conceive of reality as the patterns of speech or speech rhythms that identify individual ways of talking, our verbal method of expression. This is the 'reality' of the playwright. I call it 'real fiction' because when we, as writers, encounter the speech patterns of particular characters that take our fancy we are located neither in reality nor the fiction we are conceiving in that moment. This is a way of conceiving human existence, not merely for writers of plays and fiction. It also means, that social reality provides a wealth of resources from which to create characters.

Speech patterns of certain characters are encountered in social reality, in conversation, then extracted by the playwright and used to store and express particular knowledge about the world. For example, I have approached subjects such as mental health, criminal behaviour and school education, using this method. My research drawn on here, involved applying this method to a drama classroom by inviting student participants to engage in a workshop explaining and practising the playwriting method. Then, in an attempt to further this notion of real fiction as drama education, I conducted a monologue writing workshop with a group of student teachers.

In terms of public pedagogies, the use of drama or monologue-writing can be conceived as a public utterance and the utilisation of this practice in order to learn, coupled with the fact that the practice takes place in a drama classroom, consigns the work to the area of pedagogy.

Ultimately, the work has the potential to question the way in which we think about learning and particularly drama education. The relationship between the terms 'drama education' and 'public pedagogy' are also strengthened by this practice because the drama classroom becomes a location where we not only learn about drama but we learn about the world, what we think about the world and how to talk about the world using the skills developed through drama practice.

There has been considerable interest in arts-based or arts-led pedagogies in some recent and historical literature, though it ought to be noted that theatre as education is a relatively new field. The importance the ancient Greeks placed on the social elements of theatre might have seen it elevated to the status of pedagogy, had it not been for the relative hostility of philosophy toward the poets. That being said, even Aristotle suspected there was something more than mere play to the practice of drama, dedicating an entire work to the subject of 'poetics'. The ancient Greeks certainly used drama and theatre educationally, however, over time the practice of the performing arts as a form of social or intellectual learning has been considerably marginalised (Brook 1972).

This is tempered with a more recent development, an entire movement of documentary-style drama, applied theatre and more particularly the use of ethno-drama has emerged. We can classify some performance practices themselves as pedagogical in nature, such as ethno-drama or documentary theatre, partly because the subject matter rather than the art-form is emphasised. For example, when we watch a performance like the Laramie Project—a piece of documentary theatre exploring a community's response to the fatal gay-bashing of a young man—we are not being immersed in a fantasy, we are learning, considering, contemplating (Kaufman, 2001). Such practices transcend the theatrical space and position themselves in their social surroundings.

We are once again viewing theatre as a study in its own right. For example, Tarquam McKenna, in his 'Seeing Beyond the Habitus', defines action methods in a therapeutic context as:

...the therapeutic field which reconceptualise the interests of our patients and clients where we employ rituals that can hold them to a defined, confined or refined in a place of being through enactment or performance (McKenna 2003, p.2).

McKenna claims that 'the embodiment of being and performance' ought to be viewed as 'ways of being and knowing', perhaps implying performance can be ontological and epistemological (McKenna 2003, p.2). He describes his methodology as performance, that is, an action method or practice-based research. I claim however, that sitting and writing real fiction in fact involves reflecting on our personal experience and our engagement with the world. It could be considered mere journal writing, were it not for our attempt to hear the voice of an 'other' in the writing process and document this 'hearing' in a performance context, whether that be a theatre or a drama classroom.

Communication theorist John Shotter, whose work is connected with philosophers Wittgenstein (1968) and Searle (1979), thoroughly explores practice-based methods of enquiry in his chapter 'Practice-Based Methods for Practitioners in Inquiring into the Continuous Co-emergent "stuff" of Everyday Life' (Shotter 2013). He identifies 'unfinished processes' and 'expressive realisations' that occur in the 'hurly-burly of everyday life' as opposed to the 'prepared conditions of the experimental laboratory...' (Shotter 2013, p.2). The work of contemporary Melbourne theatre-maker Lloyd Jones, for example, seems to involve a deliberate attempt to obliterate the 'prepared conditions' of the theatre comparable to Shotter's critique of the 'experimental laboratory' (Marshall 2002; Shotter 2013). In conventional theatre the

audience seems to know what to expect, what will occur, how the experience will play out. There will be a prepared script presented by seasoned performers to an audience all of whom will sit in particular seatings and behave in particular ways. The work of artists such as Jones, disrupt this notion of theatre as a sterile laboratory, containing only the experimental scientists, technical experts focused on the task of creating theatre.

According to Searle, speech acts can be 'carved up' into various constituent parts that provide a wealth of social and psychological data, including the unique tones and rhythms of a person's speech (Searle 1979). The process of monologue writing introduces the practice of real fiction drama writing, or writing that uses speech rhythms drawn from social reality and experience. I would argue that my practice-based research in this area belongs to the category of ethno-drama (Saldaña 2005) or 'Reality Theatre' (Perry 2007), by involving 'real' participants in the process of making theatre. Like Saldaña's work, my own research blurs the line between action-based sociological data collection and theatre. My work similarly aims to subvert what we mean by playwriting, and how we approach drama in the classroom, incorporating both the process of drama education and playwriting methodology.

The importance of lucid, vibrant and meaningful Arts practice in education is broadly recognised in contemporary drama education literature (Ewing, 2010). In his article exploring the potential of practice-led research Haseman, considering 'reflexive practice', makes this assessment:

The situations of practice—the complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value conflicts...are increasingly perceived as central to the world of professional practice. These are practice-based research strategies and include: the reflective practitioner (embracing reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action); participant research; participatory research collaborative inquiry, and action research (Haseman 2006, p.3).

Haseman claims that 'these strategies re-interpret what is meant by 'an original contribution to knowledge.' They may not 'contribute to the intellectual or conceptual architecture of a discipline', however, according to Haseman, 'they are concerned with the improvement of practice, and new epistemologies of practice distilled from the insider's understandings of action in context' (Haseman 2006, p.3). What Haseman identifies is the place of arts-based and practice-based research, the distinguishing features of these practices and their location in the research landscape.

In addition to Haseman, Anne Harris and Christine Sinclair have identified the importance of critical play and creative processes in social and critical theory (Harris 2014; Sinclair 2009). Harris, for example, claims:

If we consider that the writing of the play is an act of inquiry (playwriting as method) then we can begin to see embodiment itself as methodology, a system of thought and set of tools (Harris 2014, p.12).

This notion of playwriting as methodology is pertinent to my study, and their privileging of the playwright's work and study of classroom culture intimately connects this research with my own. However while Harris insists on claiming the classroom represented in their work is fictional, I very deliberately use the term 'real fiction' to acknowledge both the active student contributions in the form of their writing and the passive contributions in terms of the surveys completed on-site (2014).

The practice-led methodology of my research deals directly with the notions of 'uncertainty', 'complexity', 'instability' and 'uniqueness', all of which are exciting for the creative practitioner but problematic in a research context. The reinterpretation of what constitutes 'research' is still a relatively new area. The research I conducted through monologue writing

workshops and a dramatic play based on the findings, could be described as examples of 'transgressive' data, or at least a 'messy' methodology, similar to that of St. Pierre and her work in her home town as an insider/outsider (St. Pierre 1997; Ferguson & Thomas-McLean 2009).

Practice-led methodology is distinguishable from practice-based methodology in that the former is work in which the 'main focus of the research is to advance knowledge about practice, or to advance knowledge within practice' ('Creativity & Cognition,' authors unknown 2013). Alternately, practice-based research seeks to achieve an artifice, a play, painting or novel as the outcome and evidence of the research. The 'Creativity and Cognition Studios' define practice-based research as 'an original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge partly by means of practice and the outcomes of that practice' (Creativity and Cognition Studios 2013). My work constitutes practice-led research because it advances knowledge about and within practice rather than by means of practice.

In my research I use the 'real fiction' monologue writing method, to focus on social labelling in the school environment. The vehicle of monologue allowed students to explore issues relating to social alienation, bullying and body image. Monologues were collected and conflated both to conceal the identity of the student participants and provide another layer to the research. That is, I had the opportunity as a playwright-researcher to elaborate on the students' ideas and further explore their potential as research. In the following extract for example, the student introduced the notion of body image and labelling and I have elaborated, gearing the discussion toward a philosophical contemplation of subjective and objective perceptions of reality:

Student 3: My brother calls me fat. He's a li'l shit. I get in trouble for calling him a li'l shit but how much damage is done by that compared to him calling me fat?! It's not his fault. He's nine. He probably doesn't even know what 'fat' is. Do I really know? Why does it hurt so much, being called 'fat'? I mean do I feel fat? Sometimes. Am I really fat, though? I look in the mirror at myself sometimes and I can hear a little voice in my head saying 'Fat, fat, fat...' and then I've got him in the background right behind me and just as the imaginary voice fades out, I hear the little shit and see him smirking behind me in the mirror. (Welsh 2016)

When conducted with teachers-in-training, this process of monologue writing based on speech rhythms and patterns was used to explore the issue of empathy between teachers and their students. The participants were asked to reflect on their recent experience in schools. After a brief discussion of the process and being shown an example of a monologue based on a real voice from conversational experience, they were invited to write a monologue based on the voice of a student with whom they least identified or with whom they felt the least amount of empathy.

Two examples of the monologues produced by the teacher-in-training sample group are reproduced below.

Example 1:

This is shit!!! Why the fuck are we reading a stupid fuckenn play that is so fucken old, that means nothing to me? BLAH fucken BLAH! Romeo sounds like a poof!

She just goes on this bitch. She looks at me like she knows better! She doesn't know me! No-one fucken knows me! Don't act like you care fucken bitch, you don't, I know it, you know it! STOP LOOKING AT ME!!!

OMG WTF can't she look at someone else?

I dunno, she wants a root hahaha! That'll fix her. Haha. I CBF with this shit. What's the point? Can we just watch the movie now? Then I can sleep! Didn't get much sleep last night. Or any night. WTF can't he just leave? Mum's f'n soft. He's fucken shit and fucken ugly. I'd kick him out, don't care if he 'pays the bills'. He's a f-wit. Don't look at me—I'm fucken reading!! Can't wait for the weekend, at least I can get out anyways. Jess better have some shit at her place, I can't be fucked goin home first. Thank fuck, she's got the movie! Oh he's hot! He's hot! Hahaha—this is better than the book, for sure.

(anon, teacher-in-training, personal communication monologue-writing data, 2015)

Example 2:

People, people, they think I'm stupid, not smart they think. He's dumb, they say. But they don't know man. They have no idea. I just can't say what I want to say the words they hard not easy to understand.

In my own language, I could be a smart person, very famous. But in English not much makes sense.

In my own language I could write anything I want to or I could say things to make them make sense to you.

(It is so frustrating) It makes me angry. I know what I want to speak, but nothing comes out good. My teachers, they correct me all the time.

I cannot speak good yet, Miss, give me time.

No one speaks this language at home. I have to teach my big brother but he is always busy, always tired. He gets angry too. But he is angry at all the people he goes to work with. They don't talk to him. They don't try. It is not fair, you know? We learn a whole new language and they don't even try.

And they think I am stupid.

(anon, teacher-in-training, personal communication monologue-writing data, 2015)

These two examples illustrate the pedagogical potential in real fiction monologue writing. The first example exhibits the teacher attempting to foster empathy for their student and developing a complex emotional relationship with them, by attempting to inhabit their world through the monologue. In the second example, the teacher participant utilises monologue to explore cultural difference and language barriers to learning.

Two forms of learning are at work here. The first comes from practice: the actual process of writing the monologue creates realisations and revelations in the participant. The second is the knowledge contained in the monologue and the potential of the monologue to store and present qualitative data. In the first example, we go on a journey with the monologue creator from having no understanding or empathy for their student to coming to understanding and empathy through articulating the voice of the student. Whereas, the second monologue seems to begin with a hypothetical barrier to learning, for a student with English as a second language, expressed throughout the monologue. The author appears to have this idea in mind throughout the piece and uses the monologue to express it.

The process of writing of the monologues involved imagining the inner world of the student, helping to provide participants with greater insight into their student's perspectives, and resulted in participants reporting an increased feeling of empathy after participating in the process. Perhaps more significantly, though, the use of drama practice in the training of teachers found a whole new context. While these students were drama teachers in training, there appears to be no obvious reason why the process could not be used with teachers from other disciplines. The hypothesis of this work is that this need not be confined to drama educators or practitioners, but rather shows the potential for the public expression of drama as a form of pedagogy with broader applications.

To fully engage in the practice of theatre, it is necessary to open oneself to learning, exploring oneself through one's voice, and also exploring the world through the voice and experience of the other. In this article, I have explored the notion of public pedagogies through connections with examples of real fiction monologue writing, and have articulated moments in my research and practice as pedagogy. Whether it is expressed in the medium of a workshop with students and teachers, or inside the theatre in what we might call its 'original' form, this kind of theatre is a bringing together of practice and pedagogy. When we encounter it, we feel a certain discomfort because we know that we are blurring the lines between theatre practice and pedagogy. Inside classrooms, such as those described above, we are uncertain whether we are learning or creating and simultaneously questioning the very idea of education.

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About the Author

Scott Welsh is a writer and thinker with a background in theatre, philosophy, and more recently drama and teacher education. He is performed playwright, a published poet and lover of philosophy. He believes that people come to education through experience, and that this is best expressed through the medium of theatre.

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Book Review:
Advertising and Public Memory: Social, Cultural and Historical Perspectives on Ghost Signs

Edited by Stefan Schutt, Sam Roberts and Leanne White
Routledge Research in Cultural and Media Studies, Routledge 2016

Review by Karen Charman

Advertising and Public Memory: Social, Cultural and Historical Perspectives on Ghost Signs (2016) published by Routledge as a part of their series Research in Cultural and Media Studies. Edited by Stefan Schutt, Sam Roberts and Leanne White.

This fascinating edited collection brings together instances of Ghost Signs. In Sam Roberts and Geraldine Marshall's article 'What Is a Ghost Sign?' they look to shifting the meaning of the term and, in part, draw on The Society for Commercial Archeology who state, 'first it must be more than 50 years old, second it advertises a product that is now obsolete signage' (2016, p.16). For the most part the case studies are of neglect. In Rachel Jackson's chapter 'Historic Signs: Toward an Understanding of Their Community Value in Heritage Practice' the reader gets a sense of what contributes to that neglect. Jackson alerts us to a disconnect between the value of signage relative to architecture. If a sign is not located on a heritage building it is afforded little significance. This raises the question of who is determining what is of heritage value?

The capacity to visually map the past through the signs is highlighted through a student project in local Melbourne Australian suburbs in Robert Pascoe and Gerardo Papalia's 'Ghost Signs and the Teaching of Immigration History'. In 'Teaching the Ghost Signs of Seattle' Marie Wong writes of the benefits of combining academic research and civic engagement in a student led project culminating in an intervention and recommendations of how planning laws might be changed in Seattle in the United States to better protect the history these signs denote. However, to return to Jackson's argument in 'Historic Signs: Toward an Understanding of Their Community Value in Heritage Practice', she points to the fact that despite the strength of the social and historical meaning of the Ghost Sign this cannot at times stand in the way of the contemporary market value of advertising spaces. She points to 'Miss Completely' in Darlinghurst Sydney which is an iconic image painted in 1990 that advertised a boutique clothing store that despite a petition to leave it visible was boarded up. How these signs work, as collective or public memory is something Veerle De Houwer in 'Olive Oyl Ignites a Spark' notes 'They can even remind us of products and customs long forgotten...they can even be directly related to greater historical events' (2016, p. 254). He tells of the discovering of an advertisement in Belgium for the British Legion's assistance during the interwar period for people looking for the graves of loved ones.

I was struck by a comment in the closing chapter 'Although popular and gentrifying today Coburg was once an undesirable manufacturing hub whose name was associated with the nearby Pentridge Prison...' (2016, p.306) as a reductive comment that seems to be at odds with the quote from Doreen Massey a few pages later of place 'as a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus' (2016, p. 308). Just as a ghost sign is singular and in some instances 'out of time' it takes situating it in its broader social and historical context to recognize its nuances and significance. So too does a geographical space over time, such as Coburg, require nuanced consideration.

The strength of this collection is the glimpse each article gives into ephemeral moments of the past. Each Ghost Sign's iconography denotes an aspect of how companies have marketed to us in a particular time. What is missing from the collection is a theoretical discussion of what constitutes Public Memory. I thought the collection could be enriched by some use of theories of hauntology and a greater engagement with human geography as ways of reading ghost signs. In what ways might these instances of Ghost Signs speak to public memory? To explore this further would be a consideration of the signs place in public pedagogy. Who is the ghost behind the Ghost Sign?