Chapter 3
Wrestling the Monster: Novice SoTL Researchers, Ethics, and the Dual Role

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Abstract Within the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), an individual often occupies a dual role of teacher and researcher (teaching and learning.) The ethical implications of dual roles assume that such roles are inherently problematic, creating opportunities for conflict and coercion between the researcher and the researched. Attending to issues of power and coercion when a faculty member wishes to conduct research with their students is necessary for ethical SoTL. However, we suggest this binary and problematized idea of the dual role is limiting. It relies on a certain idea of self and others in the research process and, often, results in the SoTL researcher having to *write out* their teacher identity and relationship to the research context within institutional ethics board applications. As we have found in our work with novice SoTL practitioners, the notion of a dual role to a new SoTL researcher can often feel confusing and confounding, and navigating the ethical implications of this can create a sense of liminality. This chapter offers an alternative hermeneutic reading of the ethical review process as a metaphorical monster that arises in *borderlands*, helping us recast familiar categories in new ways. We share fictional vignettes based on an amalgamation of our experiences working with faculty members learning to conduct SoTL as a means to illustrate the complexity of the experiences we seek to understand.

Keywords Dual role · Research ethics · SoTL, novice researcher · Hermeneutics

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Dual roles of a researcher and their associated obligations […] may create conflicts, undue influence, power imbalances, or coercion that could affect relationships with others and affect decision making procedures (TCPS 2, 2018).

Monsters do not have to look monstrous (Wallin, 2007, p. 2).

It is critical to attend to issues of power and coercion when a faculty member wishes to conduct ethical research with their students (Stockley & Balkwill, 2013; Healey et al., 2013). Frameworks that govern ethical conduct in research concern themselves with potential conflicts of interest that may affect the integrity of the research being conducted. One such conflict of interest is when a researcher occupies or has a relationship with the community they wish to research. This is called occupying a *dual role*. The ethical implications of the dual role assume that such roles are inherently problematic, creating opportunities for conflict and coercion between the researcher and the researched. Within SoTL, particular ethical considerations must attend to the dual role of being a teacher and a researcher of teaching and learning who is in relationship to the students and the institution. For the novice SoTL researcher, this framing of dual roles can sometimes feel confusing, unsettling, and even problematic as they traverse this new way of thinking about their relationship with their students and the classrooms in which they teach (MacLean & Poole, 2010). Navigating the ethical implications of this can, for many, create a sense of liminality (Webb & Tierney, 2020).

In this chapter, we use as our starting point the idea of the dual role in SoTL research to explore the ways in which institutional ethical review processes trouble, rupture, and reform how researchers come to understand themselves and their SoTL research. Using an interpretive approach, we draw upon our first-person experiences of supporting faculty who are new to SoTL and our observations of how these faculty experience the ethical review process, but also ourselves and more experienced colleagues. In doing so, we argue that the idea of the dual role is a limiting one which fails to capture the complexity of the affective, liminal experience, particularly for those new to conducting SoTL and engaging with ethics. We suggest that current conceptions of the dual role create a dilemma by requiring an individual to 'write-out' or minimize their teacher identity and relationship to the research context, which, in turn, creates an artificial separation of the coexisting identities and contexts for the SoTL researcher. We share fictional vignettes based on an amalgamation of our experiences working with faculty members learning to conduct SoTL as a means to illustrate the complexity of the experiences we seek to understand.

Central to our exploration of the dilemma experienced by novice SoTL researchers, we draw upon David Jardine's (1998) hermeneutic discussion of the pedagogical, mythological 'monster' "which creates and appears in the gaps in the once-familiar world," (p. 125) and Jason Wallin's (2007) application of Derrida's 'arrivant' (that which arrives) (p.1). We argue that understanding the ethics process as a *monster*, as described by Jardine, provides a provocative and generative metaphor to examine and illustrate the complexity of the experience of ethics in SoTL. It provides a way to understand the ethical review process that simultaneously breaks open and reframes our existing assumptions about our roles as teachers and

researchers and our relationships with our students, leading us to think of them anew. We believe this discussion enriches and extends the ongoing debates about ethics and SoTL, enabling us to shift beyond seeing ethical review as a bureaucratic safeguarding process to one which engages with complex identity work that arises from the plurality of positions and contexts inhabited by the SoTL researcher.

First, what is hermeneutics? This, of course, is a significant question. However, briefly, it is a branch of philosophy described by Moran (2002) in this way: "Hermeneutics is the art of interpretation or understanding… a conversation leading towards mutual understanding, a conversation, furthermore, where this very understanding comes as something genuinely experienced" (p. 248–9). Hermeneutics asks us to be attentive to our being-in-the-world and thus, is oriented towards ontology. It is often traced to "Husserl's phenomenology" (Caputo, 1987, p. 36), in a way that recognizes "things just as the things which they are" (p. 57) and was further developed through the work of Heidegger and Gadamer (Moran, 2002). As Moran described, Gadamer saw the experience of understanding as a profoundly linguistic and dialogical event, as a conversation "between people and their transition - the common understandings which emerge in a dialogue and which go beyond the intentions of the speakers" (p. 249). While hermeneutics lives in the realm of philosophy, it also may be utilized as an interpretive research methodology to help think about and interpret the world; it wants to "describe the fix we are in" (Caputo, 1987, p.3). Metaphors can become a powerful means of coming to a shared understanding and gathering meaning from the fix in which we find ourselves.

Conversations in the midst of supporting novice SoTL researchers navigating the ethical review process are common in our practice. We write from the point of view of two experienced SoTL researchers who run a development program for faculty who are new to SoTL at a small, teaching-focused university in western Canada. Established in 2018 and based on a previous iteration, the current development program runs over 3 years, with faculty working in multi-disciplinary cohorts. Year one of the program begins with an introduction to the foundations of SoTL and culminates in participants developing a study proposal. Participants submit a proposal to the university ethics review board in year two and conduct their study. Year three focuses on participants analyzing data and working on disseminating and publishing their work.

Despite the time we spend while facilitating this program on supporting individuals through the ethics application approval process, we have been intrigued by how troublesome (or troubling) this part of the journey is for those new to SoTL. In preparation for this chapter, we engaged in a process of correspondence (letter writing) to one another, discussion, and co-writing inspired by Carew et al. (2008). This process helped us explore our curiosities about what we have observed, discuss our interpretations of Jardine's use of the monster, and generate meaning about the experience of engaging with ethics as a SoTL researcher. While this was not a formalized self-study methodology (Samaras & Freese, 2009), our process was underpinned by co-creating an understanding of lived experience through the actions of dialogic turn-taking.

Encountering Ethics in SoTL as 'Difficult'

Cousin (2009) wrote about the importance of SoTL researchers developing a strong ethical framework to guide projects. She noted two inter-related reasons for doing so: "Firstly, it has a protective function for both the researcher and the researched. .. it is [also] facilitative. An ethical orientation supports the thoughtful conduct of the research process and the eventual credibility of the report" (p.17). This suggests that an ethical framework for SoTL can function as a reflective and protective mechanism in the research process. Coming to understand (and operate) reflectively and protectively is an ethical mindset that we think develops iteratively and unfolds over time. This is supported by Shank (2002), who argued, "becoming an ethical researcher is a lifelong process. That is, we can never say that we have no more to learn or understand about the ethical implications of our actions" (p. 97).

Writing from the Canadian context (which is governed by the federal Tri-Council Policy Statement on Research Ethics (TCPS 2)), several institutions have developed guides focused on ethics and SoTL (Fedoruk, 2017; Dalhousie University Research Ethics Board Guidelines on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, n.d.). Many of these guides provide an excellent translation of TCPS guidance in the context of SoTL. At our institution, we run workshops to complement those offered by the Chair of our institutional research ethics board, and we produce guidance on how to address the dual role in SoTL.

A considerable amount of time is spent in year one and early in year two of our SoTL development program introducing the ethical considerations and concerns in SoTL research. The majority of participants are familiar with the ethics process, but this is not universal. For some, it is the first time they are engaging in research involving human participants, and the ethics process is entirely new. We introduce faculty participants to critical ethical issues pertaining to SoTL, ranging from choosing a research question, study design and methodology, attention to power dynamics, and relationship to the research participants. We run detailed workshops on completing the institutional ethics application, provide exemplars, and give feedback on draft application forms.

Regardless of prior experience in home disciplines, we notice that submitting an ethics application to the institutional review board is a daunting task for many novice SoTL researchers, given the complexity of the dual role. We have observed cross-cohort conversations where faculty describe the unexpected challenges with the ethics review process, noting their surprise at the detail of the review, the length of time it often takes to gain approval and the range of things they had to consider when shifting from the role of teacher to researcher in the classroom context. Some of this relates to those being new to doing research with human participants, but often it seems the result of the novice SoTL researcher fully understanding, as if for the first time, that their classrooms and their students become sites and subjects of research.

Throughout this chapter, we offer a series of short fictional vignettes illustrating our program participants' shared experiences and concerns. These vignettes are not

based on any specific individual but rather are representations of the complexities encountered by novice SoTL researchers we have worked with over the years. We introduce 'Susan' in our first vignette, who we have created as a fictionalized version of many participants we have worked with over the years:

> A faculty member in our development program, Susan, was conducting her first SoTL study in a senior course, and as she had a background in the physical sciences, she was applying for human ethics for the first time. She worked hard at developing a trusting relationship with her students and was confused when she learned she could not be the person explaining the SoTL study and inviting students to participate. A key part of Susan's teaching philosophy is that her students know how committed she is to improve her teaching. She felt that having a stranger come in to do the recruitment was a cold introduction to the work, contradicted the trusting classroom community she had worked so hard to create, and wished she could share her excitement for the project with students.

For novice SoTL researchers like Susan, the idea of the dual role is brought into sharp focus through the ethics review process. In our experience, applying for ethical approval of a study can become a significant bottleneck in the learning process (Pace & Middendorf, 2004), either cognitive or emotional. Faculty members such as Susan can become blocked in terms of completing the forms themselves or responding to reviewer comments. New practitioners often experience the ethics application and review process as a hurdle or a problematic part of the journey of becoming a SoTL researcher.

Early on in our exchanges for this chapter, we used affective words to describe what we saw and heard: we perceive that individuals feel fearful, resistant, hesitant, unsure, and frustrated. Equally, we observe others describe ethics as something you have to encounter, *get through*, and provide herculean effort and attention to. This next fictionalized participant 'Darcy' illustrates a phenomenon we commonly observe:

> Darcy came into our SoTL development program having heard what he termed 'horror stories' about the ethics review process. While he was engaged in the SoTL program and excited about his emerging project, he seemed paralyzed when it came to completing the form, which delayed his research. Despite hearing that even very experienced researchers always have revisions to their proposed protocols, he spoke about the process as though it were a kind of test with answers he could get 'wrong' and expressed frustration when advised there isn't a 'right' answer in ethics - it depends on the study. We were struck by how even tenured professors can feel like students again in the face of a task they feel uncertain about.

When considering the ethical review process as a destabilizing, sometimes worrisome, encounter for novice SoTL researchers, we arrived at the idea of ethics as a kind of mythological, metaphorical monster. Drawing on Michelle's background in interpretive research and hermeneutics, we turned to Jardine's (1998) work that examined how the idea of a monster, in a mythological sense, enables us to frame the ethics process as a liminal space, a borderline, that individuals journey through and become transformed as a result. Jardine (1998) pointed out that interpretive, hermeneutic work is inherently pedagogic:

> ... it is concerned with the regeneration of meaning and is therefore disruptive of fossilized sedimentations of sense, desiring to open them up and allow 'the new' to erupt and thus allowing the old and already established and familiar to regenerate and renew itself… the process of interpretation is not the simple accumulation of new objective information. It is, rather, the transformation of self-understanding. (p. 49).

Thus, this exploration has implications not only for others but for ourselves as we conduct research with a new understanding, and support novice SoTL researchers as they encounter the ethics process often for the first time.

Hermeneutics and Ethical Review as Monster

How can we read the process of ethical review differently? As educators, we tend to want to fix things in our classrooms, as Randy Bass (1999) famously wrote in the early days of SoTL. In our teaching, educators tend to think of a pedagogical problem as something to be solved rather than a point of departure as we do in research. Bass suggested we can begin with problems in our teaching as opportunities for inquiry. Nevertheless, there are other possibilities, too.

SoTL research leans predominantly towards empirical work in researching student learning. However, interpretive work is another means to help us understand and interpret the world, especially for questions such as these about the experience of navigating research ethics for the SoTL practitioner. Interpretive work, such as phenomenology, hermeneutics, and narrative inquiry, is part of the interpretive/constructionist paradigm as described by Merriam and Tisdell (2016):

> Interpretive research… assumes that reality is socially constructed; that is, there is no single, observable reality. Rather, there are multiple realities, or interpretations, of a single event. Researchers do not "find" knowledge; they construct it. (p. 9).

As we talked about the way that new SoTL researchers experience the ethical review process in response to the call for the chapters in this book – the cognitive dissonance that the dual role presents, and the fragmentation of identity that results – Michelle recalled interpretive work she encountered many years ago on the mythological role of monsters in understanding teaching in the classroom. Jardine (1998), in his chapter *Student Teaching, Interpretation, and the Monstrous Child* presented the notion of a monster in the mythological sense and the productive role the *monstrous* can play in helping us see the world anew. Alvesson and Spicer (2011) discussed how metaphors could operate on a cognitive, behavioural, and emotional level and "...open up meaning and space of exploration of different phenomena," noting how they can "push us to examine the basic assumptions behind how we conceptualize something" (p. 38–39). Jardine's metaphor of the monster and how we are applying this to the context of ethics in SoTL helped us do just that. We began to explore the possibility of reading the ethics review process, particularly the notion of trying to inhabit a dual role in how the ethics review form names SoTL research, as something that can become a monstrous figure, particularly for new SoTL researchers. It is this idea that the rest of this essay will explore.

In Jardine's essay, he draws our attention to the critical role the monster plays in myth: it is the monster that "creates and appears in the gaps in the once-familiar world. But it does more than this: it *guards* those gaps, watchful, warning that life will be different if one 'passes' through them. This is the figure of *the monster"* (p. 125). Jardine was writing about the liminal space inhabited and traversed by teacher candidates living in the *hyphen* between student and teacher. In our case, we see different liminal spaces between the teacher and researcher (made monstrous in the shape of an ethics application) and the liminality SoTL practitioners experience in shifting from the familiar world of their disciplinary research.

As stated above, in our work with SoTL researchers, we find that the ethics review process can become a significant bottleneck (Pace & Middendorf, 2004) or threshold (Webb & Tierney, 2020) to be traversed. The idea of a threshold concept, or bottleneck, may be familiar to those in higher education in a cognitive sense when we talk about critical places in learning where students tend to get conceptually (or even emotionally) stuck in their learning. However, here we mean it mythologically, as a kind of monster to be feared, seemingly out of proportion to the task itself. Jardine (1998) wrote of how, during a rite of passage, to the initiate: "some once-familiar feature of the world has been severed from its familiar place… they thereby lose all sense of proportion" (p. 126). In the case of SoTL researchers (the 'initiate' in Jardine's framing,) the classroom is the familiar feature that has lost its familiarity, and shifted from its usual place. Mayers (2001) wrote, "Understanding and interpretation come from a tension that lives in between what is familiar to us and what is unfamiliar" (p. 6).

Previous work has noted a destabilizing of identity and encountering different forms of discomfort in becoming SoTL researchers (Miller-Young et al., 2018). The ethical review process is one signpost where this destabilization can occur, as the would-be SoTL researcher suddenly must recast the familiar world of the classroom in a new way. As described in our vignettes, access to information that is a given (part of the job as a teacher) suddenly becomes unethical to access for a SoTL inquiry, as described in our vignettes. One cannot simply ask and encourage students to participate, given the power dynamics woven into the relationship between student and teacher. Taking time during the class for anything that the teacher sees fit to do as part of the course is restricted if it is part of the study. And so on. New SoTL researchers, previously on the stable ground of the classroom (if not always easy ground, at least they always knew where they were), suddenly find themselves disrupted and questioned, shown here as we continue Susan's story:

> On her SoTL study ethics application form, Susan wrote that she planned to email students an invitation to participate with the consent form rather than have a colleague unknown to students come into the class. She planned to ask students to send their consent forms to the research assistant so she would not know who participated until after the course was over. Susan would use messaging within the Learning Management System and email students a couple of times a week with reminders, encouragement, information, and online events of interest. The feedback from reviewers at the ethics board required her to find another means of reaching students because she was not permitted to use email addresses that she had access to (for teaching) for the purpose of research recruitment. Susan understood this rationale but began to feel anxious about trusting her own judgment. How could this par-

ticular email strategy cause harm to students when she would communicate opportunities to students as part of her everyday interaction? How did she not realize this when she filled in the form?

In this way, familiar features of our everyday landscape can become strange, disorienting us. In Jardine's (1987) essay, it is the child who performs this function. Wallin (2007), building on Jardine's work, adds Derrida's notion of *"arrivant"* – that which arrives (p.1). Wallin wrote, "It is a feature particular to borderlines, thresholds, and the monsters that emerge at the limen of such 'marginal' spaces ([Derrida] 1993)" (p. 1). We propose a metaphor of the ethics process as a monster or arrivant in Jardine's and Wallin's interpretation as a productive feature of liminality, that helps break open the world for the journeyer in a new way – making the familiar (classroom) strange, showing the limits of the world as it is currently known, assisting in transformation (from teacher to SoTL researcher). Wallin wrote that it is:

> ... a matter of paying attention to borderline figures, those monsters lying at the margins of articulation and representation. Inhabiting the most familiar contours of belief, such *arrivants* might productively challenge the ways in which we frame and reinforce reality. (p. 2).

This idea of a productive challenge to our usual categories is powerful when we think about our everyday categories of teacher and researcher. Wallin (2007) wrote that Derrida talked about the *arrivant* as "(a)kin to monstrosity… *demonstrations* which both mark and disturb fixed conceptual categories" (p. 1). In our work as academics, the categories of researcher and teacher are often clearly defined and often placed in opposition to each other or at least in competition. SoTL attempts to blur these boundaries, but during the ethics process, we become hyper-aware of their competing interests, the fluidity between these positions, and the form can act like a monster that destabilizes our understanding of both. In the following vignette, we offer an example of how SoTL scholars can experience the familiar becoming strange and feeling a sense of fragmentation in their dual role:

> After 12 years in the classroom, Phillip decided to try a different approach. Instead of grading student essays in his history class with a letter grade and time-consuming written comments, he developed a rubric in collaboration with the students. Phillip then asked students to meet with him and propose a self-assessed grade based on the rubric. He spent the time he usually used for marking in discussion with the student about their work. Phillip reserved the right to change their self-assigned mark but rarely needed to use this clause. He found this a rewarding approach, both for the students and himself. For his SoTL study, Phillip proposed to run one section of the course as he had for the previous 11 years, with the other section using the new assessment approach for the major paper and then would interview students from both sections about their experience. The ethics review board gave feedback that he could not use a 'control group' in this sense, as they said it was unethical to give a section of students what he suspected to be a lesser learning experience. Meanwhile, the internal grants committee wanted a tighter explanation of how he would control variables and achieve statistical significance. Phillip understood these responses but was left unsure how to proceed with his teaching and his SoTL study. How could he persuade his colleagues to try the new approach if he did not compare them? If it was unethical to run one section as he always had, did that mean his previous 11 years of teaching were also unethical?

In our experience, SoTL scholars seem to encounter the ethics process as a *stranger* that emerges through, in Wallin's (2007) terms, a wound, or hole – in this case, literally via our institution's online research 'portal' – which Wallin suggested represents an opportunity to maintain an openness to the world: "Inhabiting the most familiar contours of belief, such *arrivants* might productively challenge the ways in which we frame and reinforce reality" (p. 2). Through this lens, the ethics process might be a productive opportunity for SoTL researchers to challenge what they think of as their teaching and research selves, creating a porousness between these roles. While the ethics form asks the dual-role researcher to define and separate these identities clearly, we know that in practice this is not possible; this is one individual dealing with, at times, competing interests. Because of the trust relationship involved in teaching, the teacher must override the researcher if there is an argument between the two identities. This is what the dual role requires – for us to make difficult choices, but this is not the same as existing with a fragmented self.

> With the support of other group members, Phillip realized that he did not need to run a control group study to conduct robust research, recognizing that this was an assumption he had made about SoTL as a particular form of social science research. Taking a more constructivist approach to the study, he decided to run all of his sections with the new pedagogy he found so generative and was able to construct a qualitatively trustworthy study based on student interviews and excerpts from their written reflections.

Living in the Hyphen

The notion of the dual role of teacher and researcher can be seen as a divided/fragmented/competing identity. Alternatively, it might be conceptualized as a kind of double vision, where the SoTL practitioner is also the one that teaches, creating complexity but potential insight. There are many places in life where we might find ourselves living in the hyphen' between 'this' and 'that' role. Jardine (1987) wrote about his teacher candidates as living the hyphen between student and teacher and seeing this as an opening: "This telltale, generative 'gap' between student and teacher (this '-') can thus be envisaged as a portal, full of opportunity (Hillman 1987), but also full of portend, warning: lessons to be learned. It is a gap between worlds and, in its lessons, is a deeply pedagogic space" (p. 125). We suggest the same might be said about the hyphen between teacher and researcher implied by the notion of dual role; it too is full of opportunity and lessons to be learned. As Pat Hutchings (2003) pointed out, the ethical issues inherent in SoTL research "are not simply occasions for caution, but windows into our aspirations and values as educators" (p. 28).

Thought about this way, does the process of becoming a SoTL researcher invite a defining and potential recasting of what the practitioner thinks teaching is? The whole journey of SoTL, indeed, can do this. As we have seen in previous research, SoTL can transform the teacher as they begin to see their students, their disciplines, and themselves differently (Yeo et al., 2018). It is as though the ethics process can

become the first disruption, the first signal that the SoTL scholar initiate is entering into a new world. Pearson et al. (2015) noted that in SoTL research, "Particular care needs to be taken when investigating one's own curriculum or pedagogical practices, where the participants are one's students or colleagues" (p. 4). Care here might mean taking heed or caution, but it can also suggest concern, compassion, and being *full of care*. The dual role requires a careful stepping into the classroom with an openness to students and learning and being taken aback by something not seen or understood before.

In the case of student-teaching, in Jardine's (1987) essay, the hyphen is temporary. At the end of the initiation (final practicum), the student is evaluated and accepted into the community of teachers. There still may be phases of liminality – substitute teaching, probationary or short-term contracts – but there is a movement towards a final, clear category. In the case of the SoTL researcher-teacher, the hyphen will always be there anytime the practitioner begins a new project. The trajectory is not unidirectional. Instead, the SoTL researcher-teacher relationship is bidirectional and mutually informing. While the ethics process may arrive initially as a monster marking the borderland between the two roles, for the long-term SoTL researcher, this borderland is traversed again and again. Indeed, the borderland may become a familiar territory, and the SoTL practitioner might consider even befriending the monster.

Nevertheless, as is their nature, monsters are unpredictable, and they may become monstrous again in the future, causing a new disruption, new strangeness. This might take the form of new requirements from the review board – boards themselves are not static things, and new reviewers or discussions over time can result in new thinking. Ethics agencies also review their guidelines, and new expectations can emerge; for example, there is a new emphasis on ethical relationships with Indigenous communities in Canada. This is as it should be, and indeed overdue, and it creates a new set of questions and ways of being to consider. Work by such Indigenous theorists such as Willy Ermine (2007, p. 193), when he wrote of the "ethical space" between two cultures, becomes critical to consider. The borderland will never entirely disappear, but we can become practiced and invitational in traversing it. This reality illustrates the ongoing, lifelong process of being and becoming an ethical researcher (Shank, 2002). Wallin suggested, with Derrida, that we can begin to domesticate the monsters, learn new habits, *inhabit* transformed identities:

> Monsters do not have to look monstrous. As Derrida (1995) develops, the monster is closely related to what is expected, with normalization and normality. While experience, oriented to the future, prepares itself for the monstrous arrivant, "that which is absolutely foreign or strange," one must, as Derrida suggests, "try to domesticate it… make it part of the household and have it assume the habits, to make us assume new habits" (p. 387). (Wallin, 2007, p. 2–3).

In this way, encountering the monster, the moment of disruption is profoundly pedagogical. The experience of traversing a borderland is oriented towards the future, and SoTL is, by very definition, oriented towards a pedagogically robust possibility.

We see our role with SoTL researchers as integrating, more than balancing the dual role, holding space for the sense-making that the novice SoTL researcher goes through. This is not always easy, and it first requires that the practitioner/initiate fully *see* the conflict, face the monster, and traverse the borderland. Once the world, or in this case, the identity of the teacher, has been broken open, how does it get put back together? How can the SoTL scholar/initiate regain a sense of wholeness and a feeling that they know where they are, and regain familiarity?

> In the end, the initiates are "returned home" having, through their monstrous visions, come upon certain intractables that define and delimit the community they have entered. Having been at the limen of the community, they have come to understand its limits. Having passed through the limen of the community, they have had a momentary glimpse of the necessary openness of that limit to the new ones. (Jardine, 1998, p. 127).

For our SoTL researchers, sometimes this comes in the form of integration of roles, while other times it is about identifying compromises they are unwilling to make, and a recasting of their study is required. We notice a new sophistication with some experience in the ethics review process, where researchers begin to understand the basis for the reviewer comments and can enter into a more productive dialogue. They realize that it is not always about automatically changing their protocol to what they think they have been told to do; sometimes, it is about explaining better and more fully. Other times, it can be about creating new possibilities. In this sense, the monster of ethics becomes less monstrous with time and experience.

Conclusions

Engaging in these conversations about how we might see the ethical review process as an opening rather than a problem to be solved as expediently as possible has helped us in two ways. The first is in how we might support the process with our SoTL scholars as they encounter the application for the first time. We might spend more time on the identity elements of the work and help them interrogate what it means to be a teacher, what it means to be a researcher, and what it might mean to integrate these roles as they engage in SoTL. We have noticed, through our dialogue, our tendency to provide detailed procedural information about the principles of ethical review in Canada, the governing bodies and documents, and definitions of dual roles. Then we quickly slide into solution mode – listening to the protocols our scholars wish to pursue, pointing out where they will have trouble with the ethics review, and presenting solutions for them to try in advance. However, we see now that this diverts us from the strong possibilities of dwelling in a borderland and traversing the limen with a renewed understanding of previously understood categories. While our suggestion is not to abandon novice SoTL researchers to the process, we see now that a deeper engagement with the notion of the dual role and the recasting of identity might be fruitful.

Wallin (2007) noted Derrida's suggestion of "the intimate relationship between the *arrivant* and hospitality itself" (p. 2) because of our need to be welcoming to that which arrives. How can a SoTL researcher take a hospitable stance towards the ethics process, rather than a defensive one, changing the idea of ethics from difficult to productively generative? How can ethics review boards extend hospitality to SoTL? In what sense do they each hold a "pedagogical responsibility toward that opportunity which emerges at the hole (*porta*)" (Wallin, p. 3)? Throughout the application process, the researcher-teacher has an opportunity to teach about the dual role as it is actually lived and about the nuances of the study proposed. Equally, the reviewers might consider how to encounter the words written on the form and thus consider the researchers in a hospitable way.

Secondly, we have found this exploration useful for ourselves as experienced SoTL researchers. It has helped us develop a nuanced understanding of what we observe in our work with novice SoTL researchers, helped name our discomfort, and given us a bigger story to connect to when the monster arrives in our own submissions. Using the monster metaphor to unpack and examine this complexity has enabled us to examine our roles and identities as researchers/teachers/developers of SoTL and has enabled us to step back from viewing the ethics process as a technocratic process. This kind of deeper reading helps us to feel part of a larger community and strengthens the sense of the traversing being worthwhile, as having a purpose, far beyond the bureaucratic process it may feel like as one fills in the institutional ethics review form. As Smith (1999) described, "We find ourselves, hermeneutically speaking, always in the middle of stories" (p. 42). Conceptualizing ethics as a monster, which we may continuously encounter in the process of being and becoming a SoTL researcher, captures well the unfolding and evolutionary understanding of our place in the field. Finally, we suggest that seeing the ethics application as an *arrivant* can help us learn a way of being, become hospitable to our students, the ethics board, and even, surprisingly, the forms themselves.

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