Being "In and Out": Providing Voice to Early Career Women in Academia

Narelle Lemon and Susanne Garvis (Eds.)

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Being Out, Looking In

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FOREWORD

It is with considerable pleasure that I write this Foreword. In the first instance the theme of the book as well as the rich chapter contributions resonate with my own interest in womens' experiences in the academy. Secondly and importantly, the insights and struggles voiced in this book are a timely reminder of critical role of the professoriate in mentoring, supporting and developing new colleagues. Learning to be an academic as well as learning what it means to undertake academic work present challenging times for those who move into scholarly world of higher education. It is in the quiet spaces between the relentless demands of the university and the loneliness of 'newness', that the collegiality, friendships and support networks can be fostered. Evident across the chapters of this book are the reflective tales of struggle, compromise and successes of early career academics as they negotiation their way in and around the academy, academic work and academic colleagues. It is about being 'in' the academy while simultaneously feeling or being on the 'out' as newcomers to a world immersed in opaque traditions, rites and rituals. The voices presented are candid in the portrayal of their own trajectories and quest for entry and acceptance in academia. The rawness of the experiences carved across the chapters of this book offers a unique insight into the barriers and opportunities that early career women encounter. Interwoven throughout the chapters is an account of how new entrants to higher education seek to understand the turbulent and at times confronting contemporary university environment.

Drawing on the metaphor of flight (Schwab, 1970), each of the contributors considers how her own personal story, or journey, mirrors the undulating momentum of a flight that can involve paths and pathways that are not necessarily linear. In their own positioning of their identities and career trajectories, the narratives penned by the women academics offer insights into their myriad struggles as well as enduring joys of their varying flights out of one field and into another. The strength of this book lies in the emergence of personal narratives that speak to and speak about the contested spaces in academia and the strategies women adopt in the quiet spaces they occupy (Fitzgerald, 2014).

The book brings together female academics who are predominately 'in' or 'out' of Australia. Importantly, the accounts presented are from women new to academia. Each of the authors highlight their unique professional and academic backgrounds and bring to their stories a diverse heritage that provides a refreshing perspective on their personal exploration of identity and agency. A key thread running through the various narratives is the power and potential of connections and networks. What has occurred in the bringing together of women across geographical and institutional spaces has been the creation connections and networks based on authorship. Importantly, the richness of this book lies in the cacophony of voices of women who

refuse to lose themselves in the hubris of academia and who rightfully claim their own space.

In many ways the narratives presented are not dissimilar to those inscribed in *Women leaders in higher education*: *Shattering the myths* (Fitzgerald, 2014). Neither new nor senior academic women position themselves as powerless. Co-mingled in their stories across both books is the optimism that the power of women lies in their independence and the uncertainty that their presence creates. Collective voices make possible opportunities to agitate for change. But the Faustian exchange is that while women may agitate for change in the gendered academic environment, there is an ongoing pressure to conform to institutional norms and practices in order to thrive and survive.

The stories in this collection are personal, reflective and complex and reveal multiple ways in which women work to sustain self, family and career. But this is not a book that offers a lament about the gendered academy and gendered work. Although the voices that permeate the chapters of this book send strong, confident and assertive messages about the challenges women face as they navigate the complex environment of higher education. But what I also hear is a challenge to senior administrators and senior colleagues to consider ways in which they might nurture young, inexperienced yet ambitious women academics. Fledgling academics, however tentative their flight into and around academia, are potentially the future professoriate and it will be their role to act as the critics and conscience of society.

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Tanya Fitzgerald
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NARELLE LEMON & SUSANNE GARVIS

1. BEGINNING THE CONVERSATION LOOKING IN AND LOOKING OUT

Jumping In and Jumping Out

When you start teaching at a university,
there is no handbook on what to do (Mueller, 2003).

BEGINNING THE CONVERSATION

We first met as researchers at a conference. Over a coffee break we shared experiences of being younger female academics. Our stories were similar. We soon realised that our discomforts amongst the discourse of academia were shared.

In our own personal observations we had noticed a shift from the rawness of our own experiences and moving towards noticing practices of women's participation in universities. There is a need to understand the practices and heightened awareness of the need to decipher, decode and begin to understand further the rhetoric that is academia.

Although we were both aware of reports that highlighted that more women than men were enrolling in universities in Australia and New Zealand, and particularly in professional schools such as law, medicine, education, and business management, we were mildly discomforted because we recognised that numbers of women as deans, professors, senior administrators, heads of school and (fulltime and permanent) lecturers were not subject to the same statistical shifts. (Fitzgerald & Wilkinson, 2010, p. 7)

As Fitzgerald & Wilkinson (2010) reflect in their considered work on gender, leadership and higher education, there is some resonance with the complicated intertwining of academia and the complexities that is required when one is an academic. The challenges and complexities are not just situated within the higher education structures and policy practices and implementations; there is indeed a layering of what women do to women in this environment.

This reflection is not about, nor has it ever been about, exclusivity, gender bias or rights. It is about moving forward, is supporting one another to be the best we can be in an environment that is at the best of times turbulent to maneuver. This book is about a network of women who as a collective and individuals can share their

stories to indeed help themselves as well as others. Our stories assist in the telling and retelling of important events. Reflecting on these events allow the 'processing', 'figuring out' and 'inquiring', leading to behavioural actions to change situations.

Our reflections offer embodied ways of looking at our work as academics and how we undertake our multiple roles within this context. The fact that we are women unites us as we have common elements with our roles both within academia, in our families, and in society. All of us are juggling multiple identities and roles within our personal and professional worlds. All of us value sharing. Our connecting "with self and the identities that we carry merges past, present and future, histories and memories. It is not about self-importance, self-reference or perfecting self" (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 107), rather it is about ongoing self-awareness, monitoring, and evaluation.

All of the authors of this book are familiar with academia. All 'are' or 'have' gone through the process of undertaking doctoral research. Some authors are working within the academy in different roles – part time, full time, causally, researching, teaching, administering, leading, or supporting. All authors feel aspects of being "in" *and* "out". The feeling of being "in" *and* "out" comes from "newcomers who join an established and homogeneous group" (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 85) and in some ways the tension of being new is not visible due to the camouflage of having been in academia previously and being able to act the part. It is the quiet spaces between the pressures and familiarity of academia and that allows a community of women to form.

The authors in the chapter all desire a sense of belonging. All authors describe experiences of entering the higher education environment and trying to actively search for information, relationships and advice to support their belonging. While search, the authors also describe navigating institutional politics and group dynamics.

The authors also share multiple identities. There are layers of PhD student, active researcher, teacher, leader, academic or professional staff. As Fitzgerald (2014) and Kaner (1993) reiterate, academics constantly scrutinize to see if they fit within a group and organisation. There is a "risk of being isolated"(Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 85) if you are not acting how others expect you to act.

"Establishing or belonging to a supportive and trustworthy network of women leaders can lesson feelings of loneliness and isolation" (Fitzgerald, 2014, p.106). These networks offer an opportunity for social exchange where "reciprocal and trust can be built around informal relationships and professional obligations" (p.106). There is a safe place and a space created and grown that allows for the sharing of experiences, creating ideas, and reflecting about actions. In the creation of this book, a community formed through these practices. As Fitzgerald reinforces, women "participate in ongoing informal networks that [rely] on a range of self-directed and self-selected activities such as meeting colleagues for a coffee, seeking out colleagues in similar roles" (p.106).

All the authors come from different positions with academia – they are in, out, moving in, moving out or a combination of being in and out. Some of the authors share insights where they are positioned within the 'third space' of academia

(Whitchurch, 2008); that is employed in academic development roles in central teaching and learning units in universities. The conceptualising of this space offers a blurring of perceptions and identities as academics and professional staff and thus this continually contested and problematic space (Land, 2008; Handal, 2008) forces those who work in this space to continually reflect upon identity. These lived experiences provided different lived experiences for us to consider when paralleled to most of the authors who are teacher educators or work in the field of education within industry. Becoming a teacher educator is often filled with tension. As teachers enter graduate school, they often make the transition to the role of teacher educator with little formal support from the university institution for continuing development (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Korthagen, Loughran, & Lunenberg, 2005). Thus, the socialisation from a school teacher to teacher educator is filled with tension, as teachers attempt to re-establish their identity within their new roles with new expectations. In this book, many are dealing with the change in identity. Dall'Alba (2009, p. 34) believed that, "the transformation of the self is integral to achieving such practice". The transformation requires more than just simple programming to teach particular things in particular ways. Rather, there must be a sense of openness that 'being' is not predetermined by a tertiary institution or government and that the purpose of education is necessarily one of forming an identity (Novinger & O'Brien, 2003).

The women in this study share their narratives in an open dialogue. Their journey into and out of academia is constructed from "a metaphorical three-dimensional inquiry space" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50). The space enables the authors to capture and communicate the emotional nature of lived experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The self-studies explore the changes in social and contextual approaches that are attached to working and studying in higher education.. The book provides a narrative of the "ups" and "downs" that female academics have individually and collectively encountered.

Researching one's practice provides opportunities to uncover understanding about the complex relations between learning and teaching, and how such knowledge can be enacted (Loughran, 2007). It also allows the exploration of leadership. This narrating and engagement in the practice of story telling offers "social interaction that other modes of communication do not" (Riessman, 2008, p.8). Individuals are able to construct their identities through storytelling and thus "encourage others to act" (Riessman, 2008, p.8). Through self-study researchers recognise that, "there is an important relationship between personal growth and understanding and public discourse about that understanding" (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001, p. 15). This is how the authors of this book have approached sharing their stories.

In our role as academics we see ourselves as ongoing learners. We learn, teach and use reflective and metacognitive processes (Wilson & Clarke, 2004). This space is where we as authors position the importance of self-study. Self-study through reflective practice is the thoughtful, systematic, critical, exploration of the complexity of one's own learning and teaching practice (Samaras & Freese, 2006).

We live, tell, retell, and relive our life stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) as we negotiate our selves within and across various contexts. This book reports on the reflective self-study of thirteen early career researchers who engage in reflection on their career trajectory 'in' and 'out' of the academic profession. Authors include:

- Individuals wanting to enter into academia after completion of doctoral studies.
- Individuals already working in academia and undertaking their doctoral work.
- Individuals seeking balance within the early stages of being in the academy.
- Individuals who have chosen to change institutions and locations (national and international).
- Individuals who have chosen to leave altogether.

All use Schwab's flights from the field. The flights from the field act as an interpretive tool revealing similarities, differences and tensions through the perceived experience of academic life in Australia.

Schwab, through, his deep commitment to his personal pedagogy and his unwavering support of "teachers…looking at their own practices and the consequences of them" (Schwab, 1959/1978, p.168) resonates with the authors of this book. The thirteen early career researchers align themselves to this way of thinking as both come from teaching fields within education and are now working as academics in teacher education in universities located in Australia. As a self-study Schwab (1969) informs the method used in this inquiry with a focus on understanding all educational situations in terms of four interacting commonplaces; subject matter, learner, milieu and teacher (Schwab, 1970).

In this self-study, the experience of being early career researchers unites the authors. All have been individually reflective on their roles and experiences and have engaged in conversations with and in some cases between each other and as a collective about what they have learnt. Connecting the authors is also a key goal of becoming well-rounded academics, learning from others and focusing on building research profiles within the higher education context. All are focused on being well-rounded individuals that is explicitly looking at how we take care of ourselves personally and professionally while we maneuver being early career researchers.

This shift prompted the authors to ponder the practical and to connect with our feelings of excitement and trepidation in this climate where much is invested in the success of being an active researcher. The authors were interested to explore their career trajectory so far as a female within the academy that was confronted with many problems. Schwab believed that such problems were slippery to grasp because they 'intrinsically involve states of character and the possibly of character change' (p. 3). Flights are "not all or equally reprehensible" (1969, p.4). Rather, they can be positive and/or negative and can take many paths. Schwab (1970) identified six flights from the field. These included:

1. General flight from the field ('A translocation of its problems and the solving of them from the nominal practitioners of the field to other men' (p. 17)).

2. Flight upward ('from theory to metatheory and from metatheory to meta-metatheory' (p. 17)).
3. Flight downward ('an attempt by practitioners to return to the subject matter in a state of innocence, shorn not only of principles but of all principles, in an effort to take a new, pristine, and unmediated look at the subject matter' (p. 17)).
4. Flight to the sidelines ('to the role of observer, commentator, historian, and critic of the contributions of others' (p. 17)).
5. Flight with marked perseveration ('a repetition of old and familiar knowledge in new languages which add little or nothing to the old meanings embodied' (p. 17)).
6. Flight (debate that is 'eristic and contentious...[with] warfare of words among contending exponents of [for example], different theories of personality' (p. 18)).

Each author collected data over the space of 12 months by writing reflective notes and thoughts about their place in academia and their positioning as early career researchers. A framework guided the narratives shared:

1. General flight – experiences that contribute to you want to enter/entering academia.
2. Flight upwards – opportunities that are exciting in your career trajectory/what is inspiring.
3. Flight downward – the challenges/barriers/questions you ask about experiences, lack of opportunities or how you have been treated/or seen others been treated.
4. Flight to sideline – moment(s) when you have stepped to the side to observe, reflect and reconsider how to look after yourself or reconsider where you are heading and what you would like to achieve.
5. Flight of perseveration – looking after you and your needs as a women in academia/trying to enter academia.
6. Final flight – where to next, what do you want to achieve, what strategies help you in focusing on yourself and your career?

WAYS FORWARD

Part of the process for the way forward has been to create a community of practice for early career females. This is the creation of this book that has allowed women to come together and share stories. The term "CoP" is defined as a purposeful social structure where teachers regularly come together to work for the collective benefit of students (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Using a collaborative approach this project has become more common-place as both a top-down and bottom-up initiative to allow greater understanding of experience. As a recognized key strategy for improving practice (Fullan, 1993), CoP and the resultant collaborative practices have been implemented as a part of school improvement initiatives. These initiatives have been seen as a means of improving outcomes through shared learning and individual and collective development of the

community members (Fullan, 1993). Making these stories known establishes a sense of collaboration and community. This action serves to perpetuate and further develop the established pedagogy and look to improve practice. A community practice seeks to locate the learning in the process of co-participation (building social capital) and not just within individuals (Hanks, 1991). It allows females to come together to share experience and discuss ways forward.

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BEING IN THE ACADEMY

GEORGINA BARTON

2. JUST KEEP FOLLOWING THE HEARTLINES ON YOUR HAND

PRELUDE

This chapter shares a personal journey; one that has hit lots of bumpy roads along the way. But in the words of singer-songwriter Florence Welch I have managed to "keep following the heartlines on my hand". It took ten years since gaining my Ph.D. to get a continuing role in academia – and I love it! There have however, been many challenges in getting there, but now that I am there I am beginning to realise that there are many more challenges to come. This chapter draws on the theoretical frameworks of professional socialisation and reflection in attempting to highlight both the process and the outcomes achieved in academia. Becoming socialised into an academic profession is not easy but, as a reflective professional who can focus on positivity and confidence in oneself, it can be very fulfilling.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores my own experience as a woman pursuing an academic career since I received my doctorate in the areas of education and musicology in 2004. It has been ten years since I finished my Ph.D. yet I have only been in my first continuing role, as an academic, for 12 months. There have been a number of reasons why including: family; my own reservations about my capability and whether I was ready or not; and also, I believe, due to perceptions of other academics including gender stereotypes. The chapter discusses the many challenges I faced as a researcher, teacher, woman, mother and musician. During this time, in many ways, I followed my heartline rather than my headline. In some respect this is a 'feminine' way of doing things (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004); it was for me at least. I even recall saying to my daughter while I was struggling as to whether or not I should apply for a full-time role "Should I follow my head or my heart?" and she replied "Your heart!" Needless to say I didn't get that job.

WHO AM I?

Before I entered the academic profession I was a teacher for 20 years, having experience in both primary and secondary schools. I have also been working in universities for this length of time in a part-time capacity. Since completing my

Ph.D. in 2004 I have applied for ten academic roles with the 11th being successful; and I have to say I really love my job. Upon reflection, I am able to accept that during the past 10 years I have learnt a great deal about myself. I have also learnt a lot about research, data collection and analysis and management due to working on other people's research projects; something I do not think I would have gained if I did go straight into a job.

Using the theoretical frameworks of professional socialisation and reflection this chapter will highlight how these perspectives impact on the ways in which I have had to negotiate particular identities, both developed by myself but also imposed upon me; and also how I have had to reflect on the journey including the 'bumpy roads' in order to come to terms with who I am as a researcher and academic. I will thread through the notions of multiple identities and being socialised into the profession of academia my personal narrative. An autoethnographic, narrative journey can talk about events in our life and give purpose to these. According to Park-Fuller (2003):

> In autobiographical narrative performances, the performer often speaks about acts of social transgression. In doing so, the telling of the story itself becomes a transgressive act—a revealing of what has been kept hidden, a speaking of what has been silenced—an act of reverse discourse that struggles with the preconceptions borne in the air of dominant politics (p. 26).

This chapter is an opportunity for me to tell my story from my perspective, as with the other authors of this book. Park-Fuller (2003) however, does alert us to the idea that stories are never static. We may present them from one perspective one day but different the next. This is because our experience is ever-changing and always impacting on the ways in which we perceive things, the ways in which we learn and adapt. This chapter will interweave reflective practice throughout and then share some key personal flights that have led me to where I am now.

BECOMING AND BEING A REFLECTIVE PROFESSIONAL

Step 1: Negotiating Multiple Identities

For quite some time I have had to negotiate with a number of identities including: sessional tutor, research assistant, project manager, lecturer, teacher, mother, wife, musician or artist. When I began my Ph.D. my daughter was very young and during my study I had my son. Being a mother and wife was very important to me so I made a lot of sacrifices to be good at these roles. At times, focusing on my family would put me behind in my study and therefore career but I did not mind, as being a mother, and a good one at that, was more important to me. Financially, I had to work even while I was studying.

This has at times been difficult to manage as I had taken on all of these roles at once; mainly trying to earn an income. In the work related positions it was difficult to 'find and establish' a consistent or 'strong' identity (Bassett, 1998). As

a sessional tutor I was on the one hand respected for my professional skills and knowledge, yet on the other not completely socialised or accepted as a professional staff member. Bassett's (1998) work investigated, for example, how both part-time and sessional staff in higher education often feel "marginalized, exploited and expendable" (p. 1). Further, Bryson and Blackwell (2006) reported that when higher education institutions tried to include part-time and casual staff through the use of various differentiation strategies they often failed to acknowledge career aspirations of such employees. Feeling marginalised, due to the fact that I was not a permanent staff member, was a recurring experience for me since working in universities since 1994.

Another identity I have maintained is that of an 'artist-teacher'. Carrillo and Baguley (2011) note that many teachers of the arts have an identity that encompasses "a personal dimension related to what [they] perceive as being important for developing skills and expertise in [their] discipline areas, in addition to a contextual component which is continually affected by the perception of 'teacher' in society" (p. 63). They also acknowledge that this is impacted on by the social, cultural and institutional environments in which the artist-teacher works. For me, music or art is at the core of everything I do. I began learning the violin when I was 7 years old and always knew that I wanted to be a music teacher. When I studied at university I majored in music and English. In this way the discipline of the arts (with creative practice as its central tenet) helped form my identity as a creative practitioner. I also enjoyed studying English and literature. In this sense the notion of disciplinarity had a large impact on my own identity. I identified as both an 'artist' and a 'teacher'.

Not only has the identity of artist-teacher impacted on my professional learning but also the ways in which others perceived me (Jones & McEwen, 2000). Once I had completed my Ph.D. it was difficult for those in the same faculty to view me as an equal – as I had always been a 'student' to them. I believe this also impacted on my lack of success in gaining an academic role. Reynolds and Pope (1991) refer to this as 'multiple oppressions'.

Challenging the roles to which I was allocated by others proved to be difficult. In the area of social constructivism however, Weber (1998) states that one should be able to challenge the dominant sub-ordinate binaries; that is, those that are implied or imposed upon us such as those related to gender, race, class and sexuality not to mention role and curriculum areas (Shih, Pittinshy & Ambady, 1999). Academic jobs in the arts are extremely limited (Barton, Baguley & MacDonald, 2013) yet one such opportunity did arise soon after I completed my doctorate. I will elaborate on this opportunity and my lack of success in gaining the position in my flight downward later in this chapter.

Despite having to juggle and, I believe, struggle with these multiple identities I have, as a result, been able to reflect on them. I have been able to utilise the learnings from them to further develop my own capacities as I continue to navigate and negotiate with a professional academic workplace and context. This is further explored in step 2 – socialising into the profession.

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Step 2: Socialising into the Profession

Jarvis (1983) defines socialisation as "the process by which the objective world of reality is internalised and becomes subjectively meaningful" (p. 88). This process is important to consider when socialising into a particular profession. Socialisation can be extremely complex with a number of factors influencing the ways in which people start to submerse themselves into employment. All of the roles that I have held over the past 10 years have contributed to the ways in which I now interpret, and operate in, my current workplace. The knowledge and skills that I have learnt throughout this time have been applied to my own research and teaching. I continue to "internalise values and norms" (Du Toit as cited in Howkins & Ewens, 1999) as expressed through the social and cultural attributes of and in my work environment.

Billet (2004) states that learning is seen as a consequence of participation in social practices and highlights the notion that there are procedural goals that impact on workplace practices. Further, it is the individual's own agency and intentionalities that impact the most on the socialisation process. Learning is constant and in this regard while I have finally achieved my intended goal – to be employed in academia – I now face different challenges. It is important to consider the personal interests, agency and reflexivity of the newly socialised individual as this could potentially transform the workplace. Billett's (2004) work shows how an individual, with strong capacities, can direct the ways in which they socialise into the workforce or professional practice rather than having the workplace impose upon them. In this sense my challenges in negotiating multiple identities has actually put me in good stead to face continued challenges in my new role. In this way the development of a personal epistemology is enabled.

Step 3: Developing a Personal Epistemology

The notion of personal epistemologies (Billet, 2009) extends the idea that as an emerging academic or professional it is important to be aware of one's identity or identities, particularly in relation to how that profession shapes and moulds you. According to Billet (2009):

> Personal epistemologies are defined as individuals' ways of knowing and acting arising from their capacities, earlier experiences, and ongoing negotiations with the social and brute world, that together shape how they engage with and learn through work activities and interactions (p. 211).

Throughout my learning journey I have managed to develop a distinct personal epistemology; one that embraces my artist-teacher role as well as the other aspects in my life. The arts are at the core of everything I do yet I have been unable to secure a permanent role in this area; but rather in my other area of expertise – English and

literacy education. While I commit a great deal of time and effort to make this area of my teaching the best possible experience for my students I do so by regularly applying my arts knowledge and expertise. In some ways I have made English teaching fit with me or my own personal epistemology.

This was only possible because of the experiences I had in various employed positions and roles. Erdogan and Bauer (2005) examined further the relationship between proactive personality and intrinsic career success. They found that employees that had a 'high fit' with their workplace resulted in an improved outcome of intrinsic career success. In this sense I have been both an enterprising and agentic individual. I have, according to Campbell (2000), been a proactive employee.

Billet's (2010) work explains four accounts of self: autonomous self, subjugated self, enterprising self and agentic self. An autonomous self is where an individual exercises autonomy and freedom in realising their desired goals; a subjugated self is where an individual is a mere placeholder within social systems; an enterprising self is a reflexive individual who can agentically maintain their identity within social systems; and agentic individuals selectively engage and negotiate with social suggestions to secure, develop and maintain their identity. Billet (2010, p. 11) believes these have distinct purposes and processes in actively resisting and reconstructing both self and society.

This aligns with Archer's (2010) concept of reflexivity where the key to understanding ourselves is to explore the relationship between individuals and the social and cultural structures in which they operate. Archer's (2010) work describes four types of reflexive personalities. These include: The autonomous, the communicative, the fractured and the meta-reflexive. Moffatt (2013) has adapted these by referring to them as: the director, the talker, the indecisive and the analyser. An autonomous reflexive can easily make up their mind and take direct action. The talker or communicative reflexive has to discuss their ideas and thoughts with others in order to make sense of the world around them. A fractured or indecisive reflexive is unable to take action as they need to think over issues; interrupting any positive outcome. The meta-reflexive or analyser can critically analyse and evaluate a situation in order to take action from this experience and to effect change.

Following My Heartline: My Flights

I, in my current role, believe that I carry out each of these selves and reflexive roles at different points in time. These parallel with different *flights* that occur in life – particularly both upward and downward. A more productive professional performance however, is one that is both agentic and meta-reflexive where a reconstructive process is cumulative and acts as a reflective spiral where an individual is able to step out of the professional context, reflect and use their personal agency to reconstruct practice based on their prior experiences.

GENERAL FLIGHT

When I was studying to become an English and Music secondary teacher I did not know much about post-graduate study. One topic that we were learning however, drew me in to want to know more. It was the study of ethnomusicology. After I completed my Diploma of Teaching I taught for two years in the high school and then began another degree. It was during this study that I was able to specialise in ethnomusicology. When I completed this degree I decided to begin my honours. I was able to upgrade this to a Ph.D. within a year.

During my Ph.D. studies I also had two children which made it quite a difficult journey. It certainly was a big achievement even though I didn't feel this when I finished. I had no idea what the point was of completing such a hard and stressful task. In many ways I regretted putting so much of my life and effort into something that returned so little once it was all over and done with. I think this was largely due to the fact that I was one of the first people to complete a doctorate in my area in this university. They hadn't quite worked out what to do with doctoral students and we were offered very little assistance during the whole process. Things have certainly changed, I think, for HDR students. Since completing my Ph.D. I regularly held research assistant roles, sessional tutoring and project management jobs. It was during this time that I feel I learnt the most about the research process.

FLIGHT UPWARDS

At the time of completing my Ph.D. there were not many academic jobs in the area of music or music education so I applied for a research assistant job in the area of literacies and disciplinarity; of which one of the disciplines with music. This time was very exciting for me because I was not only accepted for this role but also offered a Post-Doctoral fellowship. During my fellowship I was able to apply a great deal of knowledge from my undergraduate degree which also focused on the English language and literature. It also made me realise that the focus of my Ph.D. was in fact multimodality – something I was unaware of at the time of writing it.

Working with expert and reputable scholars throughout my career has definitely inspired me. I have found that professorial scholars are extremely supportive and willing to share their expertise and ideas. This part of my journey has impacted greatly on my desire to pursue a job in academia.

FLIGHT DOWNWARD

The main challenge for me was actually trying to get a continuing role in a university. For many of us who work in universities there are some challenges to be faced in order to get an academic job. For many of the jobs that I applied for I did become aware that there were others already identified for these roles. This can be very challenging and disappointing.

Another challenge I believe is common in institutions where you position yourself, is that if people know you as a student or a research assistant it is very difficult to then place you in an equal role. I think this has impacted on many people's career trajectories in the university context. As this book is about early career women I think it's important to highlight the fact that opportunities for women are less (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2004). This became evident to me when I applied for my first job soon after completing my Ph.D. I was told that one of the reasons why I was not successful was because I was very softly spoken. This was certainly not one of the selection criteria. It was apparent that a male applicant was identified for this position. Now that I have a continuing role I know that I have always had the capacity to fulfil this kind of role successfully. I feel more confident in the work that I do and believe that this forms a major part of how others perceive you.

FLIGHT TO SIDELINE

Flights to the sideline from me have potentially been each time I have gone for a job interview. For those that I was not successful I always reflected afterwards and wondered why I did not get the job or how I could have answered a particular question more effectively. For my most recent and successful interview I completed a 'learning style profiler' and a questionnaire that revealed what type of reflexive person I was. This enabled me to learn more about my strengths and weaknesses and therefore talk about these to the panel.

According to Margaret Archer (2010) I am an autonomous reflexive whereby I complete my internal deliberations alone and act upon them. I therefore need to communicate more with others on occasion about other ways (which I may not have already considered) to improve my professional practice. The learning style profiler identified me as a goal oriented achiever. This is an effective personality trait but sometimes I need to 'stop, look and listen'. Quiet reflection is important for professional development and growth as well as deeper thinking. This is particularly important in academia as collaborative work is valued and not all members of a team may work this way.

FLIGHT OF PERSERVERATION

For me, creative practice is where I can find time to relax whether it is sitting at the piano or singing or dancing. Unfortunately, due to injury I am unable to play my main instrument, the violin; otherwise I would continue performing in orchestras. Other sources of personal perseverance include yoga and meditation and finding the time with other colleagues to just sit and relax and chat about how things are going. Without these flights of perseverance I tend to become less productive and find it difficult to focus on the task at hand.

As I write this chapter I am very much aware of the fact that I do not have an adequate number of flights of perseverance, at this point in time. Academic work

can be all-consuming and exciting at the same time. I have found myself working long hours since I began in this role. This is partly due to having to develop new courses as well as settle into the role; probably making a good impression. It is important to find a balance between work and moments of perseveration.

FINAL FLIGHT AND WHERE TO NEXT?

I love my current position and am very happy that I have finally achieved a continuing role. I am excited about what this role will bring. I acknowledge that the challenges and re-negotiations with the workplace, and individuals within it, will continue even thought I have secured a continuing position. I will at different points in time face other and new challenges. I am now able to be an agentic and reflexive employee as a result of my work-life experiences. Initially I was not all that interested in promotion and moving up the ladder. However, I am now becoming more aware that I am good at this job.

I do have a number of immediate goals including: improving the number of research grants I hold; the number of publications I have; and improving my professional presence in the areas in which I research. These aspects of the job do excite me as my personality type enjoys achieving goals. The next step, for me, is to make sure that I do not take on too much but rather, focus in on key projects in order to do these well as well as make a clear research path for myself.

CONCLUSION

My journey into academia has been one full of many challenges: having to negotiate multiple identities; having to navigate many different workplaces and roles; and having to accept a number of social and cultural practices despite not agreeing with them personally. All of these experiences have enabled me to develop my own personal epistemology as well as increase my capacity to be an agentic and reflexive individual; ensuring professional growth. I have in a sense kept "following the heartlines on my hand" despite a number of obstacles. It is important, however to be strong with your career aspirations and set reasonable goals to achieve them. Becoming socialised into an academic profession is not easy but, as a reflective professional who can focus on positivity and confidence in oneself, it can be very fulfilling.

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SUSANNE GARVIS

3. ARE YOU OLD ENOUGH TO BE IN ACADEMIA? YOU DON'T HAVE GREY HAIR

Constructions of Women in Academia

PRELUDE

Becoming a teacher educator is often filled with tension. In my case the tension is based on the identity of being a younger female in the academy. According to Connelly and Clandinin (1999), for a teacher, knowledge is entwined with identity. For a teacher educator, identity is interwoven with the lives and knowledge of teachers, children and youth (Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009). In my role as a female academic, my identity of teacher educator is also constructed around my age.

In my previous career as a teacher, my age never entered conversations. Within the university, my age as a younger female academic appears a continual discussion point. Similar experiences have also been shared by academics in the United Kingdom (Archer, 2008).

In this chapter I share my experiences of entering the academy as a younger female. I share my flights of reflection based on a chronological development of a sense of resilience. In my final flights I share my coping strategies of collaboration and developing a strong sense of agency. I also offer advice to a younger version of myself and call upon women to share their stories to provide new meanings of understanding and support.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to give voice to my story on female age discrimination that is yet to be heard by the greater academic community. Only a handful of studies have focused on younger female academics (Archer, 2006; Davis & Petterson, 2005). My stories of experience are often secret and kept behind closed doors. This chapter however brings these stories to the forefront, providing a platform for stories to be shared. The strengths of my flights are the deeper understanding shared about the complexity of being a female in the academy. The stories I share are designed to illuminate personal thoughts and actions, and, at the same time show how I make sense of my relationships with others and their stance in the world (Bruner, 1986).

Context, process and relationship feature heavily in this self-study (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001). Hamilton and Pinnegar (1998, p. 236) suggest self study "is the

study of one's self, one's actions, one's ideas, as well as the 'not self'". The six flights allow me to explore the autobiographical, historical and cultural landscapes that influence my identity. I draw on a conceptualization of identity as discursively produced and 'becoming' – yet also embodied and culturally entangled (Hesse, 2000) and produced within multi-layered structural inequalities (Archer & Francis, 2006).

Gladwell (2000) describes the tipping point as the moment of critical mass, the threshold, or the boiling point. While this chapter doesn't have the potential to create a tipping point, it shows glimpses of what could be, and encourages the continued sharing of stories that will challenge the status quo. Through such sharing, a cascade of sustained change can create a tipping point (Gladwell, 2000). Challenging the status quo also allows the grande narrative of females in the academy to be sufficiently displaced, with room created for alternative stories that conform to the status quo. These alternative stories provide an awareness of the moral and ethical dimensions of women in academia, making a significant moral and ethical consideration to the development of women's careers.

WHO AM I?

In this study I examine my career from a social constructionist perspective that emphasises the social processes by which people develop their social reality and knowledge about that reality in an ongoing way in interaction with others (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Burr, 1995; Cohen, Duberley & Mallon, 2004) My identity shapes all elements of my academic career. Aged in my 30s, I am still within my early career phase within the academy. In Australia, an early career academic is still within their first five years of academia since being awarded a Ph.D. (Hemmings, 2012; Hemmings. In other parts of the world, such as North America, the early career phase can span more than 10 years (Foote, 2010). Given the difference in definitions around the world, this can appear problematic when travelling to other institutions.

When I originally graduated from my Bachelor qualification, I vowed never to study again. After a number of years teaching I began to want more for my own understanding and decided to study a Master degree full time while working full time. I enjoyed the challenge. After a Master degree I decided to apply for a Ph.D. to continue my research pathway. My partner had previously completed a Ph.D. so I was aware of all the possible twists and turns during study.

During my Ph.D. studies I was offered a full-time tenured lecturing position. During this time I managed to fulfill the roles of working full time as an academic and studying full time to complete my Ph.D.. My working ethic was in overdrive as I completed both tasks. Various academic studies have noted the long working hours of academics, with work spilling into evenings and weekends (Archer, 2008). In my case I would work most weekends. Reay (2000) notes that early career researchers often have to work at double-pace to prove their capability.

After I completed my Ph.D. my working habits continued with weekends. I began to feel a level of age discrimination. I decided to complete more study with another Master degree in a university space where I should strive and better myself (Archer, 2006). Coming from a working background I felt that it was difficult to pass into a 'classed space' such as the academy (Hey, 2003). My younger age appeared problematic.

My initial concern about age can be represented in Australian research. In Australian universities, over 46.1% of academic staff are aged 50 years and over (Hugo, 2008, p. 21). In teacher education, the field in which I work, 62.8% of academics are aged over 50 years (Hugo, 2008, p.21). According to a study by the Council for Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS), Hugo (2008, p.15) reports:

> It is clear that Generation X is substantially under-represented in the academic workforce compared with other professional areas and the workforce as a whole. There are also some substantial gender differences, among the older lecturing staff, [as] there are four men for every woman aged over 55.

Attrition rates are also high. Female academics in their late 20s and 30s rival that of academics at retiring age (Southwell, 2012; Varmvakinou, 2008). Given that large numbers of older academics are retiring and the rising of student enrolments (Hugo, 2005), It would seem significant to support new academics to build sustainability within the sector (Hemmings, 2012).

GENDER AND IDENTITY

Age appears a highly relevant characteristic in workforce recruitment, performance and performance evaluation (Perry & Parlamis, 2006). Research suggests that men and women experience age, ageing and ageism in different ways in organisations and management (Itzin & Phillipson, 1995; Ilmarinen, 2005). Some studies have highlighted that many women feel they are the wrong age for their career (Duncan & Loretto, 2004; Jyrkinen, 2013), with early mid-age women finding age discrimination a particular issue. Older women also perceive age discrimination. In a study by Jrykinen (2013), older women's knowledge was not valued in the same way as that of their male counterparts. Jyrkinen (2013) concluded that a patriarchal value system tended to exclude 'old people' when they are women.

Gender discrimination also emerges for women in the academy. Many earlier studies show how gendering processes in academia marginalise women and reduce their opportunities (Barry, Chandler, and Clark 2001; Goode and Bagilhole 1998; Margolis and Romero 1998; Prichard 1996; Thomas and Davies 2002; Valian 1998). While gender discrimination is now acknowledged in many institutions as an issue, the reproduction of certain traditions continues to create barriers for women and leadership opportunities.

Only a handful of studies have combined both gender and age when exploring discrimination against women in the workforce, termed by Carpenter (1996) as 'gendered ageism' or 'sexageism'. Gendered ageism is described as a process that

replicates and reproduces the existing gender order (Connell, 1987). Some studies have added appearance to age and gender. Under an intersectionality approach, Granleese and Sayer (2005) describes this as age, gender and 'lookism'. For example, in a United Kingdom study, women in higher education commented discrimination about their appearance alongside age and gender. Similarly in Finland (Jyrkinen, 2013) women's self-presentation of bodies and looks were subject to gendered ageism form an early career stage. Comments would be made about clothing and physical appearance. One form of discrimination identified by Jyrkinen (2013) was the treatment of women as 'girls' by male colleagues and supervisors. In work contexts, 'girling' is a derogatory word that is attached to other genderageist actions (Martin, 2006). Jyrkinen (2013, p. 5) describes the approach as:

> The 'girling phenomenon' is that of calling adult women 'girls' and treating them as such in a disparaging way. It can sometimes be a benignly-used reference made by older men about women that unintentionally infantilises women (in leisure time, such as 'How are you girls doing tonight?').

Intersectionality is an approach used to reconceptualise identities, deconstruct social categories and divisions, and explore multiple marginalisations (Crenshaw, 1991). Intersectionality addresses the simultaneous existence and occurrence of multiple sociocultural categories, such as gender, race/ethnicity, age and class, and how they mutually construct, 'inter-act' and transform each other (Lykke, 2005). In this case it allows the exploration of my personal experiences in the academy as I move through multiple sociocultural categories. I align with the beliefs of Richardson and Loubier (2008, p. 143), that 'people live multiple, layered identities derived from social relations, history, and the operation of structured power.

My identity is based within the notion of being a teacher educator. For a teacher educator, identity is interwoven with the lives and knowledge of teachers, children and youth (Clandinin, Downey & Huber, 2009). From this conceptualisation, we can consider teachers' personal practical knowledge; that is, the experiential, moral, emotional, embodied knowledge teachers hold and express in their classroom practices (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). Understanding teachers' knowledge allows us to develop a narrative understanding about the context in which teachers live and work. Those living as teacher educators live on a continual shifting social landscape. The shifting landscapes continually shape teacher knowledge and teachers' identities as they live out their stories. Clandinin, Downey and Huber (2009, p. 142) explain the complexity of teachers shifting landscapes, noting, "we simultaneously consider our shifting landscapes as teacher educators and the kinds of spaces we might collaboratively shape with teachers as they attempt to sustain their stories to live by as they work in schools". From this realisation, Clandinin, Downey and Huber (2009) suggest that such storied spaces also hold the potential for sustaining the identity of teacher educators. As a teacher educator I am aware of the larger society plot lines that ripple through schools and universities, influencing the contexts and people (Geertz, 1995).

MY FLIGHTS

In sharing my own narrative, I engage in six flights of reflection that explore my own perceptions and experiences. My journey into teacher education is constructed from "a metaphorical three-dimensional inquiry space" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50) and is an engagement with my "story as data" (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p. 7). It enables me (the author) to capture and communicate the emotional nature of my lived experience as well as capturing the dynamic nature of these lived experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

The flights I undertake have not generated an academic, distant, third-person, objective voice (Elijah, 2004; Tynan & Garbett, 2007). Similar to Tynan & Garbett (2007) I have found that reviewers of this approach often ask for more theory and less of personal stories. Striking a balance is difficult but it is hoped that my story of the lived reality in the academy may provide benefit to others.

In each of the flights you will see enablers and barriers to my academic confidence. Towards the final flight I also change my overall understanding of myself as my confidence grows and I become more resilient.

GENERAL FLIGHT

The first flight describes my initial entry into the academy. It highlights the construction of female academics by others, and introduces the concept of a 'golden age' in academia. My isolation becomes evident to the reader.

When I first entered into the academy I realised I was the youngest person in the Faculty of Education. It was initially strange sitting in meetings without anyone of a similar age. I was initially scared to speak. While others spoke about their past in the academy as a 'golden age', I could not pass comment. In a study by Archer (2008), similar findings were also made by younger academics reflecting on their older colleagues. Archer (2008) suggests identity construction for experienced academics is influenced by generational dimensions. In her study, she noted that many of the younger academics questioned the construct of a 'golden age' and talked about human nature to romanticize the past. This became evident to me during many conversations.

During my first week, I would eat my lunch in the staff room. Every day I was told that students were not allowed to eat their lunch in the staff lounge. It appeared that while I had the mental capability to work in the academy, my physical appearance was seen as 'too young'. The construction of a female academic by these commenters appeared someone who was older.

It was difficult to find common ground for every day discussion in the academy. While older staff talked about retirement, my working life was beginning. I was often told 'I had a lot to learn', and that the institution 'may not treat you as well as in the golden age'. I began to realise the extent of my isolation. Sometimes I would go to work and talk to no one for the entire day. While I wanted to complain to my

friends I couldn't. Many of my friends had studied Ph.D.s but were not offered the same changes for entry into the academy.

FLIGHT UPWARDS

My second flight provides an experience of false hope, in which I believe that my age does not contribute to my embodied identity. By being praised for success, I began to question if my age construction was my own creation of insecurity.

Two months after my tenured appointment I secured a large amount of consultancy for the university and an external research grant. The flow on from securing substantial amounts of money during my first two months of a continuous appointment was huge. All of a sudden I was encouraged to engage with the university media and promote my success. I was invited to functions that were usually exclusive for successful researchers. I was now eligible to join research institutes within the university. I was invited to lunch with the university leaders. I was treated a little differently. For a short space of time, I felt like my age did not matter. I had a step on the ladder as an early career academic (Hemmings, 2012). My confidence improved and I began to think about my research career.

During this time I began to question if "lookism" (Granleese & Sayer, 2005) existed. I was no longer marginalized by my physical appearance but rather my academic capability. Or that is what I thought…

My answer came quickly. On a Thursday afternoon I was involved in an intense research meeting with older academics to develop a new research grant application. On Friday morning I wore jeans to work and worked in the café. An older academic from the previous day walked around my table. "Good luck with your assignment-there are only two weeks until the end of semester", he said. He didn't recognize me. I was constructed as a 'student'. Again the concept of 'lookism' (Granleese & Sayer, 2005) dominated my appearance to others.

FLIGHT DOWNWARD

My flight downward has created tears, confusion and anxiety. It provides examples of how my biological age and appearance dominates other people's constructions of who I am. Again representations of being a student overshadow my actual role as an academic. My biological appearance in an intersectionality approach dominates through the concept of 'lookism' (Granleese & Sayer, 2005). My confidence decreased after each experience.

While I was lucky to have a continuous appointment, my age often appeared problematic to others. Before I spoke people would often judge me as inexperienced. For example, at a conference I had just given an interesting presentation on my current funded research project. At the end of my presentation I was happy to have an audience member ask a question. I nodded for them to ask their question, happy

that someone might be interested in my research. They took a deep breath and spoke "It is good research but are you old enough to do this?" I was confused. "What do you mean?" I asked. "Well you don't have grey hair. This is research for those with grey hair", they stated. I gave a fake laugh, trying to defuse the situation and bring the presentation to a close. I have also been asked about what wrinkle cream I use and how I stay looking 'so young'.

I am often mistaken for a student. I remember turning up to mark the university final for the two minute thesis competition. When I tried to enter the judges area I was told students were not allowed, only the judges. I had to show my staff card to show I was in fact an academic. I made my way to the judging area and sat down. I could see others around me, including the audience confused.

The library staff would also perceive me as a student. When I would request a book from another country, I was informed staff were only allowed to borrow. I would again need to show my staff card as proof of my employment as an academic. Similar to Jyrkinen's (2013) study, my self-presentation of body and looks were subject to a form of ageism.

My low confidence was created by personal perceptions. Research self-efficacy (or confidence) plays an important part in an academic's career (Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995). Akerlind (2007) notes that successful academics not only build up a range of research skills, they have the confidence to apply these skills in an appropriate and meaningful fashion. While I had adequate research skills, I was still learning the confidence of how to apply and communicate others not confidence, I needed extra support for my confidence.

FLIGHT TO SIDELINE

My next flight explores my strategies to improve my self-presentation and the concept of 'lookism'. Initially I thought I could make myself look older by wearing business clothes and engage in 'power dressing'. I soon realised that this was not who I was and in a suit I still looked young.

I began to reflect on my own situation and questioned what it meant to be a younger female in the academy. There was nothing wrong with me- I was achieving excellence in research and teaching. I was on editorial boards and being invited for keynotes. I was also asked to engage in visiting scholar positions in other countries. I realised I did not need to change a thing. The situation was external to me. I couldn't change the perceptions of others but I could create coping strategies to deal with comments. I would always have to deal with constructs of age, gender and 'lookism' (Granleese & Sayer, 2005).

A female professor also gave some exceptional advice- "Once I was young like you at conferences and thought who were all of these old women in the room. Now I am one of the old women in the room!". We shared a laugh and a smile. Her journey was similar to mine. This event changed my mindset and spurred me on

to greater things. Hemmings (2010) found similar single events when interviewing early career academics. Single events provided a vote of confidence and appeared to positively influence the construction of researcher identities.

Mentoring is viewed as a means for developing confidence in the academy. Stenova (2009) writes how one-to-one mentoring is an effective approach for those employed in the social sciences and humanities. My above experience was an informal mentoring experience, but it managed to support my confidence. Poole and Bornholt (1998) advocate that procedural know-how is needed in early stages of an academic's career and that various experts need to be sourced to provide information and model practice. From my meeting with the female professor, I was supported from both.

FLIGHT OF PERSEVERATION

My fifth flight explores coping strategies I have initiated to strengthen my resilience. This includes creating informal supportive networks. This technique is reported in the literature by younger female academics (Archer, 2008) as a way of surviving the academy.

My informal support network was created in 2010. After attending a conference, I had finally found another early career academic who was prepared to collaborate and had similar experience to me. We were both considered 'young' to be in the academy. We met for coffee after our presentations and started to realise the synergies between our research interests and passions. Finally I found someone who was like me who wanted to achieve the same goals for their research! My mind started buzzing.

Over the next year our ideas started to converge. We worked together on a book chapter that lead to a co-authored book. This lead to another co-authored book where we realised we could easily work together and support one another. We shared similar goals and expectations. We began to work together on research grants and find other isolated like-minded young researchers. We realised that by working together collaboratively from our institutions across Australia, we could strengthen our research potential. Not long after our first cross-institutional submission we began to see success with competitive grant schemes. As early career researchers we realised we had the potential and strength to produce quality grant applications that could be funded. LaRocco and Bruns (2006) suggest such genuine relationships with colleagues at other universities is also one way younger academics can demonstrate autonomy and professional standing.

Female academic collaboration appears an important coping strategy in the literature. Kochan and Mullen (2003, p. 161) discovered in a study of prolific female academics that an 'ethic' of collaboration developed where women created their own "value system which honours collaboration that helps keep them afloat during difficult times". Debowski (2006) also argues that building research networks helps younger academics boost credibility in their field of research and generate further

onfidence in their ability. Collaboration for early career academics may also "be prudent in uncertain times as higher education reform advances in higher education contexts" (Tynan & Garbett, 2007, p. 423).

FINAL FLIGHT AND WHERE TO NEXT?

Feminist writers such as Aronsen and Swanson (1991) argue that graduate women should not simply aim for career success in terms of the current system. Rather the goal for women should be to redefine academic authority. While I cannot change an entire system, I realise I am able to redefine the behaviours around me and model the behaviours I consider appropriate.

In my final flight I realise the importance to model professional relationships and conversations that are devoid of discrimination. Archer (2008) found younger female academics acting similar ways in her study. While I cannot change the beliefs of those who have come before me, I can shape and model those coming into the academy after me through active mentoring and engaging in support groups for early career researchers. It is important that we share our stories to develop new meanings and understanding of what is means to be a female within the academy. Such stories are short but they can provide substantial change. Discussing the stories through retellings also allows different interpretations to be shared to help analyse and develop strategies for people in similar situations. Hafernik and colleagues (1997, p. 31) state that by "extending the circle of researchers, we broaden the perspectives and add voices to the field".

I would also suggest to my former self to seek out other female academics who are of similar age. The research literature suggests that early career academics who are collegial and have 'corridor conversations' with colleagues may contribute to professional identity development (Baker Sweitzer, 2009; Mann et al., 2007), leading to a reduction in isolation. It is these relationships that provide supportive mechanisms for all parts of academic life. They provide opportunities to again share stories and construct and deconstruct meaning. Stories also provide opportunities to share different perspectives and viewpoints as a shared meaning in created. Shared meaning can create new understandings of age, gender and 'lookism' for female academics.

CONCLUSION

If Australian universities are to find and retain new academic staff, more support is needed for younger academics. Support can include collaboration, mentoring and 'corridor conversations'. Australian universities could simply benefit from listening to stories from younger staff members.

The self-disclosure shared in this chapter provides insights into my experience of navigating the complexity of academia as a younger female. The chapter has shared my coping strategies in dealing with 'lookism'. I have been able to reflect on the importance of building collaborations with colleagues of similar age and the

importance of sharing stories with one another to help develop new understandings and perspectives. The sharing stories are also two-fold. Not only does the listener learn about coping strategies, the teller also learns different ways of interpretation of the meaning of the story through continuous retelling to better understand the situation.

In the future it is hoped that the academic community is more accepting of females of all ages and appearances. Through active modeling of how to treat one another, women can enact change in their immediate world. An active approach also allows the support of confidence for future research endeavors. While it is impossible to challenge an entire system, it is possible to bring about small change in the world.

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ANNETTE HILTON

4. TEACHER TO ACADEMIC

Becoming and Belonging

PRELUDE

In this chapter, I examine the tensions that arose when I changed occupation and moved from professional practice into the world of academia. I focus on the changes in identity that have accompanied this transition and the factors that influenced these changes. I also reflect on the reasons behind these factors, within a three-dimensional narrative inquiry space by looking at experiences in multiple ways: backward and forward, inward and outward, and by positioning the experiences described in place and time (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). A series of flights are used to describe and reflect on significant events and situations that have shaped my identity as academic and teacher educator. My journey from professional to academic has at times been frustrating, but these frustrations have been outweighed by the excitement and intellectual challenges. On reflection, I realise that I have taken on a new professional identity, although, perhaps blended would be a better adjective than new. I have also come to realise that this change has occurred through a slow metamorphosis tempered and even directed by a strong personal identity anchored by the need to make decisions based on personal integrity.

INTRODUCTION

The tensions and challenges I encountered during the transition to academia after a career as a practitioner are the focus of this chapter. This transition has been from secondary school teacher to doctoral student to postdoctoral researcher to education researcher. This research-focused transition has been accompanied by a parallel transition from school teacher to in-service and pre-service teacher educator and university teacher. I use the term 'teacher' to describe my lecturing role intentionally and my reasons for this will become clear later in the chapter. Prior to moving to academia, I spent many happy and successful years as a secondary teacher during which I completed the part-time study of a master's degree. It was during this period that I began to present professional development to in-service teachers. A year after completing that study, I made the decision to return to university full-time to complete my doctoral thesis. I strongly believe that my years as a secondary school teacher positioned me well to fulfil my various roles in academia. In terms of teacher

education, this belief was well-founded. I worked as a lecturer and tutor during my Ph.D. and as a lecturer during my postdoctoral fellowship. These were incredibly positive experiences that convinced me that the transition from school teacher to university teacher would be a positive one.

The reference in the chapter title to becoming and belonging is borrowed from Barbara Kamler and Pat Thomson (2008) who used this term to describe the doctoral writing experience. This phrase summarises perfectly the way I perceive my experiences in making the transition from teacher to academic. I have not felt the same levels of tension in the process of becoming a teacher educator or university teacher, which has always felt like a natural progression. The ways in which my identity as an academic has been influenced and perceived by others have been the source of tension in my journey so far. Such tensions first appeared early in my doctoral study, my initial perceptions of which stood in stark contrast to the collegial experience of my master's degree. I had many years of teaching and leadership experience in the context in which I was researching. I fully appreciated that I was inexperienced in the world of research, but I was certainly not so in the teaching profession and yet I struggled with my perceptions that my teaching expertise was neither recognised nor valued. I was positioned as "expert become novice" (Murray & Male, 2005, p. 136). This was a source of considerable frustration and tension as I struggled to identify with the academic world and leave behind my professional life and identity as a teacher.

Professional identity is not static, rather it is something that develops and changes over time (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). It involves interpretation of self and being recognized as such in a particular context (Gee, 2001). This self-study focuses on aspects of identity formation and change. It examines my journey from teacher to academic and the changes and tensions that have resulted when I've felt compelled to change my identity or when my perceptions of self appeared to differ from others' perceptions or expectations of me. It considers the influences that various aspects of context have on the ways in which identity develops and the tensions that can arise when personal perceptions and values are at odds with those of others within that context. It also questions the impact that personal identity can have on professional identity.

WHO AM I?

My professional life began as a secondary mathematics and science teacher, a career I loved for many years before making the decision to leave high school teaching. Unlike some of my fellow authors in this book, the tensions and challenges I have experienced thus far in my professional life relate neither to gender nor to age. Perhaps they are symptomatic of the length of time I spent teaching before moving to academia – they are related to the apparent differences between my perceptions and those of others of the role that my academic research should play and what is (or should be) important in the role of an academic. My identity as a teacher

continues to influence my developing identity as an academic. These tensions are felt most acutely in my struggle to develop a sense of belonging – a sense of self as an authorised scholar in my field (Wisker, 2008) and an identity with which I can be happy, one that does not conflict with my personal identity and values, and yet also aligns with the perceptions and expectations of others.

IDENTITY

Defining identity is not a simple task and there are various aspects highlighted and perspectives presented in the literature. It is generally agreed that the framing of 'self' is an essential concept, but this may be combined with other concepts such as personal history, image of teaching, cultural context, or professional environment (Beijaard et al., 2004). It has been proposed that identity be recognized as a plurality of sub-identities (Mishler, 1999), which generally harmonise and are related to the individual's different contexts and relationships (Beijaard et al., 2004). People form identities within which they feel comfortable and their identities are influenced by socialisation experiences (Clarke, Hyde, & Drennan, 2013). Their identities develop through ongoing reflective processes of relating personal knowledge and feelings to experiences and through the interpretation and reinterpretation of those experiences (Antonek, McCormick, & Donato, 1997; Kerby, 1991).

Coldron and Smith (1999) identified a tension between agency (the personal dimension of one's work) and what is socially given by the structure that surrounds the individual. Thus, the behaviour and expectations of others can have a powerful influence on the way in which professional identity forms (Reynolds, 1996). Southworth (1995) distinguished between the situational self, which develops through interaction with others, and the substantial self, which is comprised of core beliefs and values and is relatively resistant to change. The substantial self is strongly influenced by life experiences and personal identity. Henkel (2000) argued that the key aspects of academic identity are an individual's unique history, their chosen moral and conceptual frameworks, and their identification "within a defined community or institution by the goods that she or he has achieved" (Clarke et al., 2013, p. 9). What is not clear is the extent to which an individual's identity is influenced when the institution or community fails to value the 'goods' in the same way as that individual.

Identifying similar influences on teacher identity, Connelly and Clandinin (1999) found that institutional stories have a crucial influence on identity. In a study of teacher identity, they found that during a period of change, teachers experienced a loss of their sense of self. Beijaard et al. (2004) described two aspects of teachers' professional identity: the influence of the conceptions and expectations of others on the one hand and what individuals themselves find important in their personal and professional lives on the other. The latter of these is influenced by both practice and personal backgrounds and experiences. This duality is potentially the source of tensions felt by individuals who find themselves in new situations or changing

contexts in which they question their identity and the ways in which others perceive it. In a study of teachers who had recently made a career transition to teacher educators, Murray and Male (2005) reported similar tensions and stress, noting the difficulties faced by early career teacher educators in establishing a new professional identity. They considered the completeness of the transition to be indicated by a close alignment between the substantial and situational selves.

The transition to an academic context clearly results in identity change. Academic identity formation is "influenced by personal attributes, early socialisation experiences, and contextual factors at both doctoral and initial career level" (Clarke et al., 2013, p. 18). Tierney and Rhoads (1993) proposed a framework of organisational socialisation as a means of understanding the ways in which newcomers to academia form identity and come to understand expectations and norms within their new profession. They identified two stages of faculty socialisation: anticipatory and organisational. The first occurs during the doctoral experience when individuals learn the attitudes, actions, and values of the faculty within which they work and they observe and internalise norms of behaviour. The organisational stage builds on the anticipatory stage and occurs during the early academic career. According to Clarke et al. (2013), individuals "face extraordinary challenges to gain membership into the profession" (p.11) and they may find that the learning experiences of their doctoral studies are "at odds with what the individual ultimately finds at the chosen institution" (p. 11). These contentions call into question the ways in which an individual responds to such conflicts. For example, does the individual simply adopt the practices and norms they have observed? What happens when an individual's current identity does not align with these new experiences? Is there the possibility that a conflict might influence an individual's decision to change context rather than change identity? Even when the individual has 'become', is there a sense of 'belonging'?

There are also organisational influences on identity formation when a person is a newcomer in an institution but not to a particular field or profession (Wulff, Austin, Nyquist, & Sprague, 2004), as may be the case when an individual changes institution. Willingness to change institution has been described by some as a signal of commitment to an academic career (Kauffman & Perry, 1989), however, it can place new challenges before the individual in terms of repeatedly learning new contexts – procedures, cultures, and mores within these new contexts (Baldwin, Lunceford, & Vanderlinden, 2005) with the resultant embarkation on new cycles of exploration, transition, and establishment (Hall, 1986).

What is clear from the literature is that identity is neither static nor simple. It is influenced by many factors, including personal beliefs and experiences, contexts, and the socialisation processes that occur within these contexts. The individual continues to develop identity based on reflection and in response to these varied factors. Connelly and Clandinin (1999) used the term 'a story to live by' to describe professional identity formation – these stories enable educators to engage in narrative inquiry to make sense of themselves and their practice, thereby shaping and framing

their professional identity. According to Beijaard et al. (2004), resistance to change may reflect the individual's need to maintain their story to live by.

MY FLIGHTS

I am currently an Associate Professor in a university in Copenhagen. My recent move from Australia to take up this position represents to many a major career (not to mention personal) move. To me it is simply one more step along a path onto which I have often felt I stumbled. What follows is the story of how I came to be here and the turning points along the way. While my journey is unlikely to be unique (in fact I have several friends at various stages along a similar path), my hope is that others might find something within it of value to them on their own pathway and that they may relate to in some way. My stories of the six flights of reflection are not always straightforward. They are mostly chronological, although at times, one might identify multiple flights within a situation or period of time. These flights have sometimes been the result of tensions, and at other times, the cause of new challenges and tensions. In some cases, the flights have been the result of a decision that changing contexts was preferable to an uncomfortable change in identity. Perhaps this is because my situational self was not aligned with my substantial self (Murray & Male, 2005), which was resistant to changes that conflicted with my core beliefs. While writing this chapter, I have relived past frustrations and occasionally, old anxieties have come flooding back. I choose not to dwell on the negatives and cannot hold others accountable for the decisions that I make. Indeed, I have endeavoured to portray each flight as a flight towards, rather than a flight away.

GENERAL FLIGHT

When I graduated from my science degree, I decided to become a secondary teacher, a career path that I followed for many years. In the beginning, other aspects of my life were prioritised and in some ways my strong personal identity prevailed over the need to develop my professional identity. My multiple life roles took precedence over career ambitions, and I must say that I was perfectly content to be an effective and respected teacher, a role with which I strongly identified. If not for two turning points, I may well still be teaching and happily so. The first of these was thanks to my school principal who pushed me to consider promotion and further study. Giving in to her insistence led to my enrolment in a master's degree and an opportunity to conduct research in the USA as a Smithsonian Fellow. The second occurred during my master's studies when several academics suggested I continue my studies. It was the encouragement of these women that gave me the impetus to pursue a Ph.D.

In essence my move to academia was not intended to be a flight from teaching. While I missed school teaching during my Ph.D., I returned to it briefly as part of my research project. Teaching at university during this time was a welcome experience and in many ways did not feel too different from teaching upper secondary school.

I prefer to view this period of time as a logical progression from secondary teaching and since then, my role as a teacher has continued through my work as a teacher educator, both of pre- and in-service teachers. In some ways, I feel that I will always identify as an educator. In the earliest stages of my career transition, it is possible that the strength of my identity as a teacher influenced my ability to identify as an academic. My personal views of the roles that my research and I as an academic should play caused me to question how to make this transition. Certainly this tension surfaced early in my doctoral study. I had a very collegial experience during my master's course and to some extent, the challenge and enjoyment of this experience influenced my decision to enrol full-time in a Ph.D. It would be fair to say that I did not perceive my doctoral experience in the same way. I struggled to identify with some of my colleagues and constantly grappled with my own need to ensure that my research would make a difference to students and teachers. I was confronted with the realisation that more than anything, my research should lead to publications in top-ranked journals – writing for teacher journals was something I could do if I wanted but not something that others might view as important or necessary. Even when I published a book chapter about my research, I was met with the comment from one very senior staff member that it didn't matter whether you published a chapter or not but who the publisher was. These experiences reflect the challenges described by Clarke et al. (2013) that newcomers feel in gaining membership in the academy.

I acknowledge that these attitudes and the advice I received may have been underpinned by good intentions and that they may be symptomatic of the increasingly competitive world in which universities find themselves and the consequent pressure they are under to secure funding. It may also be representative of the need for academics to publish in high profile journals to achieve or maintain tenure or promotion. Whatever the reason, at the time I felt disheartened and I questioned whether I could or should adopt these values. My need for an identity with which I could feel comfortable and which aligned with my substantial self was strong. In the end, I resolved to complete my thesis while considering possible future pathways.

FLIGHT UPWARDS (AND DOWN AND UP AGAIN)

After graduation, I was offered a full-time position as a lecturer at another university, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I felt that the ethos of this university and my role within it closely aligned with both my identity as a teacher and my newly developing identity as an academic. There was a strong focus on the students at the university and on delivering quality teaching coupled with a view that research should benefit others and make a difference in the lives of teachers and students. This move definitely represented a flight upwards and I felt valued and part of a dedicated and collegial department. I felt that sense of belonging that I had struggled to find during my doctoral experience. In a sense this experience aligns with the assertion of Clark et al. (2013) that what the individual experiences at the institution in which they work might be at odds with their doctoral experience unless the two

institutions have similar cultures and structures. In my case, the latter institution was at odds in a very positive way. The feeling of belonging I felt at this university reflects a close alignment between my substantial and situational selves (Murray & Male, 2005).

Unfortunately, a number of family circumstances led to a decision to leave this position and return to my hometown. Despite my previous feelings that my alma mater and I might not be a hand-in-glove fit, I applied and was short-listed for a position as a lecturer there. I was unsuccessful and the reasons given reaffirmed the tensions that I had experienced a year earlier. I felt that my years of experience as a teacher and my high university teaching evaluations counted for little, and that despite the fact that this was also a teaching role, the only aspect of consequence seemed to be the applicants' publications. I am not suggesting that the person who secured the position didn't deserve it, simply that my perception at that time was that some of my strengths were not valued. There is no question that I view research and publication as important and valuable aspects of academic work. At that time, however, I was struggling to find an identity as an academic that aligned with my own views and values – I was still 'becoming' and these experiences certainly didn't make me feel any sense of 'belonging'.

At the same time, in fact in the same phone call, I was offered a postdoctoral fellowship. This represented an opportunity to pursue further research with colleagues who I admired, to work with teachers through professional development, and to teach a postgraduate teacher education course. Ironically this course had been part of the lecturing role that I had failed to secure – I was asked to teach it because my previous teaching experience was viewed as a perfect background for the course. Even now, writing this story causes me frustration. On reflection, I should have voiced this frustration at the time, although I felt that as an early career researcher, my opinions might not be valued or supported. Ever the optimist, I was keen to be proved wrong in my interpretations of the situation. I knew I would be working with a great team of researchers and I thoroughly enjoyed lecturing. I believed that my postdoc was an opportunity to make decisions and direct research activities that I was interested in and that had the potential to directly impact on teachers and students.

FLIGHT DOWNWARD

The work of a postdoctoral fellow can be challenging. I had worked hard to shape the grant application along with the other members of the research team, and throughout the course of the project, two of the three chief investigators acknowledged my contribution to the project on many occasions. I was continuing to learn about research and navigating my way along the path of becoming an academic and to belonging. I was dedicated to ensuring that the project was successful but in the end, postdocs are not always named on research grants so while the capacity to publish is great, the grant work goes largely unacknowledged – at least in a way that can make

a difference to one's career prospects. I paused to reflect on where I was on this path to belonging. I had left a permanent lecturing position to take up a contract position. Toward the end of the second year of the project, there seemed no prospect of a permanent position becoming available and in fact another senior academic stopped me in the corridor to ask if I'd like to work on a second postdoc. I know this was intended to be a supportive gesture and I was flattered at the invitation but, it in some ways, it seemed that I still didn't quite belong.

It would be wrong to portray this period of time as a flight downward without acknowledging the many wonderful experiences and learning opportunities that it provided. Perhaps it was more a flight to a new reality. I felt a true sense of belonging when I was researching and conducting professional development in the schools that were industry partners in the project. On reflection, this is most likely indicative of a strong alignment between substantial and situational selves in such contexts. Perhaps it is also because my professional sub-identities as teacher, teacher educator, and researcher are in tune with my moral and personal framework when I am researching in school contexts (see Beijaard et al., 2004; Henkel, 2000; Mishler, 1999).

I am still unsure as to whether my perceptions of becoming and belonging (or not) relate to my own frames of reference, which are of course influenced by my sense of who I am and what I value. At the same time, I sense that my perceptions of these two states of being align with some members of the academy and not with others, and that alignment or otherwise is influenced by my colleagues' own professional and personal identities. Interestingly, when I work with teachers, I get the sense that they view me both as a teacher and as an academic – in this sense, I have a dual professional identity as perceived by others.

FLIGHT TO THE SIDELINES

In some ways, I have probably always been on the sidelines. I have always been happy to be a teacher and my roles as in-service teacher educator and university teacher have reinforced my sense of identity as a teacher – this has not changed. I am proud of my achievements as a teacher in both secondary and tertiary contexts and the ongoing positive relationships I have with my students. My flight to the sidelines is largely a mental one – it did not occur at a single point in time but rather is an action through which I reflect and try to evaluate the reasons behind the decisions of colleagues and the ethos and chosen directions of the various institutions in which I have worked. I have spent much time in self-reflection, in discussion with teaching colleagues from my days as a secondary school teacher and with new colleagues in academia. In some ways, my postdoctoral work gave me an opportunity for sideline reflection. While I was privileged to have a position that allowed me to be self-directed, I still felt that I was working on someone else's project and often on someone else's ideas. While the investigators on the project were supportive and encouraging mentors and colleagues, early in the project I identified a closely related sub-project that I was keen to pursue and this was strongly discouraged.

The challenge for me lay with the need to pursue directions that I felt best suited my expertise, interests, and research experience. My time spent on the sidelines in reflection allows me to position myself within the institution, and within the network of academics with whom I work. It has often resulted in self-questioning – who I am, who I want to be, and how those identities that I have developed align with where I am and what is expected of me.

After much speculation about the next step after my postdoctoral research, I determined to apply for positions in areas closely aligned with my background, my future goals, and my current level of experience. This process took far less time that I had anticipated and I found myself working in a Danish university as an Associate Professor.

FLIGHT OF PERSEVERATION

My current role is relatively new and in my view, while it is a flight upward professionally, at this point in time, it is best described as a flight of perseveration. One of the greatest challenges is not professional but is profoundly important – I spend lengthy periods of time separated from my anchors in life – my husband and family. Until this point in my career, I have not had to balance (or perhaps compromise) between my strong personal identity as a partner, mother and family member and my professional identity; however, distance and separation have highlighted this challenge. My husband (also an academic with whom I have researched together for several years) has not yet found work in Denmark and at present continues to work in Australia, which is the reason for our frequent separations. He is always incredibly supportive, but this situation has required numerous strategies for persevering. We use social media and communicate by video-calls with family or friends on an almost daily basis and we continue to seek opportunities to work together on research and publishing projects whenever possible.

On a professional level, I have found myself in an institution that is and has been in transition for several years. I am faced with new challenges of becoming and belonging as well as learning about aspects of a new organisational context such as those identified by Baldwin et al. (2005). There are also challenges beyond the organisational level in a wider cultural context – I am learning about a new university system in a new country in a new language with colleagues from a different cultural background to my own. These experiences are not necessarily negative. Indeed, I have felt a sense of belonging with many of my colleagues from very early in this transition and I have a very supportive program leader. My teaching and broader experiences in education were regarded highly by the review panel when I was appointed as an associate professor. This is one of the reasons that I chose to accept the position – I felt that my background as a teacher was valued alongside my academic skills and experience.

At the same time, there are professional challenges. At present I have had no teaching role. Perhaps due to miscommunication during my interview or simply

indicative of a different system, it was not until I arrived that I discovered that teacher training does not occur in universities in Denmark. This means that the education students at my university are either post-graduate students or undergraduate students studying a field of education other than teaching (e.g., educational psychology or educational sociology). I was employed to work in science education but no courses currently exist in this field. Whether a resolution can be found remains to be seen but I remain hopeful. Another important challenge has been learning about the research environment in Denmark. I have adapted by forming networks with members of the research office who have been very helpful both in helping me locate grant opportunities and in writing the applications, which often require sections in Danish.

Other professional challenges are internal – my own need to understand how things work and to feel that I can make a valuable contribution in my new environment strongly influences the decisions I make and even the ways in which I perceive events or actions. I wrote this section when I was at a science teacher conference in central Jutland in Denmark. Mine was the only workshop presented in English. Before the conference, I was concerned that what I had to say may not quite align with Danish school contexts. Would anyone come given that the parallel presentations were all in Danish? I resolved to work through these feelings and present what I know from my work in Australia has been valuable to teachers there. I needn't have worried – the room was full and the participants came from primary, secondary, and tertiary science education settings. I have realised that I have the capacity to make a difference through research and I feel that I have developed a new identity as an academic with which I am comfortable and that aligns with my personal identity and values.

For now, I feel encouraged to persevere with the challenges of separation from family, learning a new language, new systems, and new contexts with new colleagues, while maintaining connections to my previous colleagues and professional contexts. I was of course aware of many of these challenges when I accepted the position. While my role is certainly challenging, I have the freedom to pursue research interests that are important to me and I feel more in control of my academic career than ever before. I have the opportunity to learn about educational systems in Europe and to access research conferences and colleagues more easily than I could from Australia and I have the time and space to write both academic and professional papers. While I still need to persevere with my sense of belonging at times (more often than not due to language barriers or systemic or contextual differences), I have a stronger sense of having become.

FINAL FLIGHT AND WHERE TO NEXT?

I don't feel that I have flown for the last time and at this point in time I'm not sure where my final flight will lead. I am in a place where I chose to be and I am enjoying the challenges. While at the time of writing, my position does not include teaching, this is something I hope to change in the long term. Time will tell. I also miss the

opportunities I had in Australia to work closely with in-service teachers, although this too may change over time. I rather suspect that in the long term, my final flight will take me closer to where I began, at least geographically. To do what in particular, and in which institution remain to be seen and that's part of the excitement and challenge of academia. In a perfect world, it would be to a role in which I could combine my love of teaching and my enthusiasm for research to make a difference to those around me. Perhaps this will require my final flight to be in a new direction altogether.

Through the process of writing this chapter, I have come to realise that my identity certainly comprises several sub-identities as described by Mishler (1999). At times, my sense of self as a teacher is stronger than my academic identity, while at others, the reverse is true. For me, this is often situational – related to the context or circumstance. For example, when I work with in-service teachers, I adopt both identities. When I work with students, I am still the teacher (although I bring my own and others' research to this work), when I present at a research conference, my academic identity overshadows my teacher identity (although it is always there in the background). These experiences reflect findings in the literature that we take on different but related identities depending on the social context (see Beijaard et al., 2004). In line with Reynolds' (1996) suggestion that context, others' expectations, and what an individual allows to impact on him or her affects identity, I have learned that I need to identify, not only as a teacher or as an academic but also with those around me and with the institution in which I work. This need is powerful and constantly influences my decision to persevere or to take flight to new opportunities. Above all, I believe that my need to align aspects of my professional identity with my personal identity, values, and beliefs will continue to guide the decisions I make and the flights I undertake.

CONCLUSION

I have a situational professional self that adapts to changing situations and contexts but which to a large extent is governed or at least underpinned by my substantial and personal selves. Over time, my substantial self has evolved through a process of ongoing reflection to account for new or changing beliefs and values. These identities have become more closely aligned over time as I have come to understand and develop a better sense of who and what I am, what I want to be, and what I can or should allow to influence this sense of self. My experiences echo those described in the literature (e.g., Clarke et al., 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Henkel, 2000; Murray & Male, 2005). My identity is strongly shaped by my personal values, goals, sense of integrity, and loyalty to others. I feel a stronger sense of belonging with colleagues who share my goals or who at least respect them. Although contextual and social factors may not always have a direct impact on my identity, my perceptions of them may cause me to pause and reflect. Often it is the result of this reflection that determines whether or not they exert an influence. It is the misalignment of such factors that is the source of tension and challenge. In the end, it is a question of balance – the path to satisfaction in becoming and belonging requires alignment between personal and professional

selves. Perhaps beyond becoming and belonging, the most important thing is being – being happy with who you are and what you do and being able to align professional decisions with personal values. I'm sure that the cycles of reflection and change will continue but that I now have a stronger sense of self with which to make the journey.

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NARELLE LEMON

5. SENDING OUT A TWEET

Finding New Ways to Network in Academia

PRELUDE

When we take into account the history of concerns around stress, wellbeing, work/ life balance and sustainability in academic life (Barrett & Barrett, 2007; Edwards et al., 2009; Fitzgerald & Wilkinson, 2010; Kinman et al., 2006, 2008) it is imperative to find new ways of working in this environment. Not only are young academics and early career researchers calling for a change in how we operate, but higher education is changing, and new ways of connecting, collaborating and forming partnerships are being encouraged, as to new ways to disseminate research to wider audiences both nationally and internationally (Carrigan, 2014). As a reflective practitioner utilising Schwab's (1969) flights, my lived experience as an early career research woman is shared to explore formal and informal connections and networking to navigate the environment of academia. Of particular focus is the use of Twitter and social networking sites as an academic to engage with other academics as a part of a collective process of challenging what it means to be an academic at this current moment in time. The narrative shared highlights how it is possible to seek out academics whom inspire and are being innovative while exploring effective strategies and possibilities of how to be a research active early career researcher.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces my voice and flights connected to finding new ways to network. Specifically my telling and retelling of my lived experiences is closely connected to being the change I would like to see in academia; that is being generous in sharing how to be a successful researcher. The pressures to research and thus publish to disseminate findings have never been more of a focus for higher education. University rankings, strategic and operational plans are all highlighting the importance both for the institutions and the academics on staff. This chapter looks at how I shifted through the barriers and challenges to focus more on my research trajectory post doctoral thesis submission and how I developed a strong writing habit in order to develop my research profile. Key is the shift in how I see myself as an early career researcher who has been able to set goals in approaching networking, both in face-to-face and virtual spaces. This agency has enacted new inclusive ways of working that disrupt behaviours and

values that are both disturbing and confronting to me in academia. The cultivating and seeking out my professional needs has been paramount in navigating the conflicting competitive environment that academic can at times encourage. The personal-professional identity is presented that has had to be addressed to shift this work habit is shared as I, as an early career female academic, manoeuvre the contemporary demands of universities. The reflective nature of this chapter shares how personal and collegial pressure can be both confronting and motivating, and how networking and seeking advice from others both face-to-face and online through social media is beneficial in achieving a successful academic writing habit and finding new ways to be an academic or as Carrigan (2014) calls it *being an open-source academic*.

WHO AM I?

Through ongoing reflection I position myself as an ever developing woman who balances a life as an academic with personal pursuits of art making, running, Pilates, mountain bike riding, and personal relationships that help me to be a well rounded individual. I am an early career researcher within the academic world striving to find new ways of working that disrupt some of the boundaries that present themselves while being a young woman in my 30s. I engage in social media professionally, both blogging and Twitter, as a way to engage with others who are searching for smarter ways of working and displaying a generosity that supports inquiring into learning and teaching as well as research.

   I grew up in regional Victoria in a country town full of its own expectations about what it meant to be a young woman. I left soon after finishing school to study in Melbourne and have thrived in the opportunities that have been forever present. After studying to be a music teacher, and discovering these dreams were in fact not mine, I was drawn to making a difference through research and working with future educators. I worked fulltime in schools across Melbourne and in rural Victoria and Tasmania in the arts and as a generalist primary school teacher while undertaking both my Masters and doctoral studies. A strong drive to look at problems in new and creative ways drives my enthusiasm to be innovative in approaching education and the arts while working with a vast variety of people who continually inspire me to look at the world in different ways. Working in academia feeds this way of working for me and continually inspires me to look at how I can contribute to new knowledge and ways of being.

ACADEMIC WOMEN AND NETWORKING

When we take into account the history of concerns around stress, wellbeing, work/life balance and sustainability in academic life (Barrett & Barrett, 2007; Edwards et al., 2009; Fitzgerald & Wilkinson, 2010; Kinman et al, 2006; 2008), as a young academic it is imperative to find new ways of working in this space. This calls for a consciousness that can observe, reflect, and disrupt (Lemon & Garvis, 2014). Not only are young academics and early career researchers calling for a change in how

we operate, but higher education is changing and calling for a change. New ways of connecting, collaborating and forming partnerships are being encouraged as to new ways to disseminate research to wider audiences both nationally and internationally (Carrigan, 2014). Transferring networking skills from face to face situations seems only logically when considering how to work in online spaces to build connections, possibilities for future research connections, and to assist in the work associated to being an academic. New ways of working call for new ways of networking, especially in these unsettled times of higher education where there is an illusion that learning and knowledge production is certain and quantifiable" (Smith, 2014). As Fitzgerald (2014) reiterates "we address ways in which knowledge is now shaped, produced and reworked to meet international demands for productive workforces" (p. 1).

Relationship building and networking in academia have long been connected to mentoring (Burke, 1984; Kram, 1985), however, as Rothstein & Davey (1995) report, a broader base of supporting networks has also been identified as influential to career success especially in areas of enhancing job performance, career advancement, and expressive value (i.e. providing psychosocial support). In their study with 800 Canadian university academics, Rothestein & Davey (1995) found that "women had larger networks than men (primarily because of increased number of other women in their networks compared with men – the number of men in networks did not differ between male and female faculty), and received more support, particularly in the area of psychosocial benefits" (p. 24). The research found that "female faculty realise the importance of social support more than men, and make the effort to extend their networks to a greater extent than men to obtain higher levels of support" (p. 24). Likewise, Mavin & Bryans (2002) investigated women academics of management in the UK, who have used informal, collective strategies to challenge existing boundaries of management and their organisations. They reported that the benefit of networking "has facilitated the click of recognition to progress towards changing our organisations (not just changing ourselves) by developing our own political agenda and strategies for action" (p. 249). The action of networking has been to reinforce confidence to become a participant in

> the emancipatory process of sharing our experiences [while] we have raised our consciousness to the inequalities we face. The reflexivity we build into this research and into the network process allows us to become self-conscious about many issues otherwise hidden. (p. 248)

Studies such as these reinforce the value of relationships in academia. They also send a clear message that formal and informal connections are important and crucial in environments such as universities. For women the interpersonal skills of seeking out others to talk, problem-solve, and move forward are strengths. The searching out of networking highlights the constant scrutinizing to see if we as women fit with the group and to consider if the organisation is a strong fit, often an evaded and hidden story, but nonetheless an important element (Fitzgerald, 2014; Kanter, 1993). There is a tension between wanting to fit in and not doing what others expect

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so you fail or even worse set yourself up for "risk of being isolated" (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 85).

"Establishing or belonging to a supportive and trustworthy network of women … can lesson feelings of loneliness and isolation" (Fitzgerald, 2014, p. 106). These networks offer an opportunity for social exchange where "reciprocal and trust can be built around informal relationships and professional obligations" (p. 106). There is a safe place and a space created and grown that allows for the sharing of experiences, the bouncing off of ideas, and reflecting about actions. A sense of community forms through these practices. As Fitzgerald reinforces, women "participate in ongoing informal networks that [rely] on a range of self-directed and self-selected activities such as meeting colleagues for a coffee, seeking out colleagues in similar roles" (p. 106).

Knowledge today is most often produced in collaboration. It is transmitted in multi-mediated modalities and utilised in transformative ways (Heath, 2014). However, in advancing knowledge and transferring this to contexts for continued impact and reflection uptake can be very slow. Social media is a new form of communication that is changing behaviours and expectations of students, educators, researchers, employers and funding bodies (Minocha & Petre, 2012). Carrigan (2014) introduces the notion of the open-source academic. The rise of this way of working is influencing how knowledge is transferred, and how networks for formed, maintained and grown. When thinking about how new ways of working in academia can utalise networking it is important to also consider how these strategies and approaches can enhance key expectations connected to being an academic – such as research productivity. Carrigan (2014) discusses how blogging and subsequent microblogging to disseminate to a wider audience can be "an experiment in writing a book, one idea at a time" with a "series of threads" (para 3) that link ideas and invite feedback as ideas are being processed. This type of working is "an outlet for continued scholarship" (para 4) that supports the "integration of the blog into his working practices, such that it constitutes the starting point for traditional scholarship rather than something in opposition to it" (para 6). The cultivating of global peers giving feedback and thoughts on research in this space is very innovative in academia currently.

In a study with her colleagues at the Open University in the UK, Fransman (2013) concluded Twitter usage (and non-usage) was a new way of working that was situated in the development of a strong digital footprint that would enhance an individual's influence in academic networks. As the largest study to date on academics who tweet, it was found that better networking was present as to the ability to develop strong scholarly practices. Budge et al. (in press) in their study on Twitter use as academics produced evidence of new open academic identities, and through their experiences and observations of academic communities of practice suggest that Twitter is a space for actively shaping scholarly identities that challenges behavioral norms. Thus, as Pearce et al. (2010) contend new open scholarly behaviour is enabled by the uptake of new technologies. This chapter explores these notions further by

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hearing one perspective of a woman utilising Twitter as a form of networking to seek social support and explore professional knowledge and ways of being a productive researcher associated to the professional role of being an academic.

MY FLIGHTS

In sharing my lived experiences through the framework of Schwab's (1969) "flights from the field" I engage with the notion that "story as data" (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p. 7) as a valid contribution to narrative inquiry. As a reflective practitioner utilising Schwab's (1969) flights, narrative of my researcher in- and on-action is examined as I reflect on the alignment between theory and practice. This reflective process supports that identification and discovery of stories to live by (Connelly & Clandinin, 1998; Huber and Clandinin, 2005) and demonstrates how writing and rewriting as a way to explore ones stories and to reflect (Richardson, 1994) is a powerful action to process one's own lived experience while connecting with others through the sharing journey.

GENERAL FLIGHT

I came to studying a doctorate from a space where I needed to find out more. I wanted to understand more about learning and teaching and what was happening with the young people I was working with in educational settings. I was also questioning repeated patterns of curriculum and policy that just didn't seem to work. I wanted to know why and find a solution. I had this innate feeling there was more for me. Others viewed working full time in a school while studying as a high unnecessary workload but for me it seemed natural. It was inspiring and motivating. The inquiry went hand in hand and each drove one another. Undertaking doctoral research informed my practice as a teacher.

My supervisors heavily influenced my higher degree research experiences. My Masters supervisor had been particularly influential in my trajectory and had initiated my first professional five-year plan conversation. This was really the beginning of me articulating a shift into academia and my love for research. It was then my doctoral supervisors who assisted this happening with an opportunity to begin my first sessional teaching of teacher education subjects. This assisted me to be "in" the academy while still being "out". I could observe and participate before committing fully to a career in academia. It didn't take long for me to become hooked. I could really see the connection and possibilities in this space of influencing future educators. While undertaking my doctoral studies and still teaching full time in a school, these opportunities provided clarity in my teaching and ability to reflect in and on action about curriculum, policy, education, and my place. The professional dialogue supported my advocacy of *all* being learners in the classroom, no matter what age. There was also something very appealing for me in working across multiple discipline areas. This way of working is still present in my research

approach. Working across disciplines excites me and sparks the enthusiasm I so thrive on seeing connections and transferring these into practice.

FLIGHT UPWARDS

I was so excited to be appointed to my first full time ongoing academic position. I was halfway through my doctorate, had experience as a casual academic and was building a profile in industry that I could bring with me to inform my work in teacher education. I was delighted to be in a world where knowledge production and transfer were focuses. Theorizing and applying new ideas were key drivers for me. I was rather seduced, and still am, by developing a new framework and then seeing it being put into practice within different settings. I always wanted to be an academic who could contribute to making a difference to teachers with practical application of theory. In my first 6 months I thrived on the chance to be innovative and to influence new ways of working. In hindsight I was still naive, as I didn't realise what enthusiasm meant to colleagues who perhaps were not as fresh faced, passionate and energized as I was. I didn't realise I would be seen as a threat. I hadn't considered professional jealousy and the competitive environment academia can be known for. I certainly wasn't approaching my work or relationships this way. I had always been passionate about my work and loved the opportunity to be inspired by a new project. My saying yes seemed to be noticed by others who said no more often than not. I didn't have the resilience at this time to be able to handle the reaction from colleagues and thus begun a downward flight. My identity was dislocated – as an educator, learner, academic and young woman. I found this most distressing and my core beliefs and values were challenged. I was fascinated and also intrigued at critical times in an academic year that all of a sudden bore witness to ideas, inspiration and innovation grind to a halt. Stress and difficulties for colleagues to juggle the pressures of academia seemed to play out in the transference of some not so desirable behavior. Some I witnessed and some I was on the end of. A clear message was emerging for me that although noticed no one would step in and say stop. This all contributed to a flight downward for me.

FLIGHT DOWNWARD

We are constantly being told we have to research and publish. Being *research active* is a buzz term of contemporary academia. The pressure to be research productive is like a pressure cooker – there is a boiling point, steam is gushing out through tiny cracks on the edge, and it's often too hot to handle. Research and knowledge production is an intricate part of how we position ourselves as academics and is how we promote the work we do. I am often puzzled with how few people talk about what they are doing. I mean really talk, that is share, provide insights or strategies in how they do what they do. *How many academics actually share how they do research to become and maintain research active status?* I think in all reality not many do share.

Actually, I believe we often hear more from people telling you to write, publish, and research more who are themselves technically research inactive.

For me it was hearing comments such as "if I had to do it hard you do too", or "I had to figure it out so you should" or comments that were rather personal such as "shouldn't you be taking time out to have children?" or "I'm surprised at how focused you are being as I thought you would stop and have a baby" that were most confronting when trying to have conversations about research. For me I had not made connections to my professional questions about research to my personal choices. My flight downward was closely attached to comments and ways of being that were confronting and conflicting. They challenged how I saw myself and constructed my professional identity. Upon considerable reflection, and searching for social support from trusted colleagues in and out of the academy, I was able to see experiences such as these as blockers and diversionary experiences. These blockers actually spurred me on more to challenge this way of being in academia. I approached my academic career with the philosophy of *why not be the change I would like to see.* So as I moved through being passively aggressively being told to figure it out myself I continued to talk to others and seek out people who would actually talk. *If I was trying to figure it out how many other people were?*

FLIGHT TO SIDELINE

The immediate time post doctorate was a difficult time for me. I didn't have the post blues connected to being so close to the research and production of a product that are often talked about. I had the post resentment. I was actually really quite angry about the environment I felt like I was moving "in" and "out" of. I was finding the politics of higher education confronting and I was blind sighted by unprofessional behaviour by colleagues. My general health and wellbeing suffered as I found solace in unproductive coping strategies. I continually questioned why and each time I tried to step up and be the best version of me I found that I would fall down, or be rather be pushed down. In some ways these experiences enabled me to reflect and stand to the sidelines but in the moment they were challenging and confusing. I couldn't understand why the submission of my doctorate was a trigger for silence or negative comments. For so long I had been hearing "get your doctorate it will open so many doors". Now that I had my doctorate I seemed to have just opened the wire door that was covering the metal reinforced doors. This door seemed fused closed by some. If it hadn't been for my supervisors who could coach me through the confusing times I think I would have found myself out of academia. It just surprised me at how many fellow academics behaved in threatened ways rather than collegial and supportive ways. I think if I heard the comment "I had to do it hard so should you" or "I didn't become a professor to help people like you" one more time I was going to explode. I had been privileged to have supervisors for my doctoral studies who were open minded, encouraging and made me think so I couldn't understand why some colleagues were behaving this way and continued to without any self-awareness of

impact. These experiences really made me question the environment in which I was positioning myself, and indeed the gender games that seemed to be enacted. For some reason I had thought perhaps more experienced academic females would have been more helpful but actually it was the male professors, professional research staff, and young female early career researchers who assisted me in being able to shift forward and see this behaviour for what it was. I found these barriers very unproductive in attempting to build a research profile post doctorate. The realisation of this made me step to the sideline and reflect upon what type of academic I wanted to be and whom I wanted to access as mentors and research colleagues. It is here in my flight to the sidelines that reflective practice has facilitated my transformed practice.

FLIGHT OF PERSEVERATION

My world as an academic opened up when I discovered Twitter. Prior to exploring social media professionally I was in a state of confusion, frustration and exhaustion. I was entering a revaluation stage of my career and I was very much buried in emotions connected closely to questioning academia. I was six months post graduating from my doctorate and I was beginning to refocus on research possibilities and building partnerships to develop my skills and build my research profile. The institution where I had been employed at the time was emerging on a time of change. For me this was exciting but for many of my colleagues this was confronting whereby change, accountability and research active pressures where bringing out some undesirable behaviour. This energy was very disruptive and was a trigger for me to find others outside of my faculty and university to work and network with. In my adventures of "putting myself out there" I began to overhear some academics outside of teacher education talking about how they were engaging with social media to support their networking and sense of belonging. My interest was sparked and I set myself the challenge to establish a Twitter profile to evaluate if it could be a space for me to engage with professionally. Part of me approached this with hesitation and the thought "hmmm, do I have the time to engage with another social media?" and the other part of me was "I wonder how this works professionally, I'm fascinated to see what else is possible with Twitter beyond celebrities and the latest fashion trends".

Within a week I was hooked. I was amazed at how many hashtags[1] existed to support academia and research – there was #highered #AcWriMo and #PhDchat to just begin with. I was also taken aback with the links I made with colleagues outside of my current faculty who also were using Twitter for professional interactions. The incidental conversations about Twitter use, insights gained and connections made allowed me to develop the confidence to tweet. I soon realised I had to establish a professional account and a personal account to deliberately refocus the content I accessed and also shared. In hindsight my nickname as my Twitter handle (subconsciously thinking perhaps I would not be in the Twittersphere for long) would not be my first choice for a professional identity however, it has become a branding that enables me to become an approachable individual virtually and with those I meet face-to-face. In some ways

my Twitter profile, linked to my blog where I share my initial research ideas that inform my more formal academic publications, and digital identity helped me emerge from behind the metal door that seemed fused shut into a new world of innovation, collaboration, open communication, support, and collegiality. Others engaging with Twitter were also trying to figure out how to be an active researcher and productive academic in the changing times of higher education but were doing so with a much more supportive and generous approach. My fellow Tweeters were being the change I wanted to be. There was a clear disruption to the competitive nature that is associated to academia. As Budge et al. (in press) reiterate that participating in the use of Twitter as academics with other academics is a part of a collective process of challenging what it means to be an academic. Working productively, writing hints, productivity hints, and ongoing support and encouragement are all enacted and expected academic behaviours on Twitter. This way of working is challenging the landscape of scholarly publishing "with a preponderance of open-source academics" (Carrigan, 2014, para 10). I was very attracted to this way of working and it contributed considerably to my flight of perseveration.

Twitter became my vehicle in which to begin to disrupt the competitive nature and hierarchy of academia that is often associated to the performance culture of higher education (Flaherty, 2014). My Twitter use has moved from engaging with this social media professionally for ideas, keeping in the loop on up to date information, and engaging with other educators to also being a digital tool for my teaching and dissemination of my research. I access information that I share with my students as well as introduce them to Twitter as a digital access point to resources. My access point to information has widened and I enjoy the opportunity of sharing this with students in the higher education context as well. It is especially exciting when students who begin to engage with Twitter have opportunities emerge that they had never even considered.

My ability to disseminate my research has widened also where I share my work and seek feedback from over 1606 Twitter followers (at time of publication). In linking my blog I have had over 14,600 (at time of publication) views since its establishment in early 2012. Then by utilising links to my academic.com profile I can see how many people are accessing my research and downloading my publications. Recently I shared a paper that within 48 hours had 136 downloads. As an early career researcher I could never be able to reach this wide audience without engaging in global social media networks. The power and breath of this way of disseminating is far more outreaching than in traditional ways of working. This approach is especially disrupting the traditional ways of working in academia and pushing the boundaries in reporting the impact of research as an early career researcher.

Twitter has become for me an access point for impact information that I may not normally have had the opportunity to see at such an early stage of my career. The innovative ideas that are shared are inspiring and motivating for me. I thoroughly enjoy the chance to hear other perspectives and pose questions. The chance to listen as well as be heard is also appealing in a world where continued growth and meaning

making require active participation and communication. The most profound impact for me has been the chance to engage with others on a global level that I would not normally be able to connect with, listen to, or ask questions to. In some cases the Twittersphere has allowed for contact with a well-established researcher that I would not normally have access to nor feel like I could contact due to my perceived reading of their availability. Twitter breaks these walls down as contact over time and the concise communication of what it is you actually like about their work and what you want to inquire further into is made possible in 140 character tweets.

FINAL FLIGHT AND WHERE TO NEXT?

Like many others using social media, we take risks in enacting our professional selves very publicly in the online space. In addition, there is the risk taking connected to forging new communication patterns, networks, collaborations, and behaviours. This behaviour of challenging norms becomes riskier when we consider how our institutions monitor our online behaviour (Mewburn & Thomson, 2013). However, what comes with participating in these online spaces for me is a renewed, energized and focused community of academics who I can network with. There is a #circleofniceness who are available to proof read a publication, #SUAW (Shut up and write) academics who are ready to focus their time and undertake several #pomodoro sessions (a strategy to dedicate blocks of time to writing). In the month of November #AcWriMo (Academic Writing Month) becomes a dedicated time to write and support others with generous tweets of encouragement and focus to achieve high levels of dissemination of research. We even set goals for accountability on a GoogleDocs spreadsheet where we can record our daily word counts and research focuses. This is shared via Twitter globally. Any questions about flow of ideas, addressing writer's block or reference requirements are quickly met with help and often multiple perspectives to support the writing process.

   I have formed an early career researcher women network of academics I have met through networking online and face-to-face. This is where the confidence about approaching research and disrupting the barriers to being an academic begin to form a normal way of working. We are consciously helping each other, and others, to work in ways that doesn't conform to the unproductive ways of working we have noticed and been confronted by in our lived experiences. Networking and linking these academics all together for a face to face exploration of being women in academia provides further opportunity and time to unpack strategies, provide support, and discover new ways of working to be successful contemporary academic women.

CONCLUSION

Networks are critical to nurture oneself and cultivate an academic identity that aligns core values and beliefs. We can seek out academics who inspire, find researchers who are being innovative, and explore active strategies and possibilities of how

to be a research active early career researcher. Social media accelerates this with the global anytime, anywhere self-directed new way of working – a wonderful opportunity to have agency. This is where opportunity exists to be "who we are as individuals and to be true to what we do in what we think and value" (McApline & Åkerlind, 2010, p.4).

Laurel Richardson (1994) reiterates the process of writing and rewriting and then rewriting as a way to explore ones stories and to reflect. Engaging in social media as an academic reiterates the process of focusing one's research profile and exploring new ways to inquire, disseminate, and connect with likeminded academics. Composing a tweet in 140 characters helps negotiate ourselves within the contemporary academic world. Engaging with Twitter also enables building up an instant and personalized Twitter feed (Mollet et al., 2011). It is globalized and accessible anytime anywhere. In this space we have choice about what content we engage with and whom we engage with.

As I have lived, told, retold, and relived my life stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 1998) connected to being an early career researcher I have had to negotiate my way of being within and across the various contexts both face to face and virtually. The messiness and generation of a professional digital identity (Mewburn & Thomson, 2013) has been invigorating for me. I enjoy exploring possibilities of how the landscape of scholarly publishing can look different. I have found a new way of working that enables me to share my thoughts and ideas about research while also developing learning and teaching. I can disseminate, ask questions, share my work, and be connected with fellow academics whom also value this way of working. My story, is like many others, and the more we share contemporary ways of disrupting undesirable practices in academia the more it is possible to be the change we want to see as female academics. Informal networks can be engaged with as connective, collaborative and a generous community to enhance research profiles and trajectories.

NOTE

[1] The # symbol, called a hashtag, is used to note keywords or topics in a tweet. It is created organically as a way to categorise messages or themes

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BEING IN BUT SEEN AS OUT:
THIRD SPACES OF ACADEMIA

TSEEN KHOO

6. RIGHT BACK WHERE WE STARTED FROM

Circular Career Migration

PRELUDE

In contrast to the narrative of a single flight from academia, this chapter talks about my circular career experiences with academia and university administration roles. By writing it, I want to erode static notions of 'being an academic', while also discussing the costs of negotiating my career agility. The emphasis for many post-Ph.D. career narratives is on the challenges of poor academic employment prospects, and justifying non-academic (or 'alternative academic') career outcomes for graduates. This is a necessary conversation to have, and one that reduces the power of the long-standing belief that academia is the one true way for those with a doctorate. But what happens when the pros and cons of different jobs change in their appeal over time? Can you move between roles, and how does it alter your employability in each area? My experience signals that current academic formations in Australia do not support track-record diversity, despite institutional rhetoric about an inclusive and collaborative workforce.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the past fifteen years of my career. It is a career that has shifted between academic and administrative roles several times. The roles have been mostly fixed-term, replete with anxiety about work performance, job insecurity, and the soul-searching that being part of the academic precariat entails (Kimber, 2003; Nobauer, 2012; and Standing, 2014). My reasons for moving from one type of role to another varied; some moves were voluntary, others were not.

Each stage has had its own set of challenges and liberations, and transitioning from each has required much stock-taking around the desired quality of work and home life. Having completed a doctorate and become embedded in the academic environment, I found it difficult to perceive of support for career choices beyond the university. The terrain of post-Ph.D. career choices is rapidly changing now, with multiple international studies confirming that an academic career is an outcome for only a minority of graduates (Morrison, Rudd, and Nerad, 2011; Kaplan, 2012; and Fitzenberger and Schultze, 2014). Within institutions themselves, however, there remains a "lingering pro-academic bias" (Kaplan, 2012, p. 536) that works against

the reality of the job market. I knew there were *job* options beyond academia, but I had limited information on *career* prospects.

While it has felt at times that I was running parallel career paths by moving between academic and 'alternative academic' positions, and that these paths worked against each other, they have recently converged in the first continuing academic position I have held.

WHO AM I?

I am a 1.5 generation Australian of Chinese Malaysian heritage. For me, being 1.5 generation (Bartley, 2010) meant that I experienced the pressure to go to university but refused to enter the commonly expected professions of doctor, lawyer, dentist, or engineer. I chose instead to study literature and Australian cultural politics and, with encouragement from various lecturers and mentors, I ended up doing a Ph.D. I had very little idea of what the degree could mean besides validating me for an academic career. I persisted and completed it, despite my growing ambivalence about being a lecturer in a tertiary environment that seemed to promise few career prospects.

Having work experience across several sectors during my undergraduate and postgraduate years, I knew I would be able to get a non-academic job. Though I still feared I might not get a *satisfying* non-academic job, I was disheartened by academia and the seeming lack of positions for someone with my research strengths and topic expertise.

On submission of my doctorate, I started work as a university policy and projects officer and helped set up the University of Queensland (UQ) Graduate School. I thought I had happily left academia behind. A couple of years later, however, the itch to go back to doing research prompted me to apply for a postdoctoral fellowship.

This three-year research-only UQ fellowship gave me the space and time to boost my track-record and profile such that I was able to secure a second research-only fellowship position at Monash University, Melbourne. This second fellowship was an academic Holy Grail for me at the time: five years, research-only, and well resourced. My work in this position shifted me into different fields of academic engagement, though it all seemed coherent to me at the time in terms of the work's theoretical and conceptual foundations.

While the fellowship was a five-year one, my total time at Monash University was closer to six and a half years, accounting for the two periods of maternity I had while there. I faced the end of this fellowship contract with two young children and a mortgage, and with no likely academic job prospects.

Shortly after my contract finished, I secured my first ever continuing position as a research grant developer at RMIT University. This was an administrative role, a 'non-academic' role. I was in love with this job unreservedly for at least two years. I did, again, miss doing research, and the freedom and resources to pursue intellectual issues *as my job*. After just over three years in this role, I had the same hankering for a return to research, so I started looking for an academic job again. That was in late 2013.

Right now? Almost fifteen years after the award of my Ph.D., I have returned to academia in my first continuing lecturer's position. I am currently a lecturer in research education and development, and the academic identity that might be relevant to this role is still very much in flux.

OPPORTUNITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The waves of tertiary sector change, and the increased uncertainty in (and shrinking of) the Australian academic job market over the last thirty years is well documented and discussed, with a fair amount of research on the particular situation of Early Career Researchers (ECRs) (Bazeley et al., 1996; Petersen, 2011) and recent nuanced work on the wellbeing and demographic shape of the contemporary Australian academy (Bexley, James, and Arkoudis, 2011; Fitzgerald, Gunter, and White, 2012; Strachan et al., 2012).

For fixed-term researchers in Australian universities, of which I was one for two fellowships across nine and a half years, there is no real career path. As Broadbent, Troup, and Strachan (2013, p. 290) state: "most Ph.D. qualified researchers in universities work, often for decades, on fixed term contracts at the lowest academic levels with little chance of permanency or promotion". Akerlind (2005), in a study on postdoctoral researchers and their institutional positioning, finds that there is a disconnection between career options for postdocs and the standing belief that these positions prepare researchers for longer-term academic careers.

While projections about the ageing academic workforce held the promise of a jobs 'boom' (Hugo, 2005; Hugo and Morriss, 2010), this has not taken place as one might imagine. The sector has been marked by the attrition of continuing roles and extremely high growth in academic casualisation (May, 2012; May, Peetz, and Strachan, 2013; Ryan et al, 2013). Opportunities to establish an academic career, then, have been diminishing overall, and those in casual, sessional, or short-term contract roles face challenging choices about their careers.

Because these reduced opportunities in academia are mapped against a steady growth in numbers of Ph.D. graduates (Pearson, Evans, and Macauley, 2008; Dobson 2011), there has been a concomitant – and necessary – increase in writing on alternative academic (alt-ac) and post-academic pathways (Nowviskie, 2011; Whitson, 2012), and issues for those who leave academia (aka 'quit lit'[1]). This work, while prevalent and with many active voices in social media, has yet to be well represented in scholarly literature. Overwhelmingly, however, this work on alt-ac and post-ac trajectories are one way. Rarely do they address cyclic career trajectories, for example, that move between academic and professional roles several times.

MY FLIGHTS

I now introduce my flights that uncover and focus on my circular career experiences with academia and university administration roles.

GENERAL FLIGHT

After completing my doctorate in literary and cultural studies in 1999, I decided I did not want to be the kind of academic I saw around my department's corridors. No-one seemed particularly happy with their lot, and there was a thick, pervasive negativity in conversations about academic job prospects (from all levels: postgraduate peers through to established professors). Many of my peers were uprooting their lives for short-term lecturing contracts in regional or interstate institutions, hoping to get some runs on the board academically, and that these roles may turn into longer-term options.

None of this made the idea of university lecturing appear to be a desirable career option. Bazeley et al's (1996) report captures perfectly the institutional and sector environment that surrounded me. It signalled the growing and significant dissatisfaction of ECRs who felt that their contributions were "deferred, blocked or dissipated" by the academic system (Bazeley et al, 1996, p. xviii).

Despite my post-Ph.D. response of 'walking away from' academia as a career, I have spent the majority of my working life at universities. There are many improvements that can be made to the academic sector, but being surrounded and engaging with intellectually curious peers, compelling research and education projects, and a focus on ideas is a combination that can be hard to trump. Add to that the usually generous bureaucratic provisions for leave and equity, and here I still am.

FLIGHT UPWARDS

This section covers two periods of my career: happily throwing myself into a non-academic professional job, then returning to academia through two research fellowships. I view them as periods of major intellectual and professional growth, periods that took me through post-academic and early career researcher roles.

I spent a lot of time thinking over non-academic options after my Ph.D., and discussing choices with my well-established network of colleagues at University of Queensland (UQ), where I had undertaken all my university degrees. I managed to secure work as a policy and projects officer for the newly established UQ Graduate School immediately after I submitted my Ph.D. (1999-2001). The job was a professional role, and classified on the HEW (Higher Education Worker) scale.

My honeymoon period with this job lasted about two years. After the intense self-doubt and intellectual hand-wringing that accompanied the completion of the doctoral dissertation, not to mention my cynicism about academic job opportunities after graduation, it was an unadulterated joy to be in a position where I had a better sense of job security, and felt I was doing a good job and being valued for it. Looking back now at the final stages of my Ph.D., I think I experienced a form of academic burnout, defined by Maslach and Goldberg (qtd. in Stubb, Pyhältö, and Lonka, 2011, p.34) as a combination of overwork and "emotional exhaustion, cynicism and reduced sense of efficacy".

The heightened daily interactions with a work team and the new Graduate School's constituents affected me more positively than I would have believed. My relatively solitary days as a doctoral student stood in stark contrast to the everyday bustle and demand of the broader research services office where the Graduate School was located. A very big difference also was the decent wage that I had on a consistent basis. Though the position was fixed-term (several contracts of a year or less), it offered more salary and employment conditions than my previous doctoral scholarship, or the erratic sessional and casual positions I held during my Ph.D. years.

This policy and project officer role drew on many aspects of my academic expertise, including policy research and analysis, writing and communication, and project management more broadly. It also entailed negotiating change across multi-level university structures, and unit promotion and community-building. These latter aspects are perhaps not as obviously a part of a what is thought of as an 'academic' skill-set, but I had acquired them during my postgraduate days. I say that with the value of hindsight. I only had a low level of strategic intention when I chose to be part of the then Department of English's postgraduate students' society as a member and Treasurer, and when I established the bones of the research network. They were roles that brought rewards to me in terms of finding like-minded colleagues and, with the research network I helped found, a closer association with the kind of mentors I sought. My 'portfolio' approach (Mallon, 1998) to roles in my postgraduate days has stood me in good stead throughout my working life, with interview panels commenting on my practical experience with publishing, committee work, and researcher training.

My policy and project officer role attracted no provision or resources for my own research, and conducting or publishing research was not an expectation. At this stage, because I was still very engaged with research colleagues and projects, my research career did not suffer as it might have. I worked with colleagues to organise academic conferences in my field, and publish sections of my thesis. I continued managing and developing the early iterations of the AASRN, which I still run almost fifteen years later.[2] At the time, I thought of the academic activity as keeping my options open, and seeing through already-started research projects. Then I started more projects and, at the same time, the job I had began to feel more process-driven. The latter feeling became stronger once the Graduate School was actually established, and the role became less about creating a new entity and more about sustaining and streamlining it. This prompted me to start looking for academic possibilities once again, and I had research-only fellowships in my sights because teaching seemed to bring only negative elements to the academic work-lives around me.

My involvement in academic activity while in the Graduate School role was only possible because my line supervisor was extremely supportive of my career and its possible directions. That said, taking annual leave and self-funding conference travel and registration were negative elements in the equation.

With encouragement from senior UQ colleagues, I applied for a university postdoctoral fellowship. A major reason why I secured this fellowship was the fact that I had maintained a coherent and active track-record in publishing during my 'non-

academic' role at the Graduate School. Aside from the publications and leadership roles with initiatives that shaped a field (e.g. convening conferences, editing publications), I was successful in the competitive fellowship round because those same senior colleagues who had encouraged me to apply were in positions to advocate for my application where it counted. It also made a difference that the field I was in – diasporic Asian studies – was at the time a stated emerging priority for the faculty.

The UQ postdoc (2001-2004) boosted my profile and academic activity such that I secured a Monash University Research Fellowship. I was torn when I found out that I had won this fellowship, after an application and phone interview. It meant I was moving to Melbourne, and my partner would be staying in Brisbane. After twelve years together, we would be conducting a long-distance relationship for the first time.

The Monash fellowship (2004-2010) was an excellent job to have and a very active growing stage for my researcher identity. I had free rein over my proposed project and its associated research activities, and the funding to ensure I could make things happen. I collaborated with many colleagues at other institutions, nationally and internationally. With two of these colleagues, I was awarded an Australian Research Council Discovery grant, which laid important intellectual groundwork for comparative Asian Australian and Asian American studies. The major grant also meant significant things for my CV, given the weighting of Category 1 funding in contemporary universities.

It looked like my career was very much on an upward swing, particularly in terms of building an intellectual base and professional academic network. When living it, and thinking about it over a longer-term career basis, however, it was not that simple.

FLIGHT DOWNWARD

My time as a research fellow – three contracts in two roles over the nine years on the funding roundabout I mentioned earlier – was never clear of anxiety about whether I was doing a good enough job, and where the next job (and salary) would come from. These concerns are inextricably linked: unless you were seen to have performed very well in your research fellow role, the next research fellow application may not be worth submitting. I was aiming to forge a research-only career in the humanities, an unthinkable proposition according to any senior person I talked to.

Each of my fellowships was fixed term. My first was only two years long, and I had to present a case for another year's extension (for three years in total). It did not help with strategic planning or career-mindedness that I was ambivalent about academia this entire time. Questions that circulated for me continually included wondering whether this was the sector for a satisfying career, is this where I could make a difference, and would anyone employ me longer-term to do the things I really liked to do. Many of my co-postdoctoral fellows seemed free of these concerns, and appeared single-minded in their efforts to establish themselves and secure ongoing positions as teaching and research academics. Though I enjoyed immersing myself in research and its related activities, I was unsure of whether I wanted to be an

academic at all; surely there were jobs that were less stressful and required less hoop-jumping? The fact that I was twice awarded with plum research fellowships only made me feel negative about having these ambivalent feelings. I felt ungrateful, and that I should have been happier about it all than I was.

Competitive research fellowships breed a certain lack of perspective about what is a good result in terms of track-record. There is no clear performance bar that is set for you because you are basically expected to produce stellar outcomes and do more than you have done before. This was brought home to me most sharply when I found myself in the third year of the Monash fellowship writing three documents at once that all required me to justify my continued existence as a research fellow.

When I take a step back, I can see how twisted this logic of 'more than before' is. In the middle of the fellowships, all I could see was that 'over-achieving' was my ticket into the mythical land of research-only positions. A poignant aspect of this is realising years later that my peers in the same kinds of positions were all going through the same thing, and many ended up exactly the same way I did: burnt out. But we never talked about it at the time, and it remains something we tend to whisper about among ourselves rather than discuss openly with other academic colleagues.

More challenging still was realising that a research-only career for someone in the humanities really was a mythical land, unless you had already reached the top of the academic ladder as a Professor.

FLIGHT TO SIDELINE

Being a single-income household with a mortgage that needed paying, I was looking broadly – and somewhat desperately, it must said – for employment in the months before the end of the Monash fellowship. From my then jaundiced vantage point about academic employment options, I felt disengaged, if not actively resentful, of my institutionally secure colleagues. From the more astute ones, I had offers of casual and sessional teaching but, given my financial commitments and knowledge of how these 'precariat' jobs operated, these were not my first choice.[3]

I interviewed unsuccessfully for a couple of the scarce continuing academic (teaching/research) jobs in the humanities that came up. For one of these interviews, I was informally told that I had a research track-record that was basically Associate Professor level (the appointment was at Level B), but they wanted someone who had a more aligned and straightforward disciplinary and teaching background. For all the lip-service paid to interdisciplinarity, in my experience, a CV that mapped such an academic blend had difficulty coming in to traditionally structured departments and schools. I also found it untrue, though many told me otherwise, that teaching does not count and a strong research track-record is all a hiring committee is after. That has not been my experience, and I think my research-only background worked against me in the lecturing jobs I interviewed for.

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I finished my second fellowship with no fanfare and many unsuccessful applications to other fellowship schemes and academic positions. It was a time that felt professionally bleak. I felt foolish for having prioritised research-only positions to such a degree.

FLIGHT OF PERSEVERATION

Disheartened about academia, and feeling very much rejected from the academic job stream, I landed with relief and only slightly by design in a university grant development advisor role at RMIT University. At age forty, I had secured my first continuing job.

This second period of university administration work (2011-2014) turned out to be perfect in many respects after my years as a research fellow: it was at a level that meant we could pay the mortgage, the job allowed me to use my academic and research skills in new ways, and it was a chance to step off the funding roundabout that I had been on for almost ten years. The role, in a central city location, also meant I could embrace a 9-to-5 existence, and leave the job at the office when I went home. No-one expected me to be working across weekends or after hours. The flipside to this was that they *did* expect me to clock in at the office every day. Yet, with young children at home, having regulated and predictable hours was a mostly positive aspect of the job.

I was energised and enjoyed the grant development job for around two years, and built an excellent professional network in two new areas: research education and development, and research management. I channeled my need to write and synthesise information into a new project, *The Research Whisperer* (RW). Modelled on Inger Mewburn's very successful *Thesis Whisperer* initiative, the RW project (with my colleague Jonathan O'Donnell) was responsible for 'fast-tracking' our familiarity with (and profile within) the researcher and research development communities and organisations, locally and around the world. The free time that I now had after hours and across weekends because of my grant advisor job became steadily populated with RW work, as well as still running the AASRN. My writing outputs changed from academic articles and conference papers to online blog posts, opinion pieces, and solicited expert commentary for publications such as *The Conversation*.[4] While I maintained my profile in critical race studies, I was asked more often to write on research development and issues in higher education research policy.

Though I was doing well building my RW profile and publishing discussion pieces about various research development-related topics, I felt that my academic research identity and integrity was eroding. Despite my intention to publish an academic paper a year in Asian Australian Studies, I published none. I was not doing any new research. My publication track-record had a three-year (and counting) academic gap.

I had been asked twice in the grant advisor job interview whether I would miss my research and I declared I would not. At the time, I think I believed this. Being burnt out from the escalating expectations and insecurities that infested my time

within the fellowships, it felt liberating to let it all go. My growing need to conduct my own new research forced me into some extreme navel-gazing in late 2013. I decided to see if I could return to the academic side of things, which I thought would be difficult after three years in a 'non-academic' role. My intention was to apply for lecturer positions in my areas of expertise, to seek out a humanities position.

FINAL FLIGHT AND WHERE TO NEXT?

My initial decision to apply for humanities lectureships was derailed when I saw research education and development roles going at La Trobe University about a fortnight after I resolved to return to academia. One of those roles was an academic appointment. I applied, despite my recurring anxieties about whether I would be competitive. The interview that the most fun I have ever had at a job interview; applying for other jobs from within a continuing position has much to recommend it. My reasoning was that this was a test run (I had only just begun my academic job search, and I was going to give it a year), so it was all good experience. I was appointed, and – it must be said – slightly surprised.

It is difficult to judge what the future holds within the first few months of a new position at a new institution. My prime motivation for shifting back to an academic role was to undertake my own research again. My lectureship in research education and development, however, is not a straightforward academic role. It is what is known as a "para-academic" job or a "blended role" (Coaldrake, 2001; Deem, 2003; Simpson and Fitzgerald, 2013). MacFarlane (2011, p. 5) observes that education developers are often part of "central support units disconnected from the academic infrastructure", and this is the space in which I find myself. Colleagues had warned me about the challenges of working in a blended role, that it may not deliver on the aspects that I was keen to bring back into my life. Whether this will be true remains to be seen.

CONCLUSION

The various directions my career has taken – sometimes intentionally, other times not – have led to the role I was appointed to most recently. While my academic research and administrative roles have resonance with each other, I had viewed them more as parallel paths, not developing from one another. This was due, in part, to the strong divide that still persists between academic and professional roles in the university. It was also due to the relative novelty of the type of blended role that I occupy now, one that is research development-focused.

Interpreting one's experiences and skill-sets can cross over from academic to administrative, and *vice versa*. It is a symptom of an academic workforce that is increasingly required to undertake administrative responsibilities, and a professional administrative workforce that is increasingly required to be more highly qualified.

Leaving or entering academia are not always one-way migrations. A better understanding of what happens on both sides of the university 'fence' can lead to

a deeper appreciation of what these roles entail. This gives those who *have* moved between these areas a heightened level of knowledge about how a university functions (formally and informally), and constructive empathy for a broad range of university staff. To gain such a staff member, however, appointing committees need to recognise diverse experiences – in and out of academia – as beneficial rather than detrimental to someone's career trajectory.

NOTES

1   See Melonie Fullick's listing of articles and resources about 'quit lit': https://www.diigo.com/user/Qui_oui/%22Quit%20Lit%22
2   The Asian Australian Studies Research Network (AASRN) was formally founded in 2006 through a competitive grant and can be found at http://aasrn.wordpress.com.
3   See the CASA blog for personal stories and sector context for casual, adjunct, and sessional staff, http://actualcasuals.wordpress.com.
4   For a full listing of references to my recent publications, see http://tseenster.wordpress.com/my-writing.

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KYLIE BUDGE

7. FINDING POCKETS OF AGENCY

Reconstructing Academic Identity

PRELUDE

Academic life can be a joyful and an immensely collaborative experience that nourishes the mind and the soul, and also the reverse: lonely and tough. The flights I have experienced so far in academia have taught me much about the need to develop a path that aligns with my personal values and goals, and one that may not mirror the dominant paths I observe around me. Early career academics have choices in the development of their paths and there is much agency in knowing this. In this chapter I argue that there are 'pockets of agency' to be found that assist in constructing and reconstructing academic identity despite the challenging context of contemporary university life. My experience has shown me the key is in developing honest and open collaborations with colleagues, personal learning networks, and establishing strategies to sustain the self in what is an increasingly competitive environment within the contemporary university. I conclude that there are pockets of agency that enable the possibility of reconstructing, crafting and shaping academic identity in new and exciting ways that act to continuously stimulate and invigorate in ways yet unknown.

INTRODUCTION

Academic life can be a joyful and an immensely collaborative experience that nourishes the mind and the soul, and also the reverse: lonely and tough. As an early career academic I have witnessed and experienced both ends of that spectrum. Through these experiences I have also learnt of the potential for working in another way, a different approach to academic life, if you like. Within this space there is great agency and potential for early career, female academics to reconstruct the dominant way of becoming and being an academic that we may witness.

In this chapter I refer to flights I have experienced in academia so far. Through a reflective narrative I begin by describing my general flight. Next my experience of flights upwards, downwards and to the side are shared. Following that I consider flights of perseverance to sustain oneself over time in academia, and lastly, my next flight, which includes my hopes and visions for research as a new early career academic.

The flight metaphor, and my narrative that is woven through it, illustrates my argument: that despite the difficult and competitive space that contemporary university life presents, we possess agency. This notion of agency emerged as a result of each of my flights through academia and their cumulative affect. The agency I discovered showed me there is inspiration to be drawn from colleagues, but the key is in developing honest and open collaborations, and to establishing strategies to sustain the self in what is an increasingly competitive environment within the contemporary university.

WHO AM I?

From one perspective I am a very new career academic whose Ph.D. is under examination at the time of writing. Unofficially though, there is a different story. I have worked in academic roles in universities, both teaching and non-teaching, since 2000, and so feel the term 'early career academic' is a strange fit for my experiences to date. Over the past nine years I have worked in academic development roles in central teaching and learning units in universities, a highly diverse (Di Napoli, Fry, Frenay, Verhesschen, & Verburgh, 2010) and continually contested and problematic space (Land, 2008; Handal, 2008) because of their location outside of a traditional faculty. Fraser (2001) defines academic developers as a member of university staff who works with academics 'in relation to teaching, research, scholarship, leadership, funding applications and supervision of students' (p. 55). Some consider positions like these are part of what Whitchurch (2008) describes as a 'third space' in the university. That is, these roles have developed as a result of "the blurring of the boundaries between academics and professional support staff"…opening "up a new territory occupied by 'unbounded' and 'blended' professionals" (Macfarlane, 2011, p. 65). This way of conceptualising the space occupied by positions such as academic developers, while possibly accurate, causes discomfort for someone like myself who has been employed as an academic (that is, not as a member of professional staff). Identity is no doubt core to this underlying tension.

I bring the added complexity of being multidisciplinary in my research focus to this narrative about my flights into and around academia. My recently completed Ph.D. research highlights this. It was a study exploring the nature of the value of artist and designers' creative practice on the teaching of art and design in Australian universities. My research crosses disciplinary boundaries of art, design and education, and, in addition, encompasses digital spaces and social media. I enjoy having a multidisciplinary perspective and am entirely comfortable working across different disciplinary terrains, even if this means I sometimes feel 'homeless' in my research identity as I search for a disciplinary space in which to locate myself. I bring these complexities and nuances to this chapter exploring my flights into academia to highlight particular aspects of academic identity construction and development as an early career, female academic.

COLLEGIALITY AND INDEPENDENCE

While I argue the potential for change at an individual level in this chapter, I do so without the intention of ignoring or belittling the influence of broader structural and policy factors impacting on academic life (McAlpine & Akerlind, 2010). These are significant, informing and shaping academia in powerful ways. The broader research into the state of play of the contemporary academy provides rich, contextual information to the flights I have experienced so far in academia.

Blackmore's (2014) research, for example, argues the corporatisation of the university has significant and long lasting effects in relation to women's participation in academia, and in particular, their role and influence in leadership roles. I have witnessed first-hand many of the trends Blackmore highlights in her research, such as the change in the nature of collegiality in the academy. Having witnessed such trends the research she presents becomes transformed into powerful and meaningful signposts at a personal level for me as an early career, female academic. Thus, I acknowledge the broader context in full and ask what this means for early career, female academics. How does this context become enacted on the ground in every day academic life?

Blackmore argues that collegiality in today's corporate university climate has declined and individuality reigns supreme, and is an indicator of how

> domination of the managerial perspective impacts on academic identity or habitus and can be counterproductive to teaching and research that traditionally has been reliant on horizontal relationships of trust and collegiality. (Bansel & Davies, 2010, p. 91)

In considering her argument and reflecting on my own experiences of collegiality, including moments where it has been distinctly lacking, it would suggest that we have to consciously work against the grain to create a work environment that facilitates and generates collegiality. There is agency in this because it means we are part of redefining and reshaping what it means to be an academic in the 21st century on our own terms.

Women need to make a conscious effort to think about their working lives in academia according to Probert (2005) whose research focuses on gender and unequal outcomes in academic careers. Her research points to the need for women to take a holistic approach to thinking about academic life, and one that includes an assessment of their home lives, particularly the amount of time devoted to household duties. As early career, female academics, Probert's research is a powerful reminder of how we need to actively participate in shaping our careers.

Identity plays a large part of how academics feel their way and define their roles in academia. In considering identity, I draw much from Butler's (2008) research, particularly her emphasis on the performative nature of identity. Butler argues that in order to own an identity we must perform it and this includes claiming identity in the verbal sense: '*I am an academic',* thus owning the identity and voicing it

with others. This notion applies to both female and male academics, and for many, obtaining the Ph.D. as the peak academic qualification assists in embedding one's identity. This certainly reflects my experience but it is definitely not the end of the path in terms of identity construction. As Taylor points out "identity work is ongoing work" (2008, p. 27)

In relation to identity, Henkel (2005) argues the widespread changes that occurred in higher education during the late 20th century placed

> strong pressures on academic communities and institutions not only to change their cultures and structures to enable them to manage the new policy environment but also to review their assumptions about roles, relationships and boundaries in that environment. (p. 159)

She also points to the importance of values in determining identity, specifically academic identity, and the challenge long held values, such as autonomy, are currently experiencing because of the rising dominance of institutional priorities and agendas. This changing environment, also well document in McAlpine and Akerlind, (2010) has been the context for my entry into academic life. While it has been challenging and at times daunting, I argue that despite this environment, there are 'pockets of agency' present for those wishing to construct a different life in academia.

My flights within academia to date have taught me much about the need to develop a path that aligns with my personal values and goals, and one that may not mirror the dominant paths I observe around me. Early career academics have choices in the development of their paths and there is much agency in knowing this. In this chapter I argue there is inspiration to be drawn from colleagues, but the key is developing honest and open collaborations, and to establishing strategies to sustain the self in what is an increasingly competitive environment. In the section that follows my flights are described, highlighting and drawing from many of the issues alerted to in the literature about contemporary academia, identity, and female academics.

MY FLIGHTS

My narrative in this section of the chapter argues that there are 'pockets of agency' to be found that assist in constructing and reconstructing academic identity despite the challenging context of contemporary university life. My experience has shown me the key is in developing honest and open collaborations with colleagues, personal learning networks, and establishing strategies to sustain the self in what is an increasingly competitive environment within the contemporary university. I conclude that there are pockets of agency that enable the possibility of reconstructing, crafting and shaping academic identity in new and exciting ways that act to continuously stimulate and invigorate in ways yet unknown.

GENERAL FLIGHT

I have worked in the education sector for my whole working life. I was the first in my family to attend university. When I was younger I thought that doing a Ph.D. was an unreachable goal for me so I didn't consider the idea. In my late 20s I was asked by my Masters' supervisor to considering extending my project to a Ph.D. but I was more interested in travelling and living in Japan at that time. As I entered my early 30s, I became interested in doing a Ph.D. as I spent more time immersed in academia but finding the right time was tricky. Returning to Australia to work in an academic development role meant being surrounded by people with Ph.Ds.

What initially appealed to me about doing a Ph.D. was the idea of doing more research, writing and publishing. So I began presenting at conferences, writing with colleagues and publishing. The initial impetus for this was due to linking up with a female colleague who was similarly inspired to experience these things, and so we decided to try together. As peers we supported and encouraged each other and mostly felt our way in the dark, with very little guidance or mentoring on offer from anyone. Nevertheless, I loved it and became hooked! The flight into academia in a more formal sense had begun but I think it was mostly possible because of the support and encouragement from my colleague and our collaborative experience and desire to try researching and publishing together. This was a truly positive way into my academic flight and I am most grateful for having some peer support and encouragement from another female colleague who recognised, as I did, that as women we need to actively participate in shaping our careers (Probert, 2005).

I eventually took the plunge and began a Ph.D. in early 2011 and submitted it for examination in late 2013. Prior to commencing the Ph.D. I'd had 6 journal articles published and presented peer reviewed papers at several conferences. I was aware that this was not the usual way students enter their Ph.D. experience, but I also know that not everyone begins a Ph.D. at the same starting point. With hindsight, I can now see it was a very good way to enter the Ph.D. flight.

FLIGHT UPWARDS

With the thesis submitted I feel like opportunities are beginning to open up to me in ways different from what I experienced before commencing my Ph.D. It feels like the flight upwards is really beginning. Someone once described the moment of when he got his Ph.D. as being like the shattering of a glass ceiling. I can relate to this idea. Even though I was researching and publishing before, without the Ph.D. experience and credential behind me the reality is specific academic opportunities were always going to be limited.

I have recently commenced a new academic position at a university I have not worked at before. I have much hope for the possibilities that extend from the work I do from now on and know that most of this comes from having completed the Ph.D.

Writing opportunities are opening up with book chapter invitations and possible collaborative research and writing endeavours everywhere I look. It's an exciting time and I am enjoying the beginnings of working with other academics across institutions on various writing and research projects. Interestingly, many of these opportunities are coming to me via female colleagues. This could be a result of the disciplinary areas I work within (ones that are female dominated, such as education) or it could be a conscious decision on the part of those women to encourage and support another.

My confidence has also increased as a result of the Ph.D. process. I feel like that experience was a solid and thorough learning curve. It was also utterly transformational and I am now able to integrate this experience into my approach to work. Part of the flight upwards has been a result of networking with others via social media such as Twitter, a very exciting pocket of agency. I have been engaging with other academics via Twitter since 2011. It has been incredibly important part of building my personal learning network, exploring overlapping interests, linking up with others to discuss future research and writing possibilities, and for providing support through the ride that is academia. Engaging with Twitter has provided me with a 'pocket of agency' to explore and construct my academic identity in a way that has been exciting and refreshing.

FLIGHT DOWNWARD

I have not experienced many flights downward so far but there have been a few moments that have tested me. My last position and my new one are both academic development roles located outside a traditional faculty, as explained earlier in the introduction to this chapter. Over the years this has meant that I have had to work hard to encourage others in the university to identify me as 'an academic', that is, someone who is interested in and actively researching, writing, publishing and teaching. This issue of identity was compounded in my last position because I was located in a unit with many professional staff, so the differences and boundaries and were not clear to outsiders (and somewhat unclear to insiders too for some time). This experience is consistent with what Whitchurch (2008) argues has occurred with the development of 'third space' roles in universities. Over time it is possible to explain the academic focus of my role to others and many I work with come to understand this through working with me on various projects, with some faculty-based academics approaching me to work with them on research and writing projects. Working in central units in the university outside a traditional faculty poses other challenges too. Research time, for example, is not necessarily seen as a given, despite my being employed in academic positions.

In relation to flights downward, I have witnessed some extreme moments of competitiveness and eagerness to cut off or manipulate others amongst academics, a way of being and working I do not value. I have found this both challenging

and deeply troubling to witness. At one time I was also on the receiving end of this behaviour from another female academic colleague. Sadly, this attitude and practice appears not to be isolated, and at times, most astonishingly, even rewarded in the university sector. I am not interested in working in this way and have made concerted efforts to find others who wish to work differently and whose work ethic and values overlap with my own. Thankfully, the academic community, including those on Twitter, contains a vast number of people who are interested in new, more inclusive and collaborative ways of working.

Another example of a flight downward was my realisation that, for the most part, you need to figure out how everything works in academia by yourself or find like-minded peers to explore things together. What I mean is, as far as mentoring by senior staff, there has been almost nothing available to me either formally or informally. When I first began working in Australian universities I had high expectations about mentoring and eagerly looked out for opportunities where I could connect with senior staff who might share their knowledge and experience with me. What I have learnt is you have to really seek out a way to get the guidance you need but there should be no expectations in this regard. However, I have found peer mentoring to be very effective and I am grateful to have connected with those who have been prepared to share the experience of finding our way through academia. I have also found that peer support can come at unexpected moments and even from academics I do not know well.

FLIGHT TO SIDELINE

I'm a fairly reflective person. I frequently make time to take flights to the side, to think about how things are, how I am feeling, how work is satisfying me (or not), what I'd like to do more of, what I'd like to do less of, and how my general health and wellbeing is placed.

One particular flight to the side occurred about two years before I commenced my Ph.D. I realised that if I didn't make the leap, I was going to be constrained in a role that was not able to offer me the kind of intellectual challenges I craved. At that point I started making enquires about Ph.D. study, talking to others who had Ph.Ds about their experiences, thinking about possible topics, and generally putting my career first. I am so glad I did.

The last few years have really helped to crystalize for me what it is I value from my working life, the kind of professional values I hold in terms of collegiate behaviour and communication, and the kinds of people I want to work with. It has also clarified for me the central role that I want research to play in my academic working life. This has come about via a number of different moments, both in my previous role, my Ph.D. experience (which was pretty much perfect!), and by connecting and working with others both inside and outside my employing university and the one I was enrolled in during my Ph.D.

FLIGHT OF PERSEVERATION

My experience to date has revealed that networks are critical – both online (for example, through Twitter) and in real life, and they need to be cultivated and nurtured to sustain oneself for the long haul in academia. Academic life can be isolating but does not have to be. For me this involves reflecting on how I work best and structuring my work life to include the things I need as far as is possible. This approach involves seeking out other academics who inspire, who work in a way you admire, who value others and want to invest in others, but also value their own worth and potential. This takes quite a bit of work and in my experience, comes together over a long period of time but developing a personal learning network through social media sites such as Twitter definitely has an accelerating and expanding effect in this regard.

Sustaining oneself over the long term in academia also means making time to read, and not just work/research related reading, but also reading about career and strategy, and fiction to nurture the soul. I have found it absolutely critical to read widely. These are strategies I use to find inspiration and to sustain myself.

In considering my 'flight of perseveration' and the strategies I have adopted so far, one of the most important has been my resolution to try to work with integrity in all that I do. Working in this manner means that when there are difficult times, people around you will know who you are and how you work, and they will support and respect you for it. Coupled with this is knowing that you cannot change others but you can live and work in a way that respects others and models a professional manner that is healthy and balanced. You might influence others to do similarly, but there are no guarantees.

FINAL FLIGHT AND WHERE TO NEXT?

Where will the next flight take me? I am clear it will be about developing my research ideas further and being part of grant application experiences with collaborators. I am looking forward to the opportunity of being part of a funded research project that focuses on at least one of the areas I am interested in. In the past, I have asked to be mentored in grant application development but for various reasons it has not resulted. So I am determined to be proactive and make sure it happens.

The next flight is also about writing more with others, including people I have not written with before. I also intend to write a book that focuses on an area of research that I have been working on for the past two years and that truly excites me. My next flight involves continuing the development of my theory learning curve, a part of my Ph.D. experience which I found captivating.

I have found a number of strategies useful in helping me focus. For example, the need to listen intently to my body and mind and knowing that if I am not feeling healthy or am stressed there is a reason. This is a signal to me that I need to find the reason and work on changing what is contributing to a lack of wellbeing. Another strategy involves networking and talking to others, and in doing so being

honest, open, and collaborative. A big part of this approach is about understanding the dual roles of give and take. For me, this is how I learn and grow. This is how things happen. It will be messy and not always easy but that is how things are, and interesting developments often emerge from these kinds of states. I find it is important to be organised, to initiate, to watch and learn from others, to ask for and seek opportunities. I need to be alert to creating excuses, push myself, and work efficiently. My advice is to create time in your regular schedule to write and to also reflect on where you are going. If something's not working, change it, but recognise you have choices. There is great agency in knowing and acting on this.

One thing I have learnt in the last few years is it is important to talk to those who are more experienced about their career paths and the choices they have made along the way. In doing so, it is helpful to keep an open mind about one's own career path by asking the question: how can I best contribute to the world?

I am fortunate to be in contact with colleagues who believe, as I do, that it is important to model the values that are integral to you or that you aspire to. There should be no reason to feel the need to hold onto outdated models of what being an academic means. There are other healthier more meaningful ways of being. My advice is to seek them out, embody and enact them.

Finding and accessing such pockets of agency has, for me, led to the development of a 'new' sustainable self. For example, by embracing and acting on specific areas such as networking through social media to find a like-minded community of practice, I have found that I have become more comfortable and open to doing things differently. This has also has come from time and experience in the workforce. I have realised that academic life contains a vast variety of people, and through working with others you will discover their quirks and foibles, their insight and generosity, and sadly, the things that can go wrong when people do not communicate well and/or are focused on satisfying themselves for their own ends. Thankfully, they are few and far between. Remembering you have choices is critical in this instance and is vital in terms of sustaining yourself in academia. There are is no doubt that being an academic in today's climate is a tough career choice, but pockets of agency do exist; the key is to be aware of their presence and be prepared to access them. And you that don't have to do it alone.

CONCLUSION

Through a short overview of the literature regarding the nature of contemporary academia, issues of identity, and those connected to female academics, and my flights in academia, I have argued that agency exists for early career, female academics despite the broader contextual challenges facing the academy. There are indeed, pockets of agency that enable the possibility of constructing, reconstructing, crafting and shaping academic identity in new and exciting ways. This agency may come about as a result of participating in personal learning networks through the many technology-afforded avenues that exist, as a result of engaging and collaborating with peers, and by working openly, honestly, and with integrity. For, as McAlpine and Åkerlind (2010) argue, "our

practice is not just what we do, but also who we are as individuals, what we think and what we value" (p. 4). At times, this might mean challenging peoples' notions of what 'being an academic' involves, and not feeding behaviour that runs counter to collegiality or that generates competitiveness or selfishness. Instead, we need to seek out those who inspire and prioritise working with them.

Through my narrative I have also highlighted the need to find ways to look after and sustain ourselves through our academic careers. In addition to developing career-related strategies, focusing on our physical and mental health and wellbeing is absolutely critical to this. We need to carve out the space to attend to those needs amongst the frenetic pace and busyness of academic life. Most importantly, we need to stop feeling guilty about doing so.

There may, of course, be many other ways to find a particular pocket of agency that provides you with the space to breathe, to stretch the mind, to collaborate and to contribute to research, teaching, and the academy generally, in a way that is not lonely or tough, but acts to continuously stimulate and invigorate in ways yet unknown. The key is to find it, tap into it, and then embrace it.

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BEING OUT AND MOVING IN OF ACADEMIA

REBECCA MILES

8. MUM (PH.D.)

Negotiating Motherhood in Early Career Academia

PRELUDE

Through this chapter, I explore motherhood and early career academic work using the framework of Schwab's lines of flight. Reflecting on my own experiences of becoming mother concurrent with becoming academic, this chapter looks to the negotiation of motherhood and academia. In discussing this, I reflect on my own experiences alongside broader literature to consider how this negotiation holds conflicts and tensions, complexities and difficulties. Yet at the same time, both identities provide immense fulfillment and purpose.

INTRODUCTION

So good to hear from you, but sorry to hear that things are so hard (or, perhaps, 'normal' is the more appropriate word!). I can't believe it's been two years since you had Ell – how quickly does time go by (and how conscious we are of it!). … We're all going okay here, looking forward to finishing [the Ph.D. dissertation] but still feeling massively inadequate when I think that this bloody long document has to make sense to someone else who is more knowledgeable than me …

I don't know that I have any answers for doing it [parenting, Ph.D. studies and academic work] any easier. I think I just got to a point where I accepted that everything was just going to take longer. I also accepted, somewhere along the line, that TV was a blessing and ABC2 a godsend. I still struggle with how much TV the girls watch, but if it means I have ten or twenty minutes to myself ..

Strategies for getting closer to finishing? Just keep plugging away. You can only do the best that you can – "play well your part". Stubbornness helps! .. It is damn hard and frustrating – and that double whammy of parenting/Ph.D.ing guilt does drive you insane at times. … You'll get there – my experience has been that I hit a hard spot and then things just chug along for a bit before the next one. … The more I see, the more I've come to realise that everyone just muddles along doing the best they can – and if they try and tell you that

they have it all/are super organised/have perfect children and a clean house (or clean children and a perfect house), then they are clearly lying …

Enjoy the time that you spend with Ell – and enjoy the time that you spend on your Ph.D.…. Look after yourself and don't forget that you are doing an amazing job.

xx

(Personal communication, 12 October, 2013)

These opening paragraphs are drawn from an email written to a close friend and fellow Ph.D. student having similar difficulties in juggling motherhood and academic work. As the mother of a two year old, she had written to me, mother of then three and five year olds, a few months before I submitted my Ph.D. to ask how I had coped with the struggles of child-raising, Ph.D. work and full time academic work.

I was three months into full-time Ph.D. enrollment when I found out I was pregnant. I was 24 and, while partnered, I was also unmarried. My excitement at this unexpected surprise at the time was nothing if not tempered by the naiveté of young adulthood. Eight years later I am still unmarried to my partner, now with two daughters, seven and five years old, and between us two Ph.D.s, and two academic careers.

Now that I have successfully completed my Ph.D., whenever I am asked the 'how long' question I often jokingly say that I took seven years and two children. My becoming into academia and research and my becoming into motherhood were concurrent, involving much learning, growth and change – personally and vocationally. Underlying this becoming has been an identity in flux: of being pregnant woman, young mother, breast-feeding mother, working mother, along with the negotiation of these roles within the work of academic and Ph.D. student.

I am currently working as a lecturer and early career researcher in teacher education. My background is primary teaching with both my Honours and Ph.D. research degrees centred on environmental and sustainability education in primary schooling and pre-service teacher education. Underlying this however, I find that I am mostly strongly influenced in my research, teaching and personal life by poststructural theories, particularly in relation to theories of social practice and philosophies of knowledge and place.

The work of mother and of academic are both all-consuming and, despite the joys, also fraught with guilt and anxiety and issues that can be both deeply practical as well as highly conceptual and abstract. This, often simply paired with exhaustion. I also find that both of these roles provide me with much fulfillment, stimulation and many hilarious and deeply felt experiences. Within the structure of this chapter, I explore my lines of flight through the dual identities of mother and academic that I have experienced in my early career, discussing how I am navigating these as a woman/mother.

UPDRAFTS AND DIVES: LITERATURE ON NEGOTIATING MOTHERHOOD AND ACADEMIA

The literature that exists on motherhood and academia, while not extensive comes from a range of perspectives, with recent literature covering socio-cultural analyses of motherhood and work balance (Amatea & Smith-Adock, 2013; Castaneda & Isgro, 2013); the impact that establishing an academic career can have for women also facing impending fertility and childrearing (Baker, 2012); rights-based policy and practice analyses (Hampson, 2013); and practicalities on negotiating academic work and motherhood (Connelly & Ghodsee, 2011; Lahav, 2010). There appears to be consensus in these literatures, that when combined, academia and child-raising is a balancing act that involves accommodation, sacrifice and negotiation of identities, with "both productive and contradictory tensions" (Castaneda & Isgro, 2013, p. 2).

The work of both academic and mother is complex and is at times conflicting. Baker (2012, p. 10) suggests that a successful academic career requires "a life-time of commitment, long working hours, research-related travel, entrepreneurial skills, and sustained research productivity to gain promotion to the highest rank". At the same time, the work of child-raising requires organisation, flexibility and presence, with restrictions on travel, time available to be involved in outside of office hours work, and opportunity for sustained periods of writing and concentration.

There is consensus that academia is a field that is often highly competitive, with teaching and research demands leading to times where extended working hours are necessary (Bowles, 2013). However, as Cucciarre et al. (2011, p.42) articulate, "twelve-hour work days and/or seven-day work weeks, … are generally unsustainable—and undesirable—for mothers of young children". Even when such additional work practices are temporary or short term, the daily household work and childrearing responsibilities can significantly reduce out of hours productivity, a definite disadvantage in such a competitive career (Grummell et al., 2009).

Castaneda and Isgro (2013, p.2) further articulate the difficulty of this, claiming that flexibility in the work of the academy is a myth, where "bureaucratic, hierarchical and swelling expectations… make it difficult to maintain a forty-hour work schedule". In my reality, the work of an academic does not easily fit into nine to five work hours and this can have many implications for home and family life. In turn, it can be difficult not to feel a lack of flexibility afforded by child-raising, where evenings or weekends cannot be easily seconded to work time, and despair that this may have negative implications for my career.

Child-raising is a highly gendered area of academia, with research showing that women in academia are less likely to have children than their male counterparts, (Baker 2012; see also Brooks, 1997; Bassett, 2005), and where they do have children women are more likely to be single parents than men. Further, the careers of women who have children "tend to lag behind those of childfree women and fathers" in what Baker (2012, p.12) refers to as the "motherhood penalty" in academia (see also Correll, Benard, & Paik, 2007).

MY FLIGHTS

The challenges identified in literature relating to motherhood and academic work, suggest that it is complex and involves negotiation and adaptation between academic and family lives. In this chapter I speak to my personal reflections on negotiating academia and motherhood. In particular, I use Schwab's (1970) lines of flight to frame the narrative of my experience as mother and early career academic. I begin by contextualisng my becoming researcher/academic and mother, before leading into my general flight. Although the beginning and ending of my discussion on negotiating motherhood and academia are situated in the beginning and present of my journey into motherhood and academic work, the illustrations and experiences that I use in discussing my upward-downwards-sideways-and-forward lines of flight are not linear. Rather, these lines of flight frame my negotiation of motherhood and academia, drawing to a close as I contemplate future flights within these complex negotiations. I begin with my addition to Schwab's flights; nesting.

NESTING: BECOMING A MOTHER

One year and six days into my Ph.D. studies, I held our daughter in my arms for the first time. I loved becoming a mother, but it also held much difficulty; new motherhood paired with early Ph.D. candidature became a time for me of self-doubt, shyness, change and growth. I spent 12 weeks beginning to know this precious-yet-exhausting addition to our lives, amidst the blur of embodied motherhood characterised by change and transition; physically, work within the home, and self-identity. At the end of these seemingly short weeks, I was again working full-time on my Ph.D. and negotiating the ways that this being had also changed my identity as partner, student, and a person capable of sustained concentration. Self-doubt and guilt plagued me when I realised that in order to be able to read and write without distraction, I needed to place my child in the care of someone else while I worked. A discussion with my supervisor at the time saw me confess to what I felt was the multiplied guilt of Ph.D. and baby bundled together: when I was with my daughter I felt guilty for not working, and when I was working I felt guilty for not being with my daughter. Many other mothers that I have spoken to, including students, have also recognised these feelings in their own lives and work, especially with babies and toddlers. For me, I do not know that this has resolved other than becoming easier as my children get older and more independent.

GENERAL FLIGHT: ENTERING ACADEMIA

In reflecting on my general flight, the experiences contributing to my entering academia, I cannot help but feel that my journey has somewhat meandered. Coming to academia has been an interesting mix of serendipity, opportunity, pragmatism, idealism and stubbornness. I am surprised when I hear someone refer to me as

ambitious, although I do recognise that on the outside it may seem that some of my moves have been strategic. However, mostly I feel that I have meandered, learned and enjoyed the opportunities for research, learning and teaching that I have been afforded.

In constructing my entry to academia, as a university student I was reasonable. When the opportunity came to undertake an integrated Honours program during the third and fourth year of my Bachelor of Education, I took it. I had a passion for social justice and equality in education and at the time considered academia to be a place where I could make a meaningful contribution. Following a year of teaching in schools after completing my degree, I was awarded an APA scholarship and enrolled as a Ph.D. candidate. My Ph.D. candidature then led to an associate lecturer appointment. While seemingly linear, within this timeframe was also the birth and early years of caring for my two daughters, contract and sessional tutoring, marking, and research assistant work within the field of education, temporary and short term positions in fields unrelated to teaching, and four weeks of labour on a cauliflower farm.

Underlying my entry to academia, however, is my enduring fascination with the social, cultural, and ecological world around me, manifested through the perspectives of schooling and education. In becoming an academic I found a career which genuinely excited and challenged me, that enabled me to continue doing in my work-life those things that I enjoyed doing in life – reading, thinking, writing, teaching, and learning. Despite the difficulties and frustrations of navigating and seeking to understand workplace and institutional politics, and the occasional bouts of self-doubt and imposter-syndrome, this has not been a difficult shift in identity. In turn, my identity as mother, partner, self and academic has seen negotiations, accommodation, conflicts and tensions. At times this comes with a somewhat gendered self-flagellation and guilt when these roles require contradictory actions; such as the overuse of screen time to distract while I work at home with a sick child (Castenada & Isgro, 2013).

UPWARDS FLIGHT: BECOMING ACADEMIC

My upward flights, the opportunities that have been exciting and inspiring in my career, have been many. As I conveyed above, in many ways I have found this career an intensely satisfying one that allows me to engage in ongoing learning. In turn, at this point early in my career, I still feel excited about contributing to knowledge and ideas, and joining discussions and discourse in the field.

The teaching work that I do is quite diverse and spread over a range of areas, typical to the work required for a small university campus. I am excited by the possibilities to challenge and extend teacher education students in their thinking about teaching and learning and its role in society. I enjoy the richness of relationship-building with students, that although necessarily short-term and structured by both their role and mine, enables me to demonstrate the importance of relationships in being a teacher.

Finally, I am inspired by a number of academics that I have met and worked with. In something akin to an apprenticeship of observation (Grossman, 1990), I am inspired by these people who have negotiated the often ego-driven ivory tower and yet continue to be ethical, open and sharing intellectuals. As I grow into academia through my experiences and own negotiations, I find reflecting on my personal list of 'admirable academics' and recognising their humanness within their academic work helps me to gain perspective in my own life. This helps me construct a sense of what it is to be an academic, learning about how I want to *be* in this career through observing theirs.

DOWNWARD FLIGHTS: AFFECTING ACADEMIA

In the previous flights I have reflected on the reasons and inspirations for my becoming an academic. However, there are also downward flights that have affected many of my experiences in negotiating academia. As Trolley (2013, p. 31) suggests, "the many joys and professional growth associated with teaching in higher education are often overshadowed by its inherent difficulties". For me, negotiating dual roles as mother and academic continue to be an aspect of my work-life and identity that require ongoing negotiations. In the following reflection, I look to the challenges, questions and awareness of these negotiations that have affected my flight.

As I prepared to submit my Ph.D. for examination in December of 2012, I shed some tears as I reflected on this '*thing*' that had been a part of my life for longer than my children had. While being relieved at having completed it to the point of submission, I also felt the put-aside guilt at having been a mother who was often distracted and restless. Having my partner complete his Ph.D. within a month of me was definitely cause to celebrate, yet at the same time reflecting on our year leading up to that moment, I wondered at what cost to our young family – exhausted, distracted parenting is not typically celebrated in 'how to' parenting manuals. I think it is this guilt that will always be an ongoing challenge, particularly in a culture where motherhood, as Douglas and Michaels (2004, p.5) articulate, is accompanied by a "set of ideas, norms, and practices … that seem on the surface to celebrate motherhood, but which in reality promulgate standards of perfection that are beyond … reach". Being at the one time mother, Ph.D. student, and full-time academic, I have long accepted that reaching such standards of perfection are not achievable and nor do I want to strive to these. Yet it is also easy to feel defensiveness and that there is a need to justify one's choice as a working-mother. Even if self-imposed it is difficult not to feel that these standards are high and that to admit difficulty in one, because of the other, suggests failure.

In my academic work the challenges of working, breastfeeding motherhood created complexities, particularly when I was determined to extend breastfeeding to the World Health Organisation recommended two years. As such, I have attended several conferences with toddler in tow; where the usual preparation spent in order to attend and present also involved organisation of occasional

childcare and booking extra flights. While at one conference with my then five-month old daughter, I spent morning, lunch and afternoon tea breaks expressing milk in the first aid room to provide to the childcare centre the following day. Needless to say, the typical opportunities for networking didn't happen at this conference, however, I will be eternally grateful to dear friends for making sure that I was included.

I am sure that there are many who do not think it is appropriate that children should accompany parents to a conference; I have had this sentiment expressed to me several times and in different guises, including that it means the attendee cannot properly experience the conference. However, as a mother of a young breastfed child, my only alternative was to not go; something I did not want to do given that I already felt like there were opportunities inaccessible to me because of the restrictions that parenting placed on my time outside of work. The value of these conferences has been immeasurable in helping me to develop connections with many interesting people that I would not have otherwise been able to. Finally, for my sense of self, conferences became a space where I was able to be something other than just a mother, partner and student; it was, and continues to be, an opportunity to learn, engage and be refreshed by discussions and ideas new to me.

It was also at a conference that I first became consciously aware of my identity as a mother and my identity as a researcher and how being visible in one allowed an invisibility of the other. With no childcare available on the first day of this conference, a Sunday, I had baby in hand at the opening reception. During this time, a number of people spoke with me about my daughter, held or rocked her, and laughed at her early attempts to crawl. Amongst these were high profile professors as well as other researchers whose work I admired. Not once during this time did the conversation turn to what I do other than be a mother. It occurred to me there, that while I was highly visible as a mother my identity as researcher was invisible. I do not raise this as something that upset me, rather that it made me aware of these identities forming who we are. In turn, I would suggest that it is often the identity as mother or parent that remains invisible in many academic's lives, particularly at conferences where the 'researcher' is so visible.

I do occasionally feel anxious that having a family consigns me to having less ability to exploit opportunities for work. Given that many people in my field either do not have children or have children who are grown up, I sometimes worry that I am not able to commit the same out of work-hours to doing work and therefore am less able to be productive or competitive. Finding blocks of time to do research and writing is difficult between work hours where the teaching load of an entry-level academic position dominates, and outside of work hours, are spent on home duties and child-raising. Although I enjoy the productivity of working in the evenings, it is not so pleasurable when I know that I will likely have disturbed sleep and the need to wake early to get children ready for school. Finally, it can be a struggle to find the balance between work and children where I have space to be visible to myself as anything other than mother or academic.

SIDEWAYS FLIGHT: GAINING PERSPECTIVE ON ACADEMIA

I consider that flights to the sidelines are those moments of slightly jarring awareness, where one becomes metaphorically aware of looking up and looking around after focusing on one thing for a while. When I think of flights to the sideline I think of those moments of realisation where life comes pouring back in.

Having the honest observations of a seven year old has certainly prompted those moments, with one particular example happening while in the midst of playing, when I overheard her say that when she grows up she doesn't want to work because 'Dad and Mum' work too much. Susan Davis (in Booth et al, 1999, p. 23) articulates this same sentiment, when discussing her childhood with academic parents where she was unintentionally "trained in a somewhat anxious and occasionally illadvised prioritization of work, and a diffused sense that at any given moment there was some monumental undertaking". Knowing that our daughters are very astutely observing and learning about work from the way that my partner and I engage with it, did make me take a step to the sideline to consider what model we are providing to our children of the value and benefit of work; socially, financially, emotionally, intellectually. I have always felt that the work and study I have undertaken while being a mother have been important for maintaining my self-identity. However, hearing my daughter voice the opposite did make me take stock and question what exactly is modeled to her and I hope that as she grows up, she and her sister will come to learn and value this, as I did with my own mother.

About a year ago, I came across an article in Times Higher Education, *Letters to a Young Academic* (Reisz, 2013). I found that these six messages of advice from professors provided me with a moment of sideways flight. At the time I was finding the negotiation of roles between work and home a constant and exhausting juggle, and felt enabled by Angela Thody's advice to:

> Throw yourself into your priorities, and don't try, or expect, to achieve on all fronts at once. At each life stage, prioritise teaching or research or family or unpaid employment or publications. Don't aim to balance them all each day, week or even year, but be assured that each can be adequately covered over the course of a lifetime. (Reisz, 2013, para. 32)

I realised that I had fallen into a paralysing trap of feeling like I had to achieve each aspect of my work and parenting at a standard and quality above my level, within a timeframe that was impossible. It challenged me to think and question my motivations to be a part of the academy when results seemed to be at the expense of my family. This sideways flight was important in understanding and identifying that my priorities as a mother and as an academic are not dissimilar: external recognition of *what* work I do is not as important as knowing within myself that the work I do is good.

Two other moments of sideways flights have been, on the one hand, the deeply personal shift in identity and growth in confidence as I moved from Ph.D. student

to Ph.D. Here I realised that the worst criticism I could conceive – that I did not know anything and did not belong – was entirely my own. On the other hand, has been the professional realisation that my idealistic belief in the university as an institution for public knowledge commons rested on shaky foundations and instead universities exist with many competing, contradictory inefficiencies that are a manifestation of very human complexities. In the words of Margaret Wheatley (2012, p.10), I came to a point where I understood that I needed to give up thinking I could 'save the world' and instead "claim the role of warrior … [where] we focus on where we are, who we're with, what we're doing within our specific sphere of influence".

<div align="center">FLIGHTS OF PERSEVERATION: NEGOTIATING ACADEMIA</div>

In discussing my flight of perseveration, I include a further email excerpt that outlines the everydayness of life with young children and academic work and the flights of perseveration that I engaged at the time. This conveys better than retrospective description the adaptations, adoptions, acceptances and saving grace of eggs on toast in negotiating the roles and work of being mother, partner and academic.

> I've never been able to do those really long days until this past year. Lately I've been finding it easier to wake up early, so I head off to work at about 7:30/8:00 and leave N to get the girls ready in the morning – I might leave clothes out for them, and if they are awake I put the TV on for them. Then it's up to him! We also have the advantage of only being 5 minutes drive from work. Child-care wise, we don't have to provide lunch, so I just never unpack their bags (until I realise that we've been sending a pair of wet undies in a plastic bag for the past week!). N's been teaching late 3 nights a week, so I do the afternoon and evening shift. Bedtime is never until 8pm and if I'm tired a face washer can be good enough for a bath. Dinner is sometimes eggs on toast: at least I know the girls will eat it all, and I always have lots of fruit that they can eat if they're hungry. … Once they're asleep then I'm back on the computer and working until I start falling asleep while I type (not usually later than 11). Sometimes N and I will tag team on the weekends – he'll have Saturday to do work and I'll have Sunday. I like doing that because it forces him to have time with the girls when I'm not around nagging or telling him to be careful etc. But usually we don't do any work from Friday night until Sunday evening – it's not that we've ever agreed that it's family time, but I think we both subconsciously know that we also need downtime, with each other and with the girls.

Being a working mother is exhausting, the demands are constant and you rarely have a break without something or someone else demanding your concentration. There have been times, especially when my children were very young, when I fantasised about having a night away, by myself, just so that I could sleep and have a cup of tea without anyone touching me. However, most importantly for my own perseveration

was the acceptance that I could not bear for either these things, children or work, to change, rather that what could change was my mindset – so I may as well enjoy feeling human.

At times my flights of perseverance have involved the need to escape, rest and come back refreshed and recentred, while at other times I recognise that it is my family that grounds and centres me. Certainly, family time is essential for my sanity, even if that time involves the passivity of just being in the same space, doing different things. I am fortunate that for the past few years I have lived within easy travelling distance of my own parents, who have been an amazing support to my partner, our children and myself. Further to this, having a partner who is an academic and is at a similar stage in their career is both preservation and curse. We understand the stress and pressure of this work-life that we share; unfortunately it can mean that leaving work at work is difficult, and while my partner understands well what I am doing in my writing or teaching, he is also quick to tell me when I am doing too much or avoiding writing too well. Going through the final year of our Ph.D.s at the same time while both working full-time was hell and I often had a visual image of us limping our way through that year, together but alone. The proximity to my parents and their understanding and support was a flight of perseverance to both our family and our relationship during this time.

FINAL FLIGHTS AND WHERE TO NEXT?

So where to from here? I do not know that I see my future in academia and mothering in the smoothness of elegance of flying, instead I feel that it is a holding onto and taking the twists, turns and dives in stride. This is an interesting, complex and intriguing career that I find infinitely fascinating to contemplate and I genuinely feel that, for many, being an academic sits beyond being just a job. My experience of academia and research has been tempered by motherhood and will continue to be so. I accept that my career may progress more slowly or differently to others, but it is what it is. I do not feel that I am driven by ambition to play the game of academia for its own sake, however I recognise that if I don't buy in at some level that I will forever be powerless and exploitable. I mean this with humility when I say that I see the important things in my future flights in academia do not focus on career trajectories or narrow definitions of performance. Rather, what is important to me is simply doing good work, being ethical in my work, being honest to myself, and being true to what I hold firm in my work as an academic: advocating the importance of pragmatic and critical thinking in education and schooling.

CONCLUSION

In the words of a close friend, 'it's bloody hard to do a Ph.D. with a kid', a sentiment that I would extend out to academic work. Which is not to say that academic work without children is any easier; there are just different complexities. Negotiating for

yourself and your family the role and work in doing academic work is difficult, and yet I think that central to this negotiation are the identity/ies formed through becoming these roles. Given the mood of my reflections in this chapter, would I retrospectively change how I have become a mother and an academic? No, probably not. The most important lessons that I have learned in becoming mother, researcher and academic is that there is always more to be learned; and, that life emerges regardless of the ambitions, intentions and controls we try to hold onto – this is to be embraced. The negotiation of motherhood and academic identity has shaped who I have become in this work-life. If I had waited until my career was more established to have children, my life would not be as richly chaotic as it is right now in this moment; it would come later. Mostly, however, I know that regardless of when or whether I had children, it is doubtful that I would be any better at keeping up with the laundry.

It seems appropriate to end this chapter on motherhood and academia with reference to my own mother. She has long advised that the issues, stresses and negotiations of child-raising are never completely solved – the children just grow up. I think that this can also be readily applied to the negotiations of motherhood and academic work – our children grow up, we shift upwards, downwards or sideways and we simply come against new or different or other stresses, joys and perseveration.

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MIA O'BRIEN

9. TOWARDS JOY

PRELUDE

Optimism and an insatiable desire to cultivate collaborative positivity are not well-regarded personal qualities in academia. Not as highly as, say, sharp-mindedness or single-mindedness or strategic thinking. Although more experienced yet empathetic female colleagues can regard you as endearingly quaint; a common turn of phrase brandished by well-meaning professors (offering advice in career development seminars) springs to mind: try to refrain from behaviours that are career limiting. I'm told these behaviours entail all of those that distract you from the main game. Which is of course to score goals and grab the 'brass ring'. Academia is a very serious business.

This chapter takes Deleuze's (1995) lines of flight as comprising a series of well-fielded curve balls, that – in the hands of an eternal optimist with an insatiable desire to cultivate collaborative positivity – can lead straight toward one's greatest joy. While quests for joy remain a notable absence in performance review and career development policies, processes and proformas, it is my fervent view that joy can offer a most rewarding compass for early career women in academia. Indeed it has been argued that "Foucault was animated by a sense of joy… that is the joy of wanting to destroy whatever mutilates life" (Deleuze, 1995, p. 23).

I outline – with illustrations from my recent personal professional experience – how significantly transformative moments in an academic career can be drawn from the most modest of moments spent with equally joyful, generous women. And that is an inheritance that we are duty bound to pay forward.

INTRODUCTION

Above all this chapter is about identity. On the one hand a narrative can be presented as a 'hero's journey' (Campbell, 1990) – one person's path to achieving a valued goal and the various challenges and pitfalls that are encountered along the way. But the narratives that stay with us the most are stories of personal challenge, growth and the search for wholeness – the inner journey being more compelling that the outer one (Murdock, 1998). In those stories the treachery of the path and the power of the characters met along the way serve only as mechanisms for the heroine to deal more effectively with her 'self' in a quest that seeks, above all, to attain personal strength, insight and wisdom. In my view this is a more intriguing tale to tell. I

hope to illuminate how amidst the somewhat troublesome process of becoming a researcher there is the potential for valuable personal professional growth and awareness. This is a journey to be embraced. It is an opportunity for self-discovery and for identity development. For being open to inspiration and to being inspired. And it contains within it a lesson about the importance of finding *joy* as a means by which to cultivate a sustainable and rewarding research identity.

WHO AM I?

In this story about 'being in and out' amidst the vacillations of early career academic experience I draw on from what many would say is a non-traditional trajectory. Financial pressures in the early years of my Ph.D. study meant that I opted out of a scholarship and took a fulltime academic workload in the academic development field. Several years in this role afforded quite an in-depth insight into academic culture and professional life. So in many ways I feel anything *but* early career. However I am now happily ensconced in my second post-Ph.D. academic position within pre-service teacher education. Finding an academic position within Education was the first step I took towards finding my joy. Finding a way to commit to classroom-based research alongside innovative teachers now continues to extend my joy every day.

BECOMING AN ACADEMIC

As academics, we are teachers, curriculum developers, learning advisors, learning designers, technology wranglers, colleague musterers, professional developers, researchers, grant writers, paper writers, learning material writers and much more. Each of these tasks has the potential to evoke quite unique identities. We talk about 'wearing different hats' as we move between different spaces and places. A lecture theatre evokes your teacher-self, a meeting with industry partners requires your project-management-self, a grant writing session relies on your researcher-self, and designing an online course can test (to the outer limits!) your techno-savvy autonomous learner-self. These brief sketches reflect the multifaceted nature of the academic role that is well delineated in the literature (Henkle, 2005; Lee & Bound, 2003) and identified as key challenges for early career academics (Sutherland, Wilson & Williams, 2013).

Multiplicity offers both delight and challenge in equal measure. We are expected to establish multiple ways of working across these multiple plotlines sustainably, gracefully. As early career colleagues we often acknowledge each other in hallways with jokes and asides about keeping our heads above water whilst paddling furiously below the surface. And while the implicit nature of this juggle is an accepted norm – our growth and development as researchers remains the most implicit, carefully guarded identity of all. We seem somehow less inclined to share our struggles towards research identity and as women in particular, more likely to internalise a potentially paralysing perception of being under-prepared or unworthy. This sense of being 'imposter' amongst more capable and entitled peers is not new (Clance & Imes, 1978). Yet the

imposter syndrome remains endemic amongst high achieving women – of which there are many within early career women in academia (Young, 2011). I'd like to suggest that this challenge is compounded for early career women in education.

In their survey of the experiences of early career academics across higher education in New Zealand, Sutherland, Wilson & Williams (2013) found that while men and women spend equal amounts of time on research compared to teaching, there is a greater degree of *diversity* (of how time is allocated to various tasks) amongst women than men. That is, it is possible more women spend less *productive* time on research, and more time dividing their attention between various other academic tasks than men. Next to that, early career male academics are more successful than their female colleagues in securing both internal and external research funding; *and* while academics in the sciences spend the *least* amount of time teaching, academics in the humanities and education spend the *most* amount of time teaching.

What does this mean for an early career female academic in education? Academics within teacher education are predominantly female. We're usually highly educated, high-achieving women with a passion for teaching about *teaching*. As such we're likely to experience many of the challenges that are associated as troublesome for early career academics. We're committed to great teaching (because that's our main game) so we *don't* skimp on our own teaching lest we model the very practice we abhor. Our professional identities are tightly anchored to teaching as a priority. Next to this we're inherently collegial and collaborative but must learn to compete voraciously for funding and a slice of the academic pie as an individual with something uniquely individual (and therefore invaluable) to say. And within all of that, we are most likely to feel unworthy, fraudulent imposters when it comes to developing a confident and assertive research identity.

And yet we must.

Who we are, what we know and what we do are interwined. Our identities reflect the nexus of personal, professional and practical knowledge and the landscapes that we live, work and move within (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). There are, as Clandinin, Downey & Huber (2009) have compellingly argued, multiple plotlines that comprise our lives.

Research is a significantly important plotline for early career academics. Within those first few years we must articulate and evidence a research focus, profile, trajectory and identity that has both traction (in the field) and value (to funding bodies). Becoming an academic is to a large degree about developing a distinctive *research identity*. Knowing who you are as a researcher and what you have to say that is both meaningful and compelling to funding bodies and publishers alike is vital. This entails quite profound identity work.

Identity may be thought of as "an evolving yet coherent concept of self that people hold about themselves…which is consciously, unconsciously and iteratively constructed and reconstructed in interaction with cultural contexts, social institutions, local communities and people with which the 'self' lives, learns and functions" (O'Brien & Dole, 2012, p.163). Psychologists view identity in terms of

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the meanings, concepts and theories that people hold about themselves and how these are anchored in sometimes implicit conceptions of one's attributes, qualities, characteristics and abilities (Collier, 2001; Stets & Burke, 2003). Sociocultural theorists point to the work that must be done in the appropriation of knowledge and practice that builds and sustains identity as meaningful participation (Olsen, 2008; Sachs, 2005). Identity is thus enabled by and 'lived' as experience. Early career women in education have identities that are tightly bound to their professional personal knowledge and experiences as *teachers* first; yet must learn to reorient to the kinds of knowledge and practices required to participate meaningfully in *research.* In a way, our conceptions of self must shift, and so too must our preferred modes of interaction and practice: from the pedagogical to the pedagogical-research.

Eraut (2010) would point out that this is potentially a site of 'productive tension' – of generative growth and inner illumination within identity work. But how?

In our recent research of pre-service teacher identity development (O'Brien & Dole, 2012), a colleague and I illustrated how this 'productive tension' could be employed explicitly and put to effective use in facilitating the renegotiation of a 'naïve/fearful' teaching identity (in both mathematics and the arts) towards a more confident, efficacious teaching identity. We drew on Boler's (1999) pedagogies of disruption – in which potentially naïve views of self are deliberately drawn into disequilibrium and then to guided reconstruction. As a theoretical frame and pedagogical process this proved immensely powerful. In the study we made use of journals and explicit reflections in which students were directed to actively renegotiate their existing ways of thinking in favour of more positive, empowered frames of mind. We found that *positive* identity development outcomes were predicated not just on making use of disruption, but on carefully identifying and incorporating very integrated experiences of scaffolded competence building together with explicit identity renegotiation (O'Brien & Dole, 2012).

In other words, making our existing identities *explicit* and *available* for reconstructive work is vital to the process of moving towards positive identity development outcomes. In my case I've used journal writing as a mechanism for articulating and renegotiating my emerging identity as a researcher. Journaling as a process of professional learning and *research* is in wide use and highly regarded (Johnson, 2010). I've kept journals of various types for various purposes (Latour, 2005) throughout my academic journey, and have drawn on them as source for this story as data (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007).

MY FLIGHTS

This narrative reconstruction portrays six significant moments within my recent past that in various ways have been vitally influential to the development of my research identity. There are two themes that are threaded from flight to flight. The first is about the role of *other women* who contributed (often in informal ways) to an overaching trajectory of success, but in unexpected ways. The second is about

joy and the place of authentic personal engagement in the development of research identity. So often we can assume that this is the one thing we must compromise (or save for our professorial days) – yet it may have within it the very key to our success.

GENERAL FLIGHT

My pathway to being a fully-fledged academic within teacher education has been jagged and ragged to say the least. After making a great start as a sessional tutor with an APA scholarship to support my Ph.D. studies, I found myself needing to contribute financially to my then young family. I tearfully made the switch to fulltime work and part time study. This soon took its toll on my progress and I eventually floundered. The growing doubt about my capacity to complete the degree and establish an academic career in earnest was fuelled by a less than supportive male supervisor (think 'Architect' from the Matrix movies) whose old school stern mannerisms and propensity for terms like 'a priori', 'ergo' and 'exempli gratia' made me feel entirely incompetent and incapable of writing anything sensible at all. I felt like a fraud, and my journal entries portray a highly distressed and confused woman close to defeat. I was too afraid to share or discuss my confusion with anyone least they discover how clueless I really was as a researcher.

Cue a feisty, experienced female academic who, as one of my undergraduate lecturers had secured a forever place in my personal hall of potentially inspiring mentors. She spied me looking particularly morose in the campus café one afternoon, and wandered up to enquire about my progress. As she handed me a tissue (my tears had been instantaneous) she simply said, "When on earth did you loose your confidence my dear?? You've got to get out from under this negative attitude and make it happen, need a hand?"

After writing a 'Dear John' letter to my architect/supervisor we spent a month talking about what it was I really had to say, and three more months drafting what eventually became my final thesis. I submitted within five months of that tearful café conversation, published a book chapter to boot, and secured a fulltime academic position shortly afterwards. The key that turned the lock lay in that single line, offered without a moment's hesitation: *you've got to get out from under this negative attitude and make it happen, need a hand?*

FLIGHT UPWARDS

Next to developing an immovable confidence in my ability to become a researcher in my own terms – that feisty, experienced female academic taught me how to seek and use really good feedback on my thinking and writing. I learned to embrace with glee the iterative process of conceptualising, writing, editing, rethinking, reconceptualising, and rewriting. It was a truly transformative period. I also learned the value of collaboration and cooperation, and wrote furiously with like-minded colleagues on a number of topics of interest. Many of these were women, each of us

talked often about that indescribable 'something' that women needed to get better at in order to be as successful as our male counterparts. Whatever that was, we found it more attainable as a collective than as individuals. And so the collaborations and supportive conversations continued.

I was a member of several project teams that received highly competitive funding for exciting, inspiring projects. I had an emerging 'profile' as a researcher and wrote on pedagogical content knowledge, pedagogical learning and teacher identity, and in the arts and creativity. The jewel in the crown, at that time, was securing a high profile teaching and learning grant for which I was lead chief investigator. All of these felt positive, exciting, interesting and uniquely positioned to make a great contribution to various fields.

Most importantly, the 'me' that felt hopeless, hapless, inarticulate and stodgy – as a writer and as a researcher – had been left behind. My lived experience told me otherwise, with every paper that went to print and with every grant that was awarded, I felt affirmed. And while I still worked hard at the process of writing *well* those shared conversations and collaborations over coffee with fellow female academics provided vital inspiration and motivation. Together we juggled the endless hours of teaching responsibility with creatively nefarious research plans. I was surely on the slipstream of success.

FLIGHT DOWNWARD

The real hallmark of success in academia is always an endorsement from your academic supervisors that you are on a strong research trajectory. They encourage your direction and mobilise resources to ensure you attain those goals. Individual research success always reflects nicely upon the successes of the School and culture you are working within.

What happens though, when your trajectory is viewed as bricolage? As an endearing mosaic of interesting ideas but lacking in strategic direction, scholarly rigour or of portraying a *clear research identity*? You (like me) may start to discuss the innovations within each of the funded projects you have but need support or mentoring to really gain traction for yourself within. You may (like me) could find elicit a brief but distant smile of acknowledgement. You may argue that in your commitment to achieve stellar teaching evaluations and juggle course coordination with program convenorship and the various other demands of early career academia that you're yet to clearly articulate that research identity, though you know it exists. You're too busy breathing between gigs.

You may point to other (often male) colleagues who've managed to negotiate a much less complex (you're not sure how) teaching profile and ask if there's an opportunity to reconsider yours. You'll probably be told how indispensible you are in those many multifaceted roles, given your strong interpersonal skills and capacity to manage difficult people and contexts and problems. You may be told (like me) how invaluable you are on that basis, that your *positivity* may be put to good use in such roles.

And being the polite, compliant, congenial woman that you are (like me), you may simply thank those people for their time, for those ongoing opportunities for leadership (and the new ones offered as a concession at the end of the meeting), and walk home quietly. Wondering.

FLIGHT TO SIDELINE

And so it was that I found myself on the sideline. Disillusioned at being treated as a 'good all-rounder' and frustrated at myself for not being able to develop the research trajectory that I truly treasured. I took advantage of accrued long service leave[1] and left the academy to spend six months wondering what else I might do with my life. When we wonder we reflect, reconsider, reimagine and reconstruct, and then we *want* to try again. However a flight to the sideline is tricky. We're tempted to think that if we take ourselves off to one side – even just metaphorically – that we're somehow less *able* than others and are demonstrating our potential ineptness by doing so (a symptom of that imposter syndrome perhaps?). And yet time on the sideline can be invaluable and *agentic*. It can be time spent in careful reflection and honest self-analysis.

In this case I continued to be actively involved in a number of daily academic tasks and completed various research tasks including papers and co-written publications. But importantly I was taking time to think about 'who' I was as a researcher, where my research was going, and how others before me and next to me were charting their research trajectories. I was challenged by that earlier comment, and wondered most about my *positivity.* Was it misguided? Was I doing myself a dis-service, appearing naïve and pollyana-ish? Relegating me to the sidelines as a 'great teacher' but as a 'not-so-serious scholar'?

There were two moments of insight that became vitally influential in turning this flight to the sideline into a positive and enabling experience.

The first insight was recognising and accepting that figuring all of this out is part of the everyday work that effective researchers *do* and continue to do in order to be effective. We often don't see that work – we just see the results of that work as impressively populated research profiles that entail lists of publications and grants. The important thinking that goes into creating that profile – a carefully strategised line of inquiry, and progressive coherence between one paper and the next, and one grant to the next, is to a degree, invisible. At least to those of us not involved in the inner circles of successful researchers. Nevertheless, knowing that effective researchers spend time behind closed doors figuring all of this out helped me enormously. It's a little like finding out what supermodels look like without make up – it was liberating and informative. I don't want to be a supermodel. But because I want to be a successful researcher I realised that I needed to commit much more time to the deliberate articulation and design of a focused research trajectory.

The second insight came as a result of in-depth discussions with experienced and successful researchers. I sought out and spoke to a wide array of researchers in

different disciplines and asked the same question: *How do you go about identifying and developing a strong research focus and trajectory?* I received a lot of valuable advice about collaborating, writing grants early, getting feedback, joining a writing group, etc. Of the copious notes that I took in one of my notebooks there is *one* recurring theme that changed the way I thought about research quite profoundly, and it reads a little like a quote from a motivational book: *Follow your passions and do what makes you happy as a researcher, do what excites you and brings you 'delight'. No one will see things quite the way you do, and that's what you can bring to the research. Who you are and how you see things. Just learn how to frame that strategically!*

Do what excites me and brings me delight? Bring myself into the picture of my research area – frame that focus strategically? Could I do that?

FLIGHT OF PERSEVERATION

One of the most powerful anecdotes to the imposter syndrome (and to waning confidence in general) is to work with a trusted colleague to collect and identify real evidence to the contrary. My flight of perseveration took this form. I'd like to say that this was a deliberate act on my part – but in all truth I was far from being so self-managed. Instead I'd lost faith in myself and had begun to consider alternatives; alternatives to making it as an academic, to crafting that research identity. I felt so haphazard and fragmented as a researcher. I felt like a real neophyte. The task ahead appeared hopeless.

My self-doubt must have been palpable, because a very good friend and colleague began encouraged me to invest time, effort and coffee in the arduous task of rebuilding myself. She made me look with clear eyes at various achievements and see them not as deviations from a clear destination but as formative experiences that directed me *to* the next destination. She shared her own stories with me, and various documents she'd developed and written to portray *her* research trajectory and identity.

Next to that I undertook in earnest the very advice given to me by those many researchers I'd spoken with; and spent time developing a research focus that was driven by what delighted me. Day by day, through an iterative process of journaling about my joys and journaling about my research (including emerging themes of interest and significance in education) I found my voice and my 'self' began to appear. I knew what I valued. I valued *positivity* – not just as a personal characteristic but as a *pedagogical tool.* I knew where my strengths lay. I knew what my needs were, and I knew which gaps in the field I wanted to address. I knew exactly what I wanted to do next…

I have returned to the academy with renewed vigour and agency. As the end of this flight merges into the beginning of the next I hold in my hands a shiny new (federal government funded) research project. My research aims to document the *positivity* as an enabling and engaging concern within classroom teaching and

learning. The grant was collaboratively written with that very good colleague; but it was crafted from the 'ground up' as a deliberate move towards what brought me joy. It saw various drafts with thoroughly comprehensive, informed comments from fellow colleagues, many of whom were female; all of whom encouraged that 'move' towards joy.

I continue to use a number of important tools that never fail to propel me forward as an early career academic. I collaborate endlessly with likeminded colleagues. I journal daily about what I've read, what I've thought, what I've seen and heard, and how this all contributes to the research that I am developing and presenting. I remain the annoying optimist in the hallway – smiling ceaselessly as my colleagues and I continue to juggle the struggles of academic life. What I have learned about developing a research identity has been invaluable. While that identity may continue to morph and evolve over time, the process of articulating and pursing that identity will serve me well.

CONCLUSION

Becoming an academic is very much about becoming a researcher. In the various flights portrayed here I have attempted to sketch out both my journey towards identity development as well as some processes and themes that may guide others in their journey. Identity development does not necessarily come easily, nor unproblematically. Rather, we can make the most of the 'productive tension' that Eraut (2010) describes – created by the conflicting and ambiguous nature of the academic environment – by seeking opportunities to share, collaborate and make each other feel welcome and accepted (Clandinin et al, 2009). Next to that I have argued (to a degree) that this vital dimension of developing a strong academic identity is largely *invisible* within academia. A research identity is assumed to be inherent within the award of a Ph.D.; but requires much more than is garnered through that process. Successful researchers often do much of this 'identity' work behind closed doors, or gravitate more easily to this aspect of their identity via involvement in their core discipline. Early career women in education may find this more troublesome, since our 'discipline' and profession can emphasise teaching. Yet the research clearly shows that early career academics must find ways to be mentored in, and eventually to demonstrate independently, an unambiguous, well funded research profile if they are to be successful (Sutherland et al, 2013).

As we continue to access the various *hidden* ways of working of more successful colleagues, and share our own stories and those shared explicitly with us by colleagues, we must make them visible. We must make them part of our discussions and dialogue about how we develop as academics. In doing so we can 'normalise' that feeling of being 'not quite ready, but willing.' And lastly within that, we must promote and treasure what it means to pursue a research identity that moves us towards our joy.

NOTE

[1] While I was still an early career academic I had worked at the same university in academic development for several years prior to taking an academic position.

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ROCHELLE FOGELGARN

10. LESSONS FROM LOBSTERS

PRELUDE

The complexities inherent in navigating the vicissitudes of professional life whilst nurturing a large family are considered in this chapter. Drawing on lessons learned from three decades of experience in the education sector whilst presiding maternally over a growing family of children and grandchildren, considered observations are presented which attempt to deconstruct the mystique of concurrently managing two interdependent pedagogical roles. The evolution from school-teacher to full-time academic is explored with a particular focus on doctoral candidature and entry into the academic workforce. The metaphor of flight is used to symbolically represent different phases and particular moments of the (generally gratifying) journey towards successful attainment of a tenured place in the academy.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the tensions inherent in managing both the needs of a large family and the rigours of professional life. The challenge of superintending a functional home for a multi-age family provides a rich context for a career in education. My daily life has been replete with data which can invariably be used in my teaching, mentoring and reflective learning. De-identified anecdotes from my children's school experiences frequently enliven and powerfully illustrate points of pedagogical import in my pre-service teacher education lectures and workshops.

My particular interest in passionate pedagogy is a focus of this chapter about my evolving early-career academic persona. Aspiring to propagate passionate teaching and learning, I have constantly sought opportunities to enrich my pedagogical knowledge and attain the elusive wisdom borne of reflective, mindful experience. This quest has gifted me with roles in my own classrooms, school leadership, educational consultancy, (successful) doctoral candidature and pre-service teacher education.

The flight metaphor aligns easily with the ups and downs of juggling several dynamic priorities. Periods of feeling grounded, spurts of feeling airborne, moments of ascent or descent into the unknown and sudden, unexpected flights of necessity are all elemental in a life of searching and researching for truth, fulfilment and meaningful experience.

In this chapter, I explore the theoretical and experiential sources of motivation which have sustained my quest to sojourn indefinitely in the realm of academia.

WHO AM I?

I am blessed to be both the matriarch of a burgeoning family of multi-generational offspring and a fledgling academic with a teaching career spanning three decades. Teaching is in my DNA and clearly present in the genes of three of my sons who are working in different areas of education. Long before I thought about having children of my own whom I could educate, I dreamed of teaching receptive students in my own classroom. I have come to describe myself as a pedagogue; a term with perhaps suspect colloquial connotation in our culture, yet one which subsumes the loving act of holistic education in others. I can confidently say that both these pedagogical pursuits have interdependently nourished each other.

Fortunately, I cared too much about teaching to relinquish it at the onset of motherhood. Both pursuits seemed too important to sacrifice one for the other. Thus, my transition to parenthood occurred concurrently with my transition into established teacher-hood. Having been challenged constantly by conflicting interests, I have consequently grown immeasurably from determinedly and courageously embracing struggle. Creative conflict resolution has become a well-practised skill and a source of powerful affirmation.

I believe that remaining pedagogically dynamic is a precondition for sustaining oneself as both a successful teacher and supportive parent. Embracing challenging circumstances as opportunities to build skills and resilience has been a catalyst compelling me to act on the lessons life presents in every pedagogically fertile moment. Learning to relinquish restrictive structures in order to grow is one of the lessons I have learned from lobsters; known incidentally, for their longevity (Hayflick, 2000).

PASSIONATE PEDAGOGY

Passionate pedagogy fuels my flight through the turbulence borne of juggling family and academic life. Pedagogy, which presupposes passion as an integral, affective dimension, defines my existential essence. As mother and teacher, an ethics of caring (Noddings, 2010) pervades my conception and experience of pedagogy both at home and in the workplace. I care deeply – perhaps inexorably – *about, for* and *in* pedagogical relation (van Manen, 1991). I was thrilled to discover at the outset of my research career that I was not alone in my belief that one could raise a large family whilst maintaining a rich and satisfying career in education. In addition to being a celebrated academic and prolific author, Nel Noddings raised ten children with her husband of over sixty years. She is widely acclaimed for her contributions to moral education, feminist theory and school change (Amrein-Beardsley, 2010).

Noddings and I share similar priorities: domesticity, an enduring love of learning and writing and the quest for a moral life (Amrein-Beardsley, 2010). Noddings' contention that maternal instinct has a key role to play in the development of a caring morality resonates deeply within my own feminine identity (Noddings,

2010). I share her belief that home and school need to be more aligned generally; and particularly; that schools should actually *prepare* students for domestic life (Noddings, 2006).

The separation of schooling and child-rearing is similarly lamented by the Scandinavian scholar, Max van Manen. He proposes that the word 'pedagogy' most closely addresses "the entire moral, intellectual, physical and spiritual process of bringing up children" and that "parenting and teaching derive from the same fundamental experience of pedagogy: the human charge of protecting and teaching the young to live in this world and to take responsibility for themselves, for others, and for the continuance and welfare of the world" (van Manen, 1991, pp. 6-7). He defines pedagogy almost intimately, "as a certain encounter of togetherness between parent and child, teacher and pupil…a relationship of practical action between an adult and a young person who is on the way to adulthood" (van Manen, 1991, pp. 30–1).

My own research has affirmed my belief that passionate, expert pedagogues view their role as encompassing vastly more that ensuring each student in their class attains developmentally appropriate prescribed curriculum progression points. They perceive their vocational duty as an *in loco parentis* responsibility**,** whereby they feel morally bound to optimally address each student's unique needs**.** In adopting this view of interactive, relational pedagogy predicated on an orientation towards children which is premised on caring and loving concern, the power of the authentic pedagogue to make a real difference in the life and future of a child is personalized (Alfaro & Quezada, 2010; Miller, 2006; Wink & Wink, 2004). The experiential aspect of pedagogy is a compelling component in my conceptualization of passionate pedagogy.

Indeed, passionate pedagogy is an irrepressible life-force which imbues my life with purpose, perseverance and increasing perspicacity. It permits me to pursue a professional path into academia whilst simultaneously riding the exhilarating roller-coaster of family life. It provides me with ample data to inform both dimensions of my calling, enabling cross-fertilization of evolving, notional understandings of teaching, learning, what constitutes essential knowledge and ultimately, wisdom. The reflexive nature of this type of pedagogical endeavour is an energizing force with physical, mental and spiritual manifestations.

My career as both school teacher and researcher has been motivated, affirmed, transformed and sustained, by love and caring. The passionate educators I have worked with and studied appreciate that holistic, transformative learning occurs within relationship and that genuine relationship involves a caring, interested, active, affective connection; predicated on altruistic, loving-kindness. This fascination with the affective dimension of pedagogy inspired my doctoral study of the lived experienced of passionate pedagogy. I wanted to discover what sustained effective and enduring passionate, pedagogically wise, practice. The teachers who participated in my heuristic study view their passion for effective pedagogy as being inextricably connected to their capacity for love (Fogelgarn, 2013). During our interviews, their

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use of the word *love* was earnest, unashamed and prolific. Engaging in intimate dialogue with these educators brooked no possibility of doubting the intensity or integrity of their love of all things pedagogical.

In my experience and in my review of the literature, love is not a word or concept many people are comfortable using in the context of teaching. This may be due to a lack of understanding regarding the neurological connection between positive affective learning experience and the creation of neural pathways (Heywood, 2005). It may be because people believe that emotion clouds judgement and that classrooms should be places of reason, logic and linear rationality (Noddings, 1996). Yet, love, loving-kindness and compassion are fundamental tenets of almost all religions and spiritual traditions. (I propose for good reason.) Notwithstanding, compassion and love are not professional attributes every principal looks for when recruiting school personnel. This is something I wish to see change in my lifetime. Joining the academy and devoting my gifts to the cause of teacher-education and educational research seems my best hope at making a difference to tomorrow's teachers and their pupils.

MY FLIGHTS

The metaphor of flight seems rather apt for a life which has thus far been punctuated by natural sources of uplifting exhilaration – the celebration of personal and professional milestones and achievements – and periods of grounded contemplation of, and resignation to, the integral role of the mundane and the harrowing within the rich, overarching flight path of life.

General Flight

My own *lived experience* (van Manen, 1990) avers that passionate teachers are mesmerizing. They *hold* you. They inspire you. I still marvel at the power of my impassioned mentors, "at their capacity to awaken a truth within us, a truth we can reclaim years later by recalling their impact on our lives" (Palmer, 2007, p.22). These passionate, pedagogically driven educators empowered me. They infused in me a love of learning and an ingenuous zeal to teach. I have always cared deeply about the people my students might become. My teaching has been motivated by "fascination with the potential for growth within people, depth and fervour about doing things well and striving for excellence" (Fried, 2001, p.17). I have endeavoured to inculcate a similar fascination in my own students, particularly in those to whom I have been privileged to teach the fundamentals of pedagogy and classroom methodology.

In contrast to my deepest convictions, my professional experience has demonstrated that conflicted interests, misinterpreted motives and serendipitous surprises can lead to depleted energies, demoralization, resentful shaming, bitter blaming and premature departure from the profession. Throughout my career, teachers have confided their workplace woes to me, perceiving that I could be trusted to keep confidentiality,

offer validation and empathy and hopefully suggest practical strategies to navigate certain challenges and cope with apparently intractable obstacles with increased resilience. Too often, I have seen teachers plagued by feelings of vulnerability (when disenchanted colleagues disclose confidential information in order to frame a peer they perceive as a threat), overwhelmed by workload (when novice teachers are expected to undertake the same workload as established teachers; often without sufficient mentoring support) and reticent about prescriptive curriculum requirements (when teachers have been allotted subjects not within their area of specialization and not given professional development opportunities to enable them to teach new content with confidence).

Teaching in the 21st Century seems overwhelming to many teachers. The spectres of stress, and burnout (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Howard & Johnson, 2004) and alarming rates of attrition (Dawson, 2008; Plunkett & Dyson, 2011) pervade the profession. An array of issues including intense emotional drain, structural change, challenging behaviour, planning demands, restricted avenues for promotion, extra-curricular duties, clashes with experienced staff, pedagogically dispassionate leadership and work-life balance impact teachers' energy and attitudes towards their work.

A source of regenerative energy has been the success I have experienced in assisting beleaguered teachers to bravely embrace rigorous change in order to build resilience and remain within the profession. Regarding my own career trajectory, the revitalizing challenge of mid-career professional learning averted my succumbing – in a professionally lethal sense – to the sometimes inevitable terrors of teaching mentioned above. Through juggling family, full time school leadership and part-time Master's study – a formidable personal and professional challenge – I was able to redirect my flight path to a vastly more fertile and fulfilling destination: the academy.

FLIGHT UPWARDS

After a four year school leadership role (which included mentoring teachers who were generally not fans of pedagogical discourse nor passionate about teaching), a professional educational consultant persuaded me to return to university. Maintaining the leadership role, I commenced study towards a Master's degree. During this time, I experienced a "transient moment…when an experience is deepened, re-figured, and reflected through the things of the world" (Romanyshyn, 2007, p.8). As I sat transfixed both bodily and soulfully in a passionate lecturer's energized classroom, I experienced a *felt sense*[1] that what was happening was the embodiment of everything I had thought, valued, taught and dreamed of regarding the transpersonal power of passionate, transformative teaching and learning. After decades of my own earnest and ardent teaching and teacher-mentoring, on being vibrantly present as a mature-age student in a Holistic Education workshop, I felt that I was on a "journey of return" (Romanyshyn, 2007, p.13). The decision

to take six weeks study leave to complete my Master's research project was transformative and culminated in my gaining a scholarship to conduct full-time doctoral research.

Educational research appeared to me to be the logical extension of reflective teaching practice. I realised early on in my doctoral candidature that the critical analysis and constructivist orientation to learning that suffused my teaching were also fundamental, epistemological elements in the research process. The eloquent contention that "it is as necessary to be immersed in existing knowledge as it is to be open and capable of producing something that does not yet exist… [and that] these two moments of the epistemological process are accounted for in teaching, learning, and doing research" (Freire, 1998, p.35) confirmed my decision to leave school behind and forge a future flight path in the 'unisphere'. Although I trace the nascence of my heuristic journey of pedagogical inquiry to my earliest years of teaching, my teacher-as-researcher phase began with the formal commencement of my doctoral candidature. A moment of pedagogical epiphany inspired my doctoral study of pedagogical passion. Having taught for more than twenty-five years before commencing this project, I knew enough about passionate pedagogy to know how difficult it is to explicate to the uninitiated. Something spiritual urged me to plunge into unchartered territory in order to gain a more fulsome understanding that could be articulated and shared.

Early in my candidature, I was fortunate to be offered some sessional teaching in the Graduate Diploma for Primary Teaching at La Trobe University. This opportunity was enlightening, inspiring and affirming. I felt I was truly in a space where I could enact an elemental mission. I was able to visit hundreds of students on practicum at a range of schools and consequently meet many passionate mentor teachers who were supporting pre-service teachers in the education setting. I was able to work in a tertiary context where passion for teaching was not shunned, misunderstood or feared. I was able to theoretically, experientially and methodologically explore what sustains passionate pedagogy. Just as the teachers who vivify my doctoral study view their teaching as a calling which they are unable to ignore, I considered this research opportunity as a sacred vocation which had soul very much in mind (Romanyshyn, 2007). These experiences segued nicely with my research on passionate pedagogy and its enduring practitioners and confirmed the veracity of my hitherto unacknowledged desire to move from a school context into the arena of pre-service teacher education.

This career move paralleled my transition into a new phase of motherhood. During my first two decades of teaching, I was busy raising young children and teenagers. The physical and emotional demands of parenting youngsters and adolescents are many, varied and formidable. However, notwithstanding my previous extensive maternal experience, I was unprepared for the entirely different challenge of parenting adult children (whilst incidentally, still raising youngsters.) Fortunately, higher research afforded greater flexibility and autonomy of time and task management which enabled me to better manage unexpected family crises.

The joys of academic discovery provided potent doses of positive energy which went a long way towards countering unwelcome feelings of parental inadequacy and disenchantment.

Despite the grind of thesis, sessional teaching, domestic demands and intermittent crises, celebrating children's birthdays, graduations, engagements, marriages and subsequent new arrivals, I was happy to be living a life where personal and professional interests largely aligned in conceptual confluence. At home, my parenting role afforded endless opportunity to optimize each pedagogical moment (van Manen, 1991) and to subsequently reflect on the efficacy of the handling. During the often long commutes, I would re-flect on the way I had responded to my child's recount of an incident at school which resulted in a detention and the subsequent email I had composed to the Head of Campus arguing that staff needed to see the child beyond the behaviour before prescribing punitive (rather than educative) measures. I would then pre-flect where I could use this incident to better prepare student-teachers for the realities of teaching 'real' children. I felt privileged to be a dynamic part of the journey towards teacher-hood of a fascinating range of pre-service teachers. As a fledgling researcher, I could explore and conceptualise the phenomenon of passionate pedagogy, drawing on the myriad of daily encounters offered by my richly textured life.

FLIGHT DOWNWARD

During the years of my doctoral candidature and concurrent work as a sessional teacher at university, I felt I was providentially immersed in an energizing study of lived experience – my own, that of my participating teachers, my colleagues, my students and the teachers and scholars who populated the pages of scholarly literature I trawled through at every opportunity. I was exquisitely cognizant of the transformative growth I was experiencing. Another lesson I have learned from lobsters is that ceasing to grow leads to atrophy.

When I embarked on my journey towards academic doctor-hood, I was optimistic regarding the data that would be generated by my study of passionate pedagogy. Although I was using an emergent methodology, I still did not expect the flight downward from what had previously been a long but uplifted flight of enlightenment, inspiration and fertile learning. During the phase of data-analysis, I found that participating teachers were vociferous about the increasingly difficult conditions which challenge today's teachers. In fact, negative data significantly outweighed the positive, rendering the emergence of a rather bleak picture regarding the difficulty of sustaining passionate pedagogical practice in an increasingly difficult contemporary context. This phase of the research journey was difficult for me as I was shocked at the disheartening picture my engagement with this part of the data yielded. I had of course expected participants to offer some data relating to the difficulties passionate educators encounter; it was the volume and intensity of their concerns which I initially struggled to put into perspective.

This question brought into vivid relief the methodological intersection of my past and present experience. A difficult challenge I had faced as a passionate school teacher was the less than welcoming stance of many of my colleagues. Some teachers had avoided me. Some teachers reproached me for my ardent enthusiasm with the voice of sober, frequently cynical, experience. I was often told 'not to get so carried away', 'not to take things so seriously', 'not to write such detailed reports' and 'to go home earlier.' Throughout decades of classroom teaching, educational leadership, in-service and pre-service teacher mentoring, I struggled to understand my (apparently non-passionate) colleagues. How I wished throughout those years that I could change the distressing reality of unsupportive colleagues and toxic school environments.

Now, as an ingenuous, neophyte researcher, I thought I could find an (*the*?) answer. Yet what I was finding was that a doctoral thesis can be a lonely endeavour. My supervisors were competent and personable. One lavished me with emotional support but was over-loaded with teaching, administration and supervision demands. The other expected candidates to be self-regulating, disciplined, self-motivated and autonomous. Despite learning how to operate independently, I frequently felt alone, isolated and overwhelmed.

Fortunately, I never felt like giving up. I did have a peer who gave up halfway through her candidature. I view her as a would-be academic, vanquished by the many difficulties inherent in juggling the demands of life and novitiate research. Watching her come to terms with relinquishing the opportunity to attain a doctorate on a scholarship was a salutary experience. It served to reinforce my commitment and gratitude for what I viewed for myself as a privileged opportunity. I was also a scholarship beneficiary, but one with a dependent family who was 'allowing' me to undertake this herculean endeavour. Ironically, I think that the additional pressure of meeting my family's needs during my candidature actually grounded me and enabled me to maximize each moment dedicated to the research venture. My personal situation compelled me to adopt a professional stance of passionate pragmatism. Daily and weekly commitments such as housekeeping, producing exclusively home-cooked meals, regular whole-family get-togethers, ferrying children to speech therapy, music lessons, medical appointments, social activities, lengthy international phone calls with children studying overseas, spending quality time with immediate family members and close friends afforded no opportunity to deviate from my strict study and work schedule and succumb to the temptation of time-wasting distractions.

During the hardest months of isolation, conflicted-ness and fatigue, I wrestled with my thesis' unquenchable need for attention whilst trying not to ignore the often critical needs of my family. (During my candidature, several serious family crises occurred including debilitating illness, divorce and death.) My thesis became an interloping 'other'. I think everyone in my family circle came to deeply resent my thesis. My thesis was deemed an undeserving competitor for my time and emotional presence. My children yearned for their 'torture' to end with a 'real' job which they

presumed would be more 'normal'. Ultimately, I actually moved out for a period of several weeks in order to give my almost completed thesis the undivided attention it needed so that its umbilical cord be severed.

My sense of vulnerability during the months of completion evoked images of newly moulted lobsters waiting for their larger, protective shells to grow. Transforming from school teacher to doctoral candidate whilst concurrently transitioning from mothering youngsters to parenting challenged adult children required shedding outgrown identities and the patient tenacity to hold fast whilst more complex psychological structures evolved. Again, lobsters provided metaphoric modelling and motivation.

Meanwhile, I came to understand that life in the academy was not all glitter and gladness. Lecturers whom I esteemed and viewed as my own mentors seemed as beleaguered by the performativity agenda as teachers in the school sector. Passionate, expert lecturers were finding it nigh impossible to gain promotion in a 'publish to progress' environment. It appeared that academics were also not immune to some of the terrors which assailed teachers in schools. Yet, despite what I had seen and experienced, I keenly yearned to teach and write within a professional academic context. During the completion phase of my thesis, a barrage of questions assailed my weary mind during the long commutes to and from university. Did I really aspire to join this academy of career driven scholarship? Would my magnum opus be judged favourably enough to gain entrance into this world as a licensed denizen? Would I find mentors whom I could trust to show me the ropes without feeling threatened or desperate enough to exploit my ingenuousness?

Perhaps counter-rationally, my desire to be accepted into the hallowed halls of academia never wavered. The ultimate affirmation – and justification in the eyes of many around me for undertaking a doctorate – was gaining a university position. Particularly in the view of many in my immediate, personal milieu, it seemed that getting a 'real' job in the academy proves that a doctoral pursuit is not a selfish or pointless indulgence which compromises family and friends' enjoyment of, or benefit from, one's physical and/or emotional presence.

The anti-climax of submission shadowed the expected ecstasy of completion. The shift from the exquisite dynamism of labour and delivery seemed metaphorically like the experience of 'still birth'. Waiting for examiners' verdicts and the attendant retroactive legitimization of my 'employability' rendered the post-completion months a decided shade of nebulous. Who was I now? A wife and mother still, an academic yet? Does a thesis maketh an (academic) woman? This state of identity flux was not a comfortable place. Even working as a sessional staff member felt strange. I had invested everything into this doctoral endeavour but was still unable to apply for a coveted academic position without an actual doctoral qualification. Other job prospects did not entice me. I prayed for clarity and confirmation that it had all been worthwhile.

FLIGHT TO SIDELINE

Weathering the turbulence of this flight became another of life's challenges which patient, disciplined resilience enabled me to overcome. My examiners' reports were very favourable and permission was finally granted to apply for entry into the academy. I applied and waited in the transit lounge again.

Fortunately, the wait was relatively brief but nonetheless provided time to contemplate, reflect and take stock of past, present and prospective future flight paths, potential destinations and inflight safety measures. During this period my doctoral supervisor encouraged me to plan for publication from my thesis. Though I considered this wise counsel, I was not yet ready to re-enter the world of my thesis. I felt I needed a permanent place in the academy first.

I had always worked in educational contexts and could not envisage life in any other professional domain. Amongst my circle of friends, I was somewhat of an anomaly; no one else had pursued the double life I led. It was thus difficult to find true empathy close to home. I was thankful for my relationship with other female academics who understood the challenges women face in navigating the endless demands of teaching and writing whilst trying to maintain a home (albeit willingly) and nurture family (and self.)

Whilst the academy was preparing to offer me admission, my growing family was busy claiming compensation for 'lost time'. A mother's labour is never complete or invested in vain. Becoming a grandmother increased the yield of pleasures derived from decades of maternal investment. Grandchildren do indeed provide delight without the attendant primary responsibility of physical and emotional welfare. This flight served to replenish energy, consolidate domestic connections and structures and confirm aspirational desires to return to the joys and challenges of balancing both familial and professional commitments. It seemed that my new, expanded shell was now ready to accommodate an augmented identity.

FLIGHT OF PERSEVERATION

Applying for entry into the academy was a rigorous process. Refining an application of several thousand words and preparing to speak to it was a task of substantial, mental magnitude. Anticipating questions the selection panel might ask and formulating well illustrated, succinct responses kept me busy and preoccupied for weeks. Despite having workshopped interviewing skills and responding to key selection criteria with hundreds of pre-service teachers, I still experienced an adrenalin rush upon visualizing the actual interview.

When it finally happened, it felt natural; a bit like coming home. I felt prepared and the panel encouraged me to be myself. This was a welcome relief. To my mind, integrity is synonymous with authenticity. The notion of our actions flowing harmoniously from our deepest convictions and principles and our conduct being consonant with a sense of moral commitment, is not generally apparent in popular

culture. This is something I model and exhort pre-service teachers to internalize. We teach who we are (Palmer, 2007). We must therefore exert ourselves to be faithful to what's true and good. Students thrive with teachers who are real and driven by a commitment to embody trust, compassion and dependability. I sensed that my interviewers valued these attributes.

I walked away from that interview happily optimistic.

FINAL FLIGHT AND WHERE TO NEXT?

My current flight commences with an accounting of lessons learned to date and prudent goal-planning for the duration of the next phase of the journey. Ironically, whilst writing this chapter, I am contemplating the new 'inflight' conditions a permanent position in the academy demands. These include working harder to find that elusive formula for harmonious work-life balance and growing more authentically into the maturing roles of grandmother-hood and early career academia. This dual identity will necessitate the perfecting of a strategy for leaving work at work and being fully present with family at home.

Some of the strategies I believe will conduce to my becoming and remaining a holistically healthy and productive passionate pedagogue include the continued cultivation of passionate pragmatism and creative ways to enrich quality whilst decreasing quantity (mostly time). The sustained effort to evolve capacities for humility, reflective practice, resilience, emotional maturity and moral action should conduce to more effective practice and enhanced peace of mind. Locating and optimizing time and space for regeneration of spirit (self-nurture) ironically requires both investment in sisterhood (both personal and professional) and dedicated 'me' time when one can be peacefully alone with oneself. Mindful energy to proactively create and embrace meaningful opportunity is a must for 'thrival' in the academy. With this in mind, volitional avoidance of negative influences in the workplace will be a prudent precautionary measure. Maintaining the active quest for kindred spirits for co-inspiration, collaboration and co-affirmation will be a challenge well worth embracing.

CONCLUSION

Due to fair skin, dirty blonde locks and a talent for getting sunburnt in the shade, the moniker 'lobster' has engendered much self-conscious blushing over the years. It took middle-age wisdom to realise that the lobster offers salutary as well as epicurean attraction. So what can challenged early career female academics learn from lobsters?

Retreating into a secluded cavern is necessary to lobster survival. Vulnerability – and its attendant discomfiture – is a precondition for lobster growth. Discomfort signals the appropriate time to shed its rigid shell in order for a new, larger one to grow. It has been suggested that if lobsters could take tranquilizers, they would not

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grow to full maturity (Twerski, 2001). Evolving through successive iterations of personal and professional pedagogical identity, I need to remember that whereas the lobster is forced to shed its shell for survival, I have to be mindful not to succumb to the myriad tranquilizing and distracting agents lurking in our furiously paced world, threatening to impede self-actualization. Choosing to transform into a more complex entity necessitates knowing when to shed our outer protective 'skin' and embrace attendant vulnerability. This requires an act of volitional courage. Lobster wisdom suggests the reward should be professional longevity.

Sustaining one's passionate commitment and fulfilling one's authentic purpose require periods of retreat (flight to the sidelines) in the interest of self-preservation. Optimal retreat should prove reflective, cathartic and regenerative. Re-engaging the context wherein one needs to interact with others of either personal or professional relation should then prove to be a richer, more positively inter-generative experience.

My retreat from doctoral candidature and thesis submission was rewarded with the longed for position in Teacher Education. So far this flight has been smooth and scenic. I am ready to soar.

NOTE

[1]   The notion of *felt sense* is attributed to Eugene Gendlin (Gendlin, 1992) and it refers to an implicit, bodily experience of knowing or a non-conceptual awareness of one's interaction with the world. It is not to be confused with feelings or emotional reactions.

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SARAH-JANE LORD

11. ACADEMIC? … I'M JUST A TEACHER

Experiences in Transitioning from the Profession to Academia

PRELUDE

This chapter explores my insights of being an 'expert' teacher moving from the school setting into the role of lecturer of education at an Australian university. With passion and markedly innocent views about changing the world one teacher at a time, I went forth into the unknown world of the university keen to learn as much as possible and to make a difference in my students' lives. The realities were a little shocking at times. Personal and professional experiences threatened dearly held philosophical beliefs about teaching and education. Challenging situations, moments of feeling remarkably 'dumb', along with joyous times with colleagues and students who really 'got' what I was on about, made for a very dynamic flight path in the first year of my foray into academia.

INTRODUCTION

For this story, my flight began as I moved from a safe school environment where everyone knew me. I was an experienced, respected member of the community and very comfortable in my teaching role within the school. The students were great; school leadership was exemplary and very collegial. Collaboration was a key focus with students having a huge 'voice' in the curriculum and organisation of the school and its environment. I never considered that the school was part of an educational institution as to me it was more of a home away from home for both the students and staff. The school and students were an integral part of the teacher's lives; as such places often are in small rural settings. We did things differently, and I was always encouraged to expand processes and try new ways of engaging students. I would continually revise ways of using data to develop students' awareness of what they needed to do in order to succeed. Hattie's (2012) ideas of making learning visible to students to enhance achievement levels communicated in his publication *Visible Learning* fitted nicely into the way the school operated. Basically my flight path at school was pretty much at cruising altitude, everything was right with my world.

Moving to the institution of a university was a significant challenge, which I relished, but flapped about in for most of the first year. During this time there were flights in all directions, often many directions in one day. Some depleted my

confidence making me doubt whether I had anything of value to offer. Other flights took me sideways into metacognitive repose about how those in similar positions viewed their roles. Reflecting on my position in the larger scheme of the university after thinking of myself as 'just a teacher' for so long was challenging. The shift to thinking about becoming an academic rather than my default 'I'm just a teacher' position has only just started to impact my life. I now find myself advising a former principal that she should 'write a paper on curriculum development using student voice' as others would find it fascinating. In such situations, I find myself asking, "Who said that, and what have you done with Sarah?" I am finding that the assimilation of one's identity to conform to perceived academic paradigms is a continuous process. Henkel (2005) suggests that in developing academic identity, "individuals need…to immerse themselves within the cognitive and cultural traditions of their discipline…and have the courage and capacity to…engage in critical dialogue with their colleagues"(Henkel, 2005, p. 149).

Surviving the first year and now into the second year of university life, my flight is on more of an upward path; I am more comfortable and have more of an understanding of the expectations of peers and students, knowing that I do have the ability to make a positive difference to pre-service teachers' practice, which, after all, is what I am all about. This chapter shares my journey into the world of academia, where I am personally and professionally confronted about who I am, what I believe and how I operate.

A small caveat at this point may be helpful in the clarity of reading this piece. Firstly I would like to reiterating the words of Snodgrass (2002) about my writing. That is, that " these random musings will be of necessity entirely subjective, highly individualistic, and unrepresented- attributes that a scholar normally attempts to vigorously avoid in his writing" (Snodgrass, 2002, p. 118). And although writing is often seen as a linear process, this tale of mine is not at all liner in any sense, as I have travelled in many directions throughout my journey; my flight path rising and falling throughout.

WHO AM I?

I have been privileged to teach in rural primary schools for 25 years. Looking back over this time I am aware of how extremely lucky I was to have been able to observe and be guided by two expert leaders. Both were passionate educators who truly felt the enormous responsibility we as teachers have in influencing a child's life. A comment from one of these leaders has always stuck with me, guiding everything I do. She couldn't bear the thought of seeing one of her students in the future, unhappy with their life choices possibly due to her failing to assist in some way while they were in her care. The idea stuck with me that I would be on the right track if I could get these students through primary school and ready for high school being independent thinkers and learners. My job was to provide opportunities to enable them to apply their knowledge and skills to various situations and problems, to

inspire a love of learning and build confidence to do anything they put their minds to in the future.

The use of technology as a tool for student engagement became very important to me as a way to achieve my objectives. However with a crowded curriculum and time constraints involved with managing a jam-packed schedule, meetings and classroom responsibilities, many teachers are either unaware of or unable to find the time to trial new technologies. Having numerous pre-service teachers in my classroom over time, I started to think that if I could 'get them' before they came into the schools, then maybe I could help future school students. I could convey my love of teaching as well as encourage the necessity of joy in the classroom, the importance of relationships, student engagement and pertinent use of technology to the student teachers

My path led to La Trobe University, where I was very fortunate to secure a one-year contract to teach into the Master of Teaching (P-12) course in Albury/Wodonga and the Graduate Diploma of Teaching (Middle Years) out of Shepparton, in rural Victoria.

MOVING INTO ACADEMIA

In trying to investigate and define what is involved in becoming an academic, it was a little disquieting to find that in general, being an academic often means working a 60-hour week or more. Time boundaries are not clearly defined and academics often work seven days a week. They are required to obtain major funding grants for research and produce papers from the research (Acker & Armenti, 2004; Mather, 2000; Toews & Yazedjian, 2007), as well as "maneuver through often-vicious politics" (Mather, 2000, p. 1) and teach increasingly numerous students and classes.

On a lighter note, the metaphor of academia being a three-ringed circus (Toews & Yazedjian, 2007) to me, seems highly illuminating and gives me a vessel within which to hold my current experiences…a way of understanding what is expected and a reason for why things happen as they do. The three-ring circus of academia refers to service, research and teaching. This resonates with me and how I am endeavoring to approach my newfound position within academia. Toews and Yazedjian (2007) describe service obligations, as the clowns in the circus, serving as an interruption between the main acts of teaching and research. Although these service obligations of student administration and the building of positive relationships between the university and the community are expected and important to the daily operation of the organization, they are not regarded highly in regards to ongoing employment. As a new comer to university life, learning the system of the organisation could be seen as a possible barrier to success within the university, especially if one is not familiar with the governance or management processes (Smith, Salo, & Grootenboer, 2010; Toews & Yazedjian, 2007). As in all organisations, the system, along with the business manager and the cleaner, are the most important people and processes to learn as quickly as possible to enable a smooth transition. Learning

the administration side of booking rooms, conquering the video conference call, understanding the hierarchy of the chain of command, the policies and procedures if you are absent, how to book a car for travel, require getting to know the system as soon as possible, if only for one's own sanity and survival. These are all important yet normal factors in negotiating academia. This knowledge about the system also helps in considering the importance of developing an academic research identity.

Research is the prestigious 'top act' or the main attraction for the circus that *is* the university, suggested by the metaphor proposed by Toews and Yazedjian (2007). It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a university in want of funding must be in possession of a dedicated, publishing academic (with apologies to Jane Austen (Austen, 1813) . Research, even at this early stage of my understandings about academia, appears to be the 'holy grail' of the academic life force. Research brings to the academy, prestige and funding (Acker & Armenti, 2004; Gouthro, 2002; Gumport, 2000) and as such requires, out of necessity at times, academics to replace personal research with "privileged research that can attract grant money over 'pure' research" (Saunderson, 2002, p. 382). This contributes to a dip in the flight path, as the 'ringmaster' of the university needs to be satisfied.

Being new to the academy, the time spent learning the job, the system and how to carry out effective, meaningful research reduces the time available for the actual research, even though there is an underlying acceptance that for job security within this globalized market there are " pressures to publish [which] have been heightened by formal exercises that reward or punish universities and departments on the strength of research publishing" (Acker & Armenti, 2004, p. 7). In furthering my understandings about my place in academia, I need to engage with the notion that my "productivity…[will be]…defined by the publication of academic articles in refereed journals and [my] capacity to obtain research grants"(Gouthro, 2002, para.5).

At this point I think it is important to acknowledge my awareness of the barriers and difficulties that women face in education (Gouthro, 2002), in that to be considered a committed academic, one which focuses all their time on academic work, taking time off for family issues would then indicate a lack of dedication to the academic career. Research shows that female academics often suffer from guilt and exhaustion as they try to "meet the demands of each institution", both family and university, without letting either down. (Gouthro, 2002, para.20) Hopefully, in thinking about an upward flight path, this situation may eventually rectify it's self with more awareness and support from partners in child rearing roles.

Although the pressure to research can present pressure around time and holistic life commitments, one can place a positive spin on the research focus by seeing links to enhancing teaching practices by using current research and being able to generate one's own agenda for research, thus giving academics the freedom for intellectual expression and inquiry which leads to confidence and a sense of autonomy and control (Smith et al., 2010). Teachers who carry out research will undoubtedly have much higher expectations of students, promoting critical thinking and encourage the development of more complex ways of understanding what they read, rather than

taking everything at face value (Smith et al., 2010; Toews & Yazedjian, 2007). As a teacher, these concepts appeal greatly to me, and drive me to continue my research, which will impact on my teaching effectiveness.

The final act of the three-ringed circus metaphor is all about taming the animals. Teachers, according to Toews and Yazedjian (2007) are the animal tamers, using specific skills and strategies to get students to do what is required. Although animal tamers are appreciated within the circus organisation, unless the animals get out of control, they are usually overshadowed by the high-wire acts. Teaching, although valuable is not seen as a sufficient reason for promotion or tenure and often goes unnoticed unless it's poorly done (Fairweather, 2005; Toews & Yazedjian, 2007). There is increasing evidence about the "effectiveness of active and collaborative instructional practices" (Fairweather, 2005, p. 402) and a direct bearing on improving tertiary student outcomes. Even though institutions are working towards improving teacher practice, the fact remains that published research remains the key factor in promotion and tenure decisions (Fairweather, 2005; Gouthro, 2002; Toews & Yazedjian, 2007). Teaching remains a second-class citizen within the academic hierarchy, and although I understand more about the importance of research, I will continue to struggle with a system that does not prioritize effective teaching practice over all else. Smith et al. (2010) argues that being challenged philosophically, although difficult at times, can also provide a "stimulus for reinvention" (p. 59). I look forward with anticipation and excitement to my reinvention.

The view that teaching is not as important as research may be called into question by more vocal students in the current economic climate who are demanding more 'bang for their buck', so to speak. It has been recommended that teaching academics consciously elevate consumer interests by way of restructuring programs and reengineering the availability of academic services (Gumport, 2000). With rising university fees comes an increase in student expectations of provision of both services and products, putting pressure on academics to ensure quality teaching is given priority along with research and administration tasks. The animal tamers need to be using high quality skills and knowledge to ensure the containment and contentment of the wildlife.

I agree with Smith et al. (2010) that to become an effective ringmaster of the circus, that *is* academia, individual academic's need the freedom to work autonomously and make the types of decisions that resonate with their own "moral commitments and ideals about education and what it means to balance being an educator and researcher" (Smith et al., 2010, p. 60). My flights investigate this way of negotiating academia.

MY FLIGHTS

General Flight

While attending my graduation ceremony for Master of Education in ICT in 2005, I listened in awe at the students receiving their doctorates in what seemed an amazing

array of educational topics. I came out of the ceremony and promptly informed my family that very soon I would be starting my doctoral degree, most likely on the topic of Jane Austen in an iPod society. (I wanted to look at the relevance of classical English literature to a generation of iPod aficionados…along with a study of Mr. Darcy.) This didn't happen, as changes occurring at school at the time required my full attention with no energy left for furthering my studies.

A few years ago, I became interested in pre-service teacher education. Having progressed as far as I could in the rural school system without becoming a principal, a position I was not interested in for many reasons, I started to keep an eye out for jobs at the local universities, eventually I was lucky enough to obtain a position as an associate lecturer in the faculty of education. This rekindled my quest to continue my learning journey through studying for a doctorate of education.

After my years of being in a classroom, I started out on my new flight path with what seemed to be a collegiate group, at the university. I learned that starting my doctorate would be a necessity if I were considering having any sort of ongoing career at the university level. My flight upward had started off with a bang…new job, new studies, all of which I knew nothing about. When people asked me how I was going, my characteristic response was, "Great. Love the work, but it's not a learning curve…it's a vertical climb!"

FLIGHT UPWARDS

Initially the most exciting prospect of my new job was meeting the students and finding out about the differences between adult learners and primary age students. I quickly learnt that there are many benefits working at the university; no grounds duty – everyone plays nicely; no parents to deal with, no swimming to teach, and I was expecting never to say "full-stop, capital letter" ever again, but no such luck! The student-teacher relationships built over the year were one of the most inspiring aspects of my role. I found that I got the same buzz out of adult learners 'ah-ha!' moments as I did in a classroom of prep to 6 students: very satisfying. Discussing the course with the students at the end of the year, their understandings of their own teaching journey and their appreciation of what my colleagues and I wanted them to learn and what we were on about was inspiring and quite moving. Listening to their stories of teaching situations they had dealt with, how they had used specific examples of strategies that we had talked about in lectures, how successful they had been on teaching placements and the development of their professional beliefs and values about education was intense, as they were my first cohort of teachers ready to take flight. I felt proud of them.

Equally exciting has been meeting up with like-minded people who have ideas that challenge me to think about education in different ways and from different perspectives. They make me have to justify my thinking. Although at times I feel less intellectually nimble, it fascinates me to be involved in stimulating discussions then go away and cogitate about the ideas that my colleagues inspire. It's thrilling

to think about the future of education being in the hands of some of these great scholars.

One of the great opportunities at the moment is to be near the forefront of the blended learning approach in teacher education. The possibilities are endless and give us great scope for thinking outside the square, as at this stage, there are no 'norms' of teaching into a blended learning course. We are not trying to change a century old institutionalised way of operating. (Langford, 2005) believes that teachers should never do anything to or for a student that would be a learning opportunity if the teacher did it *with* the students or they did it by themselves. Therefore, teachers need to be creative in providing new and different opportunities for student learning to occur. There must be a better way of developing critical thinking skills and educational knowledge than reading great chunks of information; watching a few videos and then regurgitating it back in assessment tasks. Those who may struggle with this mode of learning drive me to reconsider, research, discuss and create as many different ways of engaging the students in their own learning; an exciting proposition.

FLIGHT DOWNWARD

Entering into the world of teacher education, I naïvely thought that teaching adults how to become teachers is the job of industry experts. I was critical of educational lecturers who had little classroom experience. I agreed with the premise that faculties needed to seek employees who had recent industry experience as hands-on practical lessons could augment the teaching abilities and equip students with the necessary skills needed to operate successfully in the education system (Garrison, 2005). I freely admit that this thinking was one sided, having now worked with passionate and incredibly knowledgeable colleagues within the university who although may not have had 25 years in a classroom, know more about educational theories and their application and relevance to teaching and learning than I do. From them I have 'caught' the fervor of research and now see how important it is for the continuation of the upwardly mobile flight of educational improvement and possibilities. The influence of these forward thinking colleagues has removed the barriers formed by my preconceived notion of academics.

Coming from this misguided view point, and without any prior understanding about how "academic work is generally constituted by active involvement in the fields of research, teaching and administration" (Smith et al., 2010, p. 55), also known as the three-ringed circus (Toews & Yazedjian, 2007), I believed, ingenuously, that I was moving into the faculty of education to instill pedagogical wisdom and help build successful practitioners of the future. I understood there might be some administration work, but it hadn't even crossed my mind that to be considered a member of the university 'club' that I would have to involve myself in research. Research to me, was always something that someone, unconnected with schools, would 'do out there…somewhere' which would eventually syphon down into a

professional development day where a few handouts would inform us about a new way to achieve success with our students.

While I wanted to start my doctorate, I did not immediately relate that study to 'research'. My general flight-cruise position started to dip as along the way, I was learning a new job in two places with two different courses, building relationships with colleagues and students, getting an inkling of what the job actually entailed. As a result I felt pulled in different directions often with perceivable barriers to my upward flight path. Should I spend time reading multitudinous articles about teacher training; about working and surviving in universities; learning more about global and local education systems and schools, or should I focus on my research? In the end, I did a little of each, without satisfaction.

Continuing on the downward path, one of the greatest challenges moving into the world of academia was learning to speak 'Acronym'. Course codes, names for different research groups and even names of various faculties within the university, are all reduced to acronyms. These flowed rapidly from the mouths of my experienced colleagues leaving me, the uninitiated, completely flummoxed. Needless to say, without wanting to look brainless, I quickly learned to record the acronym, and later quietly asked it's meaning before hastening back to my room where I secretly stashed my acronym-decoder list. (In an upward flight however…after careful study, I am quite happy to say that I am a fledgling speaker of 'Acronym'.)

Confidence when starting a new job can be easily shaken, as not only are you trying to impress your new colleagues so that they don't think they have made a grave error by employing you, but also you want to prove to yourself that you are the right one for the job. The early 'knee-knocking' time in a new job often settles down when you become more familiar with the position and confidence builds. People and colleagues around you at this precarious time have a very important role to play. Without their continued support and mentor-ship, the road remains rocky for a long time. Losing confidence in your abilities can be quite debilitating, as we readily believe the bad things people think or say about us. This is certainly one of the challenges about moving to a new place: managing upward and downward flights of different personalities that make up the organisation.

FLIGHT TO SIDELINE

As elated as I am to be finally setting out on my journey as researcher, my study has now become something I have to do, rather than something I wanted to do for myself with no pressure. My changed perception of the study, along with the pressures of learning a new job, has at times made me feel quite resentful; the fact that it takes up weekends and time away from my family and holidays. Other times I love it and want to just concentrate totally on my research. I believe that these mixed feelings are common in people working towards their doctorates, but are worth noting as a sideways motion in reconsidering where I am heading and what I want to achieve.

I would like to have a long, successful career in teacher education. To be able to achieve this, I must have my doctorate. Hence my 'want' to further my education has become a 'need', which, I think, takes some of the shine off it. I must add that I've had enormous support from others in the same position and it feels like we are all working towards an initiation into the club by working together through the process.

It has also been interesting to reflect on how others seem to judge you depending on your level or years of service at the university, and your doctorial status. "Oh… you're just Mrs?" Often I have been left feeling that I don't quite measure up, which of course adds to feelings of self-worth and lowers confidence. Again, it's so important to build up those positive relationships with like-minded colleagues who can support you through the times when you are flying low. Positive colleagues reaffirm that you are of value and that what you do is important in the life of the students. Friends we can learn from, that help us revise and reflect on what we are doing to promote effective practice. Lemon and Garvis (2014) write that one of the keys to becoming a well-rounded academic is to continue learning from others. For me, travelling to the other campuses, engaging in academic discourse, exchanging ideas from professional practice and seeing the value of adding these practices into current teacher training, was revitalizing for my confidence that had been diminished in the initial stage of the new job. Toews and Yazedjian (2007) further this idea by stating that developing collaborative relationships is the best way to maximize scholarly productivity.

Saunderson (2002, p. 380) refers to the "new managerialism" of academia being reduced to economy, efficiency and accountability. Similarities can be drawn between schools, and the ever-increasing external expectations of teachers. Teaching academics within the university have similar pressures in regards to increased expectations to achieve, with reduced funding and the pressure to publish: sideways thoughts about both organisations.

FLIGHT OF PERSEVERATION

Survival at this stage of my academic career entails not taking on or getting involved in extraneous social events that are a part of life on a rural campus. My objectives are clear. Build positive working relationships with students and colleagues: do a quality job with the teaching and all that that entails; continue to develop knowledge about education and higher education and fit in my research.

I also found during my first year in academia, when on a downward path for whatever reason, visiting schools and being around children would help reaffirm the belief in myself and my abilities. Being able to get out my guitar and sing songs with the prep, one, and two class was very cathartic and soul restoring. On the whole, young children's joy and love of school is inspiring; something to promote and aspire to when considering teaching as a profession.

The flexibility of being able to work at home has also been instrumental in my flight of perseveration. It has taken me quite a while to understand that "knowledge work is not time or place-specific" (Mather, 2000, p. 2). With the expansion of

communication technology lecturers are virtually available for consultation any time of the day and any day of the week. My boundaries of 'work' time have altered and flexibility has replaced imbedded school hours, as long as I get the job done. At the start of my academic career, traditional school hours were part of my daily routine and I could make one cup of coffee last all day. These patterns are breaking down slowly and being able to buy real coffee at any time is a definite upward flight!

FINAL FLIGHT AND WHERE TO NEXT?

I am now at a stage where I am examining the meaning of 'being an academic'. What implications will this have on my notion of how I view myself as a teacher? In my previous life I always scoffed at the 'wack-a-demics'[1] and now I find that I am striving to be one. I find myself an 'Oliver with an empty bowl', wanting 'more knowledge about everything to do with education', please Sir! More than ever I find myself wanting to be a 'real' expert teacher. An expert because I have knowledge through research as well industry practice. Participating in wondrously exciting 'academic' conversations with colleagues, about the possibilities of what we are doing and how we can improve it to make it even better, is very exciting. In fact I find this part of my new career to be one of the most exhilarating; collaborative relationships with people who share a passion for education and a vision for continual improvement.

I've been informed that to implement these world-changing ideas, I must develop my skills as a writer of grant proposals, along with my creative writing techniques, or as Toews and Yazedjian (2007) state, " faculty members have to be creative in how they accomplish scholarly activities with limited resources" (Toews & Yazedjian, 2007, p. 116). However, I'm told quite emphatically by my fellow colleagues, that academics are not manipulative…just innovative with their proposals, keeping their academic integrity by justifying the outcomes of their research bids. Something I look forward to in the flights of the future. First I have to work through my literature review chapter for my thesis. This is what sits at the back of my mind, hovering over my flight path in competition with teaching, assessment, course construction, student management and administration tasks, the last of which often seems to suck time away like a black hole.

CONCLUSION

At the end of my year and at the start of the next, I wonder whether it has been worth it. Upon reflection I think of the wonderful people I have met and worked with. The reaffirming things that students have said to me, such as … 'I went into the classroom thinking WWSD (What Would Sarah Do), and I was fine': all part of the upward flight that I wouldn't like to have missed. The sideways flight paths of reflecting on practice, blended learning in teacher education and the importance of research all of which contribute towards the forward motion of my track through the educational organisation of the university.

And finally, although I miss the cruising flight path of the kids at school and the comfortable school routines, I am excited to take part in the circus, develop my skills in all performance areas and follow the flight paths of my future. I am overwhelmed by the wonderful upward soring flight of meeting and hearing about students who are now happily teaching and who thank me for my role in their development as a teacher. It's a wonderful feeling to know that I've helped others achieve their upward flight; it is unutterably satisfying to me as really, in the end, I am still just a teacher.

NOTE

[1]   Slang for academic.

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BETINA PRZYBYLAK

12. ACADEMIC SEEKING SUSTAINABILITY

PRELUDE

This chapter examines societal and industry factors that have converged in recent years to create a working environment in academia that the author will assert is not sustainable. Moving from a personal perspective, into a community view and back again, this chapter aims to critique current and upcoming industry practices within a frame of social sustainability. It asserts that building an employment and working model based on balanced, and equitable and community oriented practices will provide fertile ground for more productive and supportive working academic environments in the future.

INTRODUCTION

In writing this chapter I began with a personal examination of my growth as an early career academic, but quickly realised that my goal of personal reflection and contemplation had evolved into an examination of social sustainability within the academy. I have always viewed the world around me with a critical lens and an introspective view; and as a young doctoral researcher working full time in the academy this has become a key element of my professional persona. As I move forward in this career I become increasingly concerned by issues of longevity and sustainability inherent in current employment and workload practices within higher education (Hammond & Churchman, 2008).

Personal observations, conversations with colleagues, and almost compulsive reading have led me to the conclusion that neither ongoing staff nor sessional employees will be able to continue to work in the ways they have in the past. Previous practices have not worked and the future of the profession appears perhaps even bleaker as upcoming funding cuts and dramatic reform look to change the sector through reduced tenured positions and increased hiring of casual and impermanent staff (Hammond & Churchman, 2008; Tilbury et al., 2005; Barrett et al., 2009; Ewing et al., 2008). To put it simply, the way we are doing things isn't sustainable.

In order to account for these observations, I will set out a narrative that begins with my own considerations on becoming an academic, acknowledging how my early experiences as a primary school teacher in the first decade of the 21st century forced me to understand the conditions I work best in, which enabled me to see what would make my working life sustainable and what would challenge me to remain open to

possibilities throughout my working life. I then move away from my own perspective to account for the people who have inspired me to be the best I can be as I have moved from compulsory education, into higher education. It is these who people have opened the door to ever expanding questions of equity, marginalisation and the social sustainability of practices in the tertiary sector and society as a whole. From this point I begin a discourse around ideas of privilege and disadvantage in the academy, worrying the notion of the sessional academic, before moving on to challenge positions of privilege through my own lens as an academic holding an ongoing position, asserting that neither position is more sustainable than the other. Finally, the narrative concludes by looking forward, exploring how community and healthy interactions in and with communities may provide space for more sustainable practices in the future.

WHO AM I?

When I was about ten my parents threatened to send me to a private school because I was getting in trouble in the classroom and being an altogether disagreeable young lady at home. I recall declaring that if they sent me to a private school I would make sure that I got expelled. I stayed where I was.

Looking back I realise that it was a sense of fairness, of a need for equity that made me so defiant at such a young age. I didn't want to go to a private school because it was a place for some; the haves could enter while the have nots *could* not. This thinking set the scene for my career as a primary school teacher in the 2000s, where I worked in lower socio-economic schools in Australia and New Zealand; and becomes increasingly important in my current work in teacher training and educational research.

I am passionate about building equitable and sustainable futures through innovative curriculum based on principles of critical multiliteracies and action based learning. I challenge and encourage each and every student I teach to view the world with a critical lens, hoping that they will never accept the world as it exists, but rather always seek to make it a better place for their students and the future. I truly believe that the power of an educator is that we can create the change that we wish to see in the world.

BEING AN ACADEMIC

A deep commitment to scholarship draws people to academic work and lies at the core of their professional values. The opportunity for intellectually stimulating work, a genuine passion for a field of study and the opportunity to contribute to new knowledge are the aspects of academic work most prized (Bexley, James & Arkoudis, 2011, p.1).

The above statement was highlighted as the first key finding of 'The Australian academic profession in transition: addressing the challenge of reconceptualising academic work and regenerating the academic workforce', a 2011 report

commissioned by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. In sharp contrast to this very positive outcome, the second finding asserted that half of Australian academics felt their workload is not manageable (Bexley, James & Arkoudis, 2011, p.1), with many seeing this issue as a key area of personal stress. Ewing et al. substantiate Bexley, James and Arkoudis' findings, noting that there is strong anecdotal evidence to show that academics in the tertiary sector "feel under pressure in terms of both how they work and how they utilise their time" (2008, p.294). The results of these pressures are growing reports of job dissatisfaction (Bexley, James & Arkoudis, 2011; Ewing et al. 2008; McInnes, 1990); increasing feelings of isolation across all career stages (Akerlind, 2005; Bazeley, 2003; Mamtora, 2004; and Norrell & Ingoldsby, 1991); and heightened risks of psychological illness with forty-seven percent of academics being at risk, compared to nineteen percent of the general working population (Winefield et al., 2003).

Academia is made up of people who are driven to contribute to their field through teaching and / or research, as well as community and university engagement. They are dedicated to developing their learning and knowledge in a lifelong cycle of renewal, and yet they work under conditions that do not appear to be sustainable. A major contributing factor to this is funding. In recent years the sector has seen overwhelming reductions in government contributions to the sector (Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008), with upcoming cuts of $2.3 billion for 2014 and 2015 heralding the biggest changes to the tertiary sector for generations (Hawley, 2013). Some key outcomes of the resultant and previous reforms have been the increasing casualisation of the academic sector (Bexley, James & Arkoudis, 2011; Prodzynski, 2010; Rothengatter & Hil, 2013; and Kimber, 2003), swelling class sizes (Hammond & Churchman, 2007; Bexley, James & Arkoudis, 2011; and Ewing at.al, 2008) and expanding administrative responsibilities at all stages of the career ladder (Bexley, James & Arkoudis, 2011; and Ewing et al., 2008).

The most affected cohort on the academic ladder is the early career researcher. More people at this level are likely to be employed on a sessional or casual basis (Bexley, James & Arkoudis, 2011; and Rotherngatter & Hil, 2013) with sixty percent indicating a concern regarding job security, demonstrating the highest levels of anxiety over this matter in the profession. Overall early career academics are also less satisfied with their incomes than other levels of academia (Bexley, James & Arkoudis, 2011). The National Tertiary Education Union estimated that the number of casual academics in Australia is 67 000, being equivalent to over 9000 full time positions. Fifty-percent of this population are women (NTEU, 2012), and together they take on over fifty percent of undergraduate teaching. With The Australian newspaper reporting anticipated growth in the rates of older academics leaving the profession in coming years (Rowbottom, 2010) early career and casual academics will be filling these positions without the job security or longevity of the past.

Some researchers are decrying a need for social and cultural reform in the academic sector. In 2002 Winefield et al. argued that programs aiming to reduce stress and improve job satisfaction would likely "enhance individual and

organisational productivity" (p.13). In examining the sustainability of social factors in the academy, Tilbury et al. highlighted a "critical concern in the hiring, tenure and promotional systems" (2005, p.2). Some suggested ways to improve concerns of isolation and stress have included: increasing communication and collaboration amongst academics both within and across institutions (Barret et al., 2009), developing more permanent employment options (Rotherngatter & Hil, 2013), and working to develop socially sustainable practices across the academy (Hammond & Churchman, 2007).

In their 2007 article 'Sustaining academic life: A case for applying principles of social sustainability to the academic profession' Hammond and Churchman contend that the tertiary sector could be pivotal in improving social sustainability across society. As educators of future generations, universities have considerable power in changing the views, practices and systems of communities both large and small. However, many of the institutional values and traditions that have created the situation under discussion are counterproductive to these possibilities.

The Western Australian Housing and Sustainable Communities Indicators Project (Barron & Gauntlett, 2002) produced five principles of social sustainability that the academic community would do well to learn from. The following paragraphs attempt to highlight the key features of Barron and Gauntlett's principles of social sustainability, while discussing the inherent issues in current higher education employment, administration and workload practices.

> **Equity**: providing equity for all members of a community, but particularly for those who are marginalised. For sessional and casual employees who are regularly left out of bureaucratic communications, relegated to cubby hole offices, paid intermittently and trained poorly in university systems this means providing equitable working conditions, improved professional development opportunities and more reliable payroll systems.
>
> **Diversity**: a community's openness to seeking diversity over homogeneity (Hammond & Churchman, 2007). Many academic institutions employ a majority of white middle class men in permanent and more senior roles, while women and culturally diverse employees are placed in casual and sessional positions (Rotherngatter & Hil, 2013; and Mason, 2013). Developing recruitment and employment models that encourage cultural, gender and age diversity through attractive incentives and ongoing professional development would be one strong step in the right direction.
>
> **Interconnectedness**: a community's implied and explicit connections with others. While universities push research connections and community engagement, the vast majority of academics feel isolated in their daily working lives. As strongly individualistic people (Bone & McNay, 2006, in Hammond & Churchman, 2007) academics need to be *actively* encouraged to seek and maintain personal and professional networks through face to face interactions such as mentoring programs, career stage networks and social interactions

(Hammond & Churchman, 2007). A focus on building community must become prevalent over the current performance oriented culture in universities if this is to improve.

Democracy & Governance: prioritises transparency *and* accountability at all levels. In the current climate, the focus has been on accountability with a top down approach where trust is lacking and stress levels are increasing (Hammond & Churchman, 2007). Developing a community and team oriented approach to these concepts where everyone is responsible for the community's transparent and accountable conduct is thought to be a much more productive and positive move for social sustainability (Barron & Gauntlett, 2002).

Quality of Life: is the measure of the sustainability of a society or community. This literature review has accounted for high stress levels, mental health concerns, administrative demands, poor job and income satisfaction, and reductions in productivity as key issues in the academic sector. If the measure of quality of life is to improve dramatic changes need to occur to create a system that prioritises people and community over performance, profits and research output. A more socially sustainable system would go a long way to creating the productivity of individual and institution that Winefield et al. (2002) anticipate.

MY FLIGHTS

Higher education institutions have the potential to "play a pivotal role in turning society towards sustainability" (Blaze Corcoran & Wals, 2004, p.3). As innovators and leaders of change they are at the forefront of growth and development. They are well situated to enact socially sustainable practices and have the highest obligation to do so (Orr, 2002, p.2).

In providing an account of Barron and Gauntlett's five principles of social sustainability I have attempted to highlight the discrepancy between the 'ideal' socially sustainable institution and what actually occurs in academic institutions. It is evident that the tertiary sector has much room for improvement in each five principles. Through the following flights I hope to explain how I came to consider these principles; why they are so important to myself, the academy and society at large; and where I see potential for future growth, at an individual and community level.

GENERAL FLIGHT

At the end of my second year of teaching in a primary school I reached a crisis point. I was struggling to succeed in a school that I now know wasn't an environment I could flourish in - I had been put on notice for my lack of progress, and everyone seemed to know about it. I remember one of my colleagues quietly telling me that I should think about becoming a curriculum writer. In other words I was good at theory but not practice.

Rather than acquiesce to this narrow view, I challenged myself to try something new. Breaking my contract, I began teaching at a small school in a much lower socio-economic area, and enrolled in a Master of Education. If I was so good at theory, then *theoretically* I could learn to be good at practice.

From the first day at this new school I knew I had made the right decision. My study drove innovation in my teaching, and the supportive staff and diverse students pushed me every day to become the best I could be. I realised that freedom of place and space were key factors in my ability to put the theory of teaching into practice. These factors made my working life more sustainable and as such I strove to place myself in such environments.

Looking back I realise how lucky I was to reach this crisis point so early in my career. It forced me to examine my motivations and desires so that I came to understand what I wished to achieve as a teacher. I wanted to innovate and change the world to make it a 'better' place; a drive which has been pivotal in my career to this day. I have never settled for anything less. I've moved jobs whenever I felt the challenge of a place and space wan, seeking new experiences that would allow me to contribute in ever more constructive ways.

This is the view I took when in 2009 I was unable to find work as a teacher for the following year. My qualifications and diverse experiences meant that I was too experienced for a classroom position, and yet no one would hire me as a curriculum leader. I decided to seek other ways to contribute to a profession that I continued to be passionate about.

I began a Doctor of Education in 2010. Within a semester I had sessional work, and by years end I was employed full time on an ongoing contract as a lecturer in educational studies. My journey as a teacher had not ended, but had yet again taken another direction.

FLIGHT UPWARDS

The world of academia provided me with a place and space that invigorated me. What struck me was the similarity between teaching and university life. Student wellbeing and engagement continue to be a vital element of my role, the vehicle that drives both my teaching and research.

I have been inspired by the stories of my students, the diversity and passion of the people around me. I have been lucky enough to develop a study of student experiences while on school practicum for my thesis, work with colleagues on student First Year Experience programs, and contribute to the development of a new Bachelor of Teaching course. I am constantly stimulated, engaged and motivated to push myself forward in this endeavour.

In my second year as a tertiary educator I realised that while my academic pursuits were thriving, other elements of my life had taken second place as I learned to balance a new career. I was unfit, a state which I knew was not good for my mental or physical wellbeing. Rather than following the typical route of

running, joining a gym, and eating well, I decided I needed a new challenge in my life.

I began to play roller derby. A full contact women's sport played on quad roller skates, roller derby was the challenge I was after. It turned out that this was one of the best decisions of my life. Roller derby complements my academic life, forcing me out of my own headspace - pushing me to be fit, strong and healthy; while also exposing me to a group of the most diverse and inspirational women I have ever met.

Roller derby has encouraged me to question my sense of self, both with regards to my role as a woman in academia, and in educating pre-service teachers. Working, laughing, sweating and crying with this group of passionate yet often marginalised women has highlighted for me the key role education plays in bridging issues of equity, sustainability and diversity.

These women are marginalised in many ways. A large majority are university students working part time on low or minimum wages. They may be earning Bachelor degrees in their twenties, and have high hopes and potential for the future, but many are Masters and Doctoral students who are running the treadmill of part time academic and non-academic work, in which they barely manage to sustain less than ideal living conditions. A number of these women are mothers, juggling parenting with part time work and study. Within this cohort more than half are sole parents who are concerned about where their future will lie in upcoming national budgetary changes. Added to this, many in the roller derby family identify as queer, nominating themselves as part of one or more of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersexual or queer communities.

While it is not in the scope of this chapter to identify and challenge the key issues of marginalisation inherent in each of these cohorts, it is clear that those in low-socio economic situations and non-heteronormative living circumstances are marginalised within modern society. Consideration of marginalisation, equity and opportunity were always a priority for me as a primary school teacher, but it was becoming a member of the roller derby community that allowed me to make the connection between classroom teaching and the role education can play in improving these issues on a broader stage. Much like the children I taught in the outer northern suburbs in the mid-2000s these groups have less access to services, their lives are more likely to be at risk of physical harm, either from family members or the general public, and they are un likely to start their education from the same privileged academic position as those who are not marginalised. They will always be at a disadvantage unless those in the education sector work to develop more socially sustainable practices that build equity and opportunity.

FLIGHT DOWNWARD

My sense of responsibility to the people I teach and those around me more generally has been greatly enhanced by these experiences. It has encouraged me to consider the position of privilege I hold as an ongoing full time academic, when so many people

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I know and care about are not as lucky. It is the predominantly female sessional academics that the institution relies upon so heavily that I feel real concern for in the current academic climate.

These highly educated women hold down multiple part time positions while often attempting to balance study and family life. Working semester to semester, often at multiple institutions, they have no job security and often end up living pay check to pay check when university systems fail to reimburse them on time. Placed in cubbyhole offices at the end of corridors, they are left out of university and faculty communications, staff meetings and professional development. In completing marking and subject development work that no one else can or will do they work many hours beyond the time allocations because, like more privileged academics, they want to do the best for their students.

I, on the other hand, hold a permanent position. My pay is routine and my workload allows one day a week for research. When my teaching commitments for the semester are completed I am able to focus on research and subject development. Non-teaching periods are times of great productivity for me, as I write my thesis and improve subjects that I have taught for the past several years without having to worry about how I will pay my mortgage.

My privilege is that I am able to build a strong academic career based upon the continuity that I have in my role. I receive increasingly strong student feedback on my teaching because I have access to the time and resources required to improve my subjects semester to semester, year to year. I am able to develop my research profile, publishing chapters, and attending national and international conferences with the support of my faculty. My thesis will most likely be completed within a four year period, even though I have worked full time for most of this time and in the meantime I continue to build my reputation across the university by building and participating in innovative programs over a sustained duration. My non-permanent colleagues cannot say the same.

FLIGHT TO SIDELINE

Issues of equity, sustainability and diversity are no less prevalent in the academic world than the primary school classroom or broader society. It is clear that I come from a position of privilege that many in my profession do not hold. This belief encourages me to critique the world around me and work ever harder to question and challenge the status quo. In recognising what is happening to those external to me, I have come to feel a need to look inward, to examine my own place in the world. In doing so I have realised that my privileged position is no more sustainable than that of my less permanent colleagues.

One of the key challenges of my career has been learning to balance my strong personal drive with reality, to find an equilibrium between what has to be done and what I wish to achieve. High teaching loads compete with thesis commitments,

curriculum development and faculty responsibilities, as well as taking on new opportunities as they arise. Learning to work towards my goals without burning out has been a key element of my development which I have seen mirrored in many around me.

During my time in primary schools, career balance was something I strove for but never achieved. I worked too hard, got sick too often and put my job ahead of my personal life on too many occasions. Being driven has gotten me to where I am today, but it has stopped me from being my best at times and has meant that I haven't always gotten the most out of life.

Changing careers has been an opportunity for me to take stock of how I approach my working life, to learn from those around me and to develop new strategies for managing my time and life more holistically. There have been ups and downs on this journey. In my third year in the tertiary sector my learning curve came to a head. I was ill for an extended period, was unable to work full time, and spent hours on my own contemplating life and what I wasn't doing.

FLIGHT OF PERSEVERATION

These inner wonderings forced me to recognise that like many of my colleagues, my enthusiasm often gets in the way of a balanced approach to life. I have come to the realisation that I seek to do 'everything', and that all too often I try to do 'everything' on my own. This behaviour was learnt during my time in primary schools, where my passion to innovate was not generally shared by my colleagues. Since changing careers, I have found that the people around me, both in academia and the wider world of family and roller derby, have been a key source of grounding for me as they have encouraged me to find a work life balance that I can actually maintain.

From all this, I have learnt that I cannot achieve my goals on my own. It is my connectedness with the people around me that makes me who I am, and drives my passions, my enthusiasm, in fact, everything I do. Looking after myself allows me to look after my community and allows my community to look after me. Living a balanced life puts me in a better place to use my position of privilege to help improve the world around me, hopefully allowing us to work together to bridge issues of equity, sustainability and diversity that are becoming so critical in the current educational climate.

FINAL FLIGHT AND WHERE TO NEXT?

It is a sense of community or interconnectedness (Barron & Gauntlett, 2002) which I now seek in order to look after myself and those around me. In building these connections I hope to set up structures that have the potential to be self-sustaining, relying upon the networks that exist within them rather than specific people. It is my

hope that relationships, collaborations and partnerships (both within and external to my current university) will form the backbone of a career that will contribute to issues I am passionate about.

My first steps in doing this are tentative. I have actively sought more direct support from my thesis supervisors, working with them on my thesis, rather than on my own. I am forming networks with like-minded colleagues through social media and conferences on areas of equity, sustainability and diversity. I have sought out a mentor as part of a university mentoring program, and am excited about the futures we might work towards with like-minded people.

My work with students is becoming more involved as I take on formal roles in student enrichment and engagement during transitionary periods, both at the beginning of university and when moving into the teaching profession. Working in these areas allows me to support students in making informed decisions for their own futures which will hopefully help them to see their own potential and responsibilities as teachers and encourage them to become future drivers of change.

Like those around me I do wish for personal success, however my ethics and morals push me to seek success through positive change: in academia, education and the world as a whole. I often look at these goals and think how naïve and altruistic they sound. But I whole heartedly believe that if enough of us feel this way then we can be the change we want to see in the world and make it happen.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has argued with conviction that the current employment and working structures, models and practices implemented in the tertiary sector are not sustainable. As they stand they are a danger to the health and wellbeing of the people within them (Winefield et al., 2003), and will not be able to support the growth that will be needed to excel in the changing employment and working climate that is likely to be the result of upcoming budgets cuts (Hawley, 2013). The current practices simply no longer work and changes need to be made.

In order to reach their potential to be innovators in the area of social sustainability (Orr, 2002), universities need to make some drastic changes. These changes will need to consider Barron and Gauntlett's five principle including: building equity for all members of their working communities; encouraging and supporting diversity of thinking, culture and gender in all areas and levels of the academy; moving from viewing innovation as competition to innovation as community capacity building, in order to enhance interconnectedness within and across universities and outside the sector and decrease staff feelings of isolation (Akerlind, 2005; Bazeley, 2003; Mamtora, 2004; and Norrell & Ingoldsby, 1991); and finally moving from a punitive model of accountability to a more democratic approach to governance that focuses on transparency and shared accountability.

Changes in this direction will dramatically improve Barron and Gauntlett's measure of the social sustainability of a university, by improving the quality of

life for all within higher education. This will allow academics to reach their full potential and improve the innovative nature of the academy as they will be able to maintain healthier work life balance. This will allow them to draw upon the "deep commitment to scholarship that draws people to academic work and lies at the core of their professional valuates" (Bexley, James & Arkoudis, 2011, p.1).

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KAYE HARRIS

13. FROM WRESTLING A CROCODILE
TO EXPLORING NEW BILLABONGS

PRELUDE

Stories illuminate real life experiences allowing others to investigate the inner experiences of an individual and draw connections (Webster & Mertova, 2007). My account is a reflection of my first year in the academy. This story uncovers my transition from school to university and provides a glimpse into my experiences of adapting to new roles and changing circumstances while learning to teach and research in the culture of higher education. It also provides insights into the significance of an experienced mentor guiding the progress of a new academic. My reflections are shared with the view that some aspects of my account may resonate with others and so they may learn from my story.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter uncovers insights about my transition from working as a leader in schools to teaching and researching in higher education. After many years of experience working in a number of Australian public schools and in variety of roles, such as teacher, assistant principal, principal and educational consultant, I seized the opportunity to explore a new terrain and became a lecturer in a regional university in the state of Victoria, Australia. Having had some familiarity as a student and occasional lecturer, I was surprised by how little I understood about the culture of the university. My story shares some insights into my experiences and captures the importance of my mentor during my first year in the academy.

WHO AM I?

I spent over eight years as a post-graduate student, spending much of that time feeling like I was *wrestling a crocodile* (my doctoral research). The *wrestle* involved juggling full-time work as a principal and crafting my dissertation. Nearing the conclusion of the *wrestle*, I entered a *new billabong* (an Australian word to describe a branch of a river forming a stagnant pool, usually after a deluge). This was to work in the academy.

The transition from school to the university occurred in my final year of completing my doctorate. My supervisor asked whether I would be interested in teaching in a

post-graduate program for pre-service teachers. I agreed to this proposition, taking up a one-year fixed term contract, knowing that it would be an opportunity to finish my research and to try something new. I thought the shift from school to university would be a smooth transition, yet as time unfolded I had to learn new ways of working to understand the culture of the academy. The transition involved adjusting to the size and complexities of working at a large, multi-campus university. The school I had been working at before the more had about 80 staff and 1,000 students and then I moved to a university which had over 3,100 staff and 34,000 students (La Trobe University, 2014; 2012). The different size of the organisations was a palpable change for me. I had gone from being well-known in the school community to feeling unknown in the academy. I had gone from feeling confident with the systems and procedures used in schools, to uncertainty and lack of understanding of the complex components of the university.

The transition also meant I needed to learn about my new role, the structures and cultures. I was experienced in leading schools, yet I was inexperienced in the academy. I went from feeling competent and knowledgeable to feeling incompetent and needing to learn about my new environment and the job. I went from a familiar pond to an unfamiliar billabong, and this chapter provides insights into my first two years in academia.

LEARNING FROM THOSE EXPERIENCED IN THE ACADEMY

Changing professions and starting a new job can be a time of new learning and can impact on the way we see ourselves and others. Further impacts occur when entering new cultures that have their own protocols and practices, such as internalised beliefs, symbols, values and norms (Wallace, 2000) and structures, stories, rituals and routines (McCaffery, 2010): otherwise known as the "*way things are done around here"* (Barth, 2001, p.7; Nias, 1989). Over time, the new academic learns about the culture, after being exposed to the overt and hidden sides. The challenge for the new academic is learning about the practices and protocols that may be second nature to those who have been in the academy and know the way things are done.

The new academic is forced to navigate new cultures, picking up hints and perspectives about the organisation, the teams they become part of, and the people that they work with in their new role. This involves gaining information about the overt parts of the culture while making sense from other clues about the hidden ways of doing things. Becher (2001) describes these cultural nuances as the front-of-stage (*the public arena*); back stage (*where the deals are done*) and under-the-stage (*where the gossip is purveyed).* Making sense of these nuances can be derived from observations, conversations with colleagues, and also from interactions with the line manager; learning about the way things are done.

The role of the line manager as a mentor has a significant part to play in the induction of the new academics (Eley, Wellington, Pitts & Biggs, 2012) and also in assisting with their development as a teacher and researcher (Bazeley, Kemp,

Stevens, Asmar, Marsh & Bhathal, 1996). McCafferty (2010) proposes that line managers have a key role in perpetuating the desirable parts of the culture of an organisation during the induction phase for new academic, whilst also phasing out the undesirable parts of the culture as new people join the organisation. The line-manager provides information to new academics about the organisation, including imparting information about the culture.

New academics do not only need to learn about the culture of an organisation, but they also need some guidance, direction and support in other areas of their work, particularly as early career researchers and as they chart the features of organisational cultures in a complex and contradictory environment. As Akerlind (2009) reports, "academia is not an easy career path to follow, faced with rising pressures and often conflicting messages" (p.144). The pressures for new academics may resonate in their understanding of their work and how they fit into the work of the university. Grigsby (2004) reports, "the early stages of an academic career can be a dizzying experience", and identifies some of pitfalls as: "too much service effort; diffusion and confusion; lack of mentoring and guidance; exploitation by other faculty members; and lack of discipline and perseverance" (p.2). This identifies the relevance of providing the necessary support to the new academic to sustain their development and ensure they succeed in the academy.

There is a strong argument for providing mentoring for the new academic. The experienced academic can provide information and perceptions about cultures while providing guidance and support about the way things are done and steer them away from the pitfalls faced by some academics early in their careers (Grigsby, 2004). Bazeley et al. (1996) found "mentoring can provide the crucial bridge for the early career researcher who has recently emerged from student status, embarked on a research career at a later stage in life, or is located in an unsupportive department" (p.27). In a similar vein, Harrison and McKeon's (2008) study of teacher educators and their transition from schools to higher education revealed teachers, "meet unanticipated demands in new teaching, grapple with making sense of the HEI culture (higher educational institutional culture), and offer recent and relevant experiences of teaching making learning meaningful for the student teachers" (p.164). Fostering mentoring relationships between the experienced and inexperienced is not a new concept as explained by Clarke (2004). Experienced academics are ideally placed to provide a mentoring relationship with new academics, imparting accumulated wisdom and insights to induct them into the culture (Eley, Wellington, Pitts & Biggs, 2012) and providing the crucial bridge to enable them to grow, flourish and contribute to the organisation and profession. This demonstrates the need for new academics to have a mentor to help them maximise their contributions and to chart their way.

MY FLIGHTS

The next part of this chapter allows me to introduce my story through the framework of Schwab (1970) flights. My account is a reflection of my first year in the academy. This story uncovers my transition from school to university and provides a glimpse

into my experiences of adapting to new roles and changing circumstances while learning to teach and research in the culture of higher education. It also provides insights into the significance of an experienced mentor guiding the progress of a new academic. My reflections are shared with the view that some aspects of my account may resonate with others and so they may learn from my story.

GENERAL FLIGHT

When I was a little girl, I wanted two things in life. First, I wanted to be a tennis-star: taking me all the way to Wimbledon. Second, I wanted to be a schoolteacher. After working in schools for over 29 years, mainly in the secondary sector in public schools, I clearly did not achieve my first ambition.

As a teacher in public schools in Victoria, Australia, I also aspired to be a principal. Although I loved teaching, I also felt fulfilled when in leadership roles in schools and I worked as an assistant principal and principals in three schools over an eight year period. During my time as a principal, I had reasonably unique experiences: leading a school closure and leading a Circus School (a select-entry school that had a symbiotic relationship with a circus training and performing organisation). These experiences proved to uncover some of the highs and lows of leadership. In particular, the experience of leading a school closure provided the impetus for my doctoral research; an examination of the experiences of principals faced with leading school closures and mergers.

During my teaching career, I had been totally immersed in my roles as a teacher and leader in schools, and I had never thought of entering the academy, yet when I was offered a one-year contract at the local university, I willingly decided to pursue this path. My doctorate had been progressing quite well, and after having had a taste of teaching in the pre-service program as an occasional lecturer, I willingly accepted the role as a teacher and researcher at the university.

FLIGHT UPWARDS

At the time of writing, I have been in academia (*the new billabong)* for just over a year. This time has flown and I have had a myriad of opportunities in research and teaching, so far. I will explain by outlining the experiences to date.

First, and probably the most significant event during my first year as an academic, was the completion and successful examination of my doctoral thesis. As well as teaching, I was afforded time to research and this facilitated the writing of the thesis. It was the first time during my eight years of part-time study that I did not have to rush home from work and spend a large portion of my waking hours reading and writing. The time to research during the course of the working week gave me the necessary space to think, develop my ideas and write uninterrupted. This was unheard of in my other professional roles. During my first year as an academic, I participated in writing and research workshops with experts in the field and this

further enhanced my experience as a higher degree student: the opportunity to talk with other academics and post-graduate students proved to normalize what was otherwise a very lonely and disciplined existence.

Second, I was teaching and developing online courses. I felt confident to teach, yet this was the first time I had led blended learning. This changed the ways I interacted with students; from frequent face-to-face interactions in classes to online contact with students via email and discussion forums. Initially I found the blended learning approach made it somewhat difficult to get to know the students on a personal level, yet as time unfolded I found strategies to improve the interactions, including online sessions in real time via interfaces such as *Zoom* and *Skype*.

Third, I was involved in curriculum development for new courses with the staff from across the faculty and many of the staff were located at other campuses. This work was invigorating, and I felt fulfilled. I also learnt a lot about the ways that other academics worked and interacted with each other. These experiences helped me start to learn about the culture of the university and the ways that academics went about their work.

Overall, my first year in academia involved teaching, researching and curriculum development. I found this work extremely stimulating and rewarding and I decided to apply for a position for another two years at the university. This decision was made easy as I felt valued by my line-manager and work colleagues, and I was keen to develop the blended learning approach and find improved ways to build relationships with the students in their development as future teachers. Overall, I had been satisfied with the first year in a new billabong.

FLIGHT DOWNWARDS

Although my first year in academia had been enriching, I found that since I had finished my doctorate and accepted more tenure time that there were some unexpected changes in my workplace. The most significant changes were the loss of my mentor (my line-manager and doctoral supervisor retired at the start of the year), a new role as Course Coordinator, and learning about the importance of developing my research profile as a key post-doctoral task. These changes revealed new things about my work and caused changes to my flight path.

When my mentor retired, I felt I had lost my guide in the academy. He had been my doctoral supervisor for the past three years and before I came to the university. He provided extensive insights into academic life, such as information about university life, strategies to teach adults and ways to complete administrative tasks. In hindsight, he provided a necessary buffer from many of the administrative sides of the job that allowed me to get on with the significant parts of my work: teaching and researching. As Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris and Hopkins (2006) suggest effective leaders provide an important buffer for staff from distractions and "protect teachers from issues and influences that detract them from their teaching time or focus" (p. 23). My mentor provided this for me.

My mentor's retirement also saw me act in his role on the regional campus and I became the Course Coordinator [leader of a degree] for the post-graduate program for a trimester. This was a steep curve requiring me to learn about the job while performing the job. It was a role that I was willing to take on, yet it became apparent that there were parts of the role that required training and experience in the context of the university.

The loss of my mentor and increased responsibilities were two of the changes I faced in my second year at the academy. Without a mentor, I looked for ways to fill the void. I sought professional development programs to learn more about developing a profile, publishing and presenting quality research, and leading teams. I attended workshops, read, and discussed ideas with other academics. This showed me a whole new world in which I felt entirely incompetent and unsure. The more I learnt, the more I learnt that I did not know very much at all about the research culture and working in the academy. I was aware that I had to work deliberately and diligently on my research, and importantly produce articles for academic publications. After all, this was what was expected of me, and my future in academia depended on me being an effective teacher and researcher.

FLIGHT TO THE SIDELINE

During my first year as an academic, I seldom flew to the sideline: I was either too busy researching, preparing for teaching, or teaching. I was just too busy to consider or reconsider the direction I had taken, and there was limited time for reflection (*sunbaking on the bank of the billabong*). There were only two brief occasions that I flew to the sidelines to contemplate my flight path.

First, when I considered whether I would apply for a new contract in the same role, rather than returning to school. I did not hesitate to reapply for the position, knowing some of the challenges ahead, but I felt satisfied with my first year at the academy. Then secondly, when my mentor retired. This event caused me to reconsider my current and future paths while revealing the value and importance the relationship an early career researcher can have with a trusted mentor. My mentor helped me make the transition from school and had led the way in my professional life during my first year at the university. My mentor's departure caused me to find others ways to gain information about the university, including teaching and researching. I had to make new connections with others at the university, rather than depending on one person for guidance and support, particularly in relation to developing my research skills and creating a research profile.

Flight to the sideline allowed me to contemplate the factors enhancing or inhibiting my flight. As an early career researcher, support and mentorship seemed to be the key. Grisby (2004) describes, "mentors assist junior faculty members with moving away from the "tyranny of the urgent" and towards a plan that will support the personal and professional growth of the junior member" (p.3). Professional growth lies in learning about the culture of the university, the work of the teacher, and the

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role of the researcher (Harrison & McKeon, 2008), as well as making progress in a supportive environment. It was apparent the support of a mentor and a supportive environment seemed important for early career researchers, and particularly for those who make the transition from one career to another.

Furthermore, I felt compelled to maximize the research from my doctorate. Other academics had warned me that writing to be published was important, yet potentially fraught with dangers (Johnson, 2014). The dangers related to competition from colleagues, lack of exposure, and rejections. Johnson (2014) deduces that researchers generally struggle with publishing, developing their research profile and winning grants. I learnt that effective researchers build relationships with established researchers and develop international partnerships. Rowarth (2009) explains researchers need to develop global networks and collaboration on projects to bolster their career. These were things I had to learn more about as I worked in the academy. It made me realise that the intensity and complexity of the work to complete the doctorate was not the end, but an entrée into the research habitus of academic life.

FLIGHT OF PERSEVERATION

Being part of a large university, set in the context of the "changing landscape of universities" (Barber, Donnelly & Rizvi, 2013, p. 67) and a competitive environment appeared had become a somewhat daunting prospect. This resonated as I tried to find my place.

In this place, I aspired to be an effective teacher and contribute to the development of the next generation of teachers. I felt I was experienced in working in schools, yet I had to develop my knowledge, skills and attitudes as a teacher and researcher in higher education. In this place, I wanted to become a mentor and guide for my students engaged in post-graduate studies, as they grappled with their research and wrestled their own crocodiles. I felt my recent experience in this arena was relevant, and that I could contribute to their development as researchers.

My uncertainties, in flight mode, related to the changing landscapes in higher education (Barber et al., 2013) and making sense of the ways I would work and progress with publishing my research. As Barber et al., (2013) suggest the "traditional university is being unbundled" (p.5) due to ongoing changes to the global economy; the ubiquitous nature of knowledge and information; the changing physical structures of universities; and the competitive nature resulting from globalization. In an ever changing and unstable environment for higher education institutions and as a new academic, I would need to adapt to the changes to my work and workplace: as a teacher and researcher.

Just when I thought I had found my place, feeling comfortable in my role and setting, I acknowledged that teaching and researching in pre-service education would continue to change. Garvis, Pendergast and Keogh (2012) explain that changes should be expected given that, "change features predominately in the teacher education landscape" (p.21). Change is afoot, and since changing careers,

adapting to new cultures, roles and circumstances, I had a clear sense that further developments would endure. It seemed evident that the necessary ingredients for a new academic entering the changing landscape of academic and pre-service education involved resilience and learning the ways of an academic, while receiving the necessary guidance and support from an experienced mentor.

CONCLUSION

My flight, from school education to higher education and from school leadership to teaching and research, uncovered three main themes. First, I experienced some impacts when changing cultures, learning new symbols, traditions, values and norms of the university culture. This showed the need to take time and make the effort to understand the way things are done when making the transition into a new setting, including the impacts of working in a large organisation, and learning about the new systems, structures and procedures. Second, the research environment proved competitive and required highly refined and specialized skills, including networking and negotiating, to name a few. In this light, support and encouragement may help the new academic learn the required skills. Third, my experience revealed the importance of an experienced academic working with a new academic in a mentoring role. Overall, entering the academy can be deemed as inspiring and invigorating, yet it had become apparent it could also be described as uncertain and ever-changing. The key for leaders, new academics and their line-managers involves ensuring the impacts are minimised and support, in the form of a mentor, allows for the new academic to flourish in the academy.

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BEING OUT, LOOKING IN

CHRISTINE HEALEY

14. THE 20/20 PROJECT

PRELUDE

In this chapter I describe how growing up in a family who had traditional role expectations for women has challenged how I have taken up varying career options to continue to develop myself. The skills learned in previous roles have put me in good stead for my current role as a museum education. With the security of ongoing employment and the desire to become better at this job, I enrolled into Ph.D. research. In this chapter I discuss the challenges and joy I have discovered on my alternate flight towards a career in museum education that brings my life personal fulfillment and a sense of accomplishment. The year 2020 represents the completion of my current education goals and my desire for 20/20 vision that will extinguish my inner voice expressing doubts about my capabilities juxtaposed against supporting my broader career choices in my role as a leader in the field of museum education.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes my experiences as I attempt to forge a successful professional life for myself and formal education has become the pathway to achieving this. I admired my primary and secondary teachers for being interesting, intelligent, well-travelled and articulate adults. They were the only adults I knew who had been to university and I hoped that one day I would too and dreamt of becoming a teacher. My father had stopped attending school in Grade 2, to eventually become an owner-operator crane driver. My mother left in Form 8 to become a proofreader, stopping to have me when she was eighteen, later working in retail. My experience was light years away from what my family knew and as such the support they were able to offer as I went through these life-changing experiences was limited. I grew up in a traditional Australian family environment with a limited outlook for girls' careers and my self-worth hinged upon my ability to be a good daughter and receiving my parent approval. There was an underlying expectation my future success would be based upon the security a husband could provide and I in turn would play the role of dutiful wife and mother. While my education was important, in that you should behave at school and do your best, subjects I didn't do well in, such as math and science were explained away that "we can't be good at everything". My best subject was art and I was released from having to exert more effort in subjects I would never naturally be any good at. I felt frustrated that

my future outlook was set so low and I wasn't encouraged to fly higher to achieve higher or different life goals. Although I was well behaved I didn't apply myself to my High School Certificate studies. I was 16, lonely and my parents argued a lot. I invested all my energy into my art folio, which I did very well at in the final examinations. I passed art and English, but failed Biology, Politics and Australian History so I couldn't attend university. After a period of unemployment while I was seeking a job as a graphic artist or sign writer, I eventually started working at a retail outlet and moved through a series of jobs that I felt ashamed of. Late night shopping had just started and working in retail meant long hours on your feet. I followed my familial expectations to the letter, my way out of the family home was by marrying at 21 and I immediately started trying for a family. Marriage was difficult and compromise didn't come easily to either of us. By the time I was 31 I was divorced, with three daughters and faced with the sobering realisation I would have to support myself. As disappointing and difficult as those times were, going through a very challenging separation and divorce, it was also a second chance to point my life in the direction I really wanted.

I was a stay-at-home mum before my three children started school, it was vital to me to be the best mother possible. I tried a range of craft classes and soon realised I could establish a home studio teaching craft myself. I won prizes at the Royal Melbourne Show and had my work featured twice in the Herald Sun. I enjoyed the challenge of teaching new skills that I saw enhanced the quality of my students' lives as a social element increased their enjoyment. I loved teaching and was reminded of my long-held ambition to be a schoolteacher. When my children were all attending school I saw my chance to enroll at university. As a mature age student with no previous tertiary experience was offered a diploma pathway into higher education. I was very frightened of going back to school. Would I be accepted by the other students and lecturers? My largest fear was that it would confirm my high school failure and self-belief that I was stupid. I was however; reassured by people I was starting to meet who had been to university. Maybe I could do it.

Indeed I could. I loved studying. It opened up new ideas, peoples and opportunities. On completion of the diploma, I enrolled directly into a visual arts bachelor degree. I enjoyed the intellectual stimulation of tutorials so much, I enrolled in a concurrent diploma in cultural studies. My fear of writing diminished and I found it easier to write about what was going on in my mind than to make art about it. I still wanted to be a teacher and enrolled in the graduate diploma of education. Years of teaching painting in the community were consolidated and my confidence grew. This was my destiny. I was pleased to be setting a good example to my daughters and felt proud of them, two were attending university themselves.

It was very disappointing not to secure ongoing employment as an art teacher so I completed further studies to qualify as an English teacher. To further improve my qualifications and capacity as a teacher I enrolled in a Masters course in arts administration. Insecure work and periods of being on unemployment benefits was very upsetting and I started to regret not studying courses that had better vocational

outcomes than art. Around this time my father died and my coping mechanisms were giving way. I dropped out of the Masters study and gave up on my dream to be a teacher.

Fortunately I found a temporary position as a business manager at a performing arts organisation. It was part-time and financially difficult. I worked there for a year, then was successful in another temporary position as an arts and culture officer in local government. This position too lasted one year. At the time I was applying for every job I could reasonably respond to the selection criteria. I broadened my search to anything in government, education, informal learning environments and cultural organisations. I was averaging three interviews a week. Then I applied for my current role as a museum educator. I felt very confident after the interview as I bring experiences from a broad range of jobs in education and the cultural sector that made me the stand-out applicant. After settling in I completed my Masters studyand relived to finally have a job I could develop my expertise in.

Being a museum educator now is creatively and intellectually stimulating and key to my personal and professional identity. Qualities researcher and museum educator Bailey (2006b) found to be common for museum educators. Much of the value of the museum educators role is found in their duty to ensure that visitors, especially young people's experiences of art museums are positive, as they have the capacity to enhance and fulfill visitor's lives (Fujiwara, 2013). With the arts playing an increasingly significant role in the lives of Australians today, in the Australia Council (2014) report *Arts in Daily Life: Australian participation in the arts* it was found that 89% of research subjects believe that the arts should be an important part of the education of every Australian. This demonsrates that the role of the museum educator as a touchstone in the introduction of museums and galleries for young people is an important one. These values expressed about the value of the arts makes my career choice a perfect fit for my personal goals and beliefs.

As there are a low number of museums and therefore a low number of museum educator positions available career options are unfortunately limited. Museums are seen as desirable work environments and competition for available jobs is fierce. It is easy to miss job postings and career progression in small departments, such as the one I work within are limited (Elsa B. Bailey, 2006a; Woollard, 2006). It is therefore appropriate for a museum educator seeking a career to remain open to as many opportunities within their job to build on their skills, knowledge and experiences and it is easy for the job to become completely consuming. One must however be careful to avoid burnout in the role, but I also wanted to think of practical ways to make my efforts at work beneficial for my career. I decided that further study could do this. My decision to undertake Ph.D. study was in part motivated by my desire to better understand the significance of my role and to improve on the delivery of education programs at my museum. I am hoping that it will enable me to better articulate the value of museum experiences for students in addition to advocating for quality museum education for students at governmental policy level.

More recently and due to my Ph.D. research an opportunity to lecture in visual arts curriculum to pre-service teachers at university was presented to me. This has provided a glimpse into the university as a possible and alternate career path for me. In order for visits to the museum to have relevance to the classroom teacher links must be made with the school curriculum. This is frequently how a teacher can justify their visit to the museum, even though many of the benefits that flow from the students' museum visit have little to do with formal learning (Falk, 2005). So this in-depth consideration of the curriculum has also complemented my work as a museum educator.

WHO AM I?

I have been in this role as education manager at my museum for five years now. This role includes managing school-group visits from preschool to university groups, working with teachers to plan their visit and select a tour that best matches their curriculum needs. I devise and deliver teacher professional development and produce downloadable education resources, consisting of information about artists and exhibitions embedding curriculum links, writing student tasks and sometimes creating videos. I contribute to the organisational strategic planning and policies at the museum in relation to education and also to the training and induction of education, public program and visitor services volunteers. I enjoy these responsibilities and although I work independently within the education department have built collegiate relationships with other educators in my professional networks. I train and manage a cohort of about sixteen education volunteers who assist me to deliver the student programs. Grant applications and stakeholder management is another highly satisfying aspect of my work. Balancing the needs of multiple stakeholders with sometimes-conflicting demands between my employment by the museum and the demands of the state education department. A common issue for museum educators as documented by Daniele Rice (2003).

To overcome the lack of education related collegiality I experience in my museum I became a committee member on the Museums Australia Education Network Victoria (MA ENVi) and have enjoyed our regular meetings, getting to know and learning about the work of museum educators from other museums across Melbourne. Many have worked in larger education teams and the differences between science, history and art museums has become noticeably distinct. I became the secretary of the national group Museums Australia Education (MAE) and bought technical computer skills (and confidence) that was useful to build an online community of practice, develop professional development and connect a widely spread (across Australia) group of educators. This participation also raised my profile within the profession.

In considering my career progression, I have in essence, reached the top level at my museum in an education role and over the past five years my position title has changed accordingly. The most obvious career step would be for me to secure a position of responsibility at a larger museum. However, education leadership

roles at other museums are infrequently advertised as people tend to stay within their roles, making it difficult for me to imagine advancement in this field beyond my current role. Thinking for the future has forced me to imagine new ways to consider how I can work towards making myself a viable candidate for higher-level museum positions that may arise. I hoped that by commencing a Ph.D. in the field would improve and broaden my personal and professional skillset. I have the time available, as I am at a stage in my personal life with three adult children that I now have the free time to commit to my career.

Returning to academic studies at this level I imagined might have the dual benefit of opening the doors to work in the tertiary sector as an alternative career option. With the popularity of curatorial studies at the university I surmise that it is only a matter of time before museum education is offered as a unit of study or as a distinct discipline. My diplomas, bachelor degree and Masters studies at university were very rewarding experiences. I learned a lot about the arts, culture and to think critically. Studying opened a whole new world of thinking and interesting people who inspired me. On commencing each level of study I had no personal yardstick upon which to compare my own experience, so I stumbled quite blindly albeit willingly into a Ph.D.

MY FLIGHTS

After having connected with a potential supervisor and receiving their support to apply, in 2012 I started my Ph.D. within the school of education. It took longer than I expected to establish the focus of my research. I found the compulsory research methods subject completely bewildering. I saw that other students were developing friendships and supporting each other with the subject but I didn't feel as though I fitted in very well at all and my attempts to relate with them felt very clumsy and didn't achieve anything. As a mature age student with a full-time job I had very little in common with my student peers. There also seemed to be a high proportion of international students with limited English skills that when we had to team up with for an assessment task, basic communication was difficult. Many other students that I had tried to establish friendships with assumed that I wasn't a *real* teacher because I only worked at a museum. They had assumed I didn't have formal training or qualifications in education and were very surprised when I explained I was which frustrated and annoyed me. I felt as though I needed to display my teaching registration card as evidence I was a *real* teacher like them.

To help fit in I attended study skills workshops and the standout advice was to form reading groups and develop support networks. This felt impossible. I was lonely, anxious and not really sure of what I was doing. It took longer than I thought to become comfortable working with my supervisors, as this was so different to my previous positive experiences of university. I had always received high marks and my old formula for success, that stood me well in the past, was failing me. I had limited free time to work on my Ph.D. and felt I was making less than satisfactory progress. This was confirmed in my low marks for the research methods subject and initial

supervisor reports. I started to attend meetings with my supervisor with the intention of quitting because I was not clear what was expected of me. I was floundering. I had progressed to the point of having almost gained ethics approval for my research project. That was a task fraught with difficulty that made little sense to me seeing as I hadn't yet gained confirmation. In order to pass ethics approval I needed to make significant alterations so it would pass. The academic had good intentions and fully believed they were helping me to refine my project but I felt misunderstood. It was the end of the first year, I was distressed and made the decision to dropout.

Before taking the final steps to withdraw I discussed my concerns with a university social worker. They said these feelings were common for first year research students. Almost all students face these challenges and the intensity of my experience was exaggerated because I was also working in a demanding full-time job. I gained comfort from their judgment that the university did not look after early Ph.D. students very well. I was given advice on how to articulate my concerns with my supervisor and ensure clear conversations about how I was to progress in my studies. At the subsequent supervisor meeting, coincidentally my supervisor seemed to have re-evaluated how they were going to manage me and things took a turn for the better. Finally, I was off and flying quickly towards confirmation with goals set in place to apply myself more meaningfully.

GENERAL FLIGHT

In addition to opening up a career path for myself, I had other motivations for wanting to complete a Ph.D. To put it simply, I needed to prove that I wasn't stupid. Having failed Form 6 I never considered myself to be very "bright". I went from being a "straight A" student in Year 9 to becoming a failure in Form 6 and dashed my dreams of going to university to become a teacher. At the time it was explained to me that there were bell curves and a certain percentage of students who fell below a particular level wouldn't pass, it was luck as much as anything to learn I belonged to this "failed" group. The concepts I was expected to understand when I was 16 were well above my maturity level. Notions of metaphor and symbolism eluded me and I really struggled to understand.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing and it was over twenty years later during my undergraduate degree, that it dawned upon me what I had misunderstood at high school. I have never let go of the sensation of not knowing and as a result empathise with students I teach, who don't understand easily. I have taught myself strategies to explain very complex concepts in simple ways to these students. During my education studies I reflected on my time at high school that I was emotionally withdrawn from engaging with others and likely depressed. The high school I attended was very rough, even the teachers were bullied. There was a continual revolving student cohort courtesy of the nearby RAAF base with its transient work force. My parents thought it stranger that I wanted to continue beyond a diploma and thought it funny to call me a "serial student". Privately, I hope that by completing

a Ph.D., years of self-talk that I'm stupid for having failed Form 6 will be expelled from my psyche.

FLIGHT UPWARDS

When I was accepted into the Ph.D. course I was surprised at how other people's attitudes towards me changed, making it feel as though my career had been propelled by a gust of wind. All I had done was enroll. I felt people's attitudes toward me shift as they admired what I was doing and more opportunities came my way to present and discuss my museum education work and study interests. It is difficult to put my finger on the changes in how I felt perceived by others, the shift was subtle and quite possible it was internal and related to my self-perception. A contact at the department of education even offered to fund an aspect of my research that coincided with their interests at the department. Coincidentally, at the same time my museum provided me with the opportunity to travel to New York to attend the American National Art Education Association conference and undertake training in Visual Thinking Strategies, a museum teaching pedagogy I had started to use. I was so excited by this opportunity to travel and extend my professional networks. A colleague from another local museum also attended and we deepened our own personal relationship. The isolation I had felt in my role at the museum as the sole educator was not as overwhelming as I was connecting with other museum educators and hearting about their experiences. Midway through the second year of the Ph.D. I formulated my research question and pI presented for confirmation of candidature. My project was entitled "Education in Australian art museums today: An exploration into pedagogies and practice". My project was divided in two phases, the first ethnographic research whereby I spend a week at five museums within their education department, shadowing staff to learn how they developed and delivered their education programs. My personal connection with other museum educators had value here. The second phase of my research was to implement this new knowledge in an action research component, further developing my practice as a museum educator and having a positive benefit for my museum for supporting my studies.

My Ph.D. presentation and paper for confirmation received unanimous support by the panel and praise for being of the highest quality the chair had seen for a long time. The hard work had been worth it and my earlier anxiety and perceived lack of direction passed. At this time there was also a change in my supervision team that also required me to change schools within my university. I was disappointed to lose my supervisor who I had developed a good working relationship with but had confidence in my new supervision team and secure in the knowledge that I knew what I had to do.

Shortly after this I applied for and received the prestigious Hugh Rogers Fellowship to travel to Boston, MA. This enabled me to expand my research to include an American museum. Having formed initial contacts on my previous American travel,

I had worked to further my relationship with museum educators who were involved in building online communities through blogging. I joined in video conversations with this group of museum educators and was using Twitter to further network. This was wonderful for when I needed an introduction to educators at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. This was also the first field research of my studies and I was excited about having the opportunity to witness other museum educators in their day to day work. Internships at this museum are highly sought after and it was an honour to spend time here learning how they deliver their education programs, as well as develop my relationship with these educators. It was a wonderful experience, with my museum mentor's overwhelming generosity to share their work and philosophies that underpinned their pedagogy and practice. I learned about their programs and how I could replicate their school partnerships at my museum to broaden the effectiveness of Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS). VTS is a teaching method co-developed by museum educator Philip Yenawine and clinical psychologist Abigail Housen in the 1980s at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (Yenawine, 2013). What I valued most about VTS was that it builds students confidence and encourages them to look carefully and speculate about an artworks meaning and back their comments up with evidence based upon what they can see. This teaching method has been very popular in America and I was introducing it to Australian museums.

A few months after my return to Melbourne I was presented with an appealing opportunity as a sessional lecturer for the curriculum and teaching units of study at a Melbourne university two evenings a week. It was a great offer made to me in light of my reputation, experience and expertise and I could manage the commitment around my full time work at the museum. Initial concerns that I was lacking in confidence in this area and about the workload were pushed aside as I was eager to gain experience working in the tertiary sector.

FLIGHT DOWNWARD

The new semester was only two weeks away from starting and I was keen to learn more about the role before accepting. I needed to know how many hours were allocated to lectures, what were the preparation hours and lecture dates. I didn't know what else I needed to ask and know. Over a few days of unclear emails and phone calls waiting for the answers to my questions that would inform my decision I made an appointment to meet with the head of school. I presented myself in the expectation that this was a formal interview and I would get the answers to my questions. Instead I was introduced to the tutor I would be working with and went through the unit outlines to discuss how I might approach the course content. I was taken aback and couldn't ask questions of a private nature and now I had two people asking me if I was accepting the job. I nodded during this meeting to indicate I would, but disappointed not to have been able to discuss my personal concerns. I was told this was an excellent step in my academic career, which amused me as I hadn't considered I had an academic career.

I stepped away from that meeting only knowing I was to adapt the course to suit my knowledge and the dates and times I was to present the lectures. I was having difficulty in getting a straight answer about how many hours would be allocated to prepare for the lectures. Accepting this role would mean that I would have some financial ease and I reminded myself a semester was only ten weeks. I could make it work for that long, in the very least. The contract was sent to me a few weeks after starting. The time I had to work on my Ph.D. was restricted to what I could do at the museum during the day and preparation each week for lectures in this new role consumed every weekend.

FLIGHT TO SIDELINE

The unit needed considerable work and I was completely overwhelmed by it. I was taking over from someone who had interwoven the tutorials and lectures and this wouldn't work for me and a tutor. I also attended a one-day introduction session for new lecturers and tutors and discovered a whole new level of administrative tasks for which I had unknowingly assumed responsibility. I wanted to backtrack. It was too much for me, I felt completely inadequate and angry with myself. I spent all my free time preparing for lectures. I was doing lots of thinking about my trip to Boston and coming to many realisations about museum education and my work at the museum that would be significant for my research, but no time to make notes or maintain diary records. A journal paper I had co-written with my initial supervisor that I thought was completed came back needing lots of corrections and rewriting. The date was looming for a conference paper I was presenting. My work at the museum was gaining momentum as new grants cycles started and a new school partnership starting as a result of the Boston experience. I was accomplishing too many goals at once and spreading myself too thin, feeling as though I was not doing anything properly. Feeling out of control and anxious raised the inner voice to tell me how stupid I was. I would have given up, but I didn't know how. Everything was entangled and messy. Stubbornness and a desire not to let people down kept me going.

FLIGHT OF PERSEVERATION

To regain my sanity I sought connections between my work at the museum and the information required for the lectures. Making curriculum connections was important for my work at the museum and lecturing would help me to exploit that aspect of my museum work and a significant reflection in my Ph.D. I was thinking a lot about my own experience of this subject I was now teaching during my education studies. I was to develop an opera about curriculum and training. My education training was at a point in time when one curriculum was being replaced and the new curriculum was not yet available. Instead of examining the previous curriculum we examined different curriculum theories to turn into an opera. The purpose was to learn through experience about team dynamics and processes of collaboration that would be useful in the school

staffroom to develop curricula. As a visual artist I could appreciate how the arts were being utilised to demonstrate our learning, making it more meaningful and personally relevant. I drew upon this experience to consider the overarching concepts I wanted students in my lectures to understand about curriculum and its implementation.

FINAL FLIGHT AND WHERE TO NOW?

It's difficult to consider what I would do differently if I had my time over. The lessons have been hard but valuable and I'm curious to see where my choices will lead in the future. I'm enjoying the benefits of the extended networks I have developed, continuing my relationships both locally and in America. I have made friends with someone who has also started a Ph.D. researching museum education and I often think about how I could advise them, to let them learn from my mistakes. But I see that their journey is quite different to mine and all I can really do is reassure them and when annoying things happen say it was like that for me too. It is good to have someone to talk to about it.

CONCLUSION

Studying is opening new horizons for me that I hadn't imagined before and I'm engaging with my work and my museum education colleagues in deeper ways. I am developing a broadened rage of skills that are useful across many areas of work and enjoy being an opportunist, open to the possibilities that seem to serendipitously present. I find my work at the museum and study to be personally rewarding and fulfilling. Just as visiting the museum as a student changed my life, I'm providing a similar experience for the students I introduce the art museum world to.

I've had lots of interesting experiences in the classroom and teaching more generally that I have enjoyed sharing with the pre-service teachers I lecture. I'm relieved to learn that I know more than I thought, which is a real confidence boost and helps me continue on. that the mantra 'this too shall pass", and remembering that I thrive on keeping myself busy helps.

I'm gaining more from my professional relationships than ever before and I feel more closely connected to my colleagues and profession in spite of working alone. I look forward to 2020 when my project is complete and wonder what new doorways and paths will be available to me then, if not before.

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15. FINAL THOUGHTS

> In too many instances, scholars in the field have continued to develop an understanding of women's working lives within the traditional framework of white male middle-class careers. Thus there remains considerable theoretical shortcoming about the nature and development of women's careers despite consistent support in the literature for the assumption that meaningful work is central to women's lives. (Patton, 2013, p. 4)

Universities are essentially seen as gendered, rewarding the competencies and skills supposedly associated with men, thereby placing male academics as 'gatekeepers' to career progression and central to decision-making processes. In particular, academic leadership is associated with (masculine) agentic attributes, namely ambition, aggression, self-confidence and independence (Madera, Hebl, & Martin, 2009). The final section of the book brings together the main ideas across all of the thirteen chapters. By looking across the chapters, the book provides new knowledge about understanding women's working lives from women's perspectives (see Figure 1). Rather than exploring lived experience within the traditional framework of white middle-class male careers, this chapter provides important insights from the perspectives of real women. The stories all show levels of career development, resilience and developing confidence within the institution.

Narrative inquiry embodies potential for shaping extraordinary insights (Huber et al., 2012) in understanding the cultural and social ecology of lived experiences. This approach allows us to attend to and act on experiences by "co-inquiring with people who interact …in other contexts in living, telling, retelling, and reliving stories of experience" (Huber et al., 2012, p. 213). The attentiveness that accompanies the sharing of stories allows for and opens up the possibilities for "shifting stories, and therefore lives" (Huber et al., 2012, p. 213).

In her chapter, Miles narrative shone light on the positioning of being an early career researcher and how it is akin to an apprenticeship of observation (Grossman, 1990). We all collectively as authors have stood back, taken a flight to the sidelines, to consider who inspires us by how they have negotiated the often ego-driven ivory tower and yet continue to be ethical, open and sharing intellectuals. As Miles reminds us this way of being and reflecting assists us to construct a sense of what it is to be a women who is an academic; learning about what we want to be in this career through observing others. We have individually, and collectively through writing this book, observed and grown as individuals, connecting to our identities of being in

and out of academia. We have told and retold through experiences and negotiations of Schwabb's flights as a framework.

Trolley (2013, p. 31) suggests, "the many joys and professional growth associated with teaching in higher education are often overshadowed by its inherent difficulties. As authors sharing lived experiences we are invited into the often silent spaces of reflection whereby identity, roles, passions and beliefs are challenged. These flights downwards are raw moments and each author has shared a variety of loved experiences that invites the reader to consider, reflect upon, consider, empathises with and resonates with while restorying ones own experiences. There are moments in time shared from the early career women that are from various stages of being and belonging within the academy – indeed for some the notions of being 'In and Out' of higher education are highlighted. We hear from doctoral dissertation students, newly awarded and we can sense that the telling and telling is just he beginning of sharing and identifying the visible and invisible stories. We know that these stories will change upon reflection but in this moment of time the collection of narratives allows us as readers to consider our own journeys and how time can indeed be a contributor to shifts of who we are as early career women.

All authors have shared their emerging identities as early career researchers, academics, women, mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, or colleagues. All are juggling aspects of life in academia that bring forth reflections upon who we are as individuals and how this works in partnership with other aspects of our lives. Yes, we are women but this is one uniting factor. For many of the authors there are journeys that invite reflection on who and how we want to be in academia. As O'Brien shares in chapter 9 that in our endeavors to be reflective academics there is much potential for valuable personal and professional growth and awareness. Schwab's flights provide a scaffold for interpreting our experiences, to show self-awareness. To share and resonate with others who can't yet share their voice. According to Clandinin and Connelly (1996), the telling and retelling of stories is a powerful tool in self-study. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) explain that "narrative is the best way of understanding and representing experience" (p. 18). Our stories reveal an ongoing attempt to achieve coherence between our personal lived experiences and the expectations of being in and out of academic spaces. Tensions are revealed when our stories conflict and compete with assumptions and expectations (Carr, 1991; Clandinin & Connelly, 1996; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) but encourage an openness to explore and disrupt where required. .

"Reading and thinking with the works of the writers made visible…our living as narrative inquirers" and thus has "increasingly layered, [and] contextualized" (Huber et al., 2012, p. 216) our stories. Some might argue that women should accept their position as they will eventually establish smooth entry into universities and learn the ropes. We feel that collaboration and the sharing of voice is important for understanding the different experiences people encounter. By sharing our voices we have challenged the order of the way things are done. We have provided opportunities for many issues to come to the forefront when thinking about the lives of female
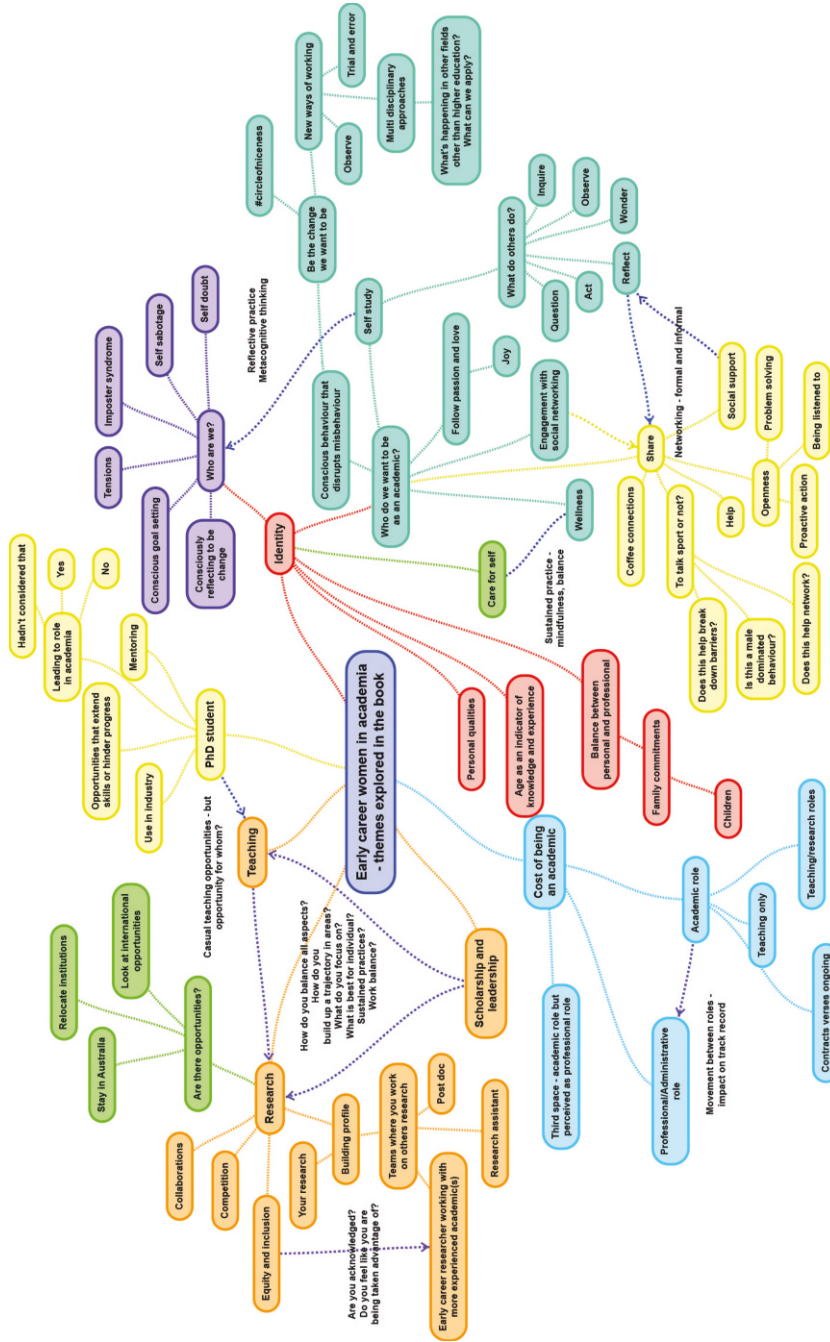
Figure 1. Mapping of main ideas explore by authors

academics. The main ideas shared within the book are represented in Figure 1. The mind mapping provides opportunities to see the many themes identified by exploring each author's lived experience. The key ideas are represented by a key word.

The book provides important messages for other female academics. On one level, authors have entered the system, recognized the game for what it has to offer but also refused to lose themselves within it. The authors represent the current face of female academics and provide new ways of working within turbulent times.

As a marginalized group in a highly complex context, early career females face a struggle to survive institutional politics and cuts to higher education funding. Brett (2000) infers that academics are forced into a position in which they must compete with each other in order to produce knowledge for research quotas. Often the knowledge that is privileged is:

> …highly theorised overviews—just think of all those eminent academic male sociologists who never dirty their hands with empirical work, while producing a continual flow of sophisticated global analyses which assume the way the world is from the vantage point of their professorial chairs. In the boys' game of academic publishing overviews are always accorded higher status than grounded accounts. Yet, it is only by giving some space to other voices that we can begin to counter the entrenched class biases in academia. (Reay, 2000, p. 19)

We believe that consideration of collaborative approaches by early career researchers is prudent to survival. Collaboration also provides a foundation within uncertain times as higher education reform advances in higher education contexts. Given that reform also represents cost and conflict, we believe that by uniting our voices we come together to find a new way of working.

The stories of Miles, Barton and Fogelgarn remind us of the balancing and juggling acts some women experience. Their stories resonate with women who make sacrifices to have careers and family lives. There stories are honest, raw and insightful into the deep thinking that women undertake to have a career while also enacting family responsibilities. Patton (2013, p. 7) reiterates these stories and lived experiences by saying that:

The current thinking about career is similar in many ways to the experience of many women. Traditional definitions of career have assumed male hierarchical careers, chosen during post adolescence and remaining quite continuous and static throughout life. Females' careers were expected to be chosen as a temporary measure, until the full-time 'career' of motherhood and homemaking. Rather, many women's career patterns can be conceptualised as a range of working positions interspersed with periods of child care.

Garvis reminds us of the importance of mentoring and collaboration between women when recounting experiences with 'lookism' (Granleese and Sayer, 2005). Her story reminds us about the importance of academics sharing experiences to build confidence and support networks. Similar themes of resilience and empowerment

are also present in Hilton's chapter as she discusses moving to another institutional context. Her story reminds us of the importance to also look beyond the Australian landscape when considering the university context. Paralleled to Garvis and Hilton's chapters is Lemon's chapter whereby networking and collaborating with others in new forms such as social media are highlighted. This way of connecting, collaborating and forming partnerships are being encouraged as to new ways to disseminate research to wider audiences both nationally and internationally (Carrigan, 2014). While Harris' chapter offers insights into her first year of academia and highlight how important relationships are.

In an important exploration of agency, Budge explores the importance of that of constructing, reconstructing, crafting and shaping academic identity in new and exciting ways. Her story reminds the reader of the importance of looking after oneself in an academic career. O'Brien also shares experiences of identity and constructing an academic identity. Collaboration again emerges as an important enabler of success and support.

Both Budge and Khoo give us insights into the 'third space' (Whitchurch, 2008) of academia – being an academic in a position that can be viewed as a professional or administrative role. Both insights provide opportunity to hear how identity is no doubt core to this underlying tension. Khoo offers rare insights of moving in and out and in to academic roles and the cost of negotiating alternative routes within higher education. This aligns with Przbylak's call for sustain ways of working that see question hidden agendas within academia and the expectation of how one must manage a career across teaching, research and leadership.

Healy, Lord, Harris, Miles, Przbylak, and Fogelgarn all share their movements in and out of academia in relation to their doctoral studies. Healy offers her narrative into wanting to succeed in a world where ongoing learning motivates a searching for opportunities to move between industry and academia. These opportunities revel tensions between development and growth verses being taken advantage of due to perceptions that taking on different academic roles can "be good for ones career". While Lord offers her lived experience of moving from being a teacher into academia as both a doctoral student and an academic. Tensions are presented in regards to the transition form industry to higher education.

Another strength of the book is the variety of career stories within the book. The variety of stories allows readers to identify possible career progression stages for women. For some authors they are still completing their doctorate studies looking into the academy from industry (Healey), and others are undertaking their Ph.D. degrees while also working in the space of teaching in the academy (Lord and Przybylak). While other authors have recently moved into university lectureships with completed Ph.D.s after undertaking teaching during canditure (Fogelgarn and Miles), others are moving in and out of third spaces (Budge and Khoo) or moving into the industry on a secondment while moving out of industry (Harris). There authors who are in the academy and are moving beyond the initial phase (Barton, Garvis, Hilton, Lemon, O'Brien). The new knowledge created by

looking across the different trajectories provides a new understanding about the variation and ambition of different women. While there are similarities in some stories, there are also many differences showing the complexity of working within the university. The women have different levels of ambition, leading to different perspectives of their role within the university. The differences in understanding also shows variation in understanding the role of a female academic in modern times.

Overall, this book highlights the complexities of females working in the academy. By listening to these stories we are able to gain a sense of current enablers and barriers to early career academic women. We are also able to identify the importance of support for entry into the university and opportunities for collaboration and collegiality. By exploring a range of different perspectives, contexts and beliefs, we are able to highlight the extent of diversity of working women and bring to the surface the concept of being 'In and Out' of the university. We thank the thirteen authors who were brave enough to share their stories. We also encourage others to share and discuss their stories in published literature and informal conversations.

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