INNOVATIONS AND CONTROVERSIES: INTERROGATING EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Permission

The International Interdisciplinary Impact of Laurel Richardson's Work

Julie White

SensePublishers

Permission

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Volume 4

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Julie White
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Audience Matters, by Laurel Richardson, was originally published in Denzin, N. K. and Giardina, M. D. (Eds.) (2014) *Qualitative Inquiry Outside the Academy*, Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek CA. Reprinted with permission.

On the Frontline: From Academic Freedom to Academic Capitalism, by Diane Reay, was originally published in *Discover Society* online journal, Issue No. 5, February 2014. Reprinted with permission.

Printed on acid-free paper

For Laurel Richardson

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PREFACE

This book is a study about the work and influence of Laurel Richardson, Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the Ohio State University. At its core lies an interest in how permission is given, assumed, accepted, side stepped, passed on and acknowledged.

The first context for this study is the modernised university that increasingly embraces and enacts neoliberal values. Those of us who work in these institutions find our research and teaching weighed and sifted for value and measurable impact. And service to discipline, the third strand of scholarly work, has become more about administrative tasks that support university operations, than valued contribution to knowledge and discipline.

The second context is The Victoria Institute for Education, Diversity and Lifelong Learning, where I work. The paragraph below was written earlier this year for another purpose – for a report of a study about the education of children and young people with significant health challenges, which is the major focus of my research. It is included here because it articulates the values of my workplace and connects with the values that sing out from Laurel Richardson's texts.

> Well placed within Victoria University, the Victoria Institute has social justice as a key focus. Our researchers work collaboratively with a range of government departments, policy makers, philanthropic organisations and community groups. The Victoria Institute operates with the explicit intention of improving educational experiences and outcomes for all. Our targeted research program aims to build better learning and greater participation and success for students from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds as well as those who are disengaged or excluded.

And the third context is the Sense book series *Innovations and Controversies: Interrogating Educational Change*, that emerged from seminars and provocations held in the earliest days of The Victoria Institute's establishment. The book series has the clear aim to:

> Serve as a forum for international research and debates around contemporary innovations and controversies in education across a broad range of contexts and thematic areas. In particular, we invite contributions that focus on:
>
> - Emerging patterns of inequality, injustice and social exclusion
> - The intersections between globalisation and social change
>
> Equity and social justice are interpreted broadly, and include the movement and displacement of people; gender and sexuality; disability and health; poverty; and cultural-linguistic background.

So this unusual project is located within these three quite different contexts.

The starting point for my investigation was Professor Richardson's impressive body of intellectual work. Then I ventured further afield into the lives and work of more than fifty others, who reside both inside and outside the academy. Some are at the beginning of their scholarly work and some have retired. Some are twenty-something while others are over eighty years of age. Some are students while others are distinguished professors. They are from Australia, Britain, Canada, China, New Zealand, Sweden and The United States.

These scholars belong to a range of disciplines and fields including: academic support, adult and community education, astronomy, communication, community activism, community health, counselling, creative writing, critical disability studies, cultural studies, dance, disability sport, drama and theatre education, early childhood studies, educational theory and practice, educational leadership, English as a Foreign or Second Language, English literature, fine arts, foreign languages, gender studies, kinesiology, human resources, humanities, inclusive education, Indigenous education, literacy, multiliteracies, music, music education, nursing, palliative care, performance studies; poetry, prison education, psychiatry, psychology, psychotherapy, publishing, social sciences, social work; sociology, sport and leisure studies, women and gender studies and youth theatre.

How Laurel Richardson's pioneering and transgressive texts have impacted on the work of others, particularly in relation to social justice, education and the modernised university has been pursued here. The ways in which this impact has been passed on to colleagues and higher degree students, within and beyond the academy has been the central interest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have followed Laurel Richardson's lead here and decided to thank many people in this opening section of the book. In the past I have opted for the understated and the subtle, but I'm over that now.

Thank you to my wonderful colleagues at The Victoria Institute in Melbourne for their ongoing support and interest in this project. In particular Professor Roger Slee, Karen Rosauer, Dr Tim Corcoran, Dr Alison Baker, Hendrik Jacobs and Freya Lance all played specific roles in the development of this book. Others I would like to acknowledge for their ongoing collegiality and warmth are Claire Brown, Deb Krapywnyj, Jeremy Burston, Professor Kitty te Riele, Dr Vicky Plows – from The Victoria Institute – and Stanley Koh, who until recently worked with us.

Moving to Victoria University has been a positive experience and I appreciate belonging to an organisation that works hard to include, rather than to exclude.

Peter and Jack Turley are still encouraging and have listened to me talk about this project for a long time. Thank you. And thank you also to Melanie Ruchel, Victoria Spicer, Dr Trevor Hay, Lynda Smerdon, June Hercules, Judy Walsh, Marj Button, Gaël McCalman, Dr Mary Burston, Dr Sally Godinho, Dr Catherine Wang, Dr Ye Hong and Dr Carla Corotto, who have each shown interest in my work and sustained me in different ways.

My higher degree (graduate) students continue to challenge and surprise with the thought-provoking scholarly work they choose to undertake as well as the interest they take in my writing. During the time I've worked on this book some have completed theses, on very different topics, in very individual ways. Dr (June) Tran Thi Tuyet, Professor André de Quadros, Dr Abdul Kamaruddin, Dr Bridget Pannell and Dr Mohammed Alzahrani have now have all flown away, around the globe, for their scholarly careers – but keep in touch, for which I am grateful. Amanda Manypeney also finished her thesis during the life of this project and settled into my city to continue her scholarship. I am currently working with Sally Denning, Wafaa Jan, Elaine Speight-Burton and Betina Pryzbylak who are gathering speed on the downhill slope towards completion and for the past year, Ferdousi Anis and Lekan Olagookun, who have both found the purpose of their studies and are now confidently on their way. It has indeed been a pleasure to participate in your work.

I thank Melissa Martin for the great care she took to paint the image for the book cover. Akiva Walum-Roberts and Ernest Lockridge joined in discussions about what the image on the front of the book might convey, and that helped enormously. Thank you.

Thank you very much to those scholars, artists and activists who have thoughtfully considered what I was trying to achieve with this book, and generously shared

their experience of encountering Laurel Richardson's work. I expand on this point in Chapter 1.

What pleases me most of all, however, is that Laurel likes the book. It must have seemed such a strange proposal when I first put it to her, but over time she did warm to it. Thank you, Laurel, for all your wonderful suggestions and sound advice along the way, especially the idea of inviting others in. And thank you also Laurel, for the friendship, encouragement and support during the past ten years – through thick and thin.

Some of the pieces included in this book have already been published. My appreciation is extended to Mitch Allen, Publisher of Left Coast Press (now Routledge), and Professor John Holmwood from the University of Nottingham, Editor of *Discover Society* who gave permission to reprint here.

Laurel Richardson's *Audience Matters* was delivered as the keynote address at the 9th International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry at the University of Illinois at Urban-Champaign. Professor Richardson had been awarded the *2013 Lifetime Achievement Award in Qualitative Inquiry* for dedication and contributions to qualitative research, teaching, and practice. This address was subsequently published in Denzin, N. K. and Giardina, M. D. (2014) (Eds.) *Qualitative Inquiry Outside the Academy* Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek CA.

Diane Reay's *On the Frontline: From Academic Freedom to Academic Capitalism* was originally published as a journal article in *Discover Society* online journal, Issue No. 5, February 2014. It can be accessed here in the original: http://www.discoversociety.org/2014/02/15/on-the-frontline-from-academic-freedom-to-academic-capitalism/

THE PERMISSION SLIP (FOR LAUREL RICHARDSON)

Ronald J. Pelias

Caught between the call to write
into knowing and knowing how
we might swerve on the smooth
curves of "s" and "e," be snagged
by the "Q's" quick tail, swallowed
into "O's" opening, buried underneath
"U's" sagging base, tested on "t's"
cross, hidden on the shelf between
"H's" haughty lines, corralled
by "C's" crooked cup, muffled
in "m" and "n's" murmuring mounds,
kicked by "K's" bottom foot, wedged
in by "W's" double "v's," bumped
by "B's" bosom so soon after "A" –
that dunce hat that starts us
on our way to all twenty-six of them,
pushing and shoving us this way
and that, making words which are
all we have. I hear the summons,
believing in what and who
we might find, believing in "I's"
power to satisfy with the stories
we can't stop telling

CHAPTER 1

RUNNING WITH IDEAS

Writing a book about Laurel Richardson's impact is important as she has influenced many others, but how to go about this task has been challenging. At times I have been tempted to rename this section 'Running with scissors,' because of the risk and uncertainty involved in the project. This chapter explains how the idea for the book arose and how it was further conceptualised and developed into a qualitative research project.

Patricia Leavy, independent editor and scholar, observed in her introduction of the recent *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 'Richardson expands the way we think of ourselves as researchers, writers, and knowers' (2014, p. 1). This comment helps to identify the key purpose of this book, which is to explore *who* has been influenced by Laurel Richardson's writing, and *how* she has had impact.

By coming along at just the right time for me, Rebecca Mead's (2014) book, *The Road to Middlemarch: My Life with George Eliot,* had a liberating effect that helped to identify what I was trying to do in this book about Laurel Richardson's impact. Like Mead, over the years I have returned to *Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life* (Eliot, 1874) to make sense of my own world. When I read Mead's book, my confidence grew about *this* book and how it could be organised and written. Mead writes about her own life, the characters of *Middlemarch* and the life of George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans). Its genre is difficult to pin down. This stopped me worrying so much about where this book would fit, how it should be described or how it might be received. It helped me to envisage the book with greater confidence and it all felt less daunting.

The second important issue that Mead's book celebrated was the ordinary and the everyday, which resonated with me. It's the ordinariness of life within university departments that interests me. While reading Mead's book, and beginning *Permission*, I was also travelling in Italy. I couldn't resist watching locals in the carefully hidden supermarket in Venice. I hoped for a glimpse into the ordinary life of local Venetians, rather than the overblown historical one that was presented at every turn.

This book glimpses into the ordinary worlds of academics in various disciplines and countries, with the central interest of how Laurel Richardson's writing influenced their own work. The main part of this book's title, *Permission*, came to me early on. On reading her work, I had an immediate sense of having permission to write differently. I wondered whether others felt this same sense of gaining permission from reading her work. At first I planned to write about charismatic ideas, the development of intellectual community, activism, inclusion, social justice and

issues of trust and betrayal in the academy – within Laurel Richardson's writing. However, as this book has taken shape, it made far more sense to forget about listing, categorising, organising or trying to explain her work. Instead, I have focused on connecting the contributions, given so generously for this book, with ideas and with Laurel's texts.

> I hope the story resonates with those who are struggling to make sense of their lives in academia. (Richardson, 1997b, p. 295)

When I found Laurel Richardson's writing, it did indeed resonate with me. In 2002, I *was* struggling to make sense of the academic department in which I worked and what I was in danger of becoming. The PhD thesis I had been writing had become uninteresting and I was troubled by doubt and unease about this new world – the university. I look back on that transition period from confident and experienced teacher professional to floundering new academic, perched precariously on the lowest rungs, and it's not surprising that I became enamoured with Laurel's texts. The immediacy and quality of her writing makes it compelling and the subjects are familiar, but brand new. And they do resonate. And many others have apparently felt a similar connection. Through Laurel's writing I learned that the limitations and disappointments of the academy did not just apply to the universities in which I have worked, but that unscholarly behaviour, misuse of power and smug entitlement were endemic. I wrote to explain this world to myself, and to keep my head above water.

This was writing as a method of inquiry and discovery (Richardson, 2000a) that led me towards what C. Wright Mills called the sociological imagination. Attempting "to grasp what is going on in the world, and to understand what is happening in themselves as minute points of the intersection of biography and history within society" (1959, p. 7) identifies what I had been attempting to achieve. Questions that have guided exemplary social science for over fifty years proved helpful in my own investigations.

> What varieties of men and women now prevail in this society and in this period? And what varieties are coming to prevail? In what ways are they selected and formed, liberated and repressed, made sensitive and blunted? What kinds of 'human nature' of each and every feature of the society we are examining? (Mills, 1959, pp. 6–7)

In the substantial four-volume set, *Autoethnography* (2013), Pat Sikes recently pointed out Mills' "injunction that sociologists should employ the sociological imagination to translate private troubles into public issues" (2013, p. 3). Laurel Richardson seems to have taken this to heart in her continuing and substantial sociological investigations into many different aspects of life. The poem below, for example, was written 40 years ago, but offers insight and commentary into ordinary research of that time.

ITEM: UNITARIAN NEWSLETTER

Laurel Richardson

wanted Children

aged 6–12
who have recently
experienced
death
of
parent
or
grandparent
for
psychological
scientific research

The children will not be harmed

Compelled to write, but unwilling to publish anything personal, I have tended instead to pursue general explanations. Nevertheless I am aware that:

> People who write are always writing about their lives, even when they disguise this through the omniscient voice of science or scholarship. (Richardson, 2001, p. 34)

By focusing on increasing accountability requirements in universities, I worked hard to explain this strange new world to myself by writing. I looked outside my own country to conceptions like new managerialism, audit culture and neoliberalism to explain how university departments are experienced by doctoral students and new academics, particularly women in the lower ranks (see White, 2010, 2012a, 2013). I focused on why academics turned a blind eye to externally driven changes to university curriculum, and how standards and outcomes had taken over in schools, resulting in teachers gradually losing control of their profession (White, 2010, 2012b). I laughed out loud at Andrew Sparkes' (2007) depiction of that awful but familiar character, the Weasel, found in university departments around the world. This is the kind of academic who is getting ahead these days, through relentless self-promotion and keen strategy. At the vanguard of successful scholarship, The Weasel focuses keenly on metrics and quality – of the kind determined by publishing houses and the burgeoning group of third space professionals (Whitechurch, 2012) in universities.

Theoretically, I leaned on Lyotard for his conception of performativity (1984) and contrasted it with creativity theory (White, 2006; Burnard & White, 2008) and later used Foucault's governmentality (White, 2012) to help explain this strange world

and the people who inhabit it. I governed myself to publish distanced accounts. Nevertheless, writing has provided me with:

> A feeling of control over time and space, and a faith that I would recover. (Richardson, 2001, p. 34)

I learned much about the importance of the writing through reading Laurel Richardson's texts. The permission I had gained from Laurel Richardson's work was passed on directly to the sixteen doctoral students I supervised and to challenge and provoke the hundreds of Masters-level graduate students who enrolled in my research methodology classes. I pushed these students to think more critically and creatively so they could move beyond the narrow and rule-bound conceptions of research they brought with them into my classroom.

I kept close the permission I took, both from Laurel Richardson's body of work and other contemporary qualitative research texts, when working as a reviewer for journals and books. I served as editor for the journals *Qualitative Research Journal* and *Creative Approaches to Research* and several edited books following the *Association for Qualitative Research* conferences and the *AERA Disability Studies in Education SIG's* meeting in Australia. In this role of editor, I worked to support researchers whose work was risky and, in the process, gathered together a wonderful team of peer-reviewers, who brought rigour and depth to that work, and to the final publications. This resulted in highly original published articles that employed narrative approaches, autoethnography, CAP ethnography, performance ethnography and arts-based inquiry.

My first direct contact with Laurel was in 2005, when I wrote to see if she was interested in coming to Australia the following year. She was. The funding program was generous and Laurel and her husband Ernest Lockridge came to Melbourne for a month, and I found myself in a new role. The extended period of time and uneven status between us meant those four long weeks could have easily become strained and miserable. Instead, we became firm friends and we continue to share our lives.

> After all, that is what close women friends do – talk about their lives. (Richardson, 1985, p. 83)

At this time I noticed how frequently her texts were cited and began to routinely examine reference lists in articles and books to check that I wasn't imagining it. She was mostly always listed. This led to my realisation that her work did indeed resonate with others and it wasn't just me. When Laurel was in Melbourne, my role as host meant that I had to work hard to protect her from the many people who pushed for access. For that entire month I felt like a nightclub bouncer working on the door.

When 500 people attended her public lecture at The University of Melbourne, the idea of this book began to germinate. How and why did so many people connect with Laurel Richardson's writing? I resolved to investigate how Laurel-the-writer

influenced others and to understand why this was so. In *Last Writes: A Daybook for a Dying Friend*, in which I am the character Maisie, Laurel included an upbeat email she had sent to family and friends from that time:

> I am working hard here though – so many different kinds of workshops and people wanting to talk with me – I had no idea I had influenced so wide a range of persons, and I am humbled and flattered and surprised.
>
> I am being treated like a rock star! (Richardson, 2007, p. 103)

That well-attended lecture provided the impetus for this book, but over time it's taken on a quite different shape. Early on I decided that instead of analysing *why* so many of us connect with Laurel's writing, I decided that the nature of the connection should be examined in different ways and from different perspectives. By identifying the key issues that structure this book – inclusion, taking responsibility, collaboration and community, sharing power, feminist engagement, social justice, overcoming obstacles, speaking truth to power – one of my aims was to discuss important ideas in contemporary scholarship. Another was to allow readers to draw conclusions about why so many connect with Laurel Richardson's writing and to identify the nature of the permission she secured for others.

Since the idea for this book was developed into a qualitative research project, and Laurel agreed to it, she began to share some of the emails she had received, by forwarding them onto me. She is regularly invited to contribute to publications and conferences and some people asked for her to examine dissertations or provide mentoring support. Others comment on the impact of her work and had written to thank her. I was very surprised to see how often these emails arrived. I filed them all away and in early 2014, invited some of the people who had written these emails to participate. I had obtained ethics (HREC/IRB) approval for the project from my former university and then from my current one, being especially clear about the nature of the book and how any contributions would fit. Norman Denzin had generously allowed me to send printed flyers about the project that were included in the conference bags given to delegates at the 2013 International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry. In the first email contact with potential contributors, I wrote:

> I am writing to you about a project investigating the influence of Laurel Richardson's work. I have included you here because we've spoken already or because Laurel has passed your name onto me. Or perhaps just because I think you may be interested in participating.
>
> The book-project is tentatively called 'Permission' and a little more about it is pasted at the end of this email. A contract has been signed with Sense for its publication.
>
> What I am hoping, is that you might consider is contributing a short piece (100–1000 words) to this project by 30 September 2014, where you write in response to one of the chapter headings…

Permission: About the Project

> This study of the work and influence of Laurel Richardson, Emeritus Professor of Sociology at Ohio State University focuses on the central theme of permission in the academy. Beginning with Professor Richardson's pioneering and transgressive texts, the idea of giving/receiving/assuming permission will be developed by investigation of how researchers from a range of fields in different countries have taken permission from her writing and applied it to their own work and worlds. How this permission has been passed on – to higher degree students and colleagues – within and beyond the academy is the third strand. At its heart, the book will serve as a meditation on pedagogy and education in terms of Richardson's modeling for others, the taking of risks and the opening of critical spaces and possibilities, which in turn connects with other researchers and how they have reacted and responded. The book will therefore posit a relationship between Richardson's body of work and its significance for others and is contextualized within the shaping debates and personalities of the period to deliver a lively intellectual account of the academy during a period of doubt, crisis and transformation. The project will involve direct contact with specific individuals including Professor Richardson herself, her former students, colleagues, critics and fans, with a view to including attributed contributions throughout.

Much of 2014 was spent communicating with people who replied to my emails or contacted me about the project. I had expected just a handful of people to respond, estimating that I might receive between 5 and 10 short contributions – if I was lucky. Unexpectedly, and somewhat terrifyingly, 52 people decided they would contribute, which was brilliant. My work on this project, therefore, took a sharp change in direction from my own planned program of writing, to undertake instead the management, organisation and keeping-track-of-everything for this project. There were consent forms, biographical information forms as well as feedback and encouragement on drafts. And of course, this all led to a major rethink about the book.

I am grateful to for the extraordinary generosity of the people who have contributed to this book. It should also be known that formal credit for these individuals – in their own institutions' annual tally of their outputs – is unlikely, as this is not an edited book, in the conventional sense. For those who work in universities, who are the majority of contributors, this is no small thing. These days, only those publications that comply with research metrics guidelines can be counted. And countable publication outputs represent valuable academic currency. And this of course, makes the generosity of the contributors doubly valuable.

Each of the contributors is named below and short biographical statements for each of these authors are included towards the end of the book. Each contributor is listed in the index. One way of reading this book might be to choose your favourite

authors and start by reading what they have to say about Laurel Richardson's impact.

CONTRIBUTORS

Keith Bryant Alexander
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Elaine Speight-Burton
Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre
Synthia Sydnor
Sophie Tamas
Verta Taylor
Denise Turner
Judith Church Tydings
Mary E. Weems
Jonathan Wyatt
Ye Hong

Roger Slee, my colleague and former Director of the Victoria Institute in Melbourne where I work, wrote a tribute to Len Barton, observing that, "It is also difficult to write about a person who, while a public intellectual, is a very private person" (p. 561). When I read that it reminded me of Laurel Richardson and so it prompts me to explain what the book is *not* trying to achieve. The first thing that should be said is that this is not a biography. I don't write about Laurel's life or circumstance. She's more than capable of doing that and after all, has the expertise. Nor do I focus on Laurel-the-person or Laurel-the-friend, but instead keep the gaze steady on Laurel-the-writer. However, as some of the contributors were Laurel's colleagues,

students and friends, their writing does shift that focus a little. Nor does this book aim to celebrate Laurel Richardson's work as some sort of hagiography or in the festschrift tradition. It seeks to understand the impact of her writing on others, but not at the expense of critical scholarship. My sincere attempts to garner critique of her work from key critics were met with crotchety emailed replies, declining involvement. Laurel retired some time ago and has been working pro bono for more than ten years, contributing to sociology and to qualitative research. I have not aimed to catalogue her work or to include commentary on all of her published work.

When compiling the overall reference list, it was surprising to see how many of Laurel Richardson's works have been cited. All of these have been included in the complete reference list at the end of the book. However, to support clarity and keep fidelity with the intentions of the contributors, references also accompany the contributed pieces, and these are found throughout the book.

Most of the chapters in this book contain several contributions that are linked together by a central theme – sometimes by more. Considerable overlap exists between these chapters and some of the sections contain poems written by Laurel Richardson, which she generously contributed.

What comes next in this chapter is the warm, *Introduction to Laurel*, that Norman Denzin gave in 2013 when she was honoured at the 9th International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry at the University of Illinois at Urban-Champaign. This is followed by Laurel Richardson's keynote address, presented after she received the '2013 Lifetime Achievement Award in Qualitative Inquiry.' *Audience Matters* is the full text of that presentation. Following this is Larry Russell's *Into the Silence* that begins with Laurel and that very speech and then takes us to another of Laurel's stories, and into his own ethnographic study of religious experience among Hispanic Roman Catholics.

INTRODUCTION TO LAUREL

Norman Denzin

Laurel Richardson needs no introduction to this audience. With three little words – *Writing as Inquiry* – she changed the way we all do our work; we can no longer act as if we observe, record, analyze and then write-up; the act of writing is inquiry.

Laurel has just won the Lifetime Achievement Award in Qualitative Inquiry for her lifetime contributions to the methods, theory, practice, and dissemination of qualitative inquiry.

We are honored to have her as keynote speaker.

AUDIENCE MATTERS

Laurel Richardson

Only once before in my life have I had writer's block. That was twenty-five years ago. I was to give the Presidential Address to the North Central Sociological Association. But Postmodernism had frozen my hand. What could I possibly write? How could I speak for anyone, even myself? What's a "self"? Doubt ruled. Theory had tied my tongue, left me speechless.

I did recover.

And I have had a wonderful time at the Postmodern Fairgrounds riding on the Tilt-a-Whirl, Dodgem Cars and roller coasters – the Millennium Force, Mindbender, The Great Global Scream Machine. Many in this room have also been at the Postmodern Fair.

So, here we are. Bruised but unbroken. Welcoming others, and so sad about those who are not with us.

When I was asked to give the Keynote at ICQI, I was excited, honored and flattered. I have spent much of my career trying to reach diverse audiences. I had walked-the-walk and thought I could probably just talk-the-talk in my sleep.

The talk's title came easily – Audience Matters. Lots of leeway. But I struggled. So come with me now as I talk about my matters regarding audience.

In my undergraduate days at the University of Chicago, I was deeply influenced by my Social Science II professor, David Riesman. His writing and teaching style were unpretentious; his mind omnicurious. When I grew up, I wanted to be one of the people Riesman lauded in his book *The Lonely Crowd*. Those people had what he called "the nerve of failure," or "the courage to face aloneness and the possibility of defeat in one's personal life or professional work without being morally destroyed."

My Social Science II class was reading *The Lonely Crowd* in its 1953 paperback edition. I believe it was the first academic research-book published in paperback. At the same time, my Humanities II class had a writing assignment: Argue against the publication of academic treatises in paperback books.

Well, I argued inexpensive books readily available to the uneducated masses were as potentially dangerous to the academic institution as publication of the Gutenberg Bible had been to the established Church. Paperback books were the first onslaught; they would lead to an unmitigated disaster, the collapse of the institutions of higher education. The masses might learn something on their own. Give birth to their own ideas without the midwifery of the academy. Make professors obsolete. Knowledge is power. Power to the People?!?

I got an "A" on my essay. I was a sixteen-year-old clearly lacking the "nerve of failure."

Fast Forward.

At the close of the defense of my dissertation – studies in the sociology of pure mathematics – I was asked what I planned to do with my doctorate.

"OH, share my love for sociology. Write for regular people," I said. Enthusiastically.

The male examiners lounged in their 1960's regulation professorial sage green corduroy suits with skinny, knit ties. Their throats bulged as they took a collective gasp. They shook their graying heads in unison like a choir of lizards.

I was so naïve.

I had given the "wrong" answer. The wrong side of my brain was in gear.

But they didn't flunk me.

What seems especially surprising to me as I look back on this experience is that my graduate seminars taught the ideas of Georg Simmel, Karl Marx, George Herbert Mead, C. Wright Mills, Irving Goffman, William Whyte, Nathan Glazer. These were sociologists whose writing styles and sociological interests were accessible to regular people. But for me to declare that I wanted to follow a public intellectual path was judged unworthy of their huge investment in my education. The department's first woman. Bad enough I had gotten married and had a child. Now this. After all their work, my sights were not set on university teaching but on reaching regular people. The third leg of the stool.

My having passed into their exalted realm was overshadowed by the obvious fact that I had disappointed them. "Just like a woman."

That dissertation defense experience, I think, shaped the DNA of my career: Double strands, running in opposite directions. One strand has science-oriented academics as its audience. I publish work that follows scientific protocols. This work does not disappoint the lounge lizards – nor me. I like the beauty and orderliness; I like feeling smart and powerful when my statistical predictions hold. And, if I had not engaged in this standard work, I would not have gotten a toehold into becoming a full professor at a top-flight department in a major research university.

The other strand, the literary one, has all manner of audiences in mind. With the *New York Times* bestselling "non-fiction" book, *The New Other Woman*, and my subsequent book tour (radio, television, bookstores) I hoped to reach "regular" women. I wrote my gender text, *Dynamics of Sex and Gender*, like a mystery novel, with both students and their mothers in mind. The co-edited interdisciplinary anthology, *Feminist Frontiers* (now in its tenth edition) brought literary-sociological analysis to humanities students. I wrote a mass-market magazine advice column that gave sociological "answers" to people's questions. I publish poetry and creative nonfiction in literary magazines, give workshops for non-academics, and serve on non-standard editorial boards. This year, I wrote a sociologically grounded literary-narrative, *After a Fall: A Sociomedical Sojourn*.

Because, audience always matters to me, writing this speech should have been a shoe-in…

But, months passed and I could not get started. I had "writer's block." And I had it bad. Postmodern theory could not be blamed, now. It had not left me speechless. It

was not doubt that I had a corner on the truth; rather, it was doubt that I would have anything new to say – anything I hadn't already said in writings now entombed in the eight file drawers that inhabited the north wall of my study – and the six drawerfulls that smoldered in the basement.

A poem I wrote long long ago came to mind:

EULOGY

Some think only
Printed Words
In tomes
In stacks
By spider webs
Entombed
Have value.
Some of my words are there.
Recall them now?

But I didn't want to recall them. I wanted to say something new.

So, I imagined a speech in which I would talk a little about my undergraduate, graduate and career-long concern with reaching diverse audiences. Then, I would cheer the new ways audiences are reached through blogs, videos, and YouTube. I'd celebrate new venues like computer screens, movie marquees, dance studios, homeless shelters, hospices, busses, galleries, NPR. The creativity and chutzpah of qualitative inquiry researchers is mind-bending and world-altering.

Great idea!

But it didn't resolve my writer's block. Everyone at this ICQI conference, I thought, surely knows about these projects! They're the ones who have done them!!

My anxiety about writing the Keynote grew like Google.

Perhaps, I thought, if I go through those fourteen file drawers of my writings, I will find something new to say. I hired a non-academic young friend, Tina, to help me create an "archive." Together we went on a three-month search and destroy mission.

Anything to avoid writing.

We came across articles and projects that were not published or funded or finished. Lots of them. My first thought was that they were failures, and I should toss them in the trash. But I wanted to talk about them, and dear Tina was my interested audience.

These old projects became new because I was seeing them through new sets of eyes – Tina's non-academic ones and my older ones. Two new audiences.

The first failed article we came upon in my file drawers dated back to 1963. I had submitted an article to the American Sociological Review entitled, "Women in Science: Why so Few?" The editor rejected it with one sentence. "This paper was obviously written by a woman because no one but a woman would be interested." I

cried; then I buried that paper. Who was I to challenge the esteemed editor's wisdom? What did I know? I had neither confidence nor chutzpah.

"What's this huge stash?" Tina asked. She had brushed aside a spider web and opened the bottom drawer of a file cabinet in the basement.

I looked over her shoulder onto twenty inches, or so, of papers. "Oh," I said. "That's the archive from my fifteen minutes of fame."

In 1972, my honors methods class researched what I came to call "the changing door ceremony." The students became participant-observers, norm violators, journal keepers, and interviewers. I wanted them to understand how cultural values are inscribed through everyday interactions? Who opens doors for whom? Are there social patterns? Is the Woman's Movement affecting everyday interactions?

"Send me something – anything," an East Coast professor wrote. He had a contract for a qualitative research anthology. I sent him "The Door Ceremony." He rejected it with a hand-written note. "Gender?!? Too trendy. Patriarchy? Too strident."

Hello!

I was untenured. And my department, fearing I would never fully recover from a coma I had following a car accident, had delayed my tenure bid – even though I did have (more than) enough peer-reviewed publications to warrant tenure. But, I submitted the "Door Ceremony" paper to the American Sociological Association's 1973 conference in New York City. At least I would have a departmental funded trip to the Big Apple, I thought, before I become applesauce.

But a different fate befell me.

"Hand That Holds Doorknob Rules World," headlined the front page of the *New York Times*' Sunday Op-Ed's section. The journalist, Israel Shenker, and his paparazzi had come to hear my paper. Shenker's article, written with sensitivity, good-will and humor, was peppered with pictures of me going in and out of doors. Shenker quoted me as saying, "I know where the power rests in my department."

I also learned about the power of the *New York Times* to create audiences for "news." Shenker's article was cited in every major U.S. and international newspaper. Because of the publicity, my sociology department was bombarded with mail and phone calls. A temp was hired to handle the commotion.

Requests for the article came from professors, priests, psychiatrists, physicists and prisoners. Two of my "pen-pals" threatened me. The police were called. Two door manufacturing companies wrote. One asked for 200 copies of the article. People wrote seeking advice on other gender issues: Should older women date younger men? Shouldn't unwed fathers be sent to prison? Is it okay for men to cross-dress? People wrote seeking help. TOP SECRET. Help me prove that the Masons murdered Kennedy! Amy Vanderbilt wrote asking for my help on revising her etiquette book. Journal editors asked to publish the paper. Presses invited me to write a whole book. The Today Show, NBC, CBS, ABC wanted me…yesterday, if possible.

One of OSU's trustees just happened to be in Tokyo when the NYT article was published there in Japanese, in which the trustee just happened to be fluent.

The trustee called the Provost to ask about my status. "Tenure her," the trustee said. The Provost called my department. "Tenure her," he said. And so they did.

I have never written about any of this.

As I write about it, now, I realize that the "door ceremony" is a politically and personally apt metaphor. Not only was I opening doors for feminist qualitative research, men outside my department were opening for me the precious tenure door.

"What do you want to do with all these news clippings and letters?" Tina asked.

"Let's put them a binder," I said. "And move on!"

Even after my fifteen minutes of fame, not all doors were opened to me. We find three more rejected articles in my files: (1) religiosity and Women's Studies classes; (2) feminism and shopping boycotts; and (3) and women survivors of the Holocaust. All three had been submitted to feminist journals. No audiences for them, I was told. In a surly curly blue-pen addendum a woman editor added "Unlike your Times apotheosis."

But something much worse than journal rejection happened. I had co-authored these papers with four different untenured colleagues. Two were men. After each of the rejections, not only did our academic collaborations cease, our value in each other's eyes diminished. Our incipient friendships withered. Their tenure bids were turned back. I still feel guilt about giving them false hope based on my ignorance/ naivety of the politics of "audience" construction.

"What about a book on women and spirituality?" I asked my editor at The Free Press.

"None of my Long Island friends would be interested," she said. "Why don't you write a book about unwed mothers?" I accepted a large advance and did perhaps a dozen interviews. What I learned troubled me. I returned the advance.

I moved on, again.

Shopping Malls!! Great idea. What fun it would be to study safe spaces for women where they can bond through, "criticizing the clothes," as my granddaughter calls our shared ventures. I raised the topic of "female bonding" to the powerful man in my department who would determine my promotion to full professor. "There's nothing to learn there," he said. I listened, abandoned the project, got promoted to full professor.

Surely, one would think, by the mid-nineties finding academic audiences for my research interests would be a walk in the park. In 1995, I submitted a paper to Symbolic Interaction entitled, "Standing in the Gateway: AIDS and Community Impact." My interest was in how AIDS helpers came to devote time, energy and compassion to People With Aids, and how these helpers managed problems of loss, burn-out and grief. What community support did they receive? And how did they perceive the potential impact of AIDS on different communities? No one had studied any of these issues.

The editor thought the paper "very nicely written and very interesting…several passages quite moving" but its contribution was "practical and motivational."

The editor suggested I write a different paper. I didn't. I buried the one I did write. The time was not right for AIDS research on caretakers or for Symbolic Interaction to value the "practical and motivational."

I hunkered down.

Graduate students needed financial support and ethnographic experience. I applied for a university grant to study an urban park, The Park of Roses. This park was a safe space – day and night – for everyone – gays, ethnic and racial minorities, pedigreed and mixed-breed dogs on and off leashes, children, families, blue-haired youth, tree-hugging women, inter-racial weddings, Wiccan rituals, Christian memorial services, rock and cello concerts, poetry readings, sonnets, free verse, rap. How was a culture of acceptance and respect of difference being passed on? How was this safety accomplished through everyday interactions?

The grant proposal was rejected by my own university when I was a full professor serving on their two most prestigious university committees – the Distinguished Visiting Research Professor Committee and the Athletics Committee – and after I had been the recipient of their first Affirmative Action Award. It was not me they were rejecting; it was socio-politically engaged ethnography. A dismal 17th century welcome to the 21st century.

When I review these "failed" articles and projects I see they have three variables in common:

(1) They are interesting, valuable, projects; (2) Gatekeepers determined whether there were audiences; and (3) Me.

It was I who did not persist. It is I who had let projects fall. In each case, it was I who lacked the "nerve of failure." I had accepted the judgment of the Gatekeepers.

If it were not for publishers such as Left Coast Press, Sage, Guilford, Routledge and Sense and editors such as Mitch Allen, Norman Denzin, Yvonna Lincoln, Art Bochner and Carolyn Ellis, I would not have had any venues for publishing my transgressive work. They were Gatekeepers who opened the gates.

On January 5, 2012 I had major surgery on my left ankle. I feared the surgery because in my childhood, whenever I was weak, ill or disabled, I was abandoned by those who supposedly loved and cared for me. But my month in rehab undid that life-long narrative. Rehab was a life-changing experience.

I embraced the Truth that I am only temporarily-abled.

I needed to write about it. I obsessed.

I wrote furiously. Both of my DNA career strands intertwined. Sociological and literary understandings entwined.

It did not take a "nerve of failure" to send the manuscript to Mitch at Left Coast Press because I knew he would give it a respectful critique.

Now, sixteen months later *After a Fall: A Sociomedical Journey* – joins the Left Coast Press's New Books List. It is one of fifteen new qualitative academic books. Here at this conference. Not merely available as a paperback, but available now worldwide as an E-Book! E-power to the people!

Editors, publishers, and conference organizers are the ones who bring together like-minded people. It is they who have built the foundation for our free-standing edifice. It is they who have had the "nerve of failure" – the willingness to risk disapprobation and financial loss so all of us have that extra oomph to be true to our callings, our own unique DNA's.

At the risk of sounding "practical and motivational," I implore you to keep taking risks. Believe in your projects. Become Gatekeepers who open gates for others. Be permission givers. Have the "nerve of failure."

And so, at last I understand why I have had a writing block about this keynote. You are my REAL audience, my people, community, the audience that matters the most to me intellectually and emotionally.

I have been anxious that this speech not disappoint.

INTO THE SILENCE

Larry Russell

She rises before an academic audience at a conference. The room is quiet. As Laurel Richardson walks toward us, I realize her position is never center stage. She looks at her text, clasping it like a singer with a musical score. Her narrative line weaves its way through friendship, gender, loss, suffering, age, mortality – stories that matter. She rarely looks up as she reads, so the audience listens intently to her soft voice. Her irony and humor are as compelling as her narrative arguments because she allows the experience to speak for itself. There are many scholars writing through the lens of personal experience, but I know of no one who cloaks their daring in as subtle a form. It is more than finesse – it's courage. Who else would use a conference keynote address as an opportunity to examine her "failed" papers?

Laurel Richardson has offered us a great deal. Many of us write because of her – not writing like her, but writing into the silence at the end of her stories. She invites a level of disclosure found only in old friendships or fine writing. We are drawn into a conversation so faithful to our experience, so intimately radical, that we must carve out new ground to meet her.

I write about religion – not theology or doctrine but experience. The clearest description of grace I know is Laurel's narrative of an emergency landing in an airplane. In a series of vignettes that brush mortality, she reaches a "sweetly disorienting" state of gratitude for her survival that she names "Grace." And so I write into the silence at the end of that story.

My ethnography of religious experience among Hispanic Roman Catholics is well-received by academic audiences. In the private conversations that follow, people tell me how they stopped believing in God as a teenager, but they still need words for the healing, transforming epiphanies they can no longer name. My own

words are Christian of a Roman Catholic variety. I learned them from fellow pilgrims as we walked to a shrine of healing in New Mexico.

I have been transformed by the rigors of this annual trek, because the rituals of compassion teach participants to care about the suffering of others. This practice is especially important for the teenage pilgrims who do not yet understand their culture nor the experience at the core of their religion. Last year, I was walking with a pilgrim group of 37 men. The beginning of the pilgrimage was somber because one of those young men who planned to join us had been killed in an accident.

In each pilgrimage, we must learn to walk, meditate, and sing. It's difficult for the young, neophyte pilgrims who have no idea of what to expect. We walked twenty miles the first day, and in the evening we visited an adobe church they were restoring after water damage had collapsed a wall and the roof. A local parishioner told how the town, families, and the congregation were split in bitter arguments. The cultural values of adobe construction had more supporters than those who wanted a less expensive, contemporary structure. So the restoration had become an effort to heal the community. Work crews from the congregation and the town ate potluck meals together. People donated time and materials. Sitting among newly carved beams and corbels that would support the roof, we looked up through the hole in the roof to the brilliant blue evening sky. Someone quietly began to sing a prayer for healing, and we joined in. I looked at the rapt faces of the boys as they began to understand their relationship to the land, earthen dwellings, and caring people.

Two nights later, we were visiting an adobe "morada" where a devotional group of Penitentes gather for prayer and song. The Brothers teach compassion through ritual practice to strengthen the community. One brother began to quietly tell us about the boy who died in the wreck. As he described him, we realized it was his son. His portrayal was not sentimental, nor was there self-pity. We watched his face as he struggled to find details that would give us a sense of the life his son had led. He stumbled on the words as he searched for a way through the grief. None of us wanted that pain, but we knelt with tears in our eyes. The grieving father and the pilgrims, young and old prayed, for strength to continue. We believed that love had brought him to this place and love would see him through.

The stories I tell of pilgrimage are gloss if I do not live them out. The deeper lessons are about the way you move through life – the long journey's struggle becomes the way you walk through the world. It is at first a road that rises up through your body to become your practice of living each day. It is the Way you look ahead, the Way you react to difficulty, the Way you treat people. And when the pilgrim path ends, you have the difficult task of finding a Way to continue.

I am always grouchy when I return; daily life is so complicated after the clarity of pilgrimage. The prayers and songs still shape me, still prod. I construct stories from the events, and I listen as I write and rewrite. At first they are a tangle of details, but then they put down roots in my life.

One night after pilgrimage, I turned off the light and sat on the bed, looking through the french doors at the moonlit woods. Where the doors came together was a dark vertical shadow intersected by the horizontal shadow of the porch railing. I had never noticed how that scene was framed by the experience of painful love. The cross was not trimming or decoration, but it held my life experience at the center like an armature. Serene. Walking had taught me to pray beyond the recitation of words to this deep watchfulness, this share of grace.

CHAPTER 2

VENTURING OUT

The title of this chapter also changed several times during its development. Early on it was 'heading out,' then it changed a few times to 'striding out,' then 'walking out' and 'setting out.' Finally I settled upon 'venturing out' which is a more cautious approach to take when leaving the safe and the known. As this book doesn't quite fit with any recognisable category, it's a little bold, and therefore it makes sense to step carefully and a little tentatively out the front door to examine how Laurel Richardson's writing has had influence and impact out there in the world.

As indicated in the previous chapter, the original plan for this book was for me to write each chapter, using these key themes:

- Charismatic ideas
- Building intellectual community
- Permission
- Scholarly activism
- Speaking truth to power
- Inclusion and justice
- Trust and betrayal in the academy

I had enough ideas and material of my own to complete the book, but much prefer the way it has turned out – with so many scholars from different academic disciplines, at different career points, and from different countries – all contributing to this investigation. Interestingly, these chapter headings were included in my communication with contributors and they have indeed become embedded throughout this book.

Four pieces have been selected for this chapter beginning with Bryant Keith Alexander's contribution that questions the concept of permission underpinning this project. He describes Laurel Richardson's writing as providing a 'template of sociality' that has eased the way for others to include their own experiences into their scholarly work. This template, he argues, is both a methodology of writing and human social engagement.

> Her words gave me *permission* (as it were) to dig deep and write with *sensitivity to the lived experiences of embodied social differences* – that made me always and already, particular.

Next is Carla Corroto's short but astute observation of Laurel Richardson's work as a conscientious dissertation supervisor. Carla was Laurel's last doctoral student.

> Laurel guided my studies by obliquely encouraging me to step-out-of-line.

Following this is Esther Fitzpatrick's piece about how identity and methodology merged through 'ekphrasis,' an ancient Greek concept of using one art form to comment on another, like a poem about a painting. Throughout this development, she comments that:

> Laurel Richardson, a haunting presence, was sitting in the corner nodding her approval.

And the chapter concludes with John J. Guiney Yallop's wonderfully risqué poem about his reading of *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life*.

PERMISSIONS AS ESTABLISHED TEMPLATES OF SOCIALITY: ON THE WORK OF LAUREL RICHARDSON

Bryant Keith Alexander

Recently I wrote an essay undergirded by the work of Laurel Richardson entitled, "Bodies Yearning on the Borders of Becoming" (Alexander, 2014). The essay includes auto/poetic and highly vulnerable reflections on three embodied axes of social difference: a part of my own story as a man who suffers from a mild case of gynocomastia, along with the stories of two of my students, young women – one who suffers with Crohn's Disease and another who was a chronic self-injurer. I come to realize after writing the essay that to some degree, I was really writing about permissions. Yet the notion of permission as an act of benevolence sometimes rooted in power differentials is a conflicted construct for me. The synonyms abound: authorization, consent, leave, authority, sanction, license, dispensation, assent acquiescence, agreement, approval, blessing, imprimatur, clearance, allowance, tolerance, empowerment. And as a member of traditionally marginalized groups – as a Black/gay/male in the United States born into a particular class, culture, community and history of oppression – these synonyms as definitional phrases are not truly adequate to what I want to celebrate in/of Laurel's work. In essence, I am no longer seeking to be given permission.

Yet in my professional orientation to Laurel's work and accomplishments – I am really thinking and feeling that she has established a template of sociality in qualitative research and the vicissitudes of writing scholarship in sociology. She has established a particular set of logics, methods and exemplars of scholarly and teacherly engagement that serve as an invitation to possibility; an invitation to a subversive personalization in scholarly production, as well as an embraced intimacy of desire in the classroom. Hence, Laurel Richardson has established a template of sociality that has, in some ways, given way to the ease of exploration for others to engage stories of embodied life in/as scholarship, to make a difference.

For you see: As a student and budding scholar I struggled with writing. I did not struggle with ideas or creativity. Nor did I struggle with words or grammar. I struggled with the conflicted regulations of academic writing that called for a substantiated objectivity that negated the use of the "I." Always with the assumption that by negating the "I," which is always connected to notions of "the personal," that somehow the veracity of the text was elevated – making the text more factual or more critical without the presumed peskiness of opinion or the motivating factors of emotionality. This was always questionable to me relative to the passions that motivate or undergird writing. My struggles with reading "traditional" academic texts then, and maybe even now, was also troubled by my consistent desire to connect with the writer – asking questions like: What is he really writing about? What is her personal investment in telling this story of theory and philosophy in that voice? How does he feel about what he is writing? And what should my relationship be in/to this text and the author, and for what purpose in the dailyness of my life? Certainly as a student it was not just to reiterate or regurgitate my understanding of the text on a test. And certainly as a scholar it was not just to display my command of a literature, review and add to the morass of scholarly discourse without personal accountability.

I struggled then, maybe as I struggle now with "scholarship" that does not invite the reader in; does not articulate the politics and polemics of living; does not give the reader a reason to care, and thus to act with care in the world. I would spend copious amounts of time reading between the lines and researching the biography of authors trying to get to the personal to contextualize the academic. Much later I found solace when Laurel Richardson wrote about inseparability in the writing process; that "the product cannot be separated from the producer, the mode of production, or the method of knowing" (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). In many ways it was that language – articulated and embodied in so much of her previous work, that validated my dilemma of reading and the challenges of writing in a regime of an assumed critical objectivity that created a distance between writing and experience; between writers and readers, between the life of the mind and the reality of the body. Her words gave me permission (as it were) to dig deep and write with sensitivity to the lived experience of embodied social differences – that made me always and already, particular.

In that same way Laurel's logics engage frames of positionality (Tetreault, 1993) to/in teaching, a relational stance to engaging pedagogy and thus students through the personal; inviting students to explore their lived experience as the foundation on which they build theory, explicate understanding and exhibit their command of knowledge through the body, through the curriculum, and back again – creating scholarship as storied narratives of living. In seeing my completed essay, I realize that the project is not just an experiment with creative interdisciplinary qualitative inquiry, or a foray into the sociological imagination – as Laurel's work is sometimes described, but a testament to the power of critical autoethnographic engagement that extends beyond the need to tell, but the importance of telling human experience for the benefit of self and others. The essay is an intimate sharing between a teacher

and his students – evidencing the potential for embrace in the processes of teaching as well as in scholarly production. Laurel offers us all that template of sociality, a methodology in writing and human social engagement.

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THE PATH TO PERMISSION

Carla Corroto

I was formally Laurel Richardson's final advisee in the Sociology Department. Of course she advised, directed, and encouraged many others on an informal basis. But mine was the last dissertation under her watch to zigzag through the bureaucracy of proper signatures and proper formatting, to consecration as a college degree. Like the single-file queue of students before me, Laurel guided my studies by obliquely encouraging me to step-out-of-line. I had tacit permission to ignore the brisk and efficient straight line, if I favored the curve. In effect, I could forego lines altogether and go all three-dimensional if that led to better sociological analysis. My relationships are always spatial!

My studies coincided with Laurel's Big Questions about sociology and form. I know now that she was struggling with her relationship to both the discipline and the university in which we were housed. But when I was enrolled, she only referenced the content of her research as writing projects. I know now Laurel fretted about students writing in 'unconventional' and autoethnographic forms and our potential to garner academic careers.

That Laurel Richardson lined my path with permission to find a unique professional and personal course was a singular gift, wrapped in the sociological imagination and her attention.

Thank you.

IT WAS BECOMING ALL TOO CONFUSING

Esther Fitzpatrick

'Yes!' she said again 'BUT I just want to know what you will measure?'

I was sitting in our meeting room in the Educational Psychology building, sharing the proposal for my Doctorate with other postgraduate students. I talked about how I was intending to respond to literature that highlighted a concern with White teachers' inability to describe themselves culturally and ethnically. I had decided to start with an autoethnographic project to explore my own story of becoming Pākehā – Pākehā being the term used to describe the White descendants of colonial New Zealanders (most of whom descend from British settlers).

To make sense of this identity I needed a methodology that gave me the ability to tell rich and complex stories. Further, I required a method that provided a vehicle for me to identify the embodied experiences of being and becoming. I wanted a method that would enable me to generate and share the multilayered, juxtaposed and complicated process of becoming in a postcolonial environment. I had decided to use an Arts-based method of responding to the data through writing poetry, factional stories, script writing, and a form of ekphrasis. Expanding on the method of ekphrasis I planned to create my own Art-works and respond to them with creative writing. Laurel Richardson, a haunting presence, was sitting in the corner nodding her approval. She whispered to me '… for some kinds of knowledge, alternative representation is preferable … writings about one's life … are a significant resource for critical methodology' (Richardson, 2002, pp. 414–415).

I looked around at the other faces in the room. They were excited about my project but also confused. I decided I was not ready to answer the question 'what will you measure?' Consequently I stopped attending this particular group. Instead I immersed myself in my project. I began writing to find things out (Richardson, 1994). And I began to play.

> Playing
> Playing with ideas
> Playing with words
> Imagining
> Listening
> To unfolding conversations
> With you
> With Derrida
> And other ghosts I chose to summon up. (Fitzpatrick, 2013)

I spent time Art-making: creating wire sculptures, painting, sewing arpillera and then writing, writing, and writing. I had permission. I read literature on writing as a method of discovery (Richardson, 2001), spent time with other researchers who were using Arts-based methods, performed my work at conferences and received appropriate

feedback. And I began to publish. Then I was asked to share my work at a postgraduate meeting.

This time I scripted a presentation with a colleague that would engage the audience in the method. Creating a pretend space of a television news studio we performed the tensions and significance of such research. Then we provided space for the students to write and perform a collaborative 'found poem.' No one asked us what we measured. Instead we were sent poems. The following poem was written by a colleague, a fellow Doctoral student with a degree in Mathematics.

The world of research is imaginative
Is fun, intertwined, engaging too
My oh my, what a wonderful preview
Of the performative methodologies
That you two have enacted
And beautifully drew
Smiles, charisma, and cutting-edge research fashion
Few things by which you held us captive
Few things by which you had us captive
On behalf of PGSA, I would like to thank you
For not only sharing with us your life passion
But also for sharing with us
You

Regards
Mohamed

'How can you be so brave?' asked another Doctoral student.
How can I be so brave?
Because Laurel said I could
Because Norman said I should
Because Derrida said 'Speak to the ghost'
Because Elliot painted a picture
Because Dorothy performed a play
'You see' I answer
'I am not brave,
I just wear a brave's shoes'. (Fitzpatrick, 2014)

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READING ‘FIELDS OF PLAY’

John J. Guiney Yallop

Between the covers
of Fields of Play
I was stimulated.
I inhaled deeply on page one; I just knew this was going to be good.
I kept inhaling on pages two
and five
and six.

Almost all the pages are underlined,
like scratch marks I left; fingernails of blue ink
across a body of text.

Boundaries were crossed
although thin black straight lines were there,
guiding me with emphasis,
drawing me further into meaning
where everything, including writing
(no, especially writing),
mattered.

And then I realized that others were watching.
Performance anxiety; my
performance anxiety.
How much of my life have I spent
trying to be good?
But Laurel tells me, whispers to me – a firm whisper,
“There is no innocent writing, including this” (p. 108),
so I continued turning pages – relaxing into the rhythm.

My body reminded me that breathing,
like writing, is also a way of being.
Was I writing myself into being (p. 137),
or was I being written into being?
Whose covers were these, anyway?
Laurel had written the book, but I had bought it.
What does it matter, as long as it’s a good read?

Everything matters, of course.
Everything matters.

“In writing the other, we can (re)write the self” (p. 153) was the moral
of the story according to Laurel,

but in writing herself, Laurel was also writing me.

Everything matters, of course.
Everything matters.
Near the end, Laurel made an admission; she was scared, too – scared
of "spiritual turns." (p. 184)

Why am I not afraid here?
Why is a sacred space where I feel most at home?
Why are so many spaces, including the space of this poem, sacred to me?
Perhaps because, as Laurel said, not so afraid after all,
there is no innocence here; there is the safety of experimentation,
the feeling of being connected, a passion for belief,
as well as honor (honour, in Canada), gratitude, and communion. (pp. 184–185)

Climax is not about arriving; it's about returning to where, and who, you are,
and it's about giving that to someone else.

CHAPTER 3

DISCOVERING YOUR PATH

I recently asked Laurel to tell me her 'Ikebana' story again, as I wanted to include it here.

One of Laurel's graduate students was stuck as she felt her dissertation project was not yet complete, but she wasn't sure how she should finish it. Her project was about how two school communities had reacted to new equity rules. She was due to present a seminar about her project in one of Laurel's qualitative methods classes. When Laurel learned that this student relaxed through Ikebana – a highly specified Japanese way of flower arrangement – Laurel encouraged her to consider the project as an 'Ikebana' one. The student took this advice and brought flowers and a vase to the class. As she arranged the flowers in front of the class, she explained that each type of flower represented a particular role in the school (e.g. principal, teacher, student). When she finished, she smiled and announced to the class that she now knew what she needed to do to finish the project. It was the *imbalance* in the flower arrangement that allowed her to see what was needed.

As Laurel pointed out, we each need to follow different paths and sometimes this discovery involves returning to your cultural roots and re-awakening artistic skills and interests (see also Richardson, 1999b).

In my work as a doctoral supervisor I continue to be surprised at the different ways that PhD candidates find their own paths, particularly into research methodology and theory. In the Australian context, The PhD experience is somewhat feudal and is quite different from that of North America and Britain, originally because of our geography. Nowadays scholars regularly fly in and out of Australia, but in the not so distant past, visiting or leaving Australia involved months at sea, so was very rare. Doctoral theses were posted to international examiners and this still occurs. In the social sciences, Australian PhD candidates have not traditionally completed coursework or undertaken examinations, although this is now changing. Internal university committees do not assess Australian dissertations. Nor are PhD candidates required to defend their thesis, via the viva voce, the oral examination routinely given in the United Kingdom. In Australia, it's just the long thesis that is examined, by strangers.

When I was a PhD student, I stumbled across Carol Rambo's article, *Sketching with Derrida: An ethnography of a researcher/dancer* (Ronai, 1998). I downloaded and read the article because Jacques Derrida had recently visited my university. I should point out here that it was very early into my candidature and I knew very little about theory or methodology and hadn't yet discovered my own way into research.

Nevertheless, it's quite shocking to recall that I didn't attend Derrida's lecture. Instead, I took myself off to a café to think about this extraordinary new world of contemporary ethnography I had just discovered.

When my doctoral supervisor, Trevor Hay, returned from his holiday at the beach, he seemed a little nervous as I told him about evocative writing and authenticity and the importance of writing in research. He knows about the power of writing, so continued to listen, but was nevertheless clearly concerned. The direct line drawn between 'writing' and 'research' hadn't yet become as clearly defined as it is nowadays, some fifteen years later. He did seem to fixate on the words 'exotic dancer' with some distress, as he tried hard to take on board what I was telling him – and to be a responsible supervisor. It was 2002 and nobody else in my department was speaking about any newer approaches to research and so it was all unfamiliar territory for him. Thankfully he wasn't against me exploring this methodological terrain and trailed a little uncomfortably behind, nevertheless providing encouragement. Fortunately, I found Carolyn Ellis's writing, which gave me heart, even though it scared me a little. This led me to narrative inquiry and to Laurel Richardson's work. And, like many others – as seen in the contributions to this book – it is at this point that I felt a strong connection and sense of belonging. In an online forum I found an early version of the criteria Laurel established for assessing contemporary qualitative research, which helped me to find my own direction as a researcher and writer.

CRITERIA FOR CREATIVE ANALYTICAL PRACTICES

> *Substantive contribution.* Does this piece contribute to our *understanding* of social life? Does the writer demonstrate a deeply grounded (if embedded) social scientific perspective? Does this piece seem "true" – a credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the "real"?
>
> *Aesthetic merit.* Rather than reducing standards, another standard is added. Does this piece succeed aesthetically? Does the use of creative analytical practices open up the text and invite interpretive responses? Is the text artistically shaped, satisfying, complex, and not boring?
>
> *Reflexivity.* How has the author's subjectivity been both a producer and a product of this text? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to make judgments about the point of view? Does the author hold himself or herself accountable to the standards of knowing and telling of the people he or she has studied?
>
> *Impact.* Does this piece affect me emotionally or intellectually? Does it generate new questions or move me to write? Does it move me to try new research practices or move me to action? (Richardson & St Pierre, 2005, p. 964)

The contributions that follow each illustrate the different ways in which the creative and the analytic have been practiced and how permission was taken. The seven

pieces in this chapter, all consider the discovery of individual research paths, beginning with Carla Corroto's *Uniform Authority*, where the school uniform, and later the architect's uniform are troubled, and how she found Laurel Richardson's work liberating.

> What a relief to read that Laurel Richardson (2000, p. 474) confessed to finding "much of qualitative writing to be – yes – boring"! I did not want to study the sociology that was created in the homogenized voice of science any more than I wanted to be disciplined while wearing a plaid or black uniform.

Another graduate student of Laurel's, Phyllis Gorman, has contributed *The Power of Learning to Transform Biography* that explains how Laurel's teaching had such a powerful effect on her own life. She describes Laurel in the 1980s as:

> Larger than life, striding confidently in the gothic corridors of University Hall, a tall formidable female presence in a world inhabited – at the senior level she occupied – exclusively by old, (mostly) white men.

Next is André de Quadros, a professor of music who was formerly one of my own graduate students. Through his piece *Empowering Song and Constraints on Writing*, he connects the freedoms he found through Laurel Richardson's writing and the music and other art forms used in his current work in American prisons. He notes:

> The coercive practices that prevail in peer-reviewed journals, academic publishers, and university assignments make it difficult to seek difference and creative individuality.

In *Permission: A Nodal Moment in Poetic Inquiry*, Lynn Butler-Kisber speaks of her indebtedness to Laurel Richardson who influenced her trajectory into the poetic representation of research. It's fascinating how we all found our way in, sometimes by accident and sometimes by noticing a small detail.

> It was that significant moment of permission, which I found serendipitously in the work of Laurel Richardson that opened and helped to validate over time many new arts-informed research possibilities.

Amanda Manypeney, another of my former graduate students, wrote in *Richardson's Influence* of her delight in discovering that Laurel had argued that the analytical and the creative were indeed compatible. Amanda celebrates the freedom she realised she had through reading about Creative Analytical Practice (CAP) ethnography:

> While drowning in a sea of traditional ethnography and autoethnography, Richardson's idea of Creative Analytical Practice (CAP) ethnography was a lifeline.

In *Writing the Tapestry* Denise Turner explains how in her own doctoral studies she pushed against the detached and distant academic writing in her field of social work, as a result of her personal experience of the unexpected death of a child. She explains

how she came to Laurel Richardson's work and how the permission she gained was transformational and helped her to find her own way forward.

> I have chosen to weave together the significant moments leading to my discovery of both the tapestry metaphor and Laurel Richardson's other work in a way, which simulates the tapestry itself – where warp and weft combine to produce a finished pattern and design.

The final piece in this chapter *Allow Me to Enter Your World,* was contributed by Susan Bardy. Working on a PhD when one is over 70 years of age is impressive enough, but a long professional life as a hospice nurse, after arriving in a new country and having to learn the English language, means that Susan has a good story to tell. And she credits Laurel Richardson being the person who:

> Gave me permission to get out there and be bold enough to tell my story.

UNIFORM AUTHORITY

Carla Corroto

From preschool to all-day kindergarten, to elementary school, through high school, I wore uniforms. Some were plaid jumpers, others navy blue skirts, and each was designed to be unflattering and uncomfortable. Beneath we wore leotards in loafers, then knee socks in platform shoes with the waistbands rolled up to fashion mini-skirts. Although popular at the time, this inelegant footwear was unintended for wear with a school uniform. Implored to act like young ladies, we were to keep our knees together under the desk and genuflect in front of our lockers. There was no running on the playground out of fear the breeze would twirl skirts up. A great deal of time was spent attending to the concealment of undergarments. Meanwhile, in the gender-boundary producing business, boys efficiently wore shirts with clip-on ties and long pants. They did not worry about knees under desks or playground wind. Our relative social positions spoke volumes about expectations.

From a gender perspective, while the uniforms I describe disciplined and restricted the movement of girls' bodies (Crane, 2000), they also policed the unruliness of boys' comportment. The nuns inspected the boys' as somatic compositions. Shirts had to be tucked into trousers, ties affixed at right angles, and shoes tied. The attention to castigating boys' for the slightest affront – like smiling in math class, talking during reading, or running in the hall – brought classroom lessons to a halt. The sisters were on guard and book learning took a back seat to strict obedience to authority. Discipline was the foundation, compliance the structure, and our uniforms stood as bland decorative symbol. This was a not-so-hidden curriculum and it challenged my inquisitive nature and attention span. When I was 12, I told my mother exactly how bored I was at school, that the nuns spent more time reprimanding than teaching.

Her response was dismissively brilliant, "Then don't go back." Of course after one week of reading books and watching daytime game shows alone at home, I put my uniform back on and returned to the structure set forth by society. Children uniformly go to school.

An interactionist interpretation of the school uniform posits they are symbols constructing meanings about identity and difference and that uniforms work to standardize the appearance of bodies (Dussel, 2013). We recognize symbols are culturally and contextually specific and depend upon standpoint. The era and place in which I wore a schoolgirl uniform was rife with conflict, leading to contrasting interpretations. On the one hand, the uniform represented assimilation to dominate notions of what disciplined schooling looks like. On the other, it functioned to challenge an increasingly prosperous capitalist society's emphasis on consumption as generator of the economy. Here, we were to purchase one jumper and one skirt, three blouses and a sweater. My grandmother made my shirts on her sewing machine. The latent function of such frugality was resistance to a consumer-encouraged economy. While my school was composed of children from middle and working classes, the uniform helped to disguise when someone's father lost his job at the steel mill or when General Motors had a lay off.

Another reading says the uniform represented homogenization that squelched individual expression. But an alternative interpretation can suggest it lessened the importance of physical attractiveness vis-à-vis fashion. Ideally, student individuality was expressed through accomplishments – the creative arts, excellence in math, or a good sense of humor – rather than appearance. Of course, reality for each student landed somewhere on that continuum. Depending on the day, I know my uniform made it easy for me to get on the school bus each morning with more concern for my homework than my wardrobe.

The age and the context were a paradox. At a time when society was relaxing formal clothing norms and garments such as jeans were moving from agricultural-worker attire to everyday middle class apparel, our parochial school was enforcing a rigid, shapeless, fashion-less uniform. The clothing in the class photos do not reveal context as each year the outfits remained the same. Even our teachers, these post-Vatican II sisters, posed in their own formless neutral-toned shifts and pared down wimples. Looking through my yearbooks, I note how our atemporal embodied images stand in contrast to the unstable time in which we lived. Right outside our schoolhouse door were the civil rights, anti-war, and women's social movement protest activity. Students were killed by the Ohio National Guard at Kent State University, just 40 miles from my seventh grade homeroom.

The seemingly timeless uniformed photographs depicting children schooled in tradition reflects social science writing steeped in the Enlightenment's claim to objectivity. By claiming the ahistorical and omniscient voice of positivism, sociology adopted a uniformly rational, third-person narrative. But, as Richardson (1991) asserted, "Sociological writing, like all other forms of writing, is a sociohistorical

construction …" (p. 174). Indeed, the hair styles in the photos give us away in the manner science writing indicates its era. Sitting atop those classic uniforms were long haired white boys, black children in afros, and white girls with shaggy layered haircuts.

Because they are imposed by those in power to discipline, some argue uniforms "govern and regulate both the outward and inward disposition of the pupil" (Synott & Symes, 1995, p. 140). Most often my disposition was focused on avoiding attention because it was given to those considered deviant. Further, there was little positive reinforcement as pridefullness was frowned upon. I was an overachiever in the classic sense of hyper-responsible student who finished her work, learned her lessons, and sat quietly waiting for the next assignment. Hands folded in the lap of my uniform skirt, legs discreetly crossed; I expected little and fervently watched the clock, yearning for the school days and years to end. We know the body is embedded in social practices. Our uniformed bodies were often complacent, but never without knowing this was a terminal situation.

My parochial education, with its fits and starts, moments of enchantment and long periods of utter tedium, and ultimately its discipline, served me well as I went on to study architecture. What I found in architecture's professional culture was another uniform – everyone wears black. All the time. No matter what. When I wore a charcoal gray outfit to my end-of-the-semester presentation, a professor looked me up and down with despair. Had I not gotten the proverbial memo? Like in grade school, the disciplining of architects is mostly accomplished by authoritative social control and image-driven rewards.

Becoming resigned to this type of disciplined educational experience is similar to the way I felt when I began a graduate degree program in sociology. Having arrived at sociology as a 'nontraditional' student – which means I was older than most in my cohort – I came with specific questions about gender and women working in male dominated professions. In sociology, like in my uniform-wearing school days, I found the content of the courses important, necessary, and interesting, but the form of sociology to be disciplined in a tedious way. You know, we skim through quantitative research papers suspicious of the third person voice, hoping at least the discussion will be worth our time. The qualitative research was a bit more engaging because of its deductive approaches, but still quite a slog to sift through. What a relief to read that Laurel Richardson (2000, p. 474) confessed to finding "much of qualitative writing to be – yes – boring"! I did not want to study the sociology that was created in the homogenized voice of science any more than I wanted to be disciplined while wearing a plaid or black uniform.

Enter stage left, the scholarship and teaching of Laurel Richardson. I felt emancipated in the classes she taught and freed by her paradigmatic stance. Encouraged to find my voice, given freedom to challenge disciplinary undercurrents, I embodied the colorful fashion of a student who feels integral to the discipline of learning, the art of telling, and the belonging to a community of like-minded curious learners.

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THE POWER OF LEARNING TO TRANSFORM BIOGRAPHY

Phyllis Gorman

It was thirty-three years ago that I received – hand delivered by the author herself – a signed copy of the freshly minted 2nd edition of *The Dynamics of Sex and Gender*, a present from the most senior academic scholar to ever cross my working-class mother's doorstep. The occasion was the party mom hosted in celebration of my bachelor's degree and proud graduation from The Ohio State University.

I admired Dr. Laurel Walum Richardson with the kind of wide-eyed enthusiasm that I came to understand – from some of my more cynical peers – was not entirely appropriate for the graduate student I was soon to become. She was larger than life, striding confidently in the gothic corridors of University Hall, a tall formidable female presence in a world inhabited – at the senior level she occupied – exclusively by old, (mostly) white men. She claimed her students' full attention with her quiet voice, her exacting prose and the high expectation set by her example. With each word and step she modeled the feminist critique she championed of the academic world we inhabited together.

As a graduate student I sat frequently spell bound – but never silent – in Laurel's seminars. Those sessions served as the catalyst for long nights of deep conversation with classmates and soul mates alike as we deliberated over the concepts that had been brought forward for our consideration in those seminars. Whether the exchanges involved Paulo Freire and the possibilities of radically transforming education or Kuhn on the power of the paradigm shift or perhaps Garfinkel's conception of reflexivity, Laurel had us hooked.

My cohort was predominantly female, the seminar classes were small and despite our collective youth and inexperience, Laurel created a genuine sense of scholarly collegiality in her classroom. We recognized and thrived in the altered dynamic of the feminist pedagogical frame. Expectations were high; permissions were given for self-directed learning, as we were encouraged to integrate understanding of our

own social contexts and personal experience into our analyses. My father's illiteracy, fifth grade exit from grade school and his subsequent entrance into the world of full-time work at age ten, didn't mean I was destined to do menial labor nor barred from earning a doctoral degree. Being the undergraduate most likely called by instructors to serve on the ubiquitous 1980's "lesbian panel" didn't mean I couldn't some day teach those same classes.

As I view my present self through a poststructuralist lens, I see the interconnections between the lessons I was presented with in those days and the agency I took in becoming the feminist sociologist I am. I recognize the utility of those earliest learnings cultivated in Laurel's classroom, understanding the continual co-creation of self and social science. I felt the power of learning to transform biography in my own life; and I strive to similarly teach my regional campus working class students, raising questions, introducing topics, providing a space in which the students can reflect and question, so that they, too, can transform their own life stories.

Laurel's lessons on the epistemologies of postmodernism inform my efforts to bring into consciousness, my students' understandings of the complexities of hidden political and ideological agendas; the value of being at odds with the mainstream and challenging dominant paradigms; and the power of self reference and understanding actions in their unfolding contexts. I may not have always recognized it, but the foundational learning in my experiences with Laurel Richardson in graduate school is the rock I still stand on as I teach.

At each step in my learning, earlier lessons and Laurel's ongoing scholarship and fierce self-examination continue to inform. By consistently breaking scholarly taboos through her choices of research subject; with her consequential challenging of social science writing conventions; and with her dedication to speaking boldly to the powerful within her own department, the field of Sociology and to interdisciplinary collaborators, the work of Laurel Richardson created space for others' scholarship and teaching. Count me among those changed and challenged by that experience.

EMPOWERING SONG AND CONSTRAINTS ON WRITING

André de Quadros

The constraints of academic writing are so deeply embedded in the scholarly environment that writing emotionally, expressively, and personally, are lost dimensions. As scholars, students or teachers, we recognize this, but the coercive practices that prevail in peer-reviewed journals, academic publishers, and university assignments make it difficult to seek difference and creative individuality. I distinctly remember that early in my master's degree, I was asked to rewrite an assignment not because of its substance but because I needed to become competent in academic writing.

Much later on, through Julie White's mentoring of my writing, I became familiar with Laurel Richardson's writing as a means, as a process, and a channel. I likened that to my own work as an experimental musician where the musical process is a means of enquiry, of self-discovery and community transformation. But, I needed permission, and this mentoring opened Laurel Richardson to me, and gave me the fortitude to pursue writing of a different kind. I have adopted this practice not only as a model for my writing, but also find kinship with my artistic work where I use an approach called EMPOWERING SONG. In this approach, song, bodywork, poetry, and visual art are used as a means of reaching into the self and the community, to achieve personal and group transformation. I have found this approach to be an inspirational force particularly in the two American prisons where I work.

PERMISSION: A NODAL MOMENT IN POETIC INQUIRY

Lynn Butler-Kisber

In the fall of 1995, I was returning full time to my faculty after a seven-year stint in the Office of the Dean of Students at McGill University. Faculty members at McGill, who are seconded to an administrative position, are freed from their usual academic duties, except for some teaching. At the time, I was teaching one graduate course per year which allowed me to stay grounded in my work. I realized, however, that my research was suffering and decided to use the time in my classroom to study my own practice. For one semester, while teaching Trends and Issues in Language Arts, I videotaped all the classes and supplemented these data with student interviews. As the study progressed, I became very enticed by the collaboration between two students (Ann and Debbie), and this became an area of focus. I had completed my dissertation on peer collaboration almost a decade earlier, so it was not surprising that their work together piqued my interest.

As part of my re-entry into academic life, I decided to treat myself to an intensive, qualitative research course on data analysis with Michael Huberman who was a visiting professor for the 1996 spring semester at Harvard Graduate School of Education. I knew that this was a unique opportunity because he was normally on faculty at the University of Geneva in Switzerland. A requirement for this course was to have data, and I certainly had plenty. I used the collaboration between Ann and Debbie as the basis for the weekly exercises.

There were many excellent readings for the course. Some of them provided transparent examples of how certain researchers did their analyses which in turn we applied to our own data, others were from the second edition of the Miles and Huberman (1994) book on various ways of working with and representing analyses. What caught my eye with a jolt was on page 110 of their book. It was a small section of text entitled, "the transcript as poem" and a text box that contained an excerpt

from Richardson's (1992) "Louisa May's Story of her Life." Miles and Huberman explained:

> The display is striking. It brings the reader very close to a condensed set of data, has a compelling flow, and forbids superficial attention by the analyst. You have to treat the data set – and the person it came from – seriously because a "poem" is something you engage with at a deep level. It is not just a figurative transposition, but an emotional statement. (1994, p. 110)

The idea that poetry could be used and accepted in qualitative research was riveting, and to find this nugget tucked between a section on checklist matrices and time-ordered displays was nothing short of a miracle. I was transfixed by this "invitation," and began to read voraciously everything I could find by Laurel Richardson. Each piece kindled excitement and helped me to see moments of "poetic possibility" in my work.

The idea of found poetry in research particularly intrigued me because the actual words of a research participant could be portrayed in ways to honour voice and imbue the representation with the emotional and relational dimensions of the work. Richardson's work with found poetry gave me the permission to venture into terrain I would have skirted around before. I had dabbled in poetry writing as an adolescent, but like many others, had bought into the narrative that poetry was the domain of a certain gifted few, and far from my reach illustrating that "we are constrained and limited by the kinds of cultural stories available to us" (Richardson, 1997, p. 2). Found poetry, however, provided a license to play with words and the musicality of utterances to express feelings and thoughts without infringing upon this "sacred domain." Louisa May was a liberation.

Interestingly, my first foray into presenting found poetry publicly came out of the work of Ann and Debbie, perhaps because they had been with me when I discovered Laurel Richardson and Louisa May, but more probably because "one sees from a particular position" (Richardson, 2010, p. 51), and Laurel Richardson had allowed me to see from a different vantage point. As I have explained elsewhere (Butler-Kisber, 2010), it was only when Ann's words were depicted poetically, that I was able to represent authentically the subtleties of Ann's poignant story of finding voice as a graduate student.

Finding voice

I'm not an authority you know
My experience is just MY experience
I go by feeling a lot
I do that for all kinds of things.

I grew up on a farm.
After milking

neighbours would drop in
and tell stories,
all these stories, there's hundreds of them.
I could sit up all night
listening.

I freeze in groups
cannot cannot think.
I find it hard to use myself,
this small talk,
fly-by-night things.
What's awfully hard for me
is saying
I've got to write MY stuff
not somebody else's.

But when I'm driving
I think these great things I mean,
I could be Einstein.

Reflections.
Talk we often don't allow
little humorous things,
true stories
feeling and thinking,
all have power to build theory
help people get over things.
Helped me, too.

My experience IS my experience.
Intense, messy, nervous
That's part of it I think
as human beings, a natural evolution.
So I don't worry
much
anymore. (Butler-Kisber, 2002, pp. 233–234)

It was that significant moment of permission, which I found serendipitously in the work of Laurel Richardson, that opened and helped to validate over time many new arts-informed research possibilities. By extension, these have increased exponentially in working with graduate students over the years. I remain indebted to her.

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RICHARDSON'S INFLUENCE

Amanda Manypeney

> Those holding the dinosaurian belief that 'creative' and 'analytic' are contradictory and incompatible modes are standing in the path of a meteor. (Richardson, 2000a, p. 930)

What can I say? Laurel Richardson had me at dinosaur. As a fairly unconventional grad student this idea seemed fairly obvious to me, but while drowning in a sea of traditional ethnography and autoethnography, Richardson's idea of Creative Analytical Practice (CAP) ethnography was a lifeline. This idea enabled me to approach my research in exactly the same way at I approached everything else in my life and played to my strengths. You see, some people just communicate better in writing. I am one of those people. Hear me talk and I will not be able to articulate ideas for a long time and look adequately vague as I try to translate my thoughts into verbal language. But put me in front of a keyboard, and interesting, sometimes even intelligently related ideas reveal themselves without any verbal translation required. These are the creative and analytic modes that I believe Richardson was talking about that she so playfully described above. Richardson's work also revealed that academic writing didn't need to be quite so boring and that there was room for a little playfulness.

While these ideas gave me freedom as a researcher, I did not wholly agree with Richardson's way of thinking. By Richardson's judgment, fiction was not an effective way to stage research as if the act of writing fiction took away some of the work's credibility. I just saw this as the optimization of the creative and analytical mentioned in CAP where one was to use common fiction writing techniques to present research. Thankfully, since the year 2000, the research world has caught up from these early stages of writing as research. While fiction as social research has firmly taken root in the social sciences, other disciplines and hardcore social scientists still dismiss fiction as soft research. I like to think that this is perhaps what Richardson was alluding to when she warned that fiction was a poor way to stage research and not a qualitative judgment of fiction as research.

Richardson's work allowed me to frame my postgraduate thesis by using what came naturally to me. The freedom to just write and discover how ideas linked

together organically made the research richer that it would have been as a traditionally labored work of analytical research. It would appear that while many researchers are still looking up at the slowly approaching meteor with confusion, it has probably occurred to some of them that it is now time to change their stance to accept the impending impact of this form of research.

WRITING THE TAPESTRY

Denise Turner

Stage 1: Inspiration

> How do we speak the tapestry … because wherever text is being produced, there is the question of what social, power, and … relationships of production are being produced. How does our writing, including this writing, reproduce a system of domination and how does it challenge that system?' (Richardson, 1997, p. 57)

I can still remember the moment when I first happened upon this metaphor of speaking research texts as tapestry. The image of colourful single threads woven together to form an overall design illuminated the writing of my PhD, which until then had largely been a process of inertia punctuated by periods of struggle. Imagining the seven long years spent on the research as part of a tapestry composed of 'threads of many different hues' (Fraser & Nicholson, cited in Richardson, 1997, p. 57) synthesized the disparate fragments of knowledge and experience, whilst finally providing me with a template for writing my thesis as I wished.

I have chosen to weave together the significant moments leading to my discovery of both the tapestry metaphor and Laurel Richardson's other work in a way, which simulates the tapestry itself – where warp and weft combine to produce a finished pattern and design. Each stage in the thesis which I ultimately produced was accomplished via a series of permissions beginning with Laurel's own work which whispered consent to others to write in ways which 'help overcome the isolation and alienation of contemporary life and link disparate persons into a collective unconscious' (1997, p. 59).

Stage 2: Warp Threads

My return to higher education in 2007 was prompted partly by previous experience as a social worker, together with the freedom gained from my youngest child's admission to primary school. However, my main reason for beginning a part time PhD was the sudden, unexpected death of my twin son Joe, in 2005. Having been a professional myself, the response to Joe's death had filled me with concern and my research was therefore aimed at identifying ways in which the experience could be improved.

As a rather antiquated but nevertheless eager PhD student, the realization began to slowly dawn on me however, that the painful emotions often prompted by sudden, unexpected child death, sat uneasily alongside the traditions and constraints of academia, a situation that was exacerbated by my own 'insider' position within the research. Issues of authorial voice became extremely strained within a system that found it difficult to endorse the personal and emotional as valid research methodologies and I found myself for a long while reproducing 'a system of domination' (Richardson, 1997, p. 57) by excluding myself and my experience from research that was so symbiotically linked with this.

Stage 3: Weft Threads

Some time after starting my research, I found myself at lunch on the last day of a Conference. Exhausted by the intensity of interaction I had chosen a rear table where I could sit alone, a plan thwarted when a distinguished older woman approached me, announcing simultaneously in expletives where I could tell her to go should she be unwelcome. Sitting down, she told me her name was Christine Bell and that she had recently completed her own PhD. Another woman joining us responded that she had read Christine's work, which had moved her to tears. I pricked up my ears, astounded to hear that a thesis could possibly provoke such a strong emotional reaction.

At the close of lunch after much animated discussion, Christine promised to send me the chapters of her thesis, 'Visible Women' which duly arrived as attachments on my home computer. Reading them, I too was very moved by the personal tales therein and yet I was also dumbfounded and confused. I knew that Christine had completed her viva and that her thesis work had therefore been officially sanctioned and yet I could not comprehend how this had happened – for this was unlike anything that I understood to be academic work. The personal accounts of older women and their struggles with life and particularly the myth of invisibility, combined with Christine's own autobiography in a way, which stimulated countless emotions alongside the mining of deep sources of wisdom and knowledge.

Reading 'Visible Women,' I saw for the first time exactly what I wanted to accomplish in my own work and the key to this seemed to lie with Laurel Richardson, a writer previously unknown to me, whose words and ideas populated Christine's own writing.

Stage 4: Weaving Together Warp and Weft

The way in which Laurel's work was handed down to me by Christine, who in turn had been the recipient of this via her own supervision and academic journey, models the construction of the collective story which Richardson calls for. Those who have striven to find their own voices within academia discover a shared permission to relocate themselves within their work and to own their own experiences in a

way which continually passes from one to another – a running thread through the collective tapestry. For my own PhD work the permissions passed to me by these women were transformational. I halted my struggle to be what I had thought of as a proper academic, 'trying to write a single text in which everything is said to everyone' (Richardson, 2005, p. 960) and claimed instead my own knowledge wrought from both personal and professional experience. This allowed me to embrace multiple identities, which rather than detracting from my work enriched it and encompassed the often difficult reactions which my research work elicited.

Now that my own PhD is complete, I am able to provide another stitch in the fabric of permissions wrought by Richardson's work and give my own students approval to write their experiences, just as that permission was handed to me. In this way the tapestry becomes greater and richer – forming part of a series in which to paraphrase Richardson herself we do unto others as we have had done to self (Richardson, 1997, p. 2).

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ALLOW ME TO ENTER YOUR WORLD

Susan Bardy

This lush Australian garden up in the hills, just outside the city, is heaven on a hot summer's day. I did not think I knew anyone at the garden party. Peter and Tony are new friends whose large circle of friends are having a great time greeting each other, sharing stories, having laughs. I was doing my best with a glass of sparkling shiraz hoping that Dutch courage would let me engage in conversation with new people whom I thought might be more intelligent than I.

I was a retired hospice nurse who was nearing the end of my doctorate, and became conscious of someone calling out to me from a distance.

"Is this really you?"

The voice came from a corner of the large garden. A tall good-looking man was beckoning me. The next instant I was swept up and held tightly. The face was vaguely familiar.

"I am Paul. I don't think you would remember me, Susan. It was almost 20 years ago when we last met. That is when you were the angel who cared for my partner Thomas, who was dying with AIDS. Our first contact was in the peaceful environment of that hospice."

In an instant it came back to me as clearly as daylight. A memory of two young men devoted to each other. It was way back twenty years ago when I watched day after day as Tom lost the will to live. I stood by as he became confused and lost his temper with Paul, who never left his side, right to the end.

I could not hold back my tears at the memory of the day when Tom died. Meeting Paul like this face to face I could only whisper: "I do remember you."

For some moments I remained standing eye to eye with Paul. There were no words but only memories.

Later after getting home from what became a very joyous afternoon, and wanting to record the experience of meeting Paul, I could only think of doing it in terms of a poem. 'I do remember' became the title!

I do remember

Could it be that it is an age since I was with a dying patient?
How the weeks, months and years have flown.
It is nearly six years since I left that hospice never to return.
Death and dying is only a distant memory now.
I only write and think of those days at my computer.
Not even black and white words on a sheet of paper in my handwriting.

Yes, but yesterday I was reminded of who I was in that past, the past that was not so distant.
Yet it was.
Paul said: "Susan, I have never forgotten you and your presence at the deathbed of my partner, you were always there, unobtrusive, always ready to help."
A hug and a gentle kiss clinched Paul's words.
I replied: "No I have not forgotten you Paul, you taught me so much about gay relationships, you were caring, gentle and loving to a dying man, so very young to die."
Yesterday in that garden I remembered the tears that stopped me driving the car, the day I left the hospice for the last time, years later.
Yesterday, because of you Paul I was again full of concern for you, your dead partner and all who have gone before, whose lives were so precious.
You thanked me, but I must thank you for the magical words that you said nearly twenty years down the track.
In that garden what happened yesterday is what makes the oft-difficult days worth living.

Yes, being there was meant to happen for both you and me.
It made me wake up to how my life was not wasted,
And I am certain that you have also taken home a light heart and a prayer.

A New Day in January 2008 – Reflections on the Past

I was into the fourth year of my part time PhD candidature, looking at why hospice work was so important for me at the final years of a career in nursing. Language of the study had to express emotional involvement and speak to the reader in a voice that touched the heart.

Higher degree research is not easy, especially for a clinician who wants to tell a story. Relaying the message of hospice nursing's daily involvement with death and dying would be difficult to convey in traditional, inflexible academic talk. Scholarly language often concentrates on 'telling' and ignores 'showing' an essential element of communicating human emotions. The heart-break and suffering I wanted to illustrate became ridiculously unintelligible. The need to find a writing style that appropriately expresses emotional turmoil was important for me. There had to be a way that could talk of death and dying as a truly poignant journey.

I kept trying to be 'scholarly' but it felt false. My feelings and those of others got trampled under by academic jargonise. I could not go on. I needed help.

Finding a way

It started with Carolyn Ellis, my initial mentor, who introduced me to autoethnography, and to Laurel Richardson at the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry at Illinois in 2005.

It was momentous!

The two women became my leading lights during the seven years of solid work that went into my dissertation. It took that long to be comfortable with 'writing as my inquiry,' living autoethnography as well as convincing PhD supervisors of the methodological validity of my research approach.

Twenty amazing years accompanying people to a peaceful death was easy in comparison with writing about it. I kept searching for a way to make it happen. That is when Carolyn Ellis introduced me to autoethnographic methodology, and Laurel Richardson showed me how to put it into words. I sensed Laurel's warm inviting style giving me permission to follow her lead in telling my story. She was there when the clinical nurse in me could not find a way to write well. The fact remained that 'report writing' was my forte. In dimly lit nurses' stations I concentrated on writing about patients' physical condition. Should I ever write about emotional matters of people in my care, I would be warned to be relevant to clinical practice. Involved in higher degree research study, and using a qualitative thinking process, I found it a problem to document psychological concerns as dry scientific facts.

Those who read some of my entries in clinical patient records considered documenting emotional issues as irrelevant information. "We have no time for

that," often adding "Get to the point briefly and concisely." Laurel experienced similar criticism causing her grief, more so because sexism also reared its ugly head in university life at the time. In *Fields of Play* (1997) she tells of being by-passed for what she thought was a richly deserved promotion. But being the strong woman, she never gave up. Had she walked away I would have never had her guidance to finish a difficult writing task. I think giving up would have been a strong possibility for me.

Much Later in 2014 – At Home This Time

On a busy day I dashed to answer the front door only to see a deliveryman driving off. The parcel he left behind displayed the familiar Left Coast Press logo.

This must be the order I was waiting for.

Yes!

I hoped it would be the latest offering by Laurel Richardson!

The parcel was wrapped securely so my hands trembled with anticipation while ripping the covers off.

There it was, from under the shredded packing materials slid *After a Fall*, another gem from Laurel.

Here I go, even after graduating with a PhD I still cannot resist the ownership of yet another volume written by the woman who among others helped me to a successful conclusion of my studies. Over the years the bookcase in my small office displayed all Richardson's volumes.

As I analyse the strong attraction I still have for Laurel's work I come to the conclusion that I simply just feel 'at home' with this remarkable woman. There is comfort in having her there. Whenever I get a so-called writers' block all I need is a quick glance at the bookshelf where I see Laurel nodding and telling me to keep writing.

I was familiar with Laurel's most quoted work long before meeting her. I purchased Denzin and Lincoln's first edition of the *Handbook of Qualitative Research* some years earlier where the chapter "Writing: A Method of Inquiry" introduced me to Laurel, who was not always happy with qualitative research articles. She confessed that for 30 years she nearly went to sleep through "supposedly exemplary qualitative studies" (Richardson, 1994, p. 516).

"Thank God I am not alone."

I had difficulty with getting the meaning of some of the literature, of 'recommended readings.' I was a hands-on bedside clinical nurse with dying hospice patients, blaming a confusion with scholarly literature on my not being academic enough to understand complex texts. I also had misgivings about my intelligence for coping with doctoral studies.

The characteristic of trying to better myself started when, as a young woman, I escaped from the hell that was post WW11 Europe. My family migrated to a new life

in Australia, and I worked hard with the new language and culture. Learning English was most important though because I aimed for a professional career.

With hard work I succeeded in our business, marathon running and with nursing, and many years later, aged almost seventy, I set myself a seemingly impossible task of sharing the story of my personal and professional life through an autoethnographic research study. That is when, after joining the amazing culture of narrative writers, I was introduced to Laurel Richardson. Nursing literature was unsuccessful in convincing me of its ability to tell a narrative or story. From the many offerings there was not one who managed writing like Laurel Richardson. It did not matter what Laurel touched she sounded like one who understood the way I felt about academic work. She did not only write in the style of a professor but managed to convey the part of her life that was not teaching at the university. This is what attracted me to her work in the first place. Laurel gave me permission to get out there and be bold enough to tell my story.

I felt at ease with talking about myself because she also told stories of her life that could have been tales of so many people's in the community. For example, Laurel the hospice volunteer worker (Hospice 101, 2011) may have been in the hospice I was familiar with. *Last Writes: A Daybook for a Dying Friend* (2007) could have been the written memory of my dying husband. *Getting personal: Writing Stories* (2001) told of rehabilitation after brain injury and was like the story of my artist friend Claire recovering following removal of a brain tumor.

Whenever I was frustrated with academic language I turned to Laurel Richardson's works. She frequently also used poetry in communicating emotional issues or as an analytical tool like that in *Louisa May's story of her Life* (1992). There was poetry writing all through Laurel's academic creations. Reading them freed me to think about life and scholarly work as I recognized them. It was a relief when poetry was the only way I could describe Paul's appearance in my life after 20 years of absence. I believe that sadness cannot be told well in simple prose. And there was comfort also in knowing that the poem I wrote after that meeting was an acceptable component of my dissertation.

Returning to 'After a Fall' in 2014

After a Fall (2013) confirmed Laurel's gift for story telling. This is when I sensed the kindly permitting nature of an author who beckoned me to follow. I found that it told me about Laurel the 'patient,' among the many patients in the life of a nurse. The book delves deeply into the daily life of a recovering patient, one who is actually a living and feeling human being. Her story line told what all patients could tell if they had Laurel's ability to write. And I finally discovered through this book my comfort with her work. She is a real caring soul behind the academic persona. She shares herself with ease that signals vast knowledge of her field. Her calm wisdom reached out and signalled that it is all right to be the woman I always wanted to be, and write about it.

I now understand what is 'writing as inquiry.' I now accept fully that the road to knowledge lies in questioning. The more you ask, the more the world opens up with answers that lead to ongoing questioning. This raises your spirits and encourages the desire to go on writing. This is behind Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophical belief that "The truth of experience always implies orientation towards new experience" (2000, p. 355). Writing as inquiry is Laurel's way of gaining experience and knowledge of the world around her.

She is the master of demonstrating how writing inspirations of an inquiring mind pays dividends. It expands the brain and intellect in so many distinctive forms of conversation and communication. I maintain that my dissertation written in an inquiring style helped to contribute a new knowledge base, as I expanded my experience with answers that came out of the inquiry.

Thanks.

At eighty years of age, a career and a doctorate behind me, I felt lost and useless.

Then came the email from Julie White offering a way out. I was given a chance to communicate with the world by "Writing as a Method of Inquiry" (Richardson, 1994). I know that being a part of the 'permission project' will give me the impetus to go on writing.

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CHAPTER 4

THE POWER OF INCLUSION

I began to feel a sense of belonging to others after I read *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life*, as Laurel Richardson wrote in a way that did connect with my own uncomfortable experience of life in the academy. Inclusion can mean different things, but in this chapter I associate it mostly with feeling entitled to participate and to belong, alongside others.

I have wondered, during the life of this project, if one of the reasons Laurel Richardson's body of work has been influential for so many others, is because it is accessible and pleasurable to read. Grasping her key ideas is not especially hard work, even though these ideas are frequently connected with complex social theory and her work has often suggested new ideas and ways of seeing the world. Indeed, she seems to have accepted full responsibility for her side of the communication contract and has undertaken all the hard work to ensure that what she says is clear to her audience. This is very respectful towards her readers and must involve the reworking of many drafts prior to publication. Nevertheless, it makes her work inclusive because it is accessible and open to all.

Laurel Richardson's writing manages to explain key points very clearly, without being pompous, patronising or exclusive. Nor does her writing contain self-conscious 'pomo' (Alvesson, 2002) affectations like (bra)cketed words or ~~under~~ ~~erasure~~ comments, or unexplained allusions to theory, which do tend towards exclusivity. Of course these devices can be used to indicate significant theoretical concepts, and understanding theory involves hard work (St. Pierre, 2011, p. 614), but they can also seem like name-dropping and belonging to an 'in' crowd. That Laurel Richardson has eschewed such writing practices, indicates that her intent as a writer is to be inclusive and democratic and to have readers fully understand what she intends to communicate.

This chapter focuses on being included and being able to participate. The title has both power and inclusion, because they are inextricably connected in practice. Inclusion is a complicated term within the field of education that Roger Slee has troubled in his book, *The Irregular School: Exclusion, Schooling and Inclusive Education* (2010). Social inclusion presents even greater challenges, as this seems to have been hijacked by political speechwriters and policymakers, who use it to stand in for social justice when offering simple remedies for complex social challenges (see White, 2014). Laurel Richardson touched on some of these social challenges while acknowledging their complexity in her consideration of disability in: *After a Fall: A Sociomedical Soujourn* where she observed:

> Like gender and race, able-ness is socially constructed as consisting of two poles – *ability* or *disability*. Like gender and race, the dominant – the able-bodied – control the rules, agenda, and ideology. In common parlance and medical-talk, one either is or is not disabled. And, in the same way that gender and race shape all our lives, so does the idea of disability. (2013, p. 256)

The six pieces that come next each address inclusion in quite different ways. Peter Gouzouasis reflects wistfully on his time as a graduate student when he fulfilled academic requirement that bore little relation to the richness of his musical world:

> My graduate studies in music have left me questioning for over 30 years: how it is that musicians work and play with perhaps the most subjective, interpretive, open ended, expressive art form, yet conform to such conservative structures and strict rules of scholarly writing?

Next is Toni Bruce's warm and detailed introduction to Laurel Richardson at the *Contemporary Ethnography Across the Disciplines* (CEAD) conference held in New Zealand in 2014. Toni observes how Laurel's work allows others to be included into the academy. She talks of Laurel's writing and of friendship:

> The relationship you have with the great texts of your life can in some way have the same profoundness as friendships…she doesn't know I exist but she has such a profound effect on my life and teaching. I feel like she's a really, really good friend because we have spent endless hours, weeks, months, together.

Following this, Karen Rosauer analyses how she fits in the academy, bringing another perspective to inclusion:

> While I wasn't aware of it at the time, Laurel's writing…helped me to see the invisible dominant Protestant white upper middle class male *normal* in academia. Laurel's article, her approach, makes space for many ways of being, for many realities, for richness of humanity.

Judith Tyding's piece, *Laurel Richardson, My Unmet Friend*, writes of her Catholic education, society's expectations of her in the 1950s and the challenges she faced as an older doctoral student in the discipline of anthropology. She writes of the sadness and joy in her own life and the impact Laurel's work had on her studies. Her description of her undergraduate college years is astounding with the small college she attended being:

> Not much more than a finishing school. Required courses included Gregorian chant, speech, gym instruction in modern dance, and four years of theology where I was taught the husband is head of the family, the wife its heart, and most "students" knitted in class, argyle socks for prospective husbands with lots of complicated bobbins hanging down.

Sophie Tamas contributes a poem and a photograph from the time she was a junior scholar hosting a visit to Canada by Laurel Richardson, observing that:

> I hadn't realized that
> arts-based research was a thing
> beyond me, that Laurel
> had set me a place at the table.

And finally, excerpts from Judith A. Cook's letter, written in support of the Lifetime Achievement Award for Qualitative Inquiry nomination, has been included because it outlines so succinctly Laurel's contribution to qualitative inquiry, scholarship and inclusion.

PERMISSION … PERMISSION:

A PARODY ON THE MELODY OF THE SONG, "TRADITION," THE OPENING NUMBER OF FIDDLER ON THE ROOF

Peter Gouzouasis

I stared at the gate. All I needed to do was find the key. So many times it was right there, but didn't recognize it. And no one gave me permission to just open the gate. Or so I thought.

The other day, I fortuitously came across Jack's book in my office. On the inside cover he wrote, "To Peter, Friend, jazz expert, my WRTI boss!" Reading the opening pages, tears welled in my eyes. Jack was talking to me. Where was my head, my heart, my soul? I read your book, Jack. We talked about music all the time. Why didn't I see the key?

"Sit down and listen, young man. Let me tell you a story, Peter. Here is a key to new ways of writing research in music."

Jack Buerkle was the kindest professor a graduate student could ever know. I was the music program director of WRTI/JAZZ90 (Temple University) in Philadelphia from 1983–1988, and Jack was a Professor of Sociology who wrote a wonderful, nuanced, colorful book with Danny Barker, the first banjoist to transition to guitar (from banjo) in jazz in the late 1920s. At the time, I thought their book was a great history of early jazz. In the midst of my fourth statistics course on the prescribed doctoral program requirements, Jack came to my office at 'RTI in March of 1985 wanting to produce my weekly 5 minute segment, "Profiles in Jazz." Jack proposed to write the weekly narration (with music accompaniment) on famous jazz musicians of the past 60 years. Of course it was a great idea. I'd been doing it a few months, but didn't have time for production work. So I passed the editing off to an undergraduate student worker, and the rest was radio history. I gave Jack permission to read his jazz stories on the radio.

As a graduate student scrambling to write a thesis, I worked as a part time instructor of guitar and aural theory at the university, taught classroom music part time in public schools, played jazz and classical guitar gigs, sang bass and countertenor with professional vocal ensembles, and guided the music programming of a 50,000 watt radio station. And Jack, an erudite speaker and fabulous writer, listened to me talk about the quasi-experimental design of my dissertation, music teaching, guitar playing, and anything else I could say to impress him. Always politely smiling and nodding, he likely thought, "Good boy, Peter, you're doing what your advisor is telling you to do. Write to the pseudo-scientific form, pay your dues, get your Ph.D., be a good researcher."

Rewind to a few years earlier when I saw a key, but was not allowed to use it. In 1983, Willis Overton's "Philosophy of Science" course placed me right in front of the gate. My head exploded as I learned to trace the lineage of my understandings of music learning to Leibnitz, Kant, Hegel, Husserl, and Heidegger. I learned of Stephen Pepper's work in the 1940s and believed it through and through. It was sensible; Pepper called it 'common sense.' His text whispered, "Listen. Doo waa doo. No such thing as pure data. Doo waa doo. Only danda and dubitanda. Whoa whoa …"

I was as engaged in new ways of thinking about music learning as I was engrossed in playing Charlie Parker solos and Joe Pass transcriptions. Overton spoke of research programs surpassing notions of models, paradigms and worldviews, and holistic ways of rejecting artificial split binaries. But I was neither given permission to use that language, nor to write the dissertation I really wanted. My graduate studies in music have left me questioning for over 30 years: how it is that musicians work and play with perhaps the most subjective, interpretive, open ended, expressive art form, yet conform to such conservative structures and strict rules of scholarly writing?

Dutifully, I wrote my masters' thesis, a 2x2 factorial design. Looking back, it reads like a 2x2 piece of lumber. Later, I honed a similarly sized chunk of wood for my dissertation. But a funny thing happened on my way to crafting those tomes. Each time I wrote a wooden, 'conform to the form' study, I had all these extra observations, learning outcomes, songs, chants, patterns, field recordings, videotapes, and daily journals that documented my experiences with preschool and middle school kids. They were ideas and brainstorms that went far beyond numerical data, results tables, and conclusions. Yet they didn't fit anywhere. They were too plastic, too elastic, too creative. So, I sheepishly put those materials in the appendices of my thesis and dissertation. And each time, when a defense committee member said, "No, that's not research, Peter. It doesn't belong in a thesis," I dutifully replied, "OK, I'll remove it, sir," with my lack of conviction and pragmatic need to just finish the damn degrees.

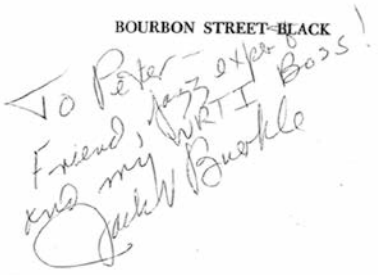
Looking in the rearview mirror, it took a doctoral student, Karen V. Lee, to pull and prod me – kicking and screaming all the way – into arts-based educational research and creative analytical practices. She insisted I take the key and open the gate. Every weekly meeting, Karen drove me crazy with her persistence, "Peter, you're such a good story teller, you've had so many cool experiences, why don't you write and publish them as pedagogical tales? And why can't I write stories for my

dissertation?" She'd bring me a pile of papers by Eisner, Richardson, Ellis, Bochner, Pelias, Barone, Denzin, Clandinin, and Sparkes and plop them on my desk. "Now it's your turn, Peter. Read these. Let's talk. Let's write stories." In a few months, with some trepidation, I gave Karen permission to write the first ABER dissertation in music education, a collection of stories about musicians making their transitions to teaching. By giving Karen permission to story musician identities, I gave myself permission to story my self.

Fast-forward, fourteen years after Karen pushed me over the precipice. I was rereading your 1990 book, Laurel. Feeling inspired, I sent you a cold call email from out of nowhere, and generously, you sent me your keynote address from ICQI 2013. A month later, I brought seven of my graduate students to a conservative colloquium to present a paper on a new ethos of music education research. I coined the term sociosophy because I knew they'd reject our proposal if we called it 'sociology' of music education. It's a tale of teaching and learning autoethnography as a wisdomful, creative, analytical way of writing stories of music teaching and learning in all contexts across the lifespan. For me, and my students, autoethnography has become a developmental, pedagogical process. It has always been about our voices, our audiences, and our consent.

We've never met. Yet, with your kind encouragement and words of wisdom, you not only gave me permission, Laurel. You kicked the gate off the hinges.

At the risk of sounding "practical and motivational," I implore you to keep taking risks. Believe in your projects. Become Gatekeepers who open gates for others. Be permission givers. Have the "nerve of failure" (Richardson, 2013, p. 14).



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INTRODUCTION TO LAUREL RICHARDSON'S QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION 'CONTEMPORARY ETHNOGRAPHY ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES' HUI

KIRIKIRIROA/HAMILTON, AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND, NOVEMBER 2014

Toni Bruce

> Tēnā koutou katoa. Nau mai, haere mai ki tēnei kōrero nā to tātou rangatira, nā Laurel Richardson. Ngā mihi mahana kia koutou.

Hello and welcome everyone to this session with Laurel Richardson.

It is my pleasure and honour to introduce Laurel Richardson for this Q & A session. I first 'met' Laurel in 1990 during my Masters degree at the University of Illinois. Laurel won't remember this because, like many of us, my first encounter was with her written work. It was a little book called *Writing Strategies* that reinforced the power and importance of writing differently for different audiences. This was something I already 'knew' as a former news and sports journalist but had not really processed in my emerging identity as an academic. And I should say that I am on my second or third *Writing Strategies* because my research students keep borrowing it and never giving it back!

Laurel is currently an Emerita Professor and a member of the Emeritus Academy at The Ohio State University, in the United States, where she has worked since 1969. She has come a long way from her early publications in the late 1960s – such as her intriguingly titled PhD – "Pure Mathematics: Studies in the Sociology of Knowledge" – and early articles like "A statistical summary of Publication in Pure Mathematics: 1959–1957" and "Group Perception of Threat of Non-Members" – to the work many of us know much better in qualitative methodologies and auto-ethnography, with titles such as "My Story and I'm Sticking to it – Until I Revise it," and "Academia: A Poetic Memoir." Laurel has almost 100 original articles and many reprints, plus published poetry, nine books (several in multiple editions), numerous keynote addresses, and regular conference presentations. She is on the editorial boards of eight journals in sociology, ethnography, symbolic interaction, qualitative and critical methodologies, and even two in sport, which is my main research area.

To deviate a little from the standard introduction, I asked people at the conference to tell me how Laurel's work has influenced them. The answers reveal something about her range of influence, even down here in the Southern Hemisphere/Pacific.

Writing as she has, into diverse, interdisciplinary spaces like education, dance, and sport studies, Laurel opened up spaces, especially for beginning researchers, to think and 'do' research differently. The participants used phrases like 'permission,' 'find a voice,' legitimated' and 'allowed' in terms of what her work has done for them:

- Laurel has given me permission to play with words to make sense of our worlds.
- Laurel changed my life in terms of thinking about a future in academia. She helped me find a voice.
- She gave me the confidence to avoid the boring thesis. Coming from someone like her, saying don't write any more boring theses, gave me that confidence to be creative. It's almost like you need permission from someone who knows what they're talking about and in the top of her field.
- She legitimated for me that you didn't need to identify yourself with a specific theory or method. She complicated and articulated for me that writing was at the core of deeper thinking about human condition.
- I think for me the crux of it would be about exploding the boundaries of what people think is OK to do or not to do in research and research representation particularly.

Laurel's concept of writing as a way of knowing and her use of found poetry are clearly influential. As well, Laurel's ideas have 'travelled' outside the realm of written narratives, particularly into dance, theatre and other forms of performance:

- She trailblazed the found poetry in research methodology. I have been using her as the touchstone for my work.
- Her work allowed me to articulate movement, creativity and embodiment in a way that other methodologies didn't.
- The thing for me was her writing as a way of knowing and that added to my exploration of ways of knowing from a feminist strand.
- Her idea of writing as a way of knowing informs my ideas of performance as a way of knowing.
- She was one of the first people who introduced me to the notion of reflexivity in research and writing as a way of being reflexive. That was her gift to me.
- It's through the process of writing that knowledge unfolds and I think that's been a really useful metaphor.
- I think one of the other things that we have Laurel to thank for is the way she highlighted the institutional resistance and inertia to doing things differently.

Finally, the importance of writers like Laurel on people's lives more generally was very evident.

- She taught me you're OK to be in your skin. To just be you.

- The relationship you have with the great texts of your life can in some way have the same profoundness as friendships. We are so far away from her and she doesn't know I exist but she has such a profound effect on my life and teaching. I feel like she's a really, really good friend because we have spent endless hours, weeks, months, together.

In my work attempting to challenge dominant discourses that marginalize, de-legitimate and reduce groups to stereotypes, I draw inspiration from her belief that "…stories that deviate from standard cultural plots provide new narratives; hearing them legitimates replotting one's own life. New narratives offer the patterns for new lives…The story of the transformed life, then, becomes a part of the cultural heritage affecting future stories, future lives" (Richardson, 1990b, p. 26).

It seems clear to me that Laurel's narratives have truly become part of the cultural heritage of qualitative research and, as the comments from conference participants reveal, will continue to affect future stories and future lives.

Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

Without further ado, I pass it over to Laurel.

PERMISSION TO UNASSIMILATE

Karen Rosauer

It was May 2007. I know, because just now, I re-found that article, and the date I saved it was 23rd May 2007. I was immediately in love. "Writing: A method of inquiry" (Richardson, 1994); it gave me permission to be myself, to put my whole self into academic thinking and writing, and to use my whole self. But it wasn't wishy washy either, it demanded rigour, focus, clarity … I loved the whole package. A Jewish Educator, at home in our Jewish traditions of building knowledge, understanding, community and identity, through story telling, wrestling with texts, debate and discussion, Laurel's writing gave me permission to bring these ways of thinking and being to my writing. Looking back, I can see my assumption, that the academic world is something separate, austere, other; another space into which I would assimilate myself. While I wasn't aware of it at the time, Laurel's writing, (and later many others), helped me to see the invisible dominant Protestant white upper middle class male *normal* in academia. Laurel's article, her approach, makes space for many ways of being, for many realities, for richness of humanity.

However it was not only the content of the article, but also its physical form that intrigued me. The electronic version that I received was a complete paper with full author details and acknowledgements, and yet it had no source, it didn't look like a regular journal article, nor was it photocopied out of a book, in fact it was a word document. I wanted to quote from it … and there was no reference! How could that be? Where was it from?

Like my mentor and PhD supervisor Julie White, I love to share articles and books that have excited me. Laurel's "Writing: A method of inquiry" (Richardson, 1994), is undoubtedly the article I have shared most often. It was one of the first articles that Julie shared with me, when I moved from being her Bachelor of Education (B.Teach) student, to taking on her challenge of turning my B.Teach research project into a conference paper. Of course I eventually found the reference, and duly acknowledged it appropriately. And since then, I have written my way to understanding many times. But at some point, as I became more familiar with the academic world, I started to wonder … how did it happen that Julie has a word version of this article? She must have a relationship with the author I realised at some stage. I rather liked that I had this apparently personal copy of the article. And every time I re-find it, I again delight in the rather unofficial look of the 12pt courier typeface.

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LAUREL RICHARDSON, MY UNMET FRIEND

Judith Tydings

> Women, I believe, search for fellow beings who have faced similar struggles, conveyed them in ways a reader can transform into her own life, confirmed desires the reader had hardly acknowledged – desires that now seem possible. Women catch courage from the women whose lives and writings they read, and women call the bearer of that courage friend. (Heilbrun, 138)

Carolyn Heilbrun introduced me to the concept of the "unmet friend" in her book on aging, *The Last Gift of Time, Life Beyond Sixty* (1997). To have an unmet friend one must be a frequent reader and most likely a woman. The late American poet Maxine Kumin was Heilbrun's unmet friend, existing as a close friend only in Heilbrun's mind.

Of that relationship she wrote that she knew Kumin "in a way no biographer or friend can know her: she is her poems and essays, and what I chose to make of them" (138). I first met emeritus U.S. sociologist Laurel Richardson through her poetry. Later moving to her prose, I discovered that she and I inhabited the same generation, both undergraduates in the mid-1950s. Heilbrun said she felt "childlike astonishment" at all she and Kumin had in common (140). Reading Richardson's *Fields of Play, Constructing an Academic Life* (1997), *Travels with Ernest, Crossing the Literary/Sociological Divide* (2004), *Last Writes, A Daybook for a Dying Friend* (2007), and *After a Fall, A Sociomedical Sojourn* (2013) I too felt the same astonishment and delight as I learned about Richardson. We loved Nancy Drew, had a penchant for Pall Malls, loved the film, The Red Shoes, I even met Robert

Helpman, choreographer and lead dancer, and both of us experienced the pain of our mothers, unbeknownst to us, disposing of our childhood books and loved possessions when we were out of the house. We had mothers who were vain about their legs. Richardson's husband, Ernest Lockridge, had a great-great grandfather who was a Methodist circuit rider, my maternal great-great grandfather rode the Philadelphia circuit. Both Richardson and I find orange juice in the morning too acidic and at this time in our lives consider trying to depopulate bookshelves, and we both have dogs at a time when people our age are petless for safety reasons. Richardson has been vital to my seventies although we have never met. It came about this way.

The fifties were not nifty. Young women, even those who managed to attend college, were to have no ambition other than to marry and raise children. It was worse if you were raised Catholic. And worse still if you had brothers and came from a family with straightened circumstances. With three younger brothers, money for college tuition was reserved for them so they could support a future wife. But, a voracious reader, excelling at school, Catholic of course, having published in Scholastic Magazine, with Latin and U.N. awards in my pocket, a stint as a student usher at the Met, and a research and writing award handed to me by Jacques Maritain, then at Princeton, my heart was set on college, specifically Radcliffe. I had a hard row to hoe as I needed a full scholarship.

The nuns refused to send my school records to Radcliffe or any "secular" college. In 1953 there was no guidance office and no place to appeal. Next, compiling a list of top tier Catholic women's colleges who offered full scholarships, including Trinity in Washington, D.C., Rosemont near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, The Colleges of New Rochelle and Manhattanville in New York, I took the SATs at Montclair High in New Jersey only to have an ice storm hit partway through the January testing, cutting off the electricity. Moved to sit near windows, the lights were off, and writing with mittens on, no heat, testing was finally called off. Unbeknownst to us, the partially finished SATs were scored as though they had been completed, and results were sent out to colleges with a tiny incoherent footnote stating "circumstances at testing center." Chances for a first tier scholarship vanished with the storm, scholarship decisions being made in April. By the time I took the SATs again, few scholarships were available. I accepted tuition and board at a small Catholic college, better now, but then not much more than a finishing school. Required courses included Gregorian chant, speech, gym instruction in modern dance, and four years of theology where I was taught the husband is head of the family, the wife its heart, and most "students" knitted in class, argyle socks for prospective husbands with lots of complicated bobbins hanging down. I note all the above in an attempt to demonstrate that I had a tremendous hunger for an education I knew was out there, and that I was being denied. As captain of my college's tennis and badminton teams I played at Bryn Mawr several times, that college being one of "the seven sisters" along with Radcliffe. As Scarlett O'Hara would say, I was "pea green with envy" as I watched a professor ride her huge tricycle around that beautiful campus. Graduating in 1957, an assistantship at a Catholic university in New York made an M.A. in History possible.

Two years younger than I, Gail Sheehy, in *New Passages, Mapping Your Life Across Time*, wrote about us members of the Silent Generation. I had been born near the close of 1935.

The women at the very beginning of the Silent Generation, born between 1931–35, bore a whopping average of 3.17 children. And the script for them basically ended there…the women who graduated from college by 20 to 24 (5.4 percent, a shockingly small percentage compared with women in succeeding generations) went comparison-shopping in their senior years for the best husband prospects. Very few went on to graduate school themselves (1995, pp. 30–31).

I fit the profile. My resistance to mainstream culture plus Catholic pressure lasted only a year after college graduation. Sociologist Wini Breines in *Young, White and Miserable, Growing Up Female in the Fifties* notes that in those days "to remain single or pursue a profession was to be considered deviant and marginalized" (p. 50). In my second year of graduate school I married, completing the M.A. two months before the birth of our first child, and in quick succession wound up with Irish quadruplets; four children, all single births, all under four, one with a congenital heart defect. I loved my babies and being a mother but the dream of pursuing a doctorate was fading into the diaper pail. My devout practice of religion was challenged as my dear Protestant husband, now of 55 years, announced his refusal to any longer abide by the Catholic birth control prohibition. My Catholic pastor told me to leave him. A Catholic theologian provided an intellectual out that I would not need today in a post-Catholic life.

With eighteen years of education in Catholic institutions, as a working mother, I, no surprise, wound up teaching in private Catholic secondary schools, writing for Catholic magazines, and producing a book about Catholic Saints with an ecumenical thrust. I gave papers focusing on unity at Catholic and Protestant conferences in Rome, Chicago and elsewhere, and taught novices, young nuns, for two summers. Then, with children grown, just shy of sixty-three, with fifteen grandchildren, I applied to a doctoral program in American Studies at The University of Maryland College Park. Getting accepted wasn't easy. Ageism was in evidence as the stereotype of the old "Learning in Retirement" student talking too much in class was rampant. And people like me took up space that could be better used by a younger grad student. I was accepted into the program for the 1999 fall semester only by dint of some strenuous lobbying by a journalism professor familiar with some of my published writing. In life history seminars I fell in love with ethnography, getting one out of the library and into the field, and I plunged into many areas of cultural studies: white studies, prison studies, the urban landscape and public history, material culture, Patricia Hill Collins and black feminist thought and standpoint theory, the writing of bell hooks. The evolving field of age studies hadn't made it to my University or most others yet. I accumulated a 4.0 average, passed my three comps, one of them scheduled on 9/11. Along with others in my program I signed up to teach undergraduates. When my name was dropped from the roster, I was told I had a longtime husband to support me, but many grad students were impoverished and needed the income. I turned my

attention to my doctoral research. Very apropos, working with two anthropologists I pursued an ethnographic project with aging New England women, one participant reaching a hundred.

On the way to graduation our second son, Michael, father of four, passed away from cancer in 2005 at age 43. A retroactive two-semester leave of absence was granted. In 2008, driving alone to the store from my home in Maryland, a car crossed over the double yellow line, cut in front of me, my car was totaled. I sustained a damaged shoulder requiring surgery and endured a long recovery. A year's program extension was given by the Dean's office. Despite the fact the clock was ticking, I developed writer's block. Halfway through my dissertation I simply couldn't move forward and the old anxiety, having my educational aspirations thwarted, loomed. I worried about being dropped from the program for having taken too long, those who hadn't wanted me there in the first place making use of the opportunity.

Subscribing to several Internet newsletters on aging, one put out by psychologists Mary and Kenneth Gergen arrived. Sheer serendipity, as I Googled the Gergens to learn something about them, I came across their article, "Ethnographic Representation as Relationship." Included was Laurel Richardson's poem from *Fields of Play*, "While I Was Writing a Book."

While I was writing a book

my friend, the longest, went crazy
my friend, the newest, went sad
nixon resigned
the saudies embargoed
rhodesia somethinged
and my dishwasher failed

my sister, the elder, hemorrhaged
my brother didn't speak to me
my ex gurued and overdosed
hemlines fell and rose
texans defeated the e.r.a.
and my oil gaskets leaked

my student, the newest, grew tumors
my neighbor to the right was shot
cincinnati censured sin
and my dracaena plant rotted

I was busy.

With the first reading of Richardson's poem, my writer's block evaporated and I saw a way forward. I felt permission to write my own poem, including both poems in my dissertation (2010) plus a discussion of Richardson's influence in a recent

article (2013). The original title of my dissertation included the words "Uncharted Territory" because that is how many writers have described old age.

While working in uncharted territory

my son, the middle one, died
my daughter became ill
9/11 happened
I passed my comps
I was given a one year LOA
my brother, the middle one, died

an "informant" won the Caldecott
three passed away
one turned ninety-eight
my neighbor across the street shot himself
a car cut in front of me – surgery followed
my left arm doesn't work too well
I was granted a one-year extension

a spouse dies, one is "widowed"
no word tho for mothers outliving children
I'm ten years older
Carolyn Heilbrun killed herself

My paperwhites are blooming.

I had not yet read Richardson's prose when I searched for her Ohio State email address writing to express gratitude for her extraordinary poem that gave me permission to include poetry in my ethnography. To my delight Richardson responded. I then wrote again sharing the anguish I felt, fearing I would be dropped from a doctoral program where I had labored for close to ten years. Here is Richardson's for me magical response,

> First here's to you resilient spirit! Don't (sic) the academics get you down or worried. I'm sure you'll do fine on your dissertation and defense. Your advisor would not let you go forward if he did not think you were able to complete the work in a way that shone good light upon him. And, just as there might be some who are VERY against the older student, there might be some who are VERY for the older student, and some who just want good students…(reply to my 1/16/09 email).

Only someone with my life history of struggling to receive an education would appreciate the gift of peace Richardson gave me, providing also a sense of collegiality I hadn't experienced in my department. When I later came to read her prose, Richardson's thoughts about qualitative research in *Fields of Play* would validate new

avenues I'd been finding in anthropology, for example, in the work of Ruth Behar's *The Vulnerable Observer, Anthropology That Breaks Your Heart* (1996). Lastly, as seen above, Laurel Richardson's poetry and prose provide me with a friend I have met only on the pages of books, a handful of emails, and in my mind; an unmet friend who is vital to my life. I salute her with a late-in-the-day glass of OJ!

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HOW I BEGAN TO BELIEVE THAT I MIGHT BELONG HERE

Sophie Tamas

'Yes,' I wrote, in pencil
on the photocopy of Writing
as a method of inquiry,
'yes yes yes. This is what
I want to DO.'

I hadn't realized that
arts-based research was a thing
beyond me, that Laurel
had set me a place at the table.

I rented a car.
She came out of the Lord Beaverbrook Hotel;
a tall American in a long brown Linda Lundstrom parka
on a drizzly day in May.
I drove carefully, chatted carefully;
a junior scholar playing tour guide
before the conference
in a place I'd never been.

The first thing I do every day, she said
is take a sip of water. To say thank you.

We stopped for lunch on Deer Island;
each wooden chair wore little knitted socks.
We chose a table for four,
ordered fish and chips,
and smiled at the carefully framed art
on the walls; all paint-by-numbers.

A three year old dumpling with glossy brown hair
brought over her crayons and stories.
She spilled apple juice on my knee.
Don't worry, we said. She's no bother.

We passed rusty fishing boats, stacked lobster traps, grey wooden docks
with long thin legs at low tide.
I pulled over by a little peeling shack
where knick knacks peeked through dusty panes,
waiting for their people to come home.
'Take a picture,' she said. 'Send it to me.'
smiling like a little girl with her hood up and hands in her pockets
under a fading sign.

CHAPTER 4

EXCERPTS FROM NOMINATION LETTER: LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

Judith A. Cook

It is an honor to provide a letter of support for the nomination of Laurel W. Richardson, Ph.D. for the Lifetime Achievement in Qualitative Inquiry Award, honoring individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the methods, theory, practice, and dissemination of qualitative inquiry. Dr. Richardson has spent her entire career, spanning nearly five decades, conducting qualitative research. Detailed in this letter of nomination are the outstanding aspects of her work in the field of qualitative inquiry as they relate to her exceptional service, research, and mentoring, as well as her steadfast commitment to social justice and advocacy under a humane human rights agenda.

…

Throughout her long and distinguished academic career, extending from her graduate work in mathematics and sociology through her emeritus phase, Dr. Richardson has been at the forefront of the theory and practice of qualitative research.

…

Beginning in the early 1970s, Dr. Richardson's work focused on racial and gender inequality and their intersection, far before the concept of "intersectionality" was popularized and used to consider how race and gender intersect in the construction of social inequality. Her textbook, *The Dynamics of Sex and Gender*, published in 1977, established the cross-cutting nature of ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation and class as issues to be addressed through qualitative research. This work contributed to the founding of a sociology of gender that was approachable and understandable through qualitative methods, thus situating qualitative inquiry at the center of the development of gender studies, and making gender studies accessible to larger audiences than would have been reached through an exclusive emphasis on quantitative techniques.

…

Another little-known aspect of Dr. Richardson's scholarship is her pioneering work, beginning during her postdoctoral period, in the not-yet named field of "disability studies." After suffering a major car accident, coma, and the loss of language, she intensified this interest by focusing on how social and cultural norms affect the physical and emotional recoveries of those who have been seriously injured and impaired.

Dr. Richardson has been a long and steadfast supporter of the International Congresses of Qualitative Inquiry since your organization's inception. She has designed and delivered workshops at each of the past Congresses, and is generous with her time at these meetings, going out of her way to mentor scholars in their early stages of career development as qualitative researchers. She also designs her

presentations at these meetings and other forums in ways that help to build the community of ethnographic and qualitative researchers. Although she is now retired, she participates in the organization and its activities because she believes in its mission and her power to facilitate the careers of others as well as her responsibility for doing so. Over the course of her impressive career, this had led Dr. Richardson to mentor a large number of successful scholars who have become noted in their own right for engaging in innovative and ground-breaking qualitative research in a wide array of disciplines. By encouraging use of the central tenets of qualitative inquiry in the disciplines of education, psychology, rehabilitation, social work, public health, and women's studies, to name just a few, she has broadened the reach and influence of qualitative scholarship and helped to elevate its acceptance and prominence.

…

Selection of Dr. Richardson for the Lifetime Achievement in Qualitative Inquiry Award not only recognizes her exemplary achievements in qualitative research, but also her important role in advancing the field of qualitative inquiry as a whole, as well as her stalwart commitment to mentoring young qualitative researchers and developing the work of her more-established colleagues. Most importantly, Dr. Richardson authenticates the mission of using qualitative research to bridge gaps in cultural and linguistic understanding, to address issues of social justice, and to document the existence of racial, ethnic, gender and other disparities in education, science, welfare and healthcare. Through her indomitable spirit, she carries forth that mission into the academic arena and the community-at-large. Among the many worthy and deserving nominees for this award, it is this aspect of her career which most distinguishes her.

CHAPTER 5

THE POWER OF FEMINIST ENGAGEMENT

EVEN THE KNIVES SLEEP

Laurel Richardson

If I were a fork, I would know my place,
to the left of the plate, tines beckoning
a hand to cradle me,
me holding meat for the knife.
The blade slips between my tines
scraping edges.
There is no pain, and after
I am bathed in water
and returned to the space
I share with others of my kind.
We nestle together, edges cradling edges.
I am safe in the drawer.
Even the knives sleep.

This chapter examines feminist scholarship in five carefully considered and substantial pieces. The focus moves between the early 1970s to the present day, spanning almost half a century, providing insight into the development of feminist epistemologies, particularly within the American context.

Kathy Charmaz firstly troubles the idea of permission in relation to gender in the academy, illustrating with her own history, observing that:

> My situation involved learning when and how I had permission or could negotiate it. I learned early that lack of permission was often arbitrarily imposed and contradicted policies and practices of the university. During several pivotal events, I challenged decisions in writing to the chagrin of those who imposed them. I understood the importance of active, recorded resistance when lack of permission imperiled either my job or my program.

Next is a co-authored piece by two of Laurel's former PhD students, Judith A. Cook and Mary Margaret Fonow, who begin by taking us to the early 1970s where, at different times, they each took Laurel's "Sociology of Knowledge" class. The most formative time for them both was Laurel's graduate "Gender Seminar" in the Spring and Summer of 1976.

> Our transformation into feminist scholars was guided by Laurel, based on a number of assumptions about the teaching/learning process that comprise the notion of feminist pedagogy. First, we saw personal experiences as legitimate sources of insight for theory-building and empirical research. Second, innovation in any aspect of the research process was valued and, in fact, we actively sought to demystify the research process by exploring dead-ends and failures. Third, a collaborative search for knowledge was encouraged through joint research projects and collective discussions about the conduct of inquiry.

After this is Verta Taylor's, *Becoming a Feminist Scholar*, where she acknowledges Laurel Richardson's important role in her own survival and development within the academy. Laurel invited Verta Taylor to join her in editing a very early feminist anthology, *Feminist Frontiers,* currently in its ninth edition. Verta's tales reveal much about the academy of the time, raising inevitable questions about what has changed and what has stayed the same.

> As a graduate student, my advisor had strongly discouraged me from taking Laurel's seminar because gender was not considered to be a legitimate field of sociology, warning that the class would distract me from "real sociology." The fact that sex and gender is today a thriving field at the center of the discipline and one of the largest sections of the American Sociological Association is because of women like Laurel who blazed the trail for so many of us who sought to bring feminist ideas and methods to sociological thinking.

In *My Scholarship is Deeply Indebted*, Bettie St Pierre writes of her experience in Laurel Richardson's graduate classes, observing that:

> I encountered brilliant female professors for the first time when I began my doctoral program at mid-life – women who were smart, tough, rigorous, and politically savvy but also captivating and mysterious. These women did not hover and "mentor" and "care"; they demanded our very best work.

The final piece in this chapter, *Building Intellectual Community,* is from Patti Lather who writes about the Postmodern Studies (PMS) group, established around 1990, for academic women across disciplines in one university who shared a "lust for theory."

> This group continued to meet for a quarter of a century and 'Laurel was as greedy as the rest of us to understand the "new" theory.'

To set the scene – and the tone – we begin with one of Laurel's unpublished poems:

FLIPPER

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Laurel Richardson

You can pay a few bucks
To swim with dolphins
But the bulls turned on
By the smell of women
Are humping them.

The male guards yell,
"Roll with it honey,
Roll with it."

PERMISSION IN PERSPECTIVE

Kathy Charmaz

What does permission mean? To whom? Meanings of permission, who gets it, and how it becomes manifest differ in time, place, and situation. What constitutes permission may be fluid, unstable, and subject to redefinition. Once gained, permission still may remain partial, conditional, begrudging, and revocable. Permission may also again become provisional after long periods of seeming acceptance. Old misgivings reemerge and alliances shift. Resources dwindle and criteria for gaining permission increase. The multi-dimensions of what permission means become apparent when transgressed and with transgressions, questions about fairness arise. Fairness, justice, equity, and authority and power figure in giving, obtaining, receiving, and assuming permission. What follows? Suffering pervades problematic experiences of seeking and obtaining permission.

Laurel Richardson received her doctoral degree 10 years before I did. At that time few women sociologists in the United States (U.S.) gained permission – or had encouragement – to enter the hallowed sanctuaries of academe, much less to obtain a tenure-track [i.e. permanent] position within it. Permission can be profoundly problematic. Women in male-dominated fields who assumed or sought permission transgressed taken-for-granted rules of their chosen professions. Early on in my career, I learned that others of similar rank and status were granted permission or could assume it while I did not have it and could not assume that it would be forthcoming. "Old white boys" guarded new positions and awarded them to their friends or students of close colleagues. By 1968, when I was finishing my master's degree, jobs in sociology in the U.S. were plentiful for white men but not for women and minority sociologists. My master's thesis advisor told me I could get in a good

doctoral program but might never get a job. Thus, I could be assured of partial, conditional permission to become a sociologist but not to be one. The department itself symbolized the uncertain fate of well-qualified women. Two women held positions on the permanent faculty but other well-qualified women lurked in the outskirts of the department as temporary lecturers. Each semester, they hoped to receive permission to teach a couple of courses which seldom turned into lasting appointments.

In the U.S. in the 1970s, much discussion about feminism and being a feminist scholar arose in numerous disciplines and professions. Yet women scholars' public claims of feminism did not necessarily translate into concrete actions to extend permission to obtain positions to all well-qualified candidates. Rather some established women reproduced the form of granting permission of the old boys who had preceded them.

My situation involved learning when and how I had permission or could negotiate it. I learned early that lack of permission was often arbitrarily imposed and contradicted policies and practices of the university. During several pivotal events, I challenged decisions in writing to the chagrin of those who imposed them. I understood the importance of active, recorded resistance when lack of permission imperiled either my job or my program.

However, I did not realize that resistance in other areas could alter lack of permission – and my situation. Just two years ago I learned how I should have handled being rejected 15 years before for one of the very few opportunities for merit raises my university has offered to faculty in the past 40 years. I had thought I had a good chance to receive at least one merit raise of the maximum of eight possible small raises. Fortuitously, I could document a number of recent contributions such as multiple international invitations, featured lectures, and publications in addition to teaching and service. Our very high teaching workload precluded me along with most faculty from having a sustained list of such contributions. The rejection letter arrived with no kind words about my accomplishments, or the difficulty of deciding between so many deserving candidates. The letter just stated denial of even one merit raise in cold bureaucratic terms. It stung. When I happened to mention this letter to a male colleague two years ago, he told me that what faculty should do is threaten to grieve as he had done. He said the administration routinely held back funds to cover potential grievances and he had received all eight of the merit raises. I had not known that I had permission to claim injustice and to file a grievance.

Many of my most trying experiences in obtaining and maintaining permission to have and keep a job preceded both meeting Laurel and the appearance of her publications about her experiences in academia. Laurel broke silences and the isolation accompanying these silences. She has given new scholars permission to look at their situations with clear eyes, face the trials and troubles within them, tell their stories – and survive. Perhaps one of her most important contributions is giving permission to resist taken-for granted practices that render some colleagues vulnerable and enhance the power of others.

What lessons about permission have I gained to pass on to others? I learned that women may not have access to crucial informal knowledge that male colleagues learn from each other. We should not have to obtain permission to exercise our rights. We can make our contributions known when others ignore them. The main lesson I have tried to pass on to new women scholars is to learn and claim their rights and demand due process so that they can recognize when no permission is needed.

WE FIRST MET LAUREL

Judith A. Cook & Mary Margaret Fonow

We first met Laurel during the 1970s as graduate students in the Department of Sociology at The Oho State University. Mary Margaret entered the graduate program in 1971 and Judith in 1974. Both encountered Laurel for the first time as students in her course, Sociology of Knowledge, in classes taught several years apart. During those years, pivotal events in Laurel's life led her to transform her approach to teaching and scholarship, as well as to alter fundamentally her thought processes and perceptions of being in the world. These changes in Laurel's life, along with co-occurring changes in the lives of her two graduate students, left an indelible mark on all three women as scholars and sociologists, resulting in lifelong bonds and collaborations that extend to this day.

Mary Margaret was a student in Laurel's graduate seminar on the Sociology of Science in 1973, the first course Laurel taught after her traumatic brain injury in a car accident, about which she has written in her article Paradigms Lost (Richardson, 1999). While neither of them knew this about the other, Mary Margaret was struggling with whether she belonged in graduate school given her working class background and the misogyny she encountered in academia. Laurel was struggling with her post-accident identity as a sociologist since her brain injury left her unable to think and speak clearly, let along engage in computational and analytical activities needed to teach the statistics and theory courses to which she was assigned. About the accident, Laurel wrote, "As if I had experienced an earthquake in my brain, the orderly strata of knowledge had been destroyed – old material collided with new material. The shards had been reshuffled" (p. 80).

The seminar served as Laurel's path to recovery, yet her students were unaware of how hard she struggled to find her words, remember concepts and theoretical formulations, or think in a linear fashion. With her department's admonishment of "teach or risk termination" in the forefront of her mind, Laurel struggled to demonstrate that she could maintain her teaching presence with graduate students. To save face and mask the extent of her "disability," she created a collaborative learning environment so that the students in her class could share in the teaching of the material, as co-creators of knowledge. This democratic pedagogy was something that deeply affected Mary Margaret, a sixties radical and budding feminist. The

friendships she created with fellow students spilled over to intense out-of-class discussions about the nature of inquiry – a topic she would pursue for the rest of her career. Unaware of her professor's struggles, what Mary Margaret remembers from that class is reading and discussing Thomas Kuhn's classic text on paradigm shifts and, as a result, her world shifted too. She discovered that there was more than one way to do sociology and that she need not change to fit the discipline but could shape the discipline as a political radical and feminist scholar. Meanwhile Laurel went home after each class in tears, crying from the exhaustion of trying to stay the course. In retrospect Laurel wrote, "Now, I see that teaching that seminar was a path for me into recovering my brain. The students defined my by-default pedagogy as 'open' and 'inviting,' not an indication of my lack of knowledge or inability to claim authority. The students learned to shift paradigms" (p. 86). And so did Mary Margaret, who went on to take additional seminars from Laurel and to eventually become her teaching assistant in one of the first courses on Sociology of Women to be taught in the U.S. She asked Laurel to supervise her dissertation on women steelworkers, one of the first feminist dissertations in the department (Fonow, 2008). Laurel more than recovered; she was promoted with tenure and went on to have a distinguished career as a sociologist.

Judith joined the sociology program in 1974, the first woman in her family to complete an undergraduate degree, and the only one to pursue a graduate degree. Unlike Mary Margaret, she had taken her first Sociology of Women course as an undergraduate, from sociology professor Sally Bould (Vantil) at the University of Delaware. She entered graduate school flush with enthusiasm and excited by the possibility of combining her double major in sociology and psychology with the study of women's roles and experiences in society. What she encountered instead was a discipline mired in stale debates regarding macro-level theories such as structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, and conflict theory, none of which considered the experiences of women apart from their relationships to men. She sought in vain for the relevance of sociology to the "real world" she saw around her, and despaired of ever finding a community of like-minded scholars. This began to change when she took Laurel's Sociology of Knowledge class and experienced a more egalitarian, empowering pedagogy, along with encouragement to center the enquiry in the experiences of women and micro-level social processes. Her perspective shifted in a more fundamental way when she participated in Laurel's graduate Gender Seminar in the Spring and Summer of 1976. There, she met Mary Margaret, who would become a lifelong friend and colleague, with whom she would go on to publish an influential anthology and a number of articles on feminist methodology and epistemology (Cook & Fonow, 1984; Cook & Fonow, 1986; Cook & Fonow, 2006; Chakravarty, Cook, & Fonow, 2012; Fonow & Cook, 1991; Fonow & Cook, 2005). Despite this long collaboration, both agree that their most formative experience was participating in Laurel's graduate Gender Seminar in the Spring and Summer of 1976. Through Laurel's teaching, mentorship, and collegiality,

Mary Margaret, Judith, and others created a community of feminist sociologists, sharing a common language, common values, common history, common collection of research folk tales, and a shared sense of identity. Feminist pedagogy used in the seminar contributed to the development of a community of gender sociologists as well as to our professional development as scholars and researchers. This experience also resulted in an essay about the seminar's long-lasting effects, published in the journal *Teaching Sociology* (Richardson, Fonow, & Cook, 1985).

At that time, Laurel was and has remained at the forefront of the theory and practice of qualitative research. Her central theoretical question has always been "how do we know we know?" In her early work, using content analysis, historical analysis, and norm-breaking experiments, she became part of the emerging qualitative research fields of science studies and ethnomethodology. As her career matured and her scholarship deepened, her focus on the nature of "knowing" led her to explore topics and pioneer areas of study decades prior to their acceptance by the larger academic community. It also led her to focus the qualitative lens on a series of supposedly "un-addressable" topics, such as adulterous relationships and racial profiling.

Our transformation into feminist scholars was guided by Laurel, based on a number of assumptions about the teaching/learning process that comprise the notion of feminist pedagogy. First, we saw personal experiences as legitimate sources of insight for theory-building and empirical research. Second, innovation in any aspect of the research process was valued and, in fact, we actively sought to demystify the research process by exploring dead-ends and failures. Third, a collaborative search for knowledge was encouraged through joint research projects and collective discussions about the conduct of inquiry.

In Laurel's seminars we came to see that someone's success was not someone else's failure. Since the personal and the structural were constitutive and equally salient, there was nothing to compete over. Each had her sphere of experiences, and those experiences were the basis for the doing of sociology. We vicariously experienced new social worlds: steel mills; baton twirling competitions; lesbian/parent relationships; custody battles; fencing teams; the death of a child. One of the most important outcomes of this sharing of work-in-progress was that the research process was made visible. Listening to other students formulate and reformulate, do and redo their work, demystified the research process and demonstrated that the cooperative mode and the collaborative spirit were effective research strategies. Students were, indeed, completing their papers and dissertations, and having them accepted for publication and for presentation at meetings.

Laurel's textbook, *Writing Strategies: Reaching Diverse Audiences* (1990) is still in print and selling strongly. Perhaps its most notable quality is that it gives qualitative scholars "permission" to experiment with their material. Her chapter in the *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, "Writing: A Method of Inquiry" (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005) has revolutionized how qualitative researchers think about writing – not as a mapping activity but as a place of discovery, learning, and engaging. This

chapter is one of the most frequently cited pieces in qualitative research. Her other monographs, *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life* (1997) and *Travels with Ernest: Crossing the Literary/Sociological Divide* (2004) provide a model of how gender and disciplinary hierarchies can be transcended, and how authors can maintain their voice while operating in the interstices of various modes of creativity. Her book, *Last Writes: A Daybook for a Dying Friend* (2007), offers another model of writing that is immediate, intense, personal, and ethnographic – in an alternative genre.

Less well known is Laurel's commitment to making her work accessible to people outside of academia, and to doing work that would change the structure and culture of injustice. One example of this is her monograph *The New Other Woman* (1985) on relationships between single women and married men. Another example is her use of qualitative research to alter the wording of items used by the National Opinion Research Center in surveys regarding race and ethnicity. Yet another example is her application of concepts and theory from the field of ethnomethodology to the creation and delivery of in-service trainings to teachers regarding racial stereotyping.

Working with Laurel prepared us to be innovative and resourceful, and as members of the "lost generation of sociologists" who earned their PhDs at a time (1975–84) when the job market in sociology was extremely soft, we had to be (Lyson & Squires, 1993, p. 4). After graduation each of us had to carve out our own career paths. Mary Margaret stayed in academia, first in non-tenured, visiting faculty positions at small liberal arts colleges and then in 1985 returned to Ohio State as an administrator helping to build one of the largest most comprehensive women's studies programs in the US. This was not an uncommon strategy as many feminist sociologists in that time period migrated back and forth between women's studies and sociology (Skeggs, 2008). In 2004 she moved to Arizona State University as Chair of Women's Studies and in 2009, she became the founding Director of the university's School of Social Transformation. Judith completed a dissertation on the impact of gender on parental bereavement following the death of a child from cancer (Cook, 1983, 1984), with Laurel as her committee chair. She followed graduate school with a post-doctoral fellowship in clinical research methods, and then left academia for a job in "applied sociology" as the Director of Research for a large network of mental health centers in Chicago. She simultaneously pursued a career as an evaluation researcher studying programs for women with HIV/AIDS, educational reform, and people with disabilities. In 1990, she was awarded a federal grant to establish a 5-year Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) on psychiatric disability, and moved that Center in 1995 to the University of Illinois at Chicago, Department of Psychiatry, where she became a Full Professor of Psychiatry. Movement between academic and applied sociology positions is another common career strategy of the lost generation (Kim, Mencken, & Woolcock, 1998). Since re-entering academia, she has continued to win funding for a series of RRTCs,

the most recent one devoted to the integration of health and mental health care in community settings.

Three women, feminist scholars, friends, and colleagues, our careers were molded by encountering Laurel at a formative moment in our and her intellectual and personal development. Working with Laurel gave us permission to chart our intellectual pursuits and our careers in surprising and novel ways. We might not have survived the academy without learning how to take the risks her permission suggested. We hope we are keeping alive the spirit of her gift in all the work we do with our students, colleagues and the public we serve.

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CHAPTER 5

BECOMING A FEMINIST SCHOLAR

Verta Taylor

I owe my start in the field of gender and women's studies to Laurel Richardson. Here's why. In the early 1980s, after Laurel published the second edition of her path-breaking text, *The Dynamics of Sex and Gender*, an editor from D. C. Heath approached her about taking on a women's studies text, an edited book that could be used in the interdisciplinary classes in women's studies that were springing up everywhere at the time. I was an assistant professor in the Sociology Department, having been hired to co-direct the Disaster Research Center, where I served as Director of Field Studies as a graduate student. It wasn't easy joining the faculty and dealing with my former teachers as colleagues. It was even harder because, after my advisor and co-director of the Disaster Research Center refused to let me go elsewhere, he confessed to being in love with me, prompting my very difficult decision to resign the Center and leave behind my research specialty. When I say "leave behind," I mean that my name was literally whited-out on coauthored publications, and I never again published on the social consequences of disasters, my then specialty.

It was at that point that Laurel saved me. She knew that I would be evaluated on my publication record when I came up for tenure and promotion and proposed that we co-edit the women's studies text she was invited to write. We titled it *Feminist Frontiers: Rethinking Sex, Gender, and Society*. The book was published in 1983, though not by D.C. Heath who abandoned its social science list, and it is now in its ninth edition. For four decades, *Feminist Frontiers* has introduced thousands of students to feminist scholarship. And it helped launch me into a career of research and teaching on gender, sexuality, and social movements. Although I had been a feminist activist involved in the women's liberation movement, I had been studying collective behavior, social movements, and social psychology. As a graduate student, my advisor had strongly discouraged me from taking Laurel's seminar because gender was not considered to be a legitimate field of sociology, warning that the class would distract me from "real sociology." The fact that sex and gender is today a thriving field at the center of the discipline and one of the largest sections of the American Sociological Association is because of women like Laurel who blazed the trail for so many of us who sought to bring feminist ideas and methods to sociological thinking. I will forever be grateful to Laurel for her confidence in me and her eagerness to make me a colleague, not just a former (non) student, by inviting me to work on *Feminist Frontiers*. It's hard to remember now what it felt like to have lost an advisor and research specialty in one fell swoop. But in the process, I gained Laurel as a co-editor and friend.

We had a lot of fun collaborating on *Feminist Frontiers* over the years, and I like to think we learned a lot from each other. We drove to academic conferences together, sometimes vacationed together with our partners, Laurel and Ernest got

married in our home, and I even took her son Ben shopping for clothes for his first job while Laurel was out of town. For the first two editions of *Feminist Frontiers*, many topics we wanted to address had not yet been researched by feminist scholars, so we sometimes had to include poems, newspaper articles, or write the chapters ourselves. And as we pulled these writings together into a coherent text of anywhere between 50–70 selections depending on the edition, we found ourselves debating and developing feminist theory in the process, contributing to the turn toward intersectionality in gender and women's studies. *Feminist Frontiers* was the first text to put sexuality and lesbian and gay issues front and center, well ahead of its time. When I think back to the fact that D.C Heath dropped the book because they did not think there would be a significant market for a women's studies text that is still a best seller in 2015, it reminds me how difficult it was for feminist sociologists to get our work published during those early years. *Feminist Frontiers'* nine editions reflect evolution of the field, and we would later invite our graduate student, Nancy Whittier, to come on as third co-editor because the book got so big and time consuming, and we wanted her input as a feminist who represented a new generation. After Laurel retired, my life partner of thirty-six years, Leila Rupp, replaced Laurel as co-editor, and she brought a fresh perspective to the book as an historian of gender and sexuality who taught feminist studies at the University of California Santa Barbara, an Hispanic serving institution.

Laurel not only taught me everything about gender and feminist theory but, over the years, mentored me about being an academic, introduced me to senior feminist scholars, and I still find myself giving some of the same advice Laurel gave me to my own graduate students and assigning her writings in my seminars at the University of California. Without Laurel, I'm not sure where I'd be today. I never would have had the successful academic career that I have had, and I might have left academia altogether had Laurel not given me both the permission and the opportunity to be a feminist scholar. When I received the American Sociological Association's Jessie Bernard Award in 2010, the highest award for a scholar of gender in the field of sociology, two members of my graduate cohort at Ohio State who had also studied with Laurel were sitting with me. As I walked to the stage, I felt a tremendous sense of gratitude for Laurel who helped me "get the man out of my head" and to find my voice as a feminist sociologist.

Over the years, our relationship changed, especially after Laurel retired. I was suddenly the only qualitative and feminist scholar in the Sociology Department at Ohio State, and I felt responsible for carrying on her legacy. These were big shoes to fill. Eventually I took a faculty position at the University of California Santa Barbara where there were a large number of important feminist scholars. But my intellectual and personal connection with Laurel continues. Last year, I had surgery for a torn rotator cuff, debilitating me for many months. Like *Dynamics of Sex and Gender*, Laurel's latest book, *After the Fall*, which chronicles her recovery from a broken foot, was a source of insight into the male dominated medical system, but it also

brought hope and inspiration. Each year, I also teach Laurel's highly cited article, now a classic, on writing strategies in qualitative research, in my graduate research methods seminar, hoping to pass onto my students the same kind of permission that Laurel gave me to research and write about gender and sexuality. So, without Laurel, I am not really sure what I would be doing today as a sociologist.

MY SCHOLARSHIP IS DEEPLY INDEBTED

Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre

My scholarship is deeply indebted to Laurel Richardson, who continues to model excellence and creativity in all her endeavours. I encountered brilliant female professors for the first time when I began my doctoral program at mid-life – women who were smart, tough, rigorous, and politically savvy but also captivating and mysterious. These women did not hover and "mentor" and "care"; they demanded our very best work.

I have written elsewhere about my rather grim experiences during the first year of my doctoral program in education at The Ohio State University; about planning to switch degree programs to law or landscape architecture; about taking Mary Margaret Fonow's advice my second year and registering for classes with Laurel, Patti Lather, and Mary Leach simultaneously, all feminist scholars who were daunting. That combination of feminist energy in one quarter was transformational. I was both thrilled and challenged and wanted to be just like them. I read every book they mentioned and studied their smart publications as models of academic writing. Oddly enough, it was Laurel, a sociologist and a lovely, graceful writer, who taught this former English teacher how to write.

After that quarter, my doctoral studies began in earnest, and I took every course these women taught – four or five with Laurel. Though I'd always called myself a feminist, I'd never studied feminism and was eager to take Laurel's doctoral seminar in feminist theory. One of her assignments for the course was to write the feminist story of our lives. The thinking that writing produced helped me understand that my lifelong resistances and refusals were not only appropriate but necessary and that, all along, it had been the women in my life who mattered most. But all Laurel's writing assignments were like that – seemingly straightforward but profoundly disturbing. They took us places we could not have gone except in writing. So I am so very grateful for Laurel's commitment to the work and pleasures of writing, for giving me permission to write and think, to move in writing, to write for the sheer pleasure of putting words together differently – such a simple thing – but sometimes shattering. I am grateful for her bringing to social science research her understanding that writing, at its best, is a method of inquiry and a practice of freedom. I carry her words with me always.

BUILDING INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY

Patti Lather

I am a poor enough historian to not remember exactly when I joined Postmodern Studies (PMS) at Ohio State University but it must have been around 1990-ish. Professor Gia Hinkle, Sociology, had started it as a feminist reading group for students that then invited faculty to join. It was a multi-disciplinary mix of women that included Laurel and something like six or so other faculty members as well as students from mostly sociology and education. We quickly figured out that the presence of students meant we never got away from the repetitions of teaching. Hence we reconvened ourselves as faculty only space and proceeded to stay together across various venues, collections of members and books until quite recently. We had social (usually potlucks) as well as book-focused meetings and we often wondered what held us together for so long. As I meditate on that question, I think six aspects were especially important.

1. Women only faculty members from across the university who had a "lust for theory": We had an open door membership at the front end, with whomever had an interest from word of mouth circulation. As time went on, we would need to replenish and became more targeted in terms of who had the feminist theory background to add to the mix. While we mixed it up pretty well regarding disciplinary affiliations and lesbian/straight sexualities with some ethnic and class background diversity, we were white girls to a fault.
2. Increasing flexibility as to what we read, even men upon occasion, with a focus on "books too hard to read alone." We read, for example, Deleuze, Derrida and Benjamin, being so flummoxed by Deleuze and *A Thousand Plateaus* that we would flip it open, do a choral reading of whatever pages were in front of us and then attempt a discussion toward some clarity. This worked surprisingly well and demonstrates how, often, no one of us was an "expert" beyond a perhaps wild enthusiasm, in my case for Walter Benjamin. Everyone taught and everyone learned in a Rancierean sort of "teaching what you do not know" where no one was afraid to be "wrong" or "stupid."
3. Openness to changing places, formats and foci. While we began in university meeting rooms within the school day, within a few years we were in one another's living rooms bi-weekly on late Friday afternoons for about an hour and a half, with one or another home deemed geographically central over the years. We made a point, mostly, of NOT eating or drinking. This does NOT mean we never indulged in the occasional treat, but the larger ethic was to get down to our work and not be a burden to our hostess.
4. We were serious about this space. We read (mostly); we began and ended pretty much on time; we were quite respectful of one another's effort to get there by getting down to business. This does NOT mean we never opened with a round of

"check ins" across our various life issues and/or check in on one crisis or another. But we all found benefit to our own scholarly work from our discussions and, mostly, kept our focus on that.

5. We included some social spaces. We were big on potlucks every semester although we segued into high end restaurant lunches toward the end. Early on, we presented together at a conference or two to great enjoyment and, as I remember, some anxiety. We even bowled together, with T-shirts made up for the occasion. There were also several "side" friendships that developed between a few members although, to my knowledge, no romances.
6. Finally, Laurel's presence: Laurel was as greedy as the rest of us to understand the "new" theory. She particularly added to the mix a deep grasp of classical sociological theory. She brought a variety of agendas to the group: art in any and every form; life and memoir writing or perhaps more accurately attention to writing; and a deep pleasure in not just the text but the non-text as well. At her urging, we viewed videos, went on field trips to such places as a book making studio, and read one another's work, the latter to uneven effect given, perhaps, the too much investment that shifted some of the dynamics.

In all of this, across over twenty years, Laurel was supportive of the ups and downs, career and otherwise, of the variety of women who came and went. She helped us negotiate the fine line between intellectualizing our task and keeping it to the bone of our lives without becoming some sort of C-R group. She listened as well as held forth upon occasion, as did we all, contributing to a very democratic space of intellectual community. Importantly, as the group limped a bit into its final year(s), she was instrumental in helping us see that it was time to end.

Mostly ahead of all of us career-wise and lifetime-wise, she helped us negotiate tenure, promotion, babies, divorces, getting published and not, the fashions of theory and anti-theory, the seasons of love and mortality and, of late, retirement. And so I will conclude with what she terms the three phases of early retirement, mid retirement and late retirement. I have found this enormously useful as I begin my own journey down this road, looking at the model she provides of an academic woman who began by pretty much doing what she had long done in the early phases, then shifting to having way too much to do outside the academy to keep that all up, to, of late, a more turning inward that surely includes travel but also the curating of the archive of her work. How's that for lifetime-wise!

CHAPTER 6

THE POWER OF INTERACTION

While some journal editors and conference chairs police disciplines to keep them safely intact and unthreatened by new ideas, others support the academics that test established and comfortable disciplinary certainties. The annual *International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry* (ICQI), at The University of Illinois at Urban Champaign, is a good illustration. Held since 2005, this conference has welcomed and championed newer approaches to research, many of which may not be as encouraged elsewhere. The director of that conference, Distinguished Professor Norman Denzin, has been active in establishing and keeping the conference vibrant, encouraging international collaboration and connecting conference participants with publications. And there are others, of course, like the *Power, Discourse, Resistance* (DPR) group that continues in the UK and the *Contemporary Ethnography Across the Disciplines* (CEAD) in New Zealand that bring together members of different research communities associated with qualitative research.

The opportunity to interact with others and to become aware of the work of other scholars with similar interests helps to form community. The opportunity to meet with authors whose work has been read and influenced our own, adds so much more. Many of us owe a debt to the people who enable us to interact in this way. And this is the purpose of this chapter, to consider the power of interaction.

The first piece by Christopher Poulos takes us straight to the ICQI conference where he finds himself walking along, sandwiched between Laurel Richardson and the late Bud Goodall. He recalls Bud's conversation as loud and boisterous, and how it contrasted with Laurel's quieter style:

> Like her writing, her spoken words seem carefully chosen, crafted just so. She speaks with great care, but with a twinkle in the corner of her eye. I get the distinct impression that she knows something I do not. Or maybe there's some sort of inside joke I'm not quite catching on to.

In *Reading Aloud,* Jonathan Wyatt talks about the significant events that occurred and the people who mattered that helped shape him as a scholar as well as he was discovering the importance of writing. Set at an unnamed conference, that sounds very much like ICQI, Jonathan describes how Laurel asked him to read his writing aloud to her and what it meant for him.

> But this moment, this series of moments, is what I remember most. It was nothing grand. It was a gesture of interest and generosity on her part, an unnecessary gift: She asked me to read to her a story I'd written.

John J. Guiney Yallop also locates his writing at the ICQI conference and talks of meeting Laurel Richardson and how they interacted at several points in the conference, providing him with renewed confidence to return to Canada and complete his dissertation the following year.

> When the tall, elegant woman began to speak, I had a feeling that I immediately liked her, even more than I liked her in her writing; it has been the opposite effect with some authors.

The next piece by elke emerald puts into practice what she learned in Laurel Richardson's workshop at the 2014 ICQI conference, which is the importance of linking the personal with the political:

> At university I learned
> about politics and gender
> race and history
> power and privilege.
>
> But I already knew it in my bones
> I knew it in my childhood.

And in the final piece of this chapter Jack Migdalek begins with a workshop held at the Arts Centre in Melbourne, that my friend Lynda Smerdon and I had organised for Laurel to work with teaching artists. Jack describes how the artists worked under Laurel's direction and what this meant for his own work, in the longer term:

> In an empty studio space, Laurel had us work in small groups with extracts of the poem, and reassemble that data (Louisa May's words) into performed interpretive works through medium of dance, drama, design and music. The results were evocative, inspiring, and touching.

A GIANT SANDWICH
REFLECTIONS ON LAUREL RICHARDSON AND QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

Christopher N. Poulos

It's late May, and as usual, I stumble into the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry (ICQI), just after wrapping up another busy academic year. On that first day, I find myself walking toward lunch, and suddenly I'm "sandwiched" between none other than my mentor and friend, the ethnographer H.L. "Bud" Goodall, Jr. and Laurel Richardson.

Giants. I am sandwiched between giants of qualitative inquiry!

I think to myself, "Wow. If this is a qualitative sandwich walking along the sidewalk, that's some pretty amazing bread." Bud, ever the entertainer, is holding forth, telling tales and laughing boisterously, as is his habit. Laurel walks along

quietly. When she speaks, her demeanor sets her apart from other scholars I know. For someone so famous – at least in this place – her humility is at once obvious, and almost startling. Smart people are rarely that humble. And when it comes to really smart people like Laurel Richardson – you know, the ones that make the rest of us look average, or even a bit dim, on a good day – usually they put off a brisk air of superiority. But not that's not true of the distinguished Dr. Richardson.

She is a gentle soul, it seems to me.

Like her writing, her spoken words seem carefully chosen, crafted just so. She speaks with great care, but with a twinkle in the corner of her eye. I get the distinct impression that she knows something I do not. Or maybe there's some sort of inside joke I'm not quite catching on to. These are not just the impressions of a fan, star-struck by being in such close proximity to these giants of qualitative inquiry. I am sure that she is onto something. I just need to puzzle out what it is.

So I search my memory. You see, like so many students of qualitative inquiry, I first "met" Laurel Richardson on the page.

Winter break, 1996: Eager to get ahead of the game for the next term, I buy the books around Thanksgiving. One is a $100 tome assigned for the doctoral seminar in qualitative methods: Denzin & Lincoln's *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 1st edition. Eager to get ahead, I open it randomly, and find myself on page 516. "Writing: A Method of Inquiry", by Laurel Richardson.

OK then. Writing. I've always loved writing. But I had never thought of it this way. Writing is a method of inquiry? Hmm.

I'm hooked. I dive right in.

"I have a confession to make," she writes. "I have yawned my way through numerous supposedly exemplary qualitative studies" (Richardson, 1994, p. 516).

"I have one too," I find myself saying out loud. "I've yawned my way through most academic studies I've read, qualitative and quantitative alike. But why? I guess I'd better read on. Surely, there's a punch line here."

And, it turns out, there are many. Here in every paragraph, I discover yet another "aha!"

And another.

And another.

But the best part comes under the heading "writing practices." As I read, I find myself stopping, walking to my computer, working over metaphors, changing formats, experimenting with various forms, going back to my field notes and journals and rendering them in new ways, writing stories of self, and so on. In the end, she offers this: "I hope these exercises are helpful. I hope you find new ways to experiment. I hope we all do…Happy writing and rewriting!" (Richardson, 1994, p. 527).

And ever since that day, this has been my clarion call. Happy writing and rewriting!

Oh, so very happy.

I'm never happier than when I am writing this way, evocatively, openly, organically…as a method of inquiry, as a journey of discovery, as a doorway to a world opening up before me.

Later, I read her short article, titled simply "Evaluating Ethnography" (2000). Again, a revelation. Actually, several revelations. Here is this humble scholar – truly a scholar's scholar, a thoughtful and brilliant scholar – boldly offering a series of "tests" or "windows" to pass each piece of ethnographic writing through:

> Is it Substantive? Aesthetic? Reflexive? Impactful? Expressive?
> Does the writing I am reading rise to these criteria?
> Does *my* writing succeed?
> Do I pass the tests?
> Is my work substantive?
> Does it have aesthetic qualities?
> Does it invite interpretive response?
> Does it show my own self-reflexive positionality in the world?
> Do I show how I wrestle with ethical, epistemological, and metaphysical questions?
> Most of all, does my writing move the reader emotionally?
> Is there a call to action?
> Does the reality expressed resonate with the broad range of reader realities?

Every time I sit down to write, even now, I ask myself these questions. But now, after our chance meeting on the way to lunch, I hear them in Laurel's voice. I may have only been a dab of mustard on that "Giant Sandwich" but I am happy I was there.

"Happy writing and rewriting!" (Richardson, 1994, p. 527).

Happy indeed.

Thank you, Laurel.

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READING ALOUD

Jonathan Wyatt

Laurel Richardson once asked me to read to her.

Discovering writing changed my life (not always for the better). It wasn't just Laurel. There were other factors (where I was in my life, the loss of my father, a supportive workplace) and other people (some who knew it, some who didn't – I'm not sure which category applies to Laurel). Circumstances, people, places, time, even the stars perhaps, all aligned and I discovered writing.

Nor was it about before or after, a turning point, a Damascene moment. That's not how it was, nor how Laurel would want it.

But there was this one moment in May 2007, one I remember, whatever claim I might not make for it.

There had been other encounters with Laurel, significant in their way, like reading *Fields of Play*, where she took me (and countless others) on her academic voyage; and, meanwhile, showed me how and what it was possible to write. There was 'Writing as Method of Inquiry' in the 1994 and 2005 *Sage Handbooks*, and 'Evaluating Ethnography' in a 2000 seminal special issue of Qualitative Inquiry.

I had already found her, drawn from her, talked with her (not that she had been aware), talked about her (ditto). Yes, she was already there; here.

But this moment, this series of moments, is what I remember most. It was nothing grand. It was a gesture of interest and generosity on her part, an unnecessary gift:

She asked me to read to her a story I'd written.

We were at a conference. Earlier, I had been in a workshop with Laurel. Others had read their work and I chose not to. That evening – no, it must have been the next day, or the day after that; some years on, I've lost the sequence. One evening, let's say, at the conference cookout, I was standing with friends at a table. Laurel Richardson approached, joined our conversation, and later asked me to read to her the writing I hadn't shared at the workshop. I did and she listened, as did the others (what choice did they have?); and the conversations continued.

That was it, in a way. No evaluative discussion, no praise, no critique, just listening; but the story found a life in a collaborative writing project with others, two of whom were at our table that evening.

And I found a life in this story: Laurel listening to my writing. It was nothing much, and it was everything.

MEETING LAUREL

John J. Guiney Yallop

I first met Laurel in her writing (Richardson, 2000a). It was a brief, but lingering, encounter in a few pages, and one that transformed my own writing. It was not a transformation that changed the direction or style or content of my work, but a transformation of conviction, a strengthening of my commitment to keep on doing what I wanted (and needed) to do – write. I also had the pleasure of meeting Laurel in person. I attended the Third International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry in 2007. I had signed up for two workshops at the Congress. One workshop was with Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner (2007), two other academics whom I greatly admire and whose work was a significant part of my own growth as an academic. I had also signed up for a workshop with Laurel (Richardson, 2007a), titled "Writing Lives and Deaths". When the tall, elegant woman began to speak, I had a feeling that I immediately liked her, even more than I liked her in her writing; it has been the opposite effect with some authors. Laurel was humble; I could tell that right away,

but I am not sure how I was able to recognize that so quickly. Perhaps it was what she could have done that made the difference; she could have told us all how to do this work, and how to do it well. Instead, she told us about the struggles she had with this particular project (Richardson, 2007b), how writing through her experiences with her friend dying had been such a challenge for her.

When Laurel invited questions, I was among, but not, the first to raise my hand. I began by saying, "I'm sorry for the loss of your friend." "Thank-you!," Laurel replied. It was the kind of thank-you that was more than words. It came with a deep breath, a sigh of relief – a message from the speaker that she needed this, that she needed to hear that I was sorry for her loss, and that it was okay to grieve, here, in this space where others had paid to hear about her experience, her expertise, her wisdom, when mostly what she had was grief, loss, and what she called her "terrible mixed emotions of sadness, anger, disgust, fear" (p. 9). I cannot recall my question, which followed my expression of sympathy, nor Laurel's answer.

Later, a colleague, who was also in Laurel's workshop and who is a close friend, said to me, "Well, once again, you went right to the heart." As I reflected on my friend's comment, it struck me that what I had been able to do in that moment was offer Laurel what she has so often and so generously given to others – permission; permission to grieve, permission to be in her body and to experience the grief, permission to feel her range of emotions, to be sad, angry, disgusted, and fearful, permission to be vulnerable, even in the presence of strangers, among unknown friends.

Later during the congress, I ran into Laurel in the corridor; it seemed an unusually empty corridor in a place where so many people were gathered. I thanked Laurel for her talk, and she thanked me again for my expression of sympathy. And then she said, "I want to hear more about your work." I could not remember where I had told Laurel about my work; I think she was in one of the sessions I gave (Guiney Yallop, 2007a, 2007b), but I don't recall, or I may have said something about it in her session, but I doubt it. Wherever she had heard of it, I was deeply touched by Laurel's remark that she wanted to hear more about my work, but I never did follow up on that request. When I returned home to Canada, I got back to the busy reality of completing my doctoral dissertation (Guiney Yallop, 2008), but doing so with a renewed commitment, and a clear permission, to put myself more and more into what I was writing.

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THE PERSONAL IS POLITICAL/THE POLITICAL IS PERSONAL

elke emerald

This writing is a development from Laurel Richardson's 3-word workshop at QI in May 2014, together with her generous intellectual encouragement and legitimation of the value of reflecting on the personal to understand the political and reflecting on the political to understand the personal.

The personal is political

I turn six
New country now
Heading to school
Make some friends

It's hot here
Don't wear shoes
That's a surprise
Rains every evening
Play under waterpipe
This is fun

Just settling in

Time to move

Now I'm seven
New town now
Heading to school
Across the road
Small and friendly
Make some friends
River at doorstep
Swim every day

Something is wrong
Feel it deep

The political is personal

When I was a child
and we were poor
I always had a full belly
and a warm bed.

I didn't pull myself up by my bootstraps
No
I didn't do it alone.

By an accident of history and geography
I was given bootstraps
by the state
and shown how to pull

I was educated
at the taxpayers' expense
because back then
my government said
'poor people can learn'
(they also said 'no fault divorce'
so many women walked away
went back to school
and a new life)

At university I learned
about politics and gender
race and history

Don't quite understand
All money gone

Time to move

Now I'm eight
New town now
Dog can't come : (
Heading to School
House too small
Five people crammed
Beach close by
And dog returned :)

Time to move

Now I'm nine
New town now
Heading to school
No friends here

Time to move

Now I'm ten
New town now
Far, far away
Two days drive
Heading to school
Make some friends
Still no money

Now I'm eleven
And
Same town, same school!
Lovely new teacher

Time to move

Now I'm twelve
New school now

And so it goes …

power and privilege.

But I already knew it in my bones
I knew it in my childhood.

I understood that
not all countries protect and care
for their citizens
the
way
we
did
then.

I was educated
at the taxpayers' expense
and I am proud to pay
my taxes now,
but
I am surprized by the conservative turn
neoliberalism is an ugly word
it abuses my ear, my poem, my heart
it makes people ugly

Privilege sees its bounty
It doesn't see it as privilege
and works hard to protect it

But what do you do
if you get sick
and have no money?

Refugees. Women. Indigenous. Immigrant,
Itinerant. Poor.

Vulnerable constellations.

Poor, female, indigenous, refugees turned
away

Accidents of geography and history

And so it goes …

DEVELOPMENT OF WORK AND SELF

Jack Migdalek

During Laurel's visit to Australia in 2006 I had the good fortune to experience a workshop session that she facilitated for performance arts practitioners/educators at the Arts Centre Melbourne. Laurel shared with us excerpts of *Louisa May's Story of Her Life*, a narrative poem that she had created from the transcript of her in depth interview with an unwed mother. I was intrigued and fascinated not only that this evocative and revealing poem was assembled using only Louisa May's words, syntax, and grammar, but also that such art creation could be presented as data in scholarly research.

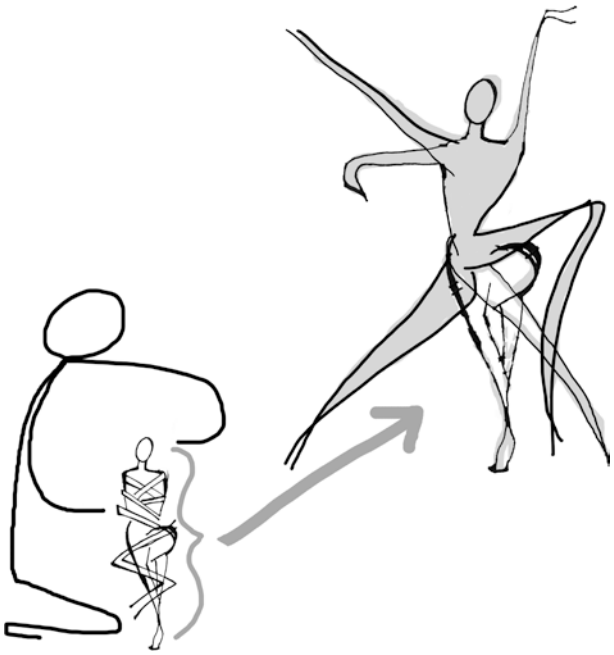
In an empty studio space, Laurel had us work in small groups with extracts of the poem, and reassemble that data (Louisa May's words) into performed interpretive works through medium of dance, drama, design and music. The results were evocative, inspiring, and touching.

At the time I was on the brink of embarking into research on embodied choreography and performance of gender. The experience of the session with Laurel gave me the inspiration and courage to use my own personal experiences and consciousness of gender and embodiment – as data – from and through which to develop an autoethnographic performance piece. Working on this stylised physical performance piece, helped me find and elucidate my research questions, and the piece, which I titled Gender Icons, subsequently became an integral part of my fieldwork and eventually my dissertation on embodied performance of gender.

The distillation and expression of data through innovative means such as a theatrical performance piece proved to be enriching both to me and to fieldwork participants (Migdalek, 2014). For me the process enhanced and disrupted my perspectives and understandings of gender and embodiment as a male dance practitioner and as a person in the everyday. Furthermore, the performance piece has touched and affected perspectives of fieldwork participants/audiences, many of whom spoke of seeing things in ways they had never previously thought to question or think about.

"[The performance] was an enlightenment to watch and I can't see the world the same again" (high school student);

"Even though I think I am open minded and not judgmental, the performance made me realise in terms of gender that I really was" (educator).



Allowing myself to think and operate outside of the conventional norms of the academy – as inspired by Laurel – made my research richer and further-reaching than it could otherwise have been. Laurel has been a most gracious and generous mentor for whose encouragement I am most grateful.

…

Gender Icons was part of Jack Migdalek's PhD, Embodied Choreography and Performance of Gender, undertaken in the school of Health and Social Development at Deakin University, under the supervision of Dr. Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli. A video recording of the piece can be accessed through Deakin Research Online at: http://dro.deakin.edu.au/eserv/DU:30047367/stream_migdalek_performance_2012.flv

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CHAPTER 7

THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

The focus now shifts from interaction to collaboration. This book has involved collaboration of different kinds. Each of the contributors has collaborated with me by sending me their work and giving me permission to include it. There is trust and goodwill involved in such action – and keeping fidelity to these texts was the way I could reciprocate.

A good illustration of how collaboration can work well is in *Travels With Ernest: Bridging the Literary/Sociological Divide* (Richardson & Lockridge, 2004) in which Laurel Richardson and her husband Ernest Lockridge individually wrote narratives of their travels that 'crisscrossed personal and professional' boundaries and in the process of writing, reading and questioning each other, remembered and resolved old wounds.

Laurel and I collaborated on the production of *Permission* too. Early on, we discussed the book, before it was a formal proposal, and found agreement on its focus. I offered her the right of veto to preclude anything she wasn't happy with and sharing power in this way was important part of this collaboration. The book was not intended to be biographical, but to focus on how her work has affected the work of others. When the contributions arrived, and the writing project changed so significantly, we collaborated again on how the book project might proceed. Laurel offered insight and valuable ideas and assisted me to organise and structure the book, thereby working collaboratively to help its shape to emerge.

The first contribution here is Mitch Allen's *Found Correspondence* that shows us something about their long-term collaboration as author and publisher. Mitch playfully innovates on Laurel's own work and words:

> While each sentence is Laurel's, the original context of her statements has been jettisoned. Sentences were aggregated into paragraphs thematically and ordered into a narrative by me.

Next is a co-authored piece by Lorelei Carpenter and elke emerald who draw upon Laurel Richardson's 'writing stories' for their current work where they write collaboratively to try to understand:

> The weight of neoliberalism on the research activities for academics today.

Jane Reece writes about the collaborative work at Bristol University where the brevity of language from Laurel Richardson's *Three-Word Workshop* presented at

the ICQI conference became creatively employed. Reece writes of the importance of the Twitter group project (Bridges et al., 2014) for her, particularly when things went wrong one day in the prison in which she taught. Later she took the project:

> To the classroom where, witnessing the learner-offender-writer-men positioned in their often traumatic lives, 'Take three words' became the opening exercise for Monday morning classes.

Jenny Ritchie also writes about attending Laurel Richardson's *Three-Word Workshop* at ICQI and the permission she gained from her texts. She shares her writing from that time where she documents her family's recent trauma and healing.

The last piece by Ye Hong describes the power of writing as a method of discovery and turns to writing as a powerful way of learning and teaching English language and intercultural communication. Using her experience in a foreign country, she illustrates how corresponding collaboratively with one of her doctoral supervisors assisted her to gain cultural insight and confidence. She comments that when she started this project, when it came to creativity and writing, she is "a typical product of Chinese education…" At the beginning of her candidature in Melbourne she met Laurel Richardson and met her again two years later:

> …at the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry at Urbana-Champaign. I was then much more confident in my research, as well as my growth as a writer and researcher.

FOUND CORRESPONDENCE

Mitch Allen

Laurel Richardson has been the champion of the innovative use of the technique of Found Poetry in qualitative research. I've repurposed this idea into Found Correspondence. What follows represents selections of almost 10 years of email correspondence between Laurel and myself (2005–2014), which spans 2 books and other discussions. While each sentence is Laurel's, the original context of her statements has been jettisoned. Sentences were aggregated into paragraphs thematically and ordered into a narrative by me. The intent was to preserve my understanding of her thought processes in the creation of her books, to retain Goodall's "narrative truth" through the editing of her writing about writing.

What a good new year there is before us!

Thanks for the invitation to write a writing book, but I will have to decline.

As to what I am working on – it is a very long piece – not sure what it will turn into. I have been writing like – well, like a writer. Writing is about all I

am doing!! I like some of it, even. I have wherever it works nicely into the text expanded on sociological issues – writing so the flow continues in a natural way. I am taking the advice I gave to grad students – you don't write a diss (or a book), you write a paragraph.

A sojourn (not sure what genre to call it, so I invented a new one). [The book] is in a genre I am calling (for the while) "literary ethnography" – in that it is "true" but "most writerly." One of my working subtitles was "a nonfiction novel."

Because, there are many people in the book and many intertwining thematics … I am loathe to write an abstract. The book has 63,300 words, thirteen chapters – and lots of blank space. And "yes" the "13" in the file identifies this as the THIRTEENTH "final" draft! As trite and clichéd as it sounds, the book demanded to be written. I am really proud of this work. I hope you like it.

I have written my little heart out, as my mother might have said. I don't think I can write another word!

It's been a rough winter here – not just the weather but the deaths … way too many. I'll slog along.

Thanks for the wonderful editor letter. I am so glad that you liked the book and found the narrative engaging. I can definitely revive my "inner sociologist" now that my "outer narrativist" has been satisfied. Thanks again for pushing me into retrieving my sociological self. My memoir writing group is reading the book now.

I will write an "About this book" afterword in the next couple of weeks. My idea is to write stuff that will make the book more citable and adoptable by academics AND to write stuff that will make book-club groups more likely to adopt it for their meetings. I also could write a "how to teach this book" appendix, but not now.

Do you know what the "fair-use" law for poetry is now? Do you need a pic of the author???

It's 5 a.m. and I can't sleep … book title!! I am going to get back to my writing and then see the doc and then vote and then write and then let my brain go for more phrases.

Kisses in the Dark
There is No Pain
Good Leg/Bad Leg
A Place Full of Cares
Call Button
Therapy Room

A Foot in Edgemont Place
Hope and Roses
The First Step
Walking Away from Edgemont Place

E. likes Hope and Roses … I kind of do, too, and also I like Call Button … A Foot in Edgemont Place (good, too) …

After a Fall

Here's a butterfly for the cover. I thought of the butterfly being a small square and the book being black. Ernest will send another picture that I also love – more metaphoric, with a lovely gate. Several of my readers think the dogs belong on the cover – as they are like catalysts for action – or like a Greek Chorus … I don't know.

The more I look at the cover, though, the less happy I am with it. It feels chaotic. A definite change is in how my name is included. I think it should be in the same type face as the title. Ah authors, don't you just hate them. The last iteration of the cover that Detta made has been sitting on my desk, and I have grown fond of it …

The sun is shining and I am happy. That's what summers and foot recoveries are for – to get my "left" foot "right."

The book looks great. Production staff is marvelous! Detta was a joy to work with. I'd love to visit her and have her cook me up some veal shanks. I am going to send her some spices as a thank-you present.

I'm beginning to wind down from the wind-up! Hemingway wrote to Fitzgerald that the ennui he was experiencing (after a book publication) was the "writer's reward." Well, here I am …

I'm getting some very nice emails from readers, and that's always nice.

I love the autumn. I never taught in the fall, when I had some control of my schedule, because I only wanted to be outside crunching leaves.

I definitely want to put together a volume on my recent work. I am thinking of it as More Fields of Play, a book that focuses on Life After Academia…I envision it as taking my post-academic-position work and placing that in a broader context. I think some of my finest writing is in the unpublished pieces. I never sent them for review because I wanted them to be published together and to be fresh for the reader.

You probably know, but I am thrilled to learn that the Lifetime Achievement Award in ICQI will be given to me this year. I think it just grand!

WRITING RESEARCH-STORIES: PERMISSION, FRAMEWORK AND INSPIRATION

Lorelei Carpenter & elke emerald

This piece is our reflection on the permission afforded to us by Laurel Richardson's work. We used her concept of writing-stories to frame our thinking when engaging with research-stories. We have also used Laurel's own experience of life in the academy and her honest writing about that as inspiration to confront our world as honestly as we are able.

Laurel Richardson's article, *Getting Personal: Writing-Stories*, is one which has had a strong influence on our current work of understanding the weight of neoliberalism on the research activities of today's academics. Published in 2001 her article builds on her earlier work published in 1997, *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life*, in which she first introduces the concept of writing–stories. Richardson (2001) explains writing-stories as both personal and political "narratives that [situate a writer's] sociological work in academic, disciplinary, community, and familial contexts" (p. 34). The contextual framework that she uses includes our professional, social and family environments. In other words it is these perspectives bounded by the wide parameters of our total life that she considers influential when we write stories.

Richardson produced the above work more than a decade ago at a time when most academic researchers were still dealing with the challenges of post-modernist thinking and research and were failing to heed the warning signs of neoliberal creep. She stressed the relationship between politics and writing in her assertion that "Writing-stories are both personal and political. Both…and…" (p. 34). Today, her arguments provide us with compelling proof (charismatic ideas) that the examination of our personal experiences of the current context of academe is an important aspect of understanding the world in which we work.

The importance of both the personal and the political in the current academic work context is underscored by Margaret Thornton's (2013) description of today's academic as a "technopreneur." That is, "a scientific researcher with business acumen who produces academic capitalism" (p. 127). Most universities are currently struggling to make sense of the force of neoliberal reforms that have resulted in the discomfort of the immense institutional changes of massification, deregulation, managerialism, bureaucratization, and accountability.

Academic researchers most often engage in research to pursue their interests, learn something more about a certain topic or look for a solution to a certain problem. In the past researchers, carried out research work mostly as a means of addressing social issues which, simply put, meant that they were working to improve society for all people. However, over the last three decades, the corporatized and managerialised university has transformed research from something that can improve the world to a vehicle for obtaining funding. It is these changes to the university system and to

the way research is regulated that has an impact on academic life. Henry Giroux's (2013) strident criticism of neo-liberalism as a form of casino capitalism clearly conveys his concern that it kills the radical imagination and the hope for a world that is more just equal, and democratic society.

In our work, we have adapted the ten criteria for writers of writing-stories (2001) that Richardson discusses in her article, *Getting Personal: Writing-Stories* and used these criteria to make sense of the journeys that academics make as they negotiate through the research component of their academic life. The 'making sense' has occurred as we are emboldened through Richardson's implicit permission to use a methodology of storying the lived experience of our work context. We use Richardson's work as a lens for contemplation and a 'way in to' the stories. The particular stories we use are research stories. By research stories we mean those stories that specifically relate to carrying our research; that is, researchers' stories of their research. We use researchers' stories to help us understand the emotional aspect of research work in the academy and the impact of the changes to the academic way of doing business that researchers are encountering. Research stories also help us to examine the apparent failure of resistance from academics to the reforms taking place in the work context. It is this lack of resistance that Suzanne Ryan (2012) referred to as the zombiefication of academics. She questioned whether academics chose "zombiedom" (p. 3) because it was the only means of survival available to them. Importantly Richardson's (2001) following three points highlight the importance of the researcher engaging in scholarly activism by recognising and acknowledging that research work today has the potential to shaping the future of the academy.

Writing is always done in socio-historical context.

Writing is always done in specific local and historical context.

What you write about and how you write it shapes your life

We wonder how and if scholarly activism continues to take place in universities and if so in what form?

And so we have used Laurel Richardson's work as a framework to guide us in our examination of ourselves and our colleagues in engaging in research work in a market oriented, audit context that has emerged as a result of an increased governmental focus on global competitiveness. Richardson's work has provided us with a way to consider how the context of research affects what and how we research and how research and researching impacts on identity. In short – to theorize our own relationship to our practices.

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PERMISSION

Jane Reece

It's easy to place the permission Richardson's work gave me. It was on reading *Fields of Play* (Richardson, 1997) when I realised that I could use creative writing to think about social issues in academia. Previously, although I had written autobiographical fiction and poetry, I kept the rest of my meandering writing private, keeping the pathways well hidden until I had traced a way to the point of arriving. Then I could write backwards, as if I had known the way all along. So that article made me realise that I didn't have to pretend that I knew where I was going all the time.

I found that and much more studying for a doctorate in Narrative Inquiry at University of Bristol. Professor Emeritus Jane Speedy, then leading the course, constantly shared materials and ideas gathered from conferences. At a writing retreat in 2009, she introduced a group of us who had gathered to write collaboratively, to Laurel Richardson's 'Take Three Words,' an exercise taken from workshop at ICQI earlier that year (Bridges et al., 2014). It worked well for almost everyone. I loved the sparcity of words, the way that extraordinarily tight phrasing emerged from performing such a simple exercise and the dramatic impact when the personal and social lines combined.

At the retreat we agreed to do more and Jane Speedy soon initiated a 'Twitter' group to which the collaborative writers could contribute 'tweets' as they wished. The limitation of 'tweets' to 140 characters gave a neat container for our writings that we split into three-word sentences (Bridges et al., 2013).

At that time I was teaching a Creative Writing programme in HMP Bristol, a category B prison of over 600 male offenders. The prison is an oppressive environment and frequently tempers frayed and frustrations boiled over as the men had no control over the sometimes chaotic home lives from which they had been removed. It was particularly difficult on Monday mornings, following a weekend of limited contact and time out of cells.

After these teaching sessions, I looked forward to my 'Take three words to twitter' writing time as a liminal space, a place to switch into a less pressured life. It was June and it was hot. I wrote of disrupted sleep, thunderous weather, a family party threatening disruption, of ripe tomatoes and the Queen.

During one afternoon break, I had been standing at the door of my class as the prison required me to, when a young man came out of the toilets. His face had been

slashed, blood was pouring everywhere. He looked terrified and couldn't speak. I sat him down and pushed the 'panic' button that set the prison response in motion. The tramping of boots could be heard down the corridors as prison officers appeared from all directions. That evening I twittered:

> cannot twitter chirpily/tonight still removing/
> self from auto/during afternoon break/
> a learner was/slashed with razor/by two others/
> staggered out of/toilets blood everywhere/
> classroom cordoned off/police investigate assault/
> we all make statements/more tomorrow while/
> search for blades/and other evidence/
> victim did not/see attackers (he/cannot say for/fear of repeat/
> or worse and/i am tired/
> of life imitating/art so i/say good night. (Bridges et al., 2013: 597–598)

The next day later, the attackers had been found. They were two of my class members, identified not by the victim but by blood on the t-shirts they couldn't destroy. When questioned the two gave their reason: to dispense 'prison' justice to a paedophile. There would never have been a valid reason for their action but in the event, they had got the 'wrong man.' The person they had attacked was in custody for a completely different charge.

The classes continued, without the two, and I began using 'Take three words' in another way. I recalled how not only had it served me as a liminal space, where transition can be made but also as a 'holding' space for me revisiting the trauma of the day. I took it to the classroom where, witnessing the learner-offender-writer-men positioned in their often traumatic lives, 'Take three words' became the opening exercise for Monday morning classes. The exercise became a container for frustration and anger that left to run its course, could go for pages of disturbing writing. The t`hree word format held the men in as they wrote and I believe, strengthened their self-belief that feelings of violence could be held in those short, staccato lines. There was one proviso on the learners' part: they requested the right to destroy what they had written.

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THREE WORD DESCRIPTIONS

Jenny Ritchie

I first came across Laurel's work in her book, *Fields of Play* (Richardson, 1997) whilst doing my doctoral work. Trying to explain the methodology of my PhD I wrote:

> As I proceeded to read more literature on methodological processes, I found resonance with narrative enquiry as a particular mode of qualitative research in keeping with my critical and eclectic methodological aspirations. Narrative modes of enquiry are contextualised and holistic, and validate personal historicities, encouraging participants to make sense of their lives (Richardson, 1997). Laurel Richardson considers 'narrativising' to be a site of moral responsibility which, in recognising the salience of power differences, can respond to the ethical challenge of addressing social inequities by providing collective storying which may offer collective solutions. (Ritchie, 2002, p. 155)

I realise, reading this now, that Laurel's insights gave me 'permission' to develop (working closely with my research colleague Cheryl Rau) a methodological mode of ethically grounded collective counter-colonial narrativisation (Rau & Ritchie, 2014). We developed this over a series of projects in our field of early childhood care and education in Aotearoa New Zealand (Ritchie, Duhn, Rau, & Craw, 2010; Ritchie & Rau, 2006, 2008).

In 2014 at the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry, I attended Laurel's "Three word workshop." Here is my writing from that session:

1. Three Word Description from One Five Year Period (Heart)

It's March 2009

Dad is sick. A heart attack. In Waikato hospital. My mother phones. "They discharged him. Sent him home." Home to die. He doesn't die. I am driving. To the school. To get kids. Below my ears. Short piercing throbbing. I feel sick. Very, very, sick. I can't drive. I stop the car. I run out. Into the toilet. Public women's toilet. I am ill. So so ill. I can't move. I will wait. It will pass. It doesn't pass. Some-one knocks. "Get help please. I am sick." No one comes. I can't move. I can't crawl. I can't leave. Finally, a rescuer. Steve calls out. "Jen-jen are you there?" "I am sick." "Open the door." "I can't move" "Open the door." "I can't reach." "Open the door. I'll break it." "I will try." I can't reach. I fall down. I start vomiting. Door breaks open. Carried to car. Driven to St John's. "Where's her pulse?" "Drive to doctors'" "Can you hear?" "Where are you?" I am sick. Don't ask me. Put lines in. Give her fluids. Get the ambulance. In the ambulance. Nurse is worried. Low blood pressure. I'm in admissions. Nurse cleans me. I'm in hospital. My Dad too.

2. Wider Picture (Head)

Hospitals so callous. Patients are discharged. No supports organised. (Later I learn. Dad discharged himself). Public toilets available. No-one is there. Individualism versus collectivism. Public versus private. Strangers won't interfere. Don't get involved. Lack of trust? Don't get involved? Didn't hear me? Strength of Steve. Value of strength. Physical power works. Saved my life? Expertise of doctors. Effective medical interventions. Support of ambulances. Service of nurses. Powerlessness and passivity. Patience of patients.

3. Merging Heart and Head

2009. Mum had a traumatic year. I had a tough year. In March Dad got sick and I got pancreatitis. I had my gall bladder removed on my 50th birthday. In July the pancreatitis attacks resumed. In June my twelve year old son Iri broke his thumb and then fractured his skull in two places, in two skateboard accidents on the same morning. My Dad slowly got sicker and weaker. In September he died. Lots of people came to his tangi [Māori funeral] at Tūrangawaewae. Tangi are a process for collective healing. What kinds of healing do we offer each other? As family, as a society? Not much really. Not much that is acknowledged, visible, tangible. We don't talk about our needs for healing, our processes for self-healing. Maybe we do when it comes to physical wellbeing, but not much about emotional and spiritual healing. And anyway, talking isn't necessarily the best medium for these kinds of healing. Not for everyone. So how do we heal ourselves? Time, distance, resting, yoga, music, singing, walking, being in communion with the more-than-human… Is death often just an end-result of a long-term failure of healing? How can we learn to be more healing – of ourselves and others? How can we teach others to be more healing – of themselves and others?

On the trip to and from that conference I read Laurel's books, *After a Fall*, and *Last Writes*. Writing is healing. Research is writing-stories (Richardson, 1999). Research is healing. Individually and collectively.

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MOMENT ON THE BRIDGE: INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AS EMPOWERMENT

Ye Hong

I was introduced to Laurel's works in the very first month of my PhD at the University of Melbourne, by Julie White – one of my supervisors, when I was struggling with my confidence about writing, my interest in creativity and the need to develop my research design and methodology. I was fascinated with Laurel's idea that "writing is a method of inquiry" (2000) and started my "Researcher's Notebook" right away. Meanwhile I kept active email correspondence with my other supervisor, Trevor Hay, as a form of "inter-cultural dialogue." These writing experiences turned out to be one of the most inspiring and transformative method of inquiry, through which I found both my research topic and methodology. I decided to conduct a critical study of the English writing practice and theory in China, in order to conceptualize an intercultural approach that could empower learners of English and enhance their competence in writing, creative thinking and intercultural communication. In addition to a chronological study of the creative writing programs in Chinese universities, I decided to use myself as a primary source of data. Autoethnography, as suggested by Laurel in our brief meeting in Melbourne in 2006, might become a powerful tool for my study.

Believing that "all ethnographic studies start by having an important story to be told, a story that lies deep within the soul" (Gregory, 2005, p. x), my PhD thesis began like this:

> I'm a typical product of Chinese education. Since I was a little girl, I have always had a dream – to become a writer, but this dream has dwindled with the progress of my previous education in China. (Ye, 2012, p. 1)

My own experience as a learner and teacher of English writing in China was juxtaposed with the research narrative and learners' writing samples in my thesis. I examined how English as a foreign language has been taught in China and then the inquiry

turned inwardly into myself. I intended to show how the email correspondence with my supervisor could be used as a form of "authentic language learning" (Kramsch, 1993) in which intercultural meanings and writerly skills were explored.

To make it more suitable for an academic discourse, and in keeping with the narrative approach, we assigned ourselves character names: I became Xiao Ye (小叶) and Trevor Hay became Hai Lei (海雷). Like Hay and Wang (2009) I was interested in the potential of literature and culture for intercultural teaching of foreign languages.

Xiao Ye, a doctoral student from China was facing the dual challenges of language and cultural adaptability in a new country. As a timid learner and writer of English, she felt powerless in maintaining a balanced identity in the first phase of her study, and was constantly annoyed and puzzled by the cultural differences and clashes on her communication with others. Things however, were going to look up with the progression of her cross-cultural conversations with Hai Lei …

Hai Lei, a native speaker of English, a senior language educator and researcher, is a writer and expert in Chinese literature and culture. Having witnessed Xiao Ye's struggle with English writing and crosscultural communication, he used email as a "intercultural dialogue" to draw out the confidence in Xiao Ye. Artfully he made every cultural encounter a source of "creative dialogue" (Fisher, 2009) that might lead to an adventure in writing and intercultural exploration.

The presenting of these emails is a vivid demonstration of Laurel's idea that "writing is a method of inquiry." Since my study seeks to explore the possibility of empowering student writers through creative writing pedagogies, how then, has this inquiry been explored through the writing of these emails? How have the interlocutors been empowered as writers through this email correspondence? How do the issues of "identity" and "voice" find their presence in these emails and what are the sources of cultural and linguistic stimuli for creativity in writing? How are the methodologies of narrative and autoethnography translated into in actual writing practice?

The following is one of the email exchanges illustrating this dynamic process in which pedagogical issues comes to life in writing itself.

Sent: Sat 20-April-2008 9:53 AM

Dear Hai Lei,

How was your week?

Sorry I am still working on the chapter of the Chinese history of English education. It has taken me much longer than I expected. The more I read, thought and wrote, the more I felt inadequate and helpless. You are right, we are all infants before the colossus of history.

But the particular problem for me is that I knew too little about Chinese history and tradition, and worse, the little knowledge I already had about our history

may be partial or distorted. As Mao's children (post 1970s), we have been educated out of our tradition. We were taught to despise it, to break up with it for good. So here I am, ignorant of all the Chinese cultural heritage that you have been talking about.

–

In order to write this chapter, I have been giving myself a big dose of Chinese history these days. Choked a few times, I am progressing steadily. To my happy surprise I found I am rather fond of history now. The wars and the movements suddenly make more sense to me. Thanks to the thesis writing process, I think I am slowly being molded into a doctor of philosophy.

So far it has taken me longer to write this chapter. Hopefully I can finish the draft early next week. Don't expect too much. I am still a baby when babbling about history and tradition.

Have a good weekend.

Warm regards,

Xiao Ye

–

Dear Xiao Ye,

Maybe you can make some point in your introduction about your own experience of history – the Children of Mao, etc. Interesting that I was experiencing my own 'infancy' of China about that time – 'crossing the bridge' at Lo Wu.[1] I am also burying myself in history – the history of literature in English about China. Really enjoying it.

The more I think about this the more I Iike it – it is exactly what I have always wanted you to do – you should locate yourself (through your author/researcher voice and perspective) as an authority inside your own culture, and then work outwards to an audience that either does not know this culture as you do, or has forgotten its own roots. In looking at the interaction between Chinese language/literature/history and Western pedagogy you have a wonderful topic for intercultural education. Jia you,[2] Dancing Fern.[3] The fronds will grow rapidly upwards from now on.

Hai Lei

–

Yes Hai Lei, the more I read, think and write about it, the more I become aware of the interaction between Chinese history and Western pedagogy in English writing education. We do have a good topic at hand. It makes more sense if I

> talk from my own perspective. Well I will send you what I have written down next week to let you see if it will work.
>
> So it seems my purpose in doing the research has to include the grand mission – to connect the broken connections between Chinese tradition and modernity through EFL writing education for a generation that has forgotten about their cultural origin.

The email correspondence is a method of intercultural inquiry – an authentic form of language learning. It is through the writing and analyzing of these emails that I have come to conceive the new writing pedagogy – the intercultural approach to EFL writing. The email correspondence is not only a tool of discovery, but also a means of demonstrating the process of the discovery. It shows how I have been gradually transformed from a rigid, timid, and passive "pupil" into a confident and passionate writer. With the progression of our email communications, my writing steadily became more and more lively, with wider choice of topics and richer expressive capacities, until finally I was bursting with love and passion for writing that I simply couldn't stop.

Besides the in writing competence, my cultural identity, which has long been suppressed in order to fit me into the English world, has been restored through the email exchanges. The regained cultural identity enables me to interact more confidently with foreign cultures and provides me with a starting point to develop an intercultural identity and intercultural awareness. The autoethnographic stories also serve as an illustration of the theory and pedagogy in intercultural approach. In a direct and vivid way, these stories show how cultural topics can be used as a source of creative talk and writing; how playing with linguistic and cultural differences between Chinese and English can generate creative writing as well as intercultural knowledge; how to shift voice and perspective in different circumstances, how creativity is developed in a critical and encouraging context, and how this intercultural and creative writing can help remove the fear and anxiety in writing.

In May 2008, I met Laurel again at the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry at Urbana-Champaign. I was then much more confident in my research, as well as my growth as a writer and researchers. Writing in a foreign language, I still had a lot of issues. These included the sometimes non-idiomatic use of language, the insufficient cultural underpinning, and relatively simple and monolithic language structure and diction. There is a long way to go to become a real writer, I believe. But what needs to be celebrated is I gained back my passion and confidence in writing. I was no longer the timid and fearful writer who takes writing as her biggest headache. Moreover I found my own voice in writing which enables me to write with relatively more ease and creativeness. Most of all through writing I strengthened my cultural awareness, and with my regained cultural identity, I could interact more successfully with the foreign world.

In addition, my conviction in narrative was strengthened, and I approached my study in a fresh look. I believed narrative, including first person narrative from my informants and myself, was going to be a major component in my thesis, though I was aware these qualitative methodologies would sometimes be received with doubts and scorn in China. Since uncertainty and ambiguity is indispensible to creative approaches to writing and research, I was ready to take the risk, and welcome the trials.

NOTES

[1] 'Lo Wu bridge' refers to the former border between Hong Kong and mainland China, when the site of present-day Shenzhen was only a small village. Here Hai Lei is referring to his own first journey to China in 1975. Metaphorically "crossing the Lo Wu bridge" equalizes entering a new country, a new culture.

[2] Jia you/加油: "Step on it!" or "Go!"

[3] The name "Xiao Ye" in Chinese means "little fronds" or "tender leaves." Here Hai Lei uses the homophonic pun to encourage Xiao Ye.

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CHAPTER 8

LOOKING OUTSIDE THE ACADEMY

In addition to her more familiar work of the past 20 years, Laurel Richardson has a history of taking on significant issues for her scholarly investigations. In doing so, she often cuts against the grain. She also looked outside the academy to share her knowledge to the wider community. Her Ph.D. dissertation, *Pure Mathematics: Studies in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Richardson-Walum, 1963) flags the beginning of her career-long predilection for intellectual frontiers. In 1964 she received a grant from the National Science Foundation for a project entitled, *Married Professional Women: An Exploratory Study*, which was a daring topic for its time and demonstrates Richardson's ability to ask sociological questions about issues close to home. Another article, *Sociologists as Signers: Some Characteristics of Protestors of the Vietnam War Policy* (Richardson-Walum, 1969), appeared in *The American Sociologist*, marking her contribution to that national and international debate. Her co-authored article, *Sex and Race: A Substructural Paradigm* (Franklin & Richardson-Walum, 1972), published in *Phylon*, an early race-focused scholarly journal, reveals that she was contributing to this social movement at the same time as segregation laws were changing and the civil rights movement had gained momentum. In the early 1970s her paper: *Divided and Conquered: Women's Liberation and Black Liberation* (Richardson-Walum, 1974) indicated her foresight about what led to intersectionality theory, as well as her commitment to taking on key social concerns – early, and in unique ways.

Laurel Richardson's extensive contribution to life outside the academy has been noted by Judith Cook and Mary Margaret Fonow who observe:

> Less well known is Laurel's commitment to making her work accessible to people outside of academia, and to doing work that would change the structure and culture of injustice. One example of this is her monograph *The New Other Woman* (1985). Another example is her use of qualitative research to alter the wording of items used by the National Opinion Research Center in surveys regarding race and ethnicity. Yet another example is her application of concepts and theory from the field of ethnomethodology to the creation and delivery of in-service trainings to teachers regarding racial stereotyping (see Chapter 6).

Richardson's book, *The New Other Woman: Single Women in Long Term Relations with Married Men* (1985) is a fascinating text because of its unorthodox perspective and focus on the lives of the other women. It's also of interest here because it was deliberately written as a book for the general public – a trade book – rather than an

exclusively academic text. It was translated into Japanese, Portugese and German and published in the UK and she publicised it widely on a national publicity tour where she gave 200 radio interviews, 40 print interviews and 12 television shows, like The Oprah Winfrey Show (Richardson, 1987).

That article about her national tour related to the book, is highly informative and retains currency and relevance. I discovered it again recently when I sought media attention for a research report, and was delighted to find a striking similarity in the interaction between the researcher and the media – even though the scale is different and there's a distance of 25 years between events. The difference is that these days, universities routinely employ media communication teams to provide advice and support and to actively develop campaigns for research dissemination. Universities also offer courses for academic staff to learn how to disseminate scholarly work to wider audiences and how to prepare and present themselves. Laurel Richardson wrote an analytical account of her experience – which sounds exhausting – demonstrating her thorough preparation and research about working with the media and the strategies she developed for that project, and for her own survival within it.

Looking outside the academy is the general theme of this chapter and one of Laurel Richardson's unpublished poems draws attention to social injustice in her home-town of Columbus, Ohio. This is followed by Patricia Leavy's *Permission to Carve Your Own Path,* in which she observes that in her work, Laurel Richardson was:

> …chronicling her journey of forging her own path in academia and opening a space for others to do the same. Simultaneously she was calling our attention to the fact that we don't find our paths, they aren't simply out there waiting to be discovered, we must *carve* them.

Next Lyn Jones begins her piece, *I Want to Write for Regular People*, at one of Laurel's presentations at the ICQI conference:

> She looked out and closed with: "Have the nerve to fail. Keep taking risks. Be a gatekeeper for what you believe in. Make it political."

This sets the scene for Lyn's powerful writing about her son's operations, her relationship with his surgeon, the various therapies they became involved with and what this all means for the family's long-term financial well-being. She ends her story with such a strong command – that it had me jumping to attention.

Following this is *Coming Closer: The He(art) of Empathy,* a piece by Mary E. Weems who connects us to the plight of teenage fashion models and the lack of regulation in that global industry. Mary also talks of her good fortune in finding Laurel Richardson's work early when she was a new graduate student. She concludes her piece commenting:

> While I am no longer 'constructing an academic life' within the academy, I remain committed to using writing as my method and to following in the footsteps of Laurel Richardson along with all artist-scholars who use their work as political acts.

Mary's contribution was the first that was sent to me for this book and I so appreciated its arrival in June 2013. Mary contacted me after reading the flyer that was included in the 2013 ICQI bag. The arrival of this contribution gave me hope that someone else might also be interested in this project. Thank you Mary.

And the final contribution in this chapter is by Dave Kelman, *Gazing into crystals – Laurel Richardson and Arts Research,* where he describes his work as:

> A creator of educational theatre with and for young people from disadvantaged communities with an organisation called Western Edge Youth Arts.

I have been in the audience for many of these performances and 'edgy' is the word I choose to describe this work. The young people that Dave inspires successfully make theatre that tells of their lives and examines significant contemporary and personal issues, with intelligence, passion and humour. But it is Laurel Richardson's metaphor of the crystal that Dave has taken and applied to his artistic world:

> How deeply we see into the world of the crystal depends where we view it from and in what light: it is a highly apposite metaphor for the ephemeral world of performance making with young people.

WE ARE AT KROGERS AT ARCADIA AND HIGH

Laurel Richardson

We are the wheezy-eyed child sucking watered
down sugared up juice with a hand-me-down-look.
and the swollen faced mother, and

we are the father unbuckling our belt, and the
gray man with the palsied gait shuffling
Inside our Goodwill blend suit, and

we are the acne scarred lady passive as space
fondling the emptiness of our
fourth finger left hand, and

we are the veteran of foreign wars with a DAV
pin in our lapel and canned Spam on our laps
Wheeling past Grade A US PRIME, and

we are Miss America tap dancing in Old Glory
Patches on Campbell soup cartons and
Wonder Bread, and

we are the Thalidomide child become a man,
holding our 10 cent off coupons like feathers
for our shoulder hands, and

We do not grow mean in Columbus.
Or ugly.
We become us.

PERMISSION TO CARVE YOUR OWN PATH

Patricia Leavy

"I am a woman writing." When Laurel Richardson wrote those words in the introduction to *Fields of Play*, it was an act of bravery. Sometimes revolutions from within are quiet, and subtle, but no less powerful. I have reread that sentence many times, and continue to say it aloud to myself.

With those simple and powerful words Laurel had named something and empowered us all to do the same. More so, she was chronicling her journey of forging her own path in academia and opening a space for others to do the same. Simultaneously she was calling our attention to the fact that we don't find our paths, they aren't simply out there waiting to be discovered, we must carve them. When Laurel opened the space up before us all, I crawled inside so that I could learn to write my way out. I set out to carve my own path and hopefully serve as a model for how others could do the same, as Laurel has done and continues to do. I owe her such a debt.

I think to understand the permission Laurel's work gave me you need to understand how disenchanted I was. I am a feminist sociologist interested in learning about women's relationships, self-concepts, identity construction and the role of pop-culture in their lives. For many years I conducted interview research with women about these aspects of their lives (as well as content analysis work and related research). I did what "you're supposed to do" in terms of publishing peer-reviewed journal articles and presenting professional conferences. I felt frustrated and disappointed. I felt no joy in this process. What's worse, I felt like my work was useless and I had failed all the women who shared their stories with me. The research was totally inaccessible to anyone outside of the academy and like most academic work would hardly even be read by those in the academy. This wasn't working for

me. So I started to play with new forms and to build research in new shapes. I started to think about audience, voice and process seriously. I started to work harder and have more fun. I began to carve my own path, with Laurel's body of work, with her permission, as a guiding force.

Like Laurel, I tried writing in many different forms including poetry, experimental narratives, and so forth. I eventually walked down the path of arts-based research never to look back. I turned to fiction as a research practice and penned two feminist novels based on a decade of interview research. When I developed the Social Fictions series in order to publish works written entirely in literary forms but grounded in scholarly research, including my own novels, I naturally turned to Laurel. I invited her to join the editorial advisory board for a series that arguably would not exist without her body of work. When she graciously accepted it was a full circle moment. Later Laurel read my novel *American Circumstance* and said that it offered "a sociology of everyday life and challenged [her] cultural assumptions" which was again a full circle moment.

Laurel's work has given me permission to try; to try to think and write in new ways, to try to engage new audiences, to try to connect with people on deeper levels, to try and experiment joyfully, and in turn, to try to give others permission to do the same, in whatever ways they wish. In my efforts toward extending that permission, I have created several book series that seek out artistic, innovative, border-crossing and social justice projects that ought to be published. When people ask how I select books, I say that I look for those with a strong voice. I have also created a Facebook community to offer daily inspiration for writers, so that we can all feel a little less alone. Perhaps it won't surprise you that with Laurel's words in mind I called the community "Women Who Write."

Reflecting on Laurel's work I think about her voice, bravery, and attention to literary craft, and it inspires me to stay true to my voice, seek courage from within, and work rigorously on my craft. I've learned that the rewards for doing work in which we are deeply engaged presents its own set of rewards, and by doing so, we invariably end up touching others in the most unexpected ways. Here's what I would say to others.

Trust your voice.
Stay true to your voice and vision.
Carve your own path.
Bring others along with you.
Who are you?
Say it out loud.
Who are you?
I am a woman writing.

CHAPTER 8

I WANT TO WRITE FOR REGULAR PEOPLE

Darolyn 'Lyn' Jones

In 2013, I got to hear Laurel Richardson speak at the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry (ICQI). Her research and narrative writing have inspired me for years and I am one of those regulars at her break out sessions at ICQI. She is older now, and she spoke with a frankness that I needed, a kick in my writing ass so to speak.

She talked about how she had always wanted to "write for regular people," but how academic writing had prevented that, but once she was tenured, allowed her to focus in on the kind of writing she wanted to do. Yet, she has regrets. She looked out and closed with: "Have the nerve to fail. Keep taking risks. Be a gatekeeper for what you believe in. Make it political."

So, I am going to do that with the blog I have started, the blog I have been talking about starting for 5 years, the blog where up to this point, I have only written safe.

But from now on my blog will represent level 2 (Rhoda Maxwell), from the gut (Natalie Goldberg), take a risk (Laurel Richardson) writing.

Here is the post Richardson inspired on my blog site "Hope Takes Practice":

My son Will's surgery approaches and my husband and I listen to the surgeon and his administrative assistant from the hospital explain to us the gruesome details and the risks before we sign away his life to them.

"Does he have a living will?" asks the faceless administrative assistant as she speaks into a clipboard.

"Oh, no," says the surgeon shaking his head at her, "that question is only for non-minor patients. Since Will is a minor, they will decide what life saving measures we would take. They will choose." And then realizing the weight of what he has just spoken, he looks at us and assures us that this is just an administrative detail.

"They choose." It's not much of a choice for us really. Our son, Will was born with severe Cerebral Palsy and has had 34 surgeries and procedures in 10 years and has been hospitalized countless times. He survives with a feeding tube, an intrathecal Baclofen pump, a host of medications, and an even larger village of medical personnel. Born dead, he now "lives."

We choose, because you people recommend. I try to research it. I ask other moms. I ask my husband, Jim, and he says, let's do what you think is best. And then I do. Sometimes I choose well and sometimes I don't.

Ten hours of therapy every week until he was three, bad choice. Yes, he made progress, but we didn't play and bond as much as we should have. Conductive education, very bad choice. But I chose to do that bad choice twice, just to be sure it was a bad choice. Gtube, good choice. Kept him alive and healthy and we were finally able to play and not spend 6 to 8 hours a day feeding him. $5,000 communication device that was obsolete in one year and he wasn't ready for, bad

choice. Hippotherapy, good choice. Loved being up and going around and around and petting the horse. Therapy and recreation combined, bonus. Feeding clinic, nightmare choice. He hated food more, got pneumonia, and had to re-learn to trust us after putting him through that.

I could go on and on with this list. I could look at my Quicken budget, the basement full to therapeutic toys and equipment, examine old photos and write a memoir using those as my prompts. All parents of kiddos with disabilities have a laundry list of these items that we are still emotionally and physically paying for.

I am back in the room with the surgeon. I stare at his hands. My face is shifted just slightly towards my right shoulder and I nod and my eyes are on him as if I am intently listening to every word he is saying. But, it's not. Instead, a desperate script plays in my head:

What if he doesn't sleep the night before, will his hands shake? What if he has too much coffee, will his hands shake? What if he drinks the night before and indulges, will he hands shake? What if he is running late and tries to rush, will his hands shake?

Then, my ears catch up with what my head is masquerading. "Do you understand? Do you have any questions?" he asks, looking down on us as he is standing up and we are seated in the armless, plastic, uncomfortable chairs we have been crouched in for the last 30 minutes waiting for his arrival.

We nod no and politely say thank you. But what I really want to say is… "Yes, actually I have a thousand."

Why was Will born like this?

Why did this happen to him?

Why are you the only surgeon who does this? Does this make you a saint or actually someone looking for glory?

You said his last surgery a year ago should be his last for a while. Why did you lie? We hang on every damn word you say. Do you even hear yourself?

How will I manage? I am so tired now that some days that I fake feeling sick so Jim will get up instead and I can steal 15 minutes more of sleepless sleep.

I love my God, always been a person of faith…but I don't understand how He can keep putting Will through this, us through this. What plan involves the systematic torture of a ten-year old boy?

Can you do this to me instead and not to Will?

My husband and I work and take care of Will. We don't know how to do anything else. What would happen if we had to choose? What choice would we make about whether Will lives or dies?

Over one too many margaritas last night, my husband talked about the future. Unlike most people who talk about the prospect of empty nesting, downsizing, traveling, and retiring somewhere on the beach, we talked about how we will always have to work to support Will. What we have in retirement wouldn't even take care of us for a few years. "What happens when our bodies go and we can't take care of him anymore?" I plead. "What will we do?"

Will is so complex and the caregiving prospects for someone like him are horrific. I know. I have visited a few as part of my transition advocacy work. Maybe they will get better. But I doubt it. We live in a culture, in a society that still locks people up and out. Maybe not literally, but we do. Now, yes "they" walk free, are out, but they are still excluded, feared, despised, looked upon with pity, and looked upon as a problem, not a solution.

I won't share my husband's answer or my reply or our discussion, maybe some day. I admit I am not yet brave enough to do that; I can't yet take that writing risk. But I will let you in on a secret. Special needs parents have conversations that are incomprehensible. They go places your brain and heart can't.

Thanks, Laurel, for reminding me to take what I know how to do, write, and share it and be my own gatekeeper. Epower is power. And I am all about giving power to the people, my people, parents like me.

Tell the truth, folks, and don't tell it slant.

COMING CLOSER: THE HE(ART) OF EMPATHY

Mary E. Weems

By the time I started my doctoral journey in 1998, I'd been consciously investigating the world through poetry for over twenty-five years. I entered the doctoral program after earning a Master's in English with a concentration in Creative Writing, unaware that scholars across disciplines were pursuing other methods for doing qualitative research. During the first semester of my journey and in the midst of posing questions about whether or not I'd begin to lose my poetic self while reading all of the required dense and deadly boring scholarship, a professor assigned Laurel Richardson's text *Fields of play: Constructing an Academic Life* which had just been released the previous year. In it, using her experiences in the academy as a frame, Laurel was giving permission, for people both in and considering entering the academy to do it on their own terms. I remember how glad I was to discover there was a place for my work already, that I didn't have to create a new space, just enter the one Richardson was describing eyes and heart open, pen poised. Laurel's work encouraged me. It inspired me to seek a community of interpretive methods, qualitative scholars, a connection which continues to nurture my spirit as I continue to grow as a socially conscious, flawed being using writing including auto/ethnography, ethnography, ethnotheatre and poetic inquiry as my method. What follows is a poem which blurs the lines between auto/ethnography, ethnography and poetic inquiry and continues the empathic development I argue is one key to a more just, democratic world. It was inspired by a short, Black and White video clip I received via e-mail on February 20, 2014, from The Daily Upworthiest:

http://www.upworthy.com/what-happens-to-some-kids-when-they-go-to-work-in-this-famous-industry-is-awful?c=upw1

Disappearing

When I was sixteen,
5 foot 9 inches
of waist and legs
I wanted to be a model
Beverly Johnson one of the few Black
examples, inspired me to shed my shoulder
drooping shyness like a costume
and follow her down a runway
of beautiful clothes, admiring eyes
and a better living than anyone
in my family.

Several lessons at a local modeling agency
ended day teacher suggested I lose twelve pounds
Something I heard as a joke I repeated to mama
that evening.

Fast forward. Decades of media perpetuate
images of white women getting younger
and younger, thin as cucumber sandwiches,
reports of eating disorders, the industry pressured
to hire models who look like more women.

This morning a short, black and white film
takes me a long way back. White-woman-former-model
in her 30s stares. At 34, she's telling a story of being 14,
discovered like so many others, promises made to her parents
in writing with a check, her ticket to a new life she couldn't wait to start.

What she describes makes her face change. Still as a camera's
eye, she recalls late-late nights, the hands of powerful men
on her when they should have been in their pockets, too young
for even a first kiss, dressed up each day and tortured in frigid
water, on the backs of wild animals, on the edges of cliffs
for the perfect smile, the just-right tilt to the chin, her eyes
in the end dim and closed
her spirit as traumatized
as my friend's who served to two terms in Viet Nam –
disappearing.

Thanks in part to Laurel Richardson's work I chose not to disappear from the Ivory Tower as a doctoral student over fifteen years ago. Last year at the Ninth International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry conference at my alma mater the University of

Illinois @ Urbana-Champaign, Laurel stepped into a panel I was chairing. I felt as excited as a first year doctoral student and was 'so' disappointed that it was someone else's turn to present. While I am no longer 'constructing an academic life' within the academy, I remain committed to using writing as my method and to following in the footsteps of Laurel Richardson along with all artist-scholars who use their work as political acts. It's an honor to be included in this book.

GAZING INTO CRYSTALS – LAUREL RICHARDSON AND ARTS RESEARCH

Dave Kelman

Above all I am a practitioner. A creator of educational theatre with and for young people from disadvantaged communities with an organisation called Western Edge Youth Arts. In 2004, I commenced research into my own practice as part of a nationally funded project at the University of Melbourne. This placed me firmly in the realm of reflective practice with its attendant traps of advocacy and self-aggrandisement, balanced by a strong desire to work out what twenty years of front-line youth arts practice actually added up to – if anything. When I started the process of asking urgent spontaneous questions to young people who had made and performed edgy youth theatre for their own communities, it was something of a revelation. The things they said were deep, passionate and complex. Things like: We think we are only a small part of the world but through drama we can reach out to a larger world and grow.

The question was, what to do with this rich and complex data? One could order and categorise it in a pseudo-scientific process but that felt reductive at best, reducing a multi-faceted arts experience to 'dominant themes' that were of some interest but often failed to do justice to what the young people were actually saying.

Richardson's work and particularly hearing her speak, provided a refreshing new perspective on this business. With her, there was no attempt to claim 'objectivity,' 'evidence bases' or 'demonstrated impacts' (to name but a few of the lies and distortions that stalk the world of arts education research). Instead there was a deeply sensitive, highly intelligent, subtle engagement with participants' experiences and the complexity of their lives.

One metaphor she uses is that of the crystal: a research form that can 'reflect, refract, change, and grow'… 'deconstructing traditional notions of validity, glancingly touching some subjects, lighting others' (*Fields of Play*, p. 136). It is a metaphor that immediately resonated for me; suggesting a moment within an art-making process the meaning of which shifts when viewed from different perspectives. A moment that may at once be about personal growth and social meaning as well as something altogether less tangible. A moment that can be 'read' visually in terms of symbol and simultaneously de-cyphered for textual meaning, all dependent on view-point

and context. A moment that moves some to tears, stimulates others intellectually or reflects back the cynicism of others. How deeply we see into the world of the crystal depends where we view it from and in what light: it is a highly apposite metaphor for the ephemeral world of performance making with young people.

Richardson's work for me stands as a powerful critique of research methodologies that reduce complex and often beautiful interactions into simplistic statements and outcomes that have no greater validity than rich and rigorous descriptions of art making described by young people in their own voice, revealing what it means to them and giving an insight into their lives at a particular moment in time.

CHAPTER 9

PASSING THE BATON

The recent four-volume *Autoethnography* collection, edited by Pat Sikes (2013) is a wonderful collection of 82 articles, mostly reprinted from elsewhere. To try out my theory about Laurel's work being so often cited, to see if her work has indeed stood the test of time, I began checking the reference list of each of those articles. I expected Carolyn Ellis and Art Bochner to be frequently cited, alongside others regularly associated with autoethnography. However, I was surprised to see that Laurel's work has indeed been referenced – and by so many different authors – in that substantial set of volumes. I began counting them and translating this into percentages, but then decided that lacked any purpose. The observation about her work being frequently cited, that had started me thinking about writing this book ten years ago, has remained the case. And the generous contribution to this book from so many people confirms that her writing has had influence and impact, in many different ways, spheres and disciplines.

Eight contributions are included in this chapter as they illustrate, in quite different ways, how the 'baton' has been passed on. Each author takes one or more of Laurel Richardson's ideas, permissions or texts and then tells their own story.

First is Bob Rinehart's poem where so many of Laurel's texts are referenced. This poem recognises Laurel Richardson's body of work and provides warm and appreciative affirmation that her work has been read and remembered.

> If you mistake her for a softy,
> though – beware … *I spoke*
> *softly as a control* … Fierce
> intelligence, patterned
> & carapaced, self-
> protective yet generous.

Monica Prendercast presents 15 short poems in 'Found Haiku' that result from her interaction with the 1994 version of Writing as a Method of Inquiry that she was given as a graduate student. She comments on the significance of that text for her own work:

> Richardson's laying out of writing – imaginative, personal, political, affective, evocative, experimental writing – as a 'legitimate' way to think about methodology and scholarship gives me permission to be the poetic inquirer I am in the lifelong process of becoming.

Next is Mary Cullinan's poem about her experience of being an older graduate student, entitled *Echoes of the Invisible Women in Academia*. The permission gained from Laurel Richardson's texts is implicit within this poem. A brief excerpt catches assumptions and prejudices facing older women studying within the academy:

> We don't give info packages to the moms.
> I am a student.
> I am also a mom.
> I want to slap her!

Susanne Gannon's essay, *Assembling with Laurel Richardson and Louisa May,* outlines her own theoretical interests and influences and her trajectory into scholarship and writing. She observes:

> Many years later, partly due to the permissions that Richardson's work first gave to me to play with different modes of writing, it is still poetry that I turn to when there's no other mode that will work. Rather than the security of writing my way into knowing, or writing to 'find out,' this is rather a commitment to writing that retains a sense of unknowing – that seeks to maximise openness and ambiguity.

The next piece, *Dear Laurel*, is a letter written by Vivienne Elizabeth where she explains how Laurel Richardson influenced her own work and how she has used the poetic form to evoke and to provoke. It was her final comment about the impact on her own work that led to the cover design of this book.

> So thank you so much for the inspiration, Laurel. Like a stone thrown into a lake, your work has had a ripple effect on my scholarship.

This is followed by Brett Smith's thoughtful exploration of Richardson's influence on his work – in research, writing and teaching. He observes that:

> Her work challenged and repositioned how I engaged with the process of doing research and the products that arise. It encouraged me to develop what I have come to call *representational literacy*. This refers to an awareness of the different types of representational genres that researchers might use to communicate research and an appreciation of the various reasons for why a certain genre might be chosen.

In *The Rub is in the Justification*, Pat Sikes talks of the impact and contribution of Laurel Richardson's work to contemporary research.

> When, however, Laurel Richardson came along and started writing in an engaging and compelling manner, paying attention to literary and aesthetic concerns and exploring poetic re-presentation, it would have been as ludicrous to have questioned her scholarship as to have denied the quality of her texts. Her adherence to high standards of what might back in pre-postmodernist

> days have unapologetically been described as rigour, her probity, integrity and ethical practice, and her commitment to transformative sociology, were crystal clear.

Finally Ernest Lockridge takes up the story he began in *Travels with Ernest: Crossing the Literary/Sociological Divide* (Richardson & Lockridge, 2004) about his father's suicide and his family's dreadful secret. In his later book, *Skeleton Key to the Suicide of my Father, Ross Lockridge, Jr., Author of Raintree County,* the story unfolds, but here Ernest Lockridge acknowledges Laurel Richardson's importance in this story:

> It was Laurel who lighted my way… Writing *Skeleton Key* was my own "process of discovery," finding new connections, at long last putting terrible things where they belong, in place and at rest.

KIDESH KINDELAH

Robert E. Rinehart

Kidesh kindelah[1]

Dreaming

As a girl, Grandfather
murmured "kindelah,[2]
kindelah": oh child
with such
hope, such a bright future. Isn't
it funny how, even as we
age, nanas & grandpas fix
for all time?
Laurel:
awarding, ancient, wreathing.

You show us the power of
self, will & agency & a
confluence of rivers:
St. Petersburg's Neva,
Scioto & Olentangy,
even the Chicago, Irish-green.

The contemporary scholar:
blended, fluid,
both idiosyncratic &
universal, reaching for answers,

seeking to know
others'
lives, but

moreso: oneself.

But I rush ahead of myself.
First impressions. Laura
Ashley maxi prints, calm,
soothing.
If you mistake her for a softy,
though – beware … I spoke
softly as a control …[3] Fierce
intelligence, patterned
& carapaced, self-
protective yet generous.

Spoken
intellect, *irrational, I know,*
but I feared
I would die[4]: afraid
yet brave.

Like Romulus & Remus, suckling
at the teats of Helen Keller (anointed
as "*a special girl*"[5]), Jessamyn
West ("*my Miss*
West"[6]), privilege was
natural.
Senn High, 50th
reunion, unified/dis-
unified, making sense of
it all … my high-school as a seat
of family continuity.[7]

Crafting

Writing: A method of inquiry became
your *Leaves of Grass:* incarnate
soulful, ever-changing. Like solipsists
who create a future, your
meme grew from I … *yawned*
my way through numerous

supposedly
exemplary
qualitative studies.[8]

Could you be more restive?
A role model for engage-
ment,
imbricating each
life event into your craft,
into your writing –

Fields of Play!
Writing!
CAP, PMS!
After a fall!

Imagine
the lemonades you have
made in this world, the writings
like children tossed into
the fray.

Resisting

When can you return to work?
they said, hovering like
bats, sucking your saline,
your lifeblood without remorse. Evidence

of a system gone wrong – evidence
of bottom-line, instrumental
thinking. Evidence. Data. Input.

not a requirement
for tenure, by the way,
just a departmental
custom, like stoning in other cultures.[9]
"Chet," "Hank": such
schmucks.

Like others of your genera-
tion, you trained in positivism; how
did you escape? Change. Grow.
Adapt? Chromatophores?

Again: courage. If you're not
THE MAN
you're, gladly, not The Man.

A rarity, like a Monarch floating
around as winter nears, capturing
nectar, husbanding resources,
but not using the weapons
of the masters:
hard to avoid. That
might lead to a cyborg
jungle populated by men in little
shiny suits.
Suited men for
systems, for *status quo*, little
men.

Leading

Of course: books
are progeny. Counting coup,
touches of insight, wee
bits, castings of those standing
on your very broad
shoulders.

the "good" ethnography like "good"
literary works … to experience a
culture or an event.[10]

Tick them off
on your fingers: those
you've flavored like the sugar
in water. Others – unknown –
countless others who your children
have caught by surprise,
whose own worlds,
disrupted & fresh,
soothsayers
all, prognosticators to the gods.

Kindalah, what do writers
do?

They write. They get read. They
influence.
Kindalah, you're a writer.

NOTES

[1] Roughly translated from Yiddish as "wonder child."
[2] Richardson (2013a, p. 102) (*Kindela* in original).
[3] Richardson (1996), p. 236; Richardson (1997), p. 193.
[4] Richardson (2013a), p. 8.
[5] Richardson (2013a), p. 103.
[6] Richardson (1996), p. 234.
[7] Richardson (2013b), p. 341.
[8] Richardson and St Pierre (2005), p. 959.
[9] Richardson (1998), p. 43.
[10] Richardson (1997), p. 182.

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FOUND HAIKU FROM LAUREL RICHARDSON'S "WRITING: A METHOD OF INQUIRY"

Monica Prendergast

These found haiku, a form of found poetry, are crafted from the first edition text of Laurel Richardson's key essay in the *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Richardson, 1994). Selecting one piece of writing from Richardson's extensive list of publications seemed daunting to me, but this essay (I am certain) has had, and continues to have, a particularly significant impact. I share this essay with graduate students all the time and reread it often myself. Richardson's laying out of writing – imaginative, personal, political, affective, evocative, experimental writing – as a 'legitimate' way to think about methodology and scholarship gives me permission to be the poetic inquirer I am in the lifelong process of becoming.

The process of creating these found poems is the process of sifting through the essay, allowing Richardson's words to wash over me. I highlight words and phrases that 'crystallize' (to use her term) what I am responding to most strongly in the

moment. I then work within the creative constraints of the Japanese haiku form to find a way to express these crystallizations. Found poetry is always the product of a present tense encounter. If I were to repeat this task a day, month, week or year from now, the 'results' would not look the same. Nor should they, which is one of the many considerably gifts we receive from Richardson.

I gift these poems to Laurel with deepest gratitude. From the day a professor in graduate school recommended Richardson's autoethnographic study *Fields of Play*, many years ago, I have owed her this gift exchange. She forged the path I walk.

Spirit of affectionate irreverence

consider writing
a method of inquiry
a way of knowing. (p. 516)

Confession

I have yawned my way
through exemplary studies
can something be done? (p. 517)

Poststructuralism

knowing the Self and
knowing "about" the subject
intertwined, local. (p. 518)

Language is a constitutive force

no textual staging
is ever innocent
(including this one). (p. 518)

Metaphor

backbone of writing
it bears weight, permits movement
beneath the surface. (p. 519)

Evocative experimental form

touches where we live
in our bodies, our doubts,
our uncertainties. (p. 521)

Narratives of the self

staged as renderings
(swagger, entertain, relive)
frankly subjective. (p. 521)

Ethnographic fictional representations

flashback, flashforward
alternative points of view
tell a good story. (p. 521)

Poetic representation

speech is poetry
lets us see, hear, feel the world
in new dimensions. (p. 522)

Ethnographic drama

a way of shaping
(without losing) unruly
lived experience. (p. 522)

Mixed genres

a postmodernist
deconstruction (I think) of
triangulation. (p. 522)

We crystallize

symmetry + substance =
infinite variety of
angles of approach. (p. 522)

Crystals are prisms

what we see depends
upon our angle of repose
both waves and particles. (p. 522)

Whither and whence

no single way, much less
"right" way of staging a text
(like wet clay to shape). (p. 523)

Playful pull

writing that is more
diverse, less boring, humbler
we cannot go back. (p. 524)

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ECHOES OF THE INVISIBLE WOMEN IN ACADEMIA

Mary Cullinan

This requires a tremendous amount of my energy
Is there someone more deserving of this from me?
The other students look past me
I am their mother, not their peer
The orientation person said
We don't give info packages to the moms.
I am a student.
I am also a mom.
I want to slap her!
At least send her to her room for a
Time out.
My husband says he was
Always smart in school.
So was I.
Some things I just knew.
Good thing because no one told me.
My boys are proud of me.
They are teenagers.
What do you think about that,
Orientation girl?
They say,

You can do anything you want!
Really though, I did this for me.
All about me.
When I told my supervisor that
I am interested in looking at women's experiences
Between violence and learning in graduate school,
She said,
You'll never find anyone. Why?
We weed them out.
That's what she says,
We weed them out.
I'm here.
Can you see me?
The clock is ticking.
I'm trying not to panic
At my age in particular
I need to write things down.
Find a support group
Someone to listen to me
Talk to me
Some people say,
Your grandchildren need you
Your children need you.
I don't feel old.
I feel young.
I started something new.
I have a passion.
I'm here.
Can you see me?

Since contributing this piece Mary has completed her doctorate. She also sent me a link to her website *Echoes of Late Entry Women* that details some narratives of women who have returned to school later in life to pursue doctoral study: http://marycullinan.wix.com/echoes-of-late-entry

ASSEMBLING WITH LAUREL RICHARDSON AND LOUISA MAY

Susanne Gannon

A recent book on the work of feminist philosopher Rosi Braidotti begins by describing her work as a 'singular field of intensity,' and the pleasures of engaging with her work as 'making an assemblage with Rosi Braidotti' (Van der Tuin & Blagaard, 2014, 3).

What does it mean to think about the body of work of any fiercely independent scholar through both 'singularity' and connectedness as 'assemblage'? How do we recognise that a scholar and work that seems so fresh for its moment, is of its moment, a mode of thought and practice emerging in a confluence of other influences that enable it to emerge at a particular time and begin moving in the world? As Van der Tuin and Blagaard put it, 'Though we tend to conceptualise a thought or an oeuvre… as a self-contained or unified whole with a clear source, we must also admit that this presumed holism refers, in fact, to a multiplicitous force field immanently linking body, text and context' (2014, 5). The 'clear source' – the apparently individual writer – is continuously assembling and reassembling with other bodies and flows of thought and practice. Tracing these movements is part of the reframing work that Richardson does with her earlier work in *Fields of Play* (Richardson, 1997), but I want to turn to another encounter between Louisa May, Laurel Richardson and me. The Deleuzian concepts of assemblage, and of multiplicitous force fields of body, text and context that Van der Tuin and Blagaard evoke to think through Braidotti are helpful in framing my thinking about Laurel Richardson's influence on my writing in and out of academia.

Rather than abstractions or summaries or broad assertions or assessments, to map assemblages and trace force fields means following idiosyncratic and particular collisions between bodies, and bodies of writing, and situating these in the material contexts of the world. A body on a sofa, for example, is where my story starts. My body stretched out on a wet hot afternoon in the tropics of northern Australia, reading. I'm holding a library book with a pale purple cover, in the days when all library books were material objects that had to be checked out and carried out of an actual library. My library was a bright new building on a fresh new campus that had just been built in a sugar cane field across the highway from the high school where I worked as an English teacher. I waited ten years for the university to be built, and straight away enrolled to study a postgraduate Masters of Education. Browsing the shelves was one of my great joys, another was my Saturday afternoon women's writing group where we played with language in fiction and memoir, often writing our ways (creatively, passionately, collaboratively) through the particular dramas of our intimate relationships. The book I was reading on the sofa on that wet afternoon collided with everything at just the right time. *Investigating Subjectivity* (Ellis & Flaherty, 1992) included a chapter by Bronwyn Davies on romantic storylines in women's lives (1992), a chapter by Carol Rambo Ronai on her self as simultaneously an erotic dancer and a feminist researcher (1992) and Laurel Richardson's poem of Louisa May (1992) in which transcript data was sifted and selected to 'crystallize' the experience of a single mother into a poem. Despite my writing group, I hadn't known it was possible to write in such ways of women's lived experience in academia. I responded with a paper inspired by all three: an analysis of romantic storylines, sexual desire and feminist subjectivity in my own life and presenting 'data' as a poem constructed from journal entries (Gannon, 2002). This was only possible through the generosity of another great permission

giver, Bronwyn Davies, who supervised and inspired me from this first coursework unit through two theses and into academic life. My pragmatic approach to higher education, which had begun as an effort to expand the contexts in which I would be eligible to teach (adult, ESL and Aboriginal education), became an adventure in writing that has never really ended.

That first poetic experiment closely followed the textual strategies that Richardson used as she stripped back 36 pages of prose text into a poem, using Louisa May's 'voice, diction and tone' and claiming that the poem enables 'multiple and open readings' that are not possible in conventional social scientific prose. Working with text of my own, I stripped back 40 pages of manic anguished prose, written across a week that my marriage was collapsing, into a three page-poem. I worked quickly, by instinct as much as conscious deliberation. The phrases which leapt out were those to which I had an embodied response, those which made me gasp with recognition or horror. I strung those phrases together and the rhythm they made was like breast beating, grieving. The journal text was laden with clichés and repetitions, and many of these remain in the poem. That was how I told my story then. Highlighting the clichés of romantic love by retaining them in the poem was in itself a means of challenging them by making the discourses visible. Women who read the poem commented on their sense of recognition, of 'déjà vu' at the self-defeating talk they recognised in their own lives. I 'messed' with texts poetically through my Masters and PhD, driven by the desire to create academic texts that provoke affective and ethical as well as intellectual movement, and as a way of working through my struggles with the impossibility of data and representation (2001, 2004, 2008).

Many years later, partly due to the permissions that Richardson's work first gave to me to play with different modes of writing, it is still poetry that I turn to when there's no other mode that will work. Rather than the security of writing my way into knowing, or writing to 'find out,' this is rather a commitment to writing that retains a sense of unknowing – that seeks to maximise openness and ambiguity. The first academic texts that I published incorporated poetic texts (2001, 2002), and my most recent publication is a poetic experiment where Deleuzean concepts collide with bodies, desire and the landscapes of the tropics (2014), which – on reflection – is right where I started. In that moment on the sofa of romantic storylines, feminist dilemmas and poetic play – of assembling with Louisa May and Laurel Richardson and Bronwyn Davies and others – the multiplicitous force field that shapes my writing practice.

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DEAR LAUREL

Vivienne Elizabeth

Dear Laurel,

We've never met, although I would relish the opportunity. No doubt many others affected by your scholarship would enjoy first-hand experience of conversing with you too.

I can't quite remember when I first came across your critical and creative commentaries about writing sociology. It was years ago, perhaps the late 1990s, and even if the memory of that moment has faded, its importance lives on.

Reading 'Writing: A method of inquiry' (2000) opened up possibilities for me to do sociology differently. It gave me the permission, even authority, to follow in your wake and push the boundaries of how sociology is practiced. In this, I've been helped along the way by colleagues you know well, I believe: Caroline Ellis, Art Bochner, Norman Denzin and Ron Pelias, to name just a few.

Strangely, it has been your use of poetry or the poetic that has been especially influential on my own writing practices. I say strangely because poetry is not a medium that I would have imagined capturing my heart and mind. It is not that I don't like poetry; it is just that I don't go out of my way to read or write poetry.

Nevertheless, a set of autoethnographic poems tumbled out of me and onto the page when I wanted to convey something of the reality of growing up in

a family where both corporal punishment and discord prevailed (Elizabeth, 2008). People tell me that the poems are both evocative and provocative. What more could I want?

More recently, my colleagues and I reworked an interview with a mother who had lost the custody of her two young sons into a narrative sequence of poetic representations (Elizabeth, Gavey, & Tolmie, 2014). Hers had been a lone voice in a broader study on mother's experiences of custody disputes. Yet we all felt her story of her foiled attempts to protect her children by a system that minimises the prevalence of violence against women and children deserved to be heard. The narrative sequence of poetic representations conveys something of Erica's sense of injustice, bewilderment, and heartache over losing her sons to her ex-husband and their father, a man she'd left because of his violence towards her and their older son, and a man who had threatened to leave her with nothing as a consequence, not even the children. Could we have presented this interview data in a more conventional manner? Almost certainly. But would it have had the same resonance? I doubt it.

So thank you so much for the inspiration, Laurel. Like a stone thrown into a lake, your work has had a ripple effect on my scholarship. I don't write poetry every day, nor do I use poetic representations regularly. But I know I can draw on both modes of representation should circumstances inspire and conspire with some confidence that the academic world is big enough to accommodate this kind of diversity. Long may this remain.

Yours,
Vivienne Elizabeth

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I SOMETIMES WONDER

Brett Smith

I sometimes wonder what the content, form, and feel of both my research and teaching would be like had I not come across a small group of scholars in the late 1990's that included and were influenced by Professor Richardson; I suspect

both would be very different. Her work challenged and repositioned how I engaged with the process of doing research and the products that arise. It encouraged me to develop what I have come to call representational literacy. This refers to an awareness of the different types of representational genres that researchers might use to communicate research and an appreciation of the various reasons for why a certain genre might be chosen. This awareness and appreciation extends into what Richardson termed creative analytical practices (CAP). Having an awareness of CAP and appreciation for why one might choose a certain genre of representation can be profound. It has helped me to be much more reflexive and critical when thinking about how to represent research. It has resulted in the use of certain CAP, like creative non-fiction, to ask questions about the capacity of stories to translate knowledge effectively and increase the possibility of research making a difference. In this sense, Richardson's work has provided a bridge to connect a desire to represent research in different ways with the increasing emphasis from UK universities, grant funders, policy makers, and government on researchers to translate research and generate impact.

In addition, Richardson's body of work has moved me to care even more about how I write each journal paper or book chapter and what is in each sentence. It moved me to recognise and embrace the idea that analysis takes place in the process of writing. This was significant because it taught me that not only is writing a way of knowing, and thus it is valuable to continuously and obsessively write throughout a project. It also helped me better appreciate that qualitative analysis is much more than about following a set of prescribed steps, like in a thematic analysis, interpretive phenomenological analysis or grounded theory study. Analysis is a craft that requires phronesis (practical wisdom). Respecting that writing is a form of analysis is vital in developing these. Richardson helped give permission to embrace this rather than hide behind any façade that analysis is a clean, linear, procedural technical exercise that delivers findings independent of the researcher, as if each finding fell out of sky and landed unedited on the page.

Professor Richardson's work has not only played out in my own research. It has also been passed on to others, including my undergraduate and graduate students. Each research methods course I teach has lectures and seminars dedicated to developing student's representational literacy by asking critical questions about why researchers traditionally write like they do and what other options are available. Reading lists are peppered with papers or chapters that talk about representation or use for certain reasons different CAP. The work offered by people like Professor Richardson has meant that there can be no excuse for avoiding discussions on writing or ignoring CAP in any university that prides itself on educating students in research methods. Her work has given students permission to challenge dominant ways of knowing, to ask troubling questions about why researchers report findings in a certain way, and to take risks about how they write an essay or research report. It has, then, made a big difference to both research and pedagogy.

THE RUB IS IN THE JUSTIFICATION

Pat Sikes

Over the past 50 or so years, more and more people working across the social sciences have begun to use a wider range of written, and indeed other forms of, re-presentational genres and styles. More importantly perhaps, they have found growing acceptance of these approaches in terms of using them in work subjected for assessment at postgraduate level and with regard to publication in peer reviewed journals and by academic publishing houses. Undoubtedly Laurel Richardson has made a major contribution to the shifts in thinking enabling this state of affairs: indeed, this project and the text arising out of it are obvious testimony to her influence.

There always have been those whose work offered exciting, and sometimes surprising, alternatives to what was constructed and came to be regarded as traditional, legitimated and, it has to be said, often boring, jargon filled and difficult to understand, 'scientific' formats. Exceptions who didn't follow the rules include Zora Neale Hurston (now receiving the recognition she deserves) and Willard Waller who, in 1932, unequivocally stated that he was going to use fiction in his study of *The Sociology of the Teacher* in order 'to present materials in such a way that characters do not lose the qualities of persons, nor situations their intrinsic human reality' (Waller, 1932, n.p.).

Although Waller's work was well regarded (which may be why he 'got away with it'), others using unconventional forms were frequently viewed as mavericks whose work lacked scientific credibility. When, however, Laurel Richardson came along and started writing in an engaging and compelling manner, paying attention to literary and aesthetic concerns and exploring poetic re-presentation, it would have been as ludicrous to have questioned her scholarship as to have denied the quality of her texts. Her adherence to high standards of what might back in pre-postmodernist days have unapologetically been described as rigour, her probity, integrity and ethical practice, and her commitment to transformative sociology, were crystal clear.

I came shamefully late to Laurel Richardson and by the time I did get to know her work, my academic and publishing careers had been going for 16 years and I'd had my doctorate for over a decade. Looking back I see so many missed opportunities to benefit from her words and insights, especially as I so often find myself referencing or quoting her in my own writing and in my teaching and supervisory work. The first piece of hers I read was 'Writing as a Method of Inquiry' (1994) in the first *Handbook of Qualitative Inquiry* (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). To say that reading that chapter changed my professional life is not totally hyperbole. There is no doubt that it validated – and gave what I took as permission for – the way in which I had interpreted and adopted C. Wright Mills' (1970/59) exhortation to invoke the sociological imagination to make personal concerns public issues, to embody and put flesh onto concepts and, thereby, to encourage readers to engage and identify with those whose lives are

the focus of our studies. As Laurel notes, people need to read and be affected and moved by what we write or else our work won't have even the potential to, let alone, actually make, a difference. With her I believe social researchers are required always to be asking axiological questions of the order of: 'what is the point?' or, 'where is the justification for putting people to whatever trouble being involved in research entails, if it isn't ultimately to try, in some way, to make things better'? (Richardson, 1994, p. 517). I'd argue that attempts to make a difference through research demand accessible, effective and ethical communication; such communication is central to Laurel's research practice, to the books and articles in which she re-presents her own research, and to what she has to say about research writing.

Fundamental to that practice and writing is her recognition of the ethical imperative to acknowledge our implication in the social research we undertake. Following Robert Merton, who apparently saw her as his heir (Richardson, 1998, pp. 42–43), Laurel's sociology is explicitly auto/biographical (cf. Stanley, 1993). 'The sociological rests in the intersection between the biographical and the historical' (Richardson, 1997, p. 1). Where else could it be? And if one agrees with and accepts this view, the question is 'how, then, do we write ourselves into our texts with intellectual and spiritual integrity?' (ibid, p. 2). Well, the starting point has to be constantly reminding ourselves that 'narrativizing, like all intentional behaviour … is a site of moral responsibility' (Richardson, 1990, p. 13).

Laurel has never lost sight of this. For instance, in her most recent works she writes 'of course, no matter what precautions we take, no matter how painstakingly we filter what we say and how we say it, we cannot know the consequences of our work' (Richardson, 2007, p. 170) and 'all writing is an ethical activity. Choices are made. I have tried to write well and truly and to inspire right actions and good spirits in myself and my readers' (Richardson, 2013, p. 265).

Her ethical concerns also encompass her responsibilities to academic excellence. She stresses, for example, the importance of clarifying the sorts of truth claims we make and says we should write honestly, telling our readers when we are writing 'fiction' (2000, p. 926). She also emphasizes the need to aspire to the highest standards and this is crucial, for bad fiction and poetry do no service to the acceptance of them as legitimate forms of social science representation. Unfortunately, whilst great writers like her and Carolyn Ellis inspire many to try and do likewise, not all share the same level of talent or skill.

I ensure my students encounter Laurel's work right from the start and I tell them, 'in your research and writing you can do what you like provided you can justify it in ethical, methodological and re-presentational terms.' Of course, the rub is in the justification: Laurel has shown us how it can be done.

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SKELETON KEY

Ernest Lockridge

On March 6, 1948, my brilliant father – whose prize-winning and wildly praised first novel *Raintree County* was the *New York Times's* Number One bestseller – murdered himself in the back-alley garage of our new home, taping an Electrolux hose to the exhaust of our brand-new Kaiser and locking the garage from within. He had borrowed the hose from his parents who had long employed it in a similar manner to gas the moles of "Murmuring Maples," Dad's boyhood home a mile from his place of death. My mother's 34th birthday was five weeks away. My younger brother was 5, my sister 4; my youngest brother had turned 2 in February. I'd just turned 9. Dad was 33.

He left a "suicide note," of sorts, typed on the typewriter on which he wrote his acclaimed novel. "As for the evil, are they to blame or are they not also the victims of long circumstance? … Some lives … which seem fortunate become involved in agony, and who shall say whether this is through their own fault or not? Just as poets are born so, the brave are born so, and the cowardly are born so. That is, they are born to their fate. No one blames the child of less than ten for the errors of his personality, but link by link he is bound to the grown man."

"Evil" – yet innocent …?

How could this man have committed such a dreadful crime against himself, his family? And, why? Any ordeals that had marred the publication of *Raintree County* were grossly disproportionate to the prodigious success in which he should have been reveling. After all, he had suffered setbacks before – some of them extreme – only to bounce back stalwart in spirit and more robust in resolve. What with the MGM Novel Prize of a million in today's dollars, the January Book-of-the-Month Club Selection, a compressed version of *Raintree County* in Reader's Digest Books and a lengthy excerpt in *Life Magazine*, and stellar reviews in just about all the important places, Dad was pulling in enough to stuff the garage with cash.

This waste of a precious life and incalculable loss to literature spawned a murder mystery that for decades has extruded a slow crawl of platitudes. Dad was "worn out"; couldn't write his next novel; was destroyed by (take your pick): "the bitch-goddess Success"? a "greedy publisher"? a book club? Hollywood? He felt overwhelmingly guilty for having surpassed his father. Was insufficiently loved by his mother. There

are a couple of "biographies": an envy-driven hatchet-job with kid gloves, and an interminable shaggy-dog story replete with quaint, home-spun philosophizing. The Freudian quackery of both books is quintessential Sid Caesar. My father is made out to be a weakling, unable to face the trivial slings and arrows that any "real man" would just shrug off, when merely to keep himself alive as long as my father did took the most extreme courage, given the enormity of his childhood and young manhood.

By my thirties I had "solved" the mystery, sort of, though of course the "solution" had been in plain view almost from the get-go. But I defined myself as a novelist, and the fumbling attempts I made to fictionalize my father's story added further layers of concealment. The underlying reality was more meaningful and elegant than my fictions. Truth was seamless; things happened for reasons. I was, however, fearful of writing the truth "straight" – fearful of reliving a dark childhood, and fearful of the Custodians of the Family Honor with whom I'd joined in an unspoken pact to bury the dead and leave them there to rot. Families close ranks. Society-at-large remains in comfortable proximity to the Good Old Days when Family, the Family Doctor, the Family Lawyer, and the County Judge routinely committed Little Big Mouth to The Nervous Hospital with a pre-frontal lobotomy to make sure he or she remained locked away for life. I could be certain at the very least of a cornucopia of malediction if I wrote the truth.

Since the early 1980s I have been involved in Laurel Richardson's groundbreaking, barrier-shattering and highly influential work, with its emphasis on "lived experience" and the crossing of disciplinary boundaries – transforming interviews into poems, academic debate into plays, broadening the intellectual landscape to accommodate an infinite variety of innovation. Writing for Laurel is famously, in and of itself, a process of discovery. It was Laurel who came up with the idea of *Travels with Ernest, Crossing the Literary/Sociological Divide* (2004), which opened me for the first time to writing non-fiction. What is behind or beneath an occurrence, or effect? What's the cause? The significance? What ties things together? What do these things mean? I'd never have written what I wrote in our book were it not for Laurel.

It was Laurel who lighted my way to *Skeleton Key to the Suicide of my Father, Ross Lockridge Jr., Author of Raintree County* (2011; revised 2014). I found myself exploring my father's death in an amalgam of the jigsaw puzzle and the family album, tacitly inviting the reader to join me in the "lived experience" of moving puzzle-pieces into place. Writing *Skeleton Key* was my own "process of discovery," finding new connections, at long last putting terrible things where they belong, in place and at rest.

CHAPTER 10

HURDLING ACADEMIC OBSTACLES

When I read Laurel Richardson's *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life* (1997a) and *Skirting a Pleated Text: De-Discipline an Academic Life* (1997b), like many others, I felt I had found a kindred spirit, albeit a braver one. My experience of the academy has mostly not been an uplifting one and it seems to me that many of those who have sheltered within universities are rather flawed human beings. Disappointingly, mediocrity is alive and well and bullying seems to be widespread. Not many have focused their writing on the academic context in a way that evokes a 'Yes. That's me too!' response:

> Many departmental colleagues understood that, like the chair's previously conquered opponents, I had become dangerous to associate with, dangerous to even know. In their minds I had brought it upon myself, which of course I had. (Richardson, 1997, p. 298)

Two of Laurel Richardson's poems, *The Academy* and *Gem of an Academic Woman* set the scene for the next four contributions in this chapter.

Art Bochner's substantial piece *Coping with Institutional Depression* is a sobering, highly analytical and deeply personal examination of the academy. He credits Laurel Richardson's writing as providing the spark he needed, and observes:

> We've seen the casualties of an alienated workforce up close, etched on the blank faces of colleagues who caved in, gave up, and stopped caring.

Mona Livholts talks of becoming an 'untimely' writer and how she was inspired by Laurel Richardson, along with Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Hélène Cixous, to develop her own work. Early in her academic career she:

> …became convinced that ways in which academic wrote their texts had implications for the becoming of academic selves. At that time I must admit that this was a frightening thought that I only shared with a few colleagues. I began to photograph the university architecture and to think about the relation between wording and textual shaping and architectural creating of writing selves.

Next is Synthia Sydnor's poem *1999* in which she appreciates and references many of Laurel Richardson's well-known works.

Liz Mackinlay's piece *Permission for Wom*n* provides a moving account of killing off the ever-helpful, self-sacrificing woman academic who is a familiar fixture within the academy. Somewhat reminiscent of Charles Dicken's character, Uriah Heep (1848/2004), this contemporary female version is portrayed as:

> … intensely supportive, particularly of those men she saw herself in servitude to. She put herself across as utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of office politics and baking cakes for staff birthdays. She sacrificed herself daily. If there was a committee she put her hand up to be on it…

Elaine Speight-Burton, who is completing a PhD with me, talks of being an Academic Language and Learning practitioner in her piece *Against the Grain.* Characterising this work as gendered academic housekeeping, she writes about:

> …the politics of my location, the times and spaces in which 'I' am set. Like Richardson, I write about my lived experiences in that place we call 'the academy.' And I use writing as a method of inquiry to re-cognise who I am and who I am allowed to be.

As I was beginning to write this book, Diane Reay sent me a copy of a recent article *On the Frontline: From Academic Freedom to Academic Capitalism* that shows how dreadful academic life has become for so many in the United Kingdom. Her article was developed from the keynote presentation she gave, at my invitation, at the 'Sub-Prime Scholarship' 2013 annual conference of the *Association for Qualitative Research* in Melbourne. I wrote to her immediately, seeking permission to republish it here, because it fits in so well. Her reply is below:

> Hi Julie, lovely to hear from you and of course, I'd be delighted. I really like Laurel's work but as you can see from the article things aren't good here!!
>
> All the best Diane Reay

The diverse collection that makes up this chapter, therefore, doesn't pull any punches about working in the academic context. In doing, however, the glossy paint depicting the academy is peeled back to reveal grim realities, as well as hope. Individuals do manage to leap over the hurdles established by performativity (Lyotard, 1984) and despite governmentality (Foucault, 2008; Gane, 2008) can retain their humanity. And Laurel took an early leading role in writing to understand how it all works in our own contexts. She also formulated this process as: *Writing as a Method of Inquiry* (Richardson, 1994, 2000a; Richardson & St Pierre, 2005), which has been taken up by many others, illustrated here.

THE ACADEMY

Laurel Richardson

The Raptor Barn houses
Various Birds of Prey
That are being Rehabilitated
for release. Those that
cannot be released
successfully
are kept
as Educational Birds.

(Found Poem, Raptor Barn, Felix Neck Wildlife Sanctuary, Martha's Vineyard – September 10, 1994)

GEM OF AN ACADEMIC WOMAN

Laurel Richardson

My
facets
polished
reflect
decades of wisdom

Ground
Beveled
Deflawed
Registered
Certified
Purchased
Displayed in Hagerty Hall, Room 114 D
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2–3

Ivy climbs the walls.

COPING WITH INSTITUTIONAL DEPRESSION

Art Bochner

In 1989, Laurel Richardson attended her first meeting of the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction (SSSI), where she presented a paper that she later

published on "narrative knowing" (Richardson, 1990). "My goals were brash," she later acknowledged – "to move narrative to the center of sociology, and to position my work as the axis for the 'narrative turn'" (Richardson, 1997, p. 23). At the time, Laurel (1990, p. 25) saw herself as "a promising recruit" – not yet a player in the interpretive human sciences. Though what she wanted for sociology may have seemed audacious, what Laurel desired for herself was what most aspiring academics long for: "I wanted my ideas to circulate and I wanted to be cited" (p. 23). Like many of us, she felt that she needed the confirmation of the wider academic community (of sociologists). Thus, she attempted to write a definitive essay on narrative in the distanced voice of science, omitting any reference to her own life or her own self.

I attended my first SSSI meeting two years later. At that meeting, Carolyn Ellis and I gave a staged performance on the constraints of choice in abortion – what we would today regard as an autoethnographic performance (Ellis & Bochner, 1992). I had read Laurel's essay on "narrative and sociology," taken the narrative turn, and immersed myself in the work of the philosophers of history, language, and science from Thomas Kuhn to Donald Davidson and Richard Rorty. Laurel's essay had planted the seed for the development of non-alienating research practices by emphasizing the dual functions of narrative as both a way of knowing (a method) and a way of telling (a discursive practice); and as "a site of moral responsibility" (Richardson, p. 131). I had not yet met Laurel, but her essay gave me just the spark I needed.

The next step was clear. We didn't need more narrative theory; we needed narrative practices. In the field of anthropology Michael Jackson (1989, p. 4) was on the same wavelength, urging the need for researchers in the human sciences to "make ourselves experimental subjects and treat our experiences as primary data." Carolyn and I saw our performance as an exemplar of what the human sciences should be doing in the aftermath of the narrative turn and the challenges to venerable notions of truth and knowledge. We should be taking our readers and/or our audiences through a journey in which they develop an experiential sense of the events we are depicting and come away with a sense of what it must have felt like to live through what happened. Our work should attempt to produce "an experience of our experience" that would make it possible for readers/audiences to see the Other(s) in themselves or themselves in the Others (Ellis & Bochner, 1992). It should also provide an opportunity to reveal ourselves to ourselves, allowing or facilitating a perspective on our experience that we did not have before this narrative, autoethnographic inquiry.

Laurel went on to describe her turn toward narrative as a longing for forms of sociological expression in which she wouldn't have to suppress her own subjectivity, where she could become more attuned to the subjectively felt experiences of others, where she would feel free to reflect on the consequences of her work not only for others but also for herself, and where all parts of herself – emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and moral – could be voiced and integrated in her work, as it is in her life (Richardson, 1992).

Bravo!

I had my first of many important and cherished conversations with Laurel at the SSSI meeting in 1992. It turned out that we had much in common – a desire to become not only researchers but also writers; an aversion to the terminal tedium of traditional social science; a contempt for the academic politics of university departments and disciplinary boundaries; a resistance to the current and a need to swim against it; a love and admiration of eloquence, imagination, and heartaching, gut-wrenching, poignant personal narratives; and a strong, deeply considered belief in writing as method (Richardson, 1994).

Five years later, in *Fields of Play* (1997), Laurel exposed the kind of insidious departmental politics that hovers over vulnerable faculty members whose attempts to innovate or adopt unconventional research and writing practices can get them "buried" or "eaten-alive" (p. 186). Laurel's pain and rage is palpable as she paints a menacing and revolting picture of how life is lived in some large, elite sociology departments, where university administrators seek "to eliminate all obstacles to those whose will to power has met with success" (p. 212). Reading Laurel's account of her own experiences, and reflecting on my own, I reached the only plausible conclusion: universities are failing their faculties, and the faculties (of many departments) are failing each other (Bochner, 2014).

Our universities (and their departments) are not nurturing environments; they pay little or no attention to how their workers – the faculty and staff – feel, or to the reality of their private lives and the skills they need to negotiate the connections between academic and personal life. In many cases, as I discovered in May 2014, faculty do not exercise the practices and skills they teach to their undergraduate and graduate students. Consider, for example, my own department of communication. When faced with a divisive and potentially catastrophic conflict, nine faculty members declined an invitation to meet face-to-face with the Dean of the College and Chair of the department because, in their words, they were "suffering from exhaustion" and felt they did not need a meeting. Imagine that, a communication department in which a significant number of faculty members refuse to communicate with each other openly. I am reminded of Vivian Gornick's (1996, p. 135) explanation of the consequences of such actions: "Here at the university, the pain lingers. I cannot clear out. It is hard to heal. Because it is hard to heal I must defend myself: close off, grow scar tissue, thicken my hide. Speech becomes guarded. I give up expressiveness."

Stirred by Laurel's candid depiction of the marginalization she experienced in the "minefield" of the sociology department in which she worked, I felt compelled to rack my brain for a term that could capture the emotional fallout of a lifetime of university teaching and research. The term I chose was institutional depression, which I described as "a pattern of anxiety, hopelessness, demoralization, isolation, and disharmony that circulates through university life" (Bochner, 1997, p. 431). Normally we don't recognize its institutional form because we take for granted the

rules under which institutional depression operates, the rules that isolate faculty members from each other, and from their supervisors, while holding them (us) hostage to the satisfactions presumably derived from the model of solitary productivity that governs university life.

Why are there so many "dead souls" in the university? Shouldn't we be troubled by how few of us carry a passion for research and theory into our forties and fifties and sixties, and how many of us have lost the excitement and liveliness we once displayed? We've seen the casualties of an alienated workforce up close, etched on the blank faces of colleagues who caved in, gave up, and stopped caring. I think of it as a moral crisis, an epidemic of institutional depression. We turn the other cheek, keep quiet, pretend the crisis isn't there, but that doesn't make it go away. If you are a faculty member in a university department, you know what I'm talking about. You've seen or experienced the deep despair, loneliness, insecurity, and unhappiness that many academics experience in their institutional lives. Some of you, like me, have probably wondered why we university professors don't talk with each other about our institutional lives in self-critical and vulnerable ways. In the human sciences, we are supposed to be experts on indoctrination and control, yet we act as if we are baffled, unsuspecting, or oblivious to the norms of conformity and control that most of us learn when we are socialized into our disciplines.

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but this condition is not going away anytime soon, especially if we don't talk about it candidly. Instead of hiding the pain many of us feel about the ways we are unfulfilled by the life of the mind, we need to face up to the ways we use orthodox academic practices to discipline, control, and perpetuate ourselves and our traditions, thus stifling innovation, discouraging creativity, inhibiting criticism of our own institutional conventions, making it difficult to take risks, and severing academic life from emotional and spiritual life. We need to take seriously what Laurel Richardson's body of contributions to the human sciences suggests: a need for different goals than the ones we were socialized to seek in graduate school and as young professors; different styles and forms of research and writing; and different ways of bringing the academic and the personal into conversation with each other, a more human science that can contribute something good to the world and one in which we can ourselves work more authentically and purposefully.

When I was a graduate student, I was told that a discipline is "a community of scholars" searching for the truth in a circumscribed domain of collective concern. My professors promoted the idea that a discipline was a constantly evolving community of conversation, deliberation, and inquiry. As a human group, a community of scholars was supposed to do something more than protect the status quo. After all, one's discipline would not remain the same over time. Today's graduate students shape tomorrow's future. What a discipline could become was as important as what it had been in the past. A community of scholars was supposed to be a dynamic society

respectful of its past and its traditions but pointed toward the future, not just "being" but also "becoming" – renewing and reinventing itself, staking out opportunities to expand its mission and scope of influence.

People like me, professors socialized into this ideal image of a university miss the closeness and companionship we once experienced with colleagues whom we regarded as good friends. We are appalled by the failure of the university, which includes all of us, to be aware of itself as a social organism and we resent the absence of a relational consciousness in today's "modern" university, one aimed at encouraging a devotion to the time and effort necessary to build good relationships and concentrate attention on the human level of social and emotional bonds among colleagues (Tompkins, 1996). Perhaps it's already too late. The die has been cast in the opposite direction. Too frequently, university departments form a crust covering an accumulation of wounds, hostilities, and rivalries that continue to bubble below the surface – sometimes for years – because they were never dealt with openly when they appeared. Perhaps it's already too late. We have come to exist in what Tompkins called "an elsewhere of print, phone, fax, and e-mail" (1996, p. 187). And the situation is worse now that it was eighteen years ago when she bemoaned the absence of closeness and companionship in the university. Nobody is minding the store, Tompkins (1996) complained, because they no longer believe it is important to establish good relationships with the colleagues with whom they occupy a common workspace. If you believe that the university is not the place to seek any sort of emotional or spiritual fulfillment then you have no incentive to engage in social and emotional housekeeping.

Take the temperature of your own department. What do you make of the atmosphere, of the emotional climate, of its rhythm, of its soul? Do people talk meaningfully to each other? How many of your colleagues have read your recent work and commented on or talked to you about it? Are your untenured professors on the tenure track (but not yet tenured) invited to meetings in which they are expected or tacitly induced not to speak their minds freely? Do you believe they feel safe and sufficiently secure to grow and become their best selves? Do you ever discuss how narrowed and limited you are by the institutional norms of productivity that militate against giving attention to one's emotional and personal life, or to cultivating one's imagination and/or spiritual life? Do you share a common purpose with your colleagues? Look around the table at your next department meeting and tell yourself what you see. Is what you observe something akin to a collection of disembodied minds? Doesn't this make you sad? Do you think, as I do, that in the human sciences, we ought to privilege the ideal of becoming a more integrated person?

If these questions bother you, don't blame me. They might never have occurred to me if I hadn't had the pleasure of a friendship with Laurel Richardson and a deep appreciation for the wisdom conveyed by her many published works.

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PERMISSION FOR UNTIMELY WRITING

Mona Livholts

Autumn arrives while I write this text. It is dark in the morning when I leave my flat and walk in haste down the road to catch the subway. During this short walk I pass the park with the green area that I love so much. I notice the sound of autumn; the swishing of leafs under my shoes, breathing clear 'high' air. Since a few years back, like so many people, I commute, and I find how regular movements in travelling spaces transform my bodily self, shaping a sense of multiple becomings by the rhythm of human bodies moving in the same direction.

The sound of feet
Against the stone floor at the central station
Through the movements of bodies
I stretch my bodily self
On my way to train-writing

Since the invitation from the Permission project arrived I found it challenging to choose what to write about from the rich and creative body of work of Laurel Richardson. However, the thoughts about the influence of Richardson's writing that kept reoccurring were first of all the thought provoking and wise questions: 'How do the specific circumstances in which we write affect what we write? How does what we write affect who we become?' (1997: 1) These questions that Richardson wrote nearly twenty years ago have stayed with me ever since I first read them. She suggested that they were timely and timeless questions. I would like to add that to me they are also 'untimely' questions that helped to pave way for what I today call 'untimely academic novella writing.'

It was in the late 1990s when I wrote my dissertation, analysing the category of women in state investigations and Nordic welfare state research (Livholts, 2001/2011) that I became convinced that ways in which academic wrote their texts had implications for the becoming of academic selves. At that time I must admit that this was a frightening thought that I only shared with a few colleagues. I began to photograph the university architecture and to think about the relation between wording and textual shaping and architectural creating of writing selves.

I used mainly memory work and inspirations from novellas and I wrote different endings to my dissertation: one consisting of memories from academic and personal life and another including a 'traditional' ending, a theatre ending and a letter ending. This developed into a thinkingwriting methodology that refused the literary science divide and developed into what Richardson (1994) named 'writing as a method of inquiry.'

Regardless of the resistance towards this kind of writing, I had become convinced that to learn more about inequality, power and social justice there was a need to create new textual representation. The visualisation of the university building, corridors, rooms and furniture, spoke a language that I had not been able to formulate in writing before.

Looking back it is obvious that the thinkingwriting methodology I developed in my dissertation opened up a field of inquiry that I have been committed to ever since. As mentioned earlier genre-transgressive textual and visual scholarly narrative writing that I have engaged in during later years is called 'untimely academic novella writing' (Livholts, 2010a, 2010b, 2013).

Although the becoming of untimely writing is theoretically inspired by a range of authors such as Cixous and Perkins Gilman, and uses a variety of writing strategies, the questions Laurel Richardson wrote and the moment I read them was decisive for me to find courage to develop my work.

Becoming an untimely writer has created a life of movement and changes – wanted and unwanted, expected and unexpected. Because my work was 'different' than the mainstream there was no one place or location, but many and increasingly interdisicplinary environments. This led to changes of my geographical location and for my children, it created opportunities as a guest in different environments; also, for a long time it became an obstacle for recognition of academic merit. What I find most interesting is that the writing of untimely academic novellas has infused a sense of becoming that allows me to watch and reflexively engage in positions of writing, reading and living. Indeed, how I write shapes what is possible to know and who I become. In one of my untimely academic novellas (Livholts, 2013: 181) I write the following:

> I realize I have been writing novellas over a period of ten years, which have actually led to creating a life story rather than documenting it. Writing the novellas has, over time, infused an untimely element into my life. The writing and the text accompany me when I walk the streets of this small city, which I

> often do. I feel that my life is shaped by the existence of the novella, as if I am both that woman in the text striving for the chair and at the same time watching this story.

I nowadays think I have a lot in common with designers, architects and artists and much of the awakening interests from readers of my work come from those areas. In March 2008 I founded the international interdisciplinary research network RAW, The Network for Reflexive Academic Writing Methodologies, which constitute a space for scholars with an interest in a variety of writing methodologies, and edited the volume *Emergent Writing Methodologies in Feminist Studies* (Livholts, 2012) with contributions from members in the network. Last week I arranged a writing workshop with students in social work and in December I am part of arranging two seminars on writing, one in collaboration with designers and one with psychologists and psychotherapists. Every time I engage in writing sessions it is so exciting, because writing take so many shapes and expressions and open up for learning and understanding the complexity of social life, power and social relations in an increasingly globalised world.

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1999

Synthia Sydnor

I discern your iconography
forehead then fingertips
your scapular shining translucent
proclaiming in the darkened liturgy
your yawning boredom.

Your disheveled methodology
opposes apostolic succession
cries at academic miasma
so I quote Peguy
can a woman continue to live once God has set eyes on her?

I confess
Writing: A Method of Inquiry meant something
your tortured hand reciting a vocation
drawn by illegitimacies
graced with new ruins.

PERMISSIONS FOR WOM*N

Elizabeth Mackinlay

After: Woolf, V. (2008). Professions for women. In D. Bradshaw (Ed.), *Virginia Woolf: Selected Essays* (pp. 140–145). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

But to tell you my story – it is a modest and naïve one. You have only got to imagine yourselves a wom*n in the ivory tower with mind, body and heartlines bursting with the fullness of theory, experience and emotion that is writing. I see her standing there and wonder whether she is locked in that lofty turret or locked out of a post beyond her but for now we have to only concern ourselves with what it is that she must do. She had only to craft those heartlines into an academic paper; a publication in a high-ranking journal would suffice – from beginning to end, introduction to conclusion, and life to death. Then it occurred to her to do what is simple and economical enough after all – to write from those heartlines, to write her body, herself as wom*n and slip a few of those pages into her article, quickly tap out a letter to editor, and email it away into the deep dark ether with hope as its companion. It was thus that once my heartlines began to flow that I came to call myself a feminist academic; and my effort was rewarded on the first day of the following academic year – a very glorious day it was for me – as I watched my Q-index grow and bibliographic data collection expand exponentially. But to show you how little I knew about what it meant to be

called a feminist academic, how little I know of the struggles and difficulties of such lives, I have to admit that instead of taking heed of those around me who insisted I was too bold in daring to bite the hand that fed me, I continued to write my body, write myself, write the heartlines on my hand. Words became whimsical images became rhyme became public performances, which very soon involved me in bitter disputes with those whom I would not wish to call friends.

What could be easier than to write your body, write yourself, and write the heartlines? But wait a moment. Articles have to be something – something quite particular if you write as an academic, and even more so if you are a wom*n. My writing, had become insistent, refusing to be anything other than the heartlines but I soon discovered that if I were going to write as a feminist academic, I should need to do battle with a certain spectre. And the spectre was a wom*n masquerading as not-wom*n, not writing her body, not writing herself or her heartlines. I observed her day in and day out, falling into step with the procession of academic men in front of her, not daring to walk to a beat of her own making because they were behind her too. The monotonous pacing saw her shift shape in mind, body and spirit and I watched in horror as she became that which she had always professed she would not. The heartlines stopped flowing, her skin began to pale and flake, the light in her eyes was replaced by a dull ache, and her voice had become but a fleeting shadow. When I came to know her better I likened her after the heroine of a famous poem, The Angel in the House, except this wom*n was a Cherub in praise of the Masters in the Academy.

It was this Cherub, Angel, spectre – call her what you will but know that she is always a refusal – who used to come between me and my writing. I can hardly believe that I once felt sorry for her but it was she who bothered me and wasted my time and so tormented me that at last I killed her. I will describe her as briefly as I can. She was immensely smart but was always proudly careful not to conceal it. She was intensely supportive, particularly of those men she saw herself in servitude to. She put herself across as utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of office politics and baking cakes for staff birthdays. She sacrificed herself daily. If there was a committee she put her hand up to be on it and she always made sure she tidied up the action items with her trusty tea towel; if there was a course that needed teaching or work to do on weekends, she made sure to be made she did both and 100% more without complaint – in short she was so constituted that she never had a mind or a wish of her own, but preferred to acquiesce always with the minds and wishes of the Masters in the Academy. Above all – I need not say it – she was uncontaminated by the heartlines in her hand, her mind, her body, her writing was clean and the Masters applauded her. Her concentration, clarity and commitment to the Masters were her chief beauty – her blushes, her great grace, and the measure of her worth. Then and now every department, every School, every Faculty have their Angels.

And when I came to write myself as a feminist academic, I encountered her with the very first words. I felt her vice-like presence squeezing and closing my throat;

the shadow of her crumbling wings fell on my page; I heard the creak and groan of shoulder pads, starched skirts and stilettos as she silently stalked me. I jumped as she slipped behind my chair and placed her clammy hand on my shoulder. I felt her sour and rotting breath on my neck as she began to whisper: "My dear you are a young wom*n. You are writing an article for the academy. You would do well to remember that patriarchy – dominator culture of the white, imperial, capitalist kind is your Master in this tower. He pays your wage, opens the door for your publications and allows you to be promoted. Be sympathetic; be tender; flatter; deceive; use all the arts and wiles of our sex. Never let anybody guess that you have a mind of your own. Above all, be clean." And without warning, she made as if to wash my mouth out with soap, her fingers scraping, scratching, feverishly trying to cleanse the f-word from my tongue. I bite down hard and feel the crush of bones; blood, sweat and tears burning like acid and buying enough time for something more. I admit now it is with relish that I turned around and smashed her hard on the side of her head with an open hand. How much easier it would have been if I had a hammer in my possession. I did my best to kill her. My excuse, if I were to be charged with a crime, would be that I acted in self-defence. Had I not killed her she would have killed me. She would have plucked the heart out of my writing. I call her she but in that moment I saw her for who and what she was, an ideology, a discourse and a praxis which detested the likes of me.

Don't be fooled, she did not die easily, and I cannot be sure even now that she is gone for good. Whenever I sense her presence, the stale stench of patriarchy she exudes, the sinister sounds of domination she ushers in or the whisper of her wings that would wash me and my sisters away, I once more pick up whatever heavy implement I have at my disposal and fling it at her. She has a nasty habit of always creeping back, the blood and bruises she bears from the last assault a beacon of hope for those like me. It is far harder to kill a spectre than a reality, and the Academy is full of hallowed halls with goal posts that keep shifting. The struggle is severe and it is bound to befall all feminist academics at some time. I raise my fist in the air and see the heartlines in my hand pounding; we are at war and killing this Cherub has become my obsession. What will remain after the Angel is dead? I cannot know, indeed you cannot know either, but such a crime is worth the freedom to begin searching for the room we may call our own in writing.

AGAINST THE GRAIN

Elaine Speight-Burton

Taking my inspiration from Laurel Richardson (as I have for much of my thesis!), I have written the following short piece that draws its inspiration from my narrative knowing and uses poetic forms to examine the consequences to my sense of self and to my professional identity as an ALL practitioner, of performing work that goes against the grain.

In Australia, the work of 'transitioning' students into their new academic discourse communities generally falls to specialist units charged with the task of making visible the conventions, practices, requirements and cultures of the disciplines. I am employed as a language and academic skills advisor, one of those 'para-professionals' deployed by higher education institutions to work with students to improve their learning outcomes in the disciplines. Although we have a focus on developing students' academic literacies in the broader sense of learning, much of my work is concerned with supporting students to successfully complete their written assignments. In the main, these one-on-one consultations, as they are called, mean seeing one student at a time, for one assessment at a time. Sometimes it is the student who self-refers to the service, sometimes it is the lecturer who refers a student and sometimes it is the 'system' that identifies a student for referral. In any of these cases, attendance is voluntary. My use of the term 'para-professionals' then is both a deliberate provocation to views in the field of academic language and learning (ALL), that see us as 'coming of age as a profession' (Percy, 2011), as it is a knowledge claim, based on my lived experiences of working as an ALL practitioner in a place we might wish to term 'the modernised university' (White, 2012).

against the grain
my work goes
against the grain
I teach students
how to do things
with words [here]
but I am troubled by
how words do things to us

I work with difference in order to
assimilate it,
to align it to the main
I fit the student
to the discipline by deferring my work
to the authority of the 'discipline expert'

It is women's work, housework, invisible work
we are a gendered profession
a caring profession
always behind the action,
and always in response to
someone else's concerns
we clean up
other people's academic mess
so we can

outcome the student
and quality assure the brand

now we work
in 15 minute
face-to-face
writing ‘consultations’
so we can
up the numbers
extend the reach
show we count

we say we
socialise
enculturate
accommodate
but we work to
indoctrinate
inculcate
the student
one by one
one after one

why do I
do unto others
what was done to me?
this is
my own triple crisis of
legitimation
representation
and ethicality

These are the politics of my location, the times and spaces in which ‘I’ am set. Like Richardson, I write about my lived experiences in that place we call ‘the academy.’ And I use writing as a method of inquiry to re-cognise who I am and who I am allowed to be.

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CHAPTER 10

ON THE FRONTLINE: FROM ACADEMIC FREEDOM TO ACADEMIC CAPITALISM

Diane Reay

For the first decade of the 2000s I was a member of FAAB – Feminists against Academic Bollocks. We wrote satirical sketches, sang and danced, tried to embody innovative forms of resistance to the academic status quo, and gave conference performances. In part, this was about performance as reclaiming a feminist identity, but it was also centrally about what is legitimated and delegitimated in the academy, and the gendering and classing of the academic persona.

One of the songs we sang to the lyrics of Gloria Gaynor's 'I will survive' started:

> At first we were feminists, we were organised
> Then we entered academia and were atomised
> But then we spent so many nights
> cursing how you did us wrong
> And we grew strong
> And we learned how to get along
> But now they're back
> From outer space
> With neoliberal ways
> that put sad looks upon our face
> We need to change the way we work
> We need to make more of a fuss

Well we haven't made nearly enough of a fuss! And it is neoliberal ways rather than feminisms that have got stronger.

The Neo-Liberal University

For the last three decades scholarship in British universities has been increasingly under threat from theories and practices conceived in American business schools and management consulting firms. The main corollary of positioning higher education as a private investment is that there is little commitment, either in Government policy, or the public imagination, to Higher Education as a public good. This onslaught of privatization within the university sector is not just about turning a university education from a public entitlement into a private investment, it is also an attack on the University as a public institution.

There has been a creeping privatization of higher education over the last thirty years, resulting in over a third of universities out-sourcing aspects of their work, from the running of their student residences to the maintenance of their buildings.

However, now we are facing more far reaching privatization of many university services. The stated objective, 'greater efficiency' is yet another spurious means to open up the university sector to what is termed 'the free market.' However, the

two main consequences are the transformation of a public institution into a source of profit for many private firms, and a shift in the main focus of academia from teaching and learning to marketing.

Just as insidious is the conversion of knowledge into something to be sold, traded and consumed. We no longer have independent knowledge underpinned by academic freedom, but a knowledge economy where the value of knowledge is decided by political elites on the basis of its utility to them. The result is that we have seen the death of universities as centres of critique. Rather, the role of academia has become one of servicing the status quo rather than challenging it in the name of justice, human flourishing, freedom of thought or alternative visions of the future.

Recent funding changes are yet another nail in the coffin of the public university and a critical questioning academia. If we need evidence of how far academia in the UK has progressed along the road towards full blown academic capitalism the following facts from an article by George Monbiot (2009) provide telling evidence:

- The Medical Research Council is run by a billionaire arms manufacturer
- The Natural Environment Council is run by the head of a large construction company
- The Higher Education Funding Council is run by the chairman of a real estate firm
- Oxford University has a Rupert Murdoch Professorial Chair of Language and Communications

However, as well as adopting the worst of current neoliberal capitalism, academia has retained the worst of its elitist past. It is a territory which is heavily discursively policed; where, for example, the prevailing hegemony means modernist statements that assert gender and class inequality can be discounted as simplistic, reeking of old discredited metanarratives. The ruling principles which guide all hegemonies; namely that they present elite interests as everyone's interests are rarely made explicit and challenged.

Consequences for Academic Work

Between 2004 and 2010 the total number of students in UK universities increased by 9%. Over the same period the number of HE managers working in finance, marketing, widening participation, human resources, student services and quality assurance increased by 33%. Within contemporary HE professional judgement has largely been replaced by the wholesale importation of micro-management practices of audit, inspection, monitoring, efficiency and value for money.

But over the past decade we have also seen the invasion of impact. UK academia has been captured by the impact agenda in which the usefulness of academic research is judged against its wider social and economic usefulness. But usefulness is contingent upon relations of power. Useful research is all too often that which those with the power to make judgments believe is valuable to their interests. While

impact is increasingly seen as necessary, natural, self-evident and unquestionable, I would argue that it is being socially and historically constructed to serve the interests of British elites. They can now control the focus and type of research conducted. The risks for research that is critical of policy and the status quo, are self-evident.

Alongside an insidious, creeping control of academic work we have rampant casualization. Fourteen years ago I wrote a paper called 'Dim dross' (Reay, 2000), outlining the low status and poor working conditions of junior researchers. Despite campaigning at the level of the union and through professional associations, nothing has changed. There is now an even wider gulf between academic labour and academic capital. Subordinate workers, overwhelmingly women, service those who generate academic capital, overwhelmingly men. The appropriation of one's intellectual labour remains a constant hazard for research staff, becoming a normative, routine practice within the academy. Junior research staff are vital to the professional status and career advancement of grant holders (academics on stable contracts). There is a clear process of intellectual extraction in which the labours of research staff both in the field and outside of it are converted into both academic and symbolic capital, which accrue to the project directors rather than the researcher.

According to HESA (n.d.) 43% of teaching staff and 68% of research-only staff are on fixed term contracts in the UK. Only the catering and residential care industries employ a higher proportion of fixed-term contract workers. However, we are now seeing a new deeper form of exploitation in UK higher education – zero hours contracts – where scholars go hungry (Grove, 2013) as a result of casualisation,

The University and College Union estimated in July 2013 (University and College Union, 2013) that 47 per cent of 'teaching-only' contracts are zero-hours contracts, which offer workers no certainty on their hours or income. The consequence is that without guaranteed income, academics on zero-hours contracts are unable to make financial or employment plans on a year-to-year or even month-to-month basis and can be driven to resort to 'bin diving.' Zero-hours contracts generate a loss of professional dignity alongside a loss of voice for staff, and are part of a trend towards increasing numbers of badly paid, unheard, insecure and overworked staff. In a Guardian article, teaching and research associates spoke of 'never knowing that they will have enough to survive' (Swain, 2013).

Conclusion

The UK academic status quo over the last 30 years has been one that increasingly valorizes the entrepreneurial competitive individual but, with the growing importance of economic and political impact, it has also become a culture that rewards and sanctions compliance and conformity and, moral as well as professional, flexibility.

So what has happened to 'the community of scholars' in the new managerialist era? I suggest that it has been reconfigured as an upper echelon of elite, mainly male, academics serviced by an army of casualised teaching, research and administrative

staff, a poor shadow of what a community should be. And do I have any solutions? Apart from trying to speak out about these developments, I am afraid not. I feel as complicit and compromised as many other academics are feeling. FAAB, the Feminist Collective I mentioned at the beginning, often ended performances with this short poem from Adrienne Rich. I think it encapsulates a very important message for all of us ensnared in contemporary neoliberal academia:

> If not with Others, How?
> If I am not for myself, who will be for me?
> If I am only for myself, what am I?
> If not now, when?
> If not with others, how?
>
> Adrienne Rich – Reprinted from *Blood, Bread and Poetry* (New York; W.W. Norton, 1986)

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CHAPTER 11

TRAIL BLAZING

This book has examined how Laurel Richardson's writing has influenced so many other academics in different countries at the various levels of the highly stratified university environment. Opening up scholarly writing frontiers and stepping around the rule-following tendencies of academia has been the major legacy that Laurel has left for others to take up. This book is testimony to the permission that others have taken from her work and applied to their own. In these evidence-based and metrics-obsessed times, the surprising number of scholars who opted to participate in this project provides evidence about Laurel Richardson's impact on the scholarly work of others. Impact has increasingly been measured by university-employers using the narrow tools supplied by for-profit publishing houses. But quantification isn't the only means of verification and impact has proved a somewhat slippery concept. Traditional understandings of what counts for scholarship, however, is still pretty clear. Academics have responsibilities as public intellectuals. Fazal Rizvi draws from the work of Edward Said to argue that these responsibilities involve:

> Raising embarrassing questions publicly, confronting orthodoxy and dogma, avoiding cooption by government or corporations, and most importantly, representing the people and issues usually forgotten or hidden. (2008, p. 120)

The project of writing this book – and as time went on, managing and organising the work of others – confirms my first thoughts when I encountered Laurel Richardson's work and how academics reacted to her in Melbourne more than ten years ago. She has continued to speak up and speak back – more often than not – about unspeakable topics. And she has spoken in a clear and unequivocal voice. And this has been done with a sharp edge, often accompanied by humour and generosity. Laurel has successfully communicated and connected to many others, by publishing thoughtful writing that possesses great clarity. The impact of her work has indeed been significant.

It was with some trepidation that I sent the not-yet-finished book off to Distinguished Professor Carolyn Ellis, another trailblazer in the contemporary ethnography field. I wanted to gauge how the book would be received and knew she would provide a genuine response. Carolyn wrote warmly and openly about her long-term friendship and her personal and professional relationship with Laurel. I decided that this piece serves to pull the book together, which is why it sits alone in this chapter.

CHAPTER 11

BLAZING TRAILS

Carolyn Ellis

> I am a storyteller, for better and for worse. I suspect that a feeling for stories, for narrative, is a universal human disposition, going with our powers of language, consciousness of self, and autobiographical memory. (Oliver Sacks, 2015, p. 382)

> And it is this that we mean when we say a life matters: That it has come from someplace and it goes to someplace. And thereby a mending, a fundamental healing takes place when a story is told and heard. (Barbara Myerhoff, 2007, p. 19)

It is storming, really storming outside our mountain cabin, so bad that our oversized gutters are overflowing, the water is running down our driveway like a creek and threatening to enter our garage, and I see evidence of the mountainside eroding as I type. Water pelts the windows in sheets. Talk about vulnerability; the magnificent elements are winning.

Yet I am cozy in our cabin, reading *Permission* and writing this contribution about Laurel, happy to be doing something meaningful that celebrates Laurel, my friend, colleague, and mentor. Laurel has never been to our log cabin, though we frequently talk about her visiting. I know she would like our mountain home and experience it, as do I, as a writing sanctuary and an invitation to immerse herself in nature, admire the flowers and trees, take long mountain walks, and watch the sunsets on our deck over wine and food at day's end. It would be fascinating to watch her take it in. I make a note to encourage her to visit.

Do you feel the love? If not yet, you will once you sink your eyes, mind, and heart into the warm and caring notes making up this volume. I know that Julie White wrote about Laurel "the writer," not Laurel the person, or friend, and that this book is not a biography about her life. But many contributors – myself included – well, we just can't help ourselves. When we think of Laurel the writer, we think of Laurel in all the ways we relate to her. Her roles merge and generate embodied heartful connections to our feelings about her. We appreciate all she is and acknowledge the permission she has given us to write from our hearts, speak our minds, and experiment with creative analytic practices. Having just finished reading *Permission* then, I'm feeling a bit schmaltzy toward Laurel, my long-time friend and colleague.

I also feel grateful for and empowered by the other contributors to this book. The tributes are evidence of our flourishing community of interpretive, qualitative, autoethnographic, and feminist scholars. I feel proud of us, that we are in this together, thinking and feeling similarly, committed to doing what we can to humanize the university, research and writing, insisting on making life as good as we can, even as we transgress and resist the barriers that stand in our way.

I am thrilled to realize how many people love and admire Laurel as I do, and have learned from her as I have. Though many of us know Laurel in different ways, the same words repeat in multiple contributions. These echoes are in themselves a found poem about Laurel. Poems are not my forte, but Laurel beckons me to try. "Come on," she says, "have the 'nerve of failure.'"

***

How do we know we know? Laurel asks.
Eyes twinkle, tall, elegant,
Gentle soul, humble, and confident, quiet voice, good listener
self-protective and generous,
fiercely intelligent,
striding confidently, bigger than life,
haunting presence
Inspiring
Friend, mentor, and colleague.

Gift giver
of peace, providing a place to go forward
She freed me, gave me confidence, helped me find my voice,
A gracious and generous mentor, she showed us how to
dig deep,
take risks,
She invited us to possibility,
opened spaces,
blazed the trail.

Permission giver
She showed us how to
become our own gatekeepers,
seek the truth,
be ourselves.
It is okay, she says, to be in your skin, to be just you, be bold,
step out-of-line, maintain a sense of unknowing, and carve your own path.

In writing herself Laurel also writes me.
She is the rock I stand on,
She teaches me to have the nerve of failure.

***

As I read these words, I nod my head repeatedly. Yes, yes.

Suddenly I stop reading and send Laurel an email that says:

I received "Permission" yesterday and didn't mean to read it yet, but couldn't resist. I am enjoying seeing you from all these perspectives, finding out new

> things, remembering old. Mainly I wanted to say that I am engrossed in your life as viewed by others, remembering how important you have been/are to me in the process. Love you, dear Laurel.

As typical in our long relationship, Laurel responds with love and gratitude, and news of her life. She and I met in 1989 at the Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction (SSSI) Stone Symposium in Tempe, Arizona. I gave a paper on "Introspective Research in the Lived Experience of Emotions" and she delivered one on "Narrative and Sociology." We were both relatively new to SSSI meetings, and we recognized each other as kindred spirits interested in emotions, lived experience, and storytelling. After that we were inseparable at the many sociology and symbolic interaction conferences we went to together. Then in 2006, we both began attending the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry and that became an annual meeting place. In between conferences we frequently met at St. Petersburg Beach.

Thinking about our long history, I feel peaceful and calm in spite of the storm outside my window. Laurel has that effect. She helps put things in perspective whether it's a bad review, a difficult conclusion, an exclusion, a department gone crazy, or water pouring over my gutters. She's always there to help, coach, and celebrate, during a walk around a college campus, on the beach, or over wine and dinner.

Wondering how I could ever write to expresses all I feel and all I want to say, I type "Laurel," and then "Richardson" into my Microsoft start search box to get some ideas. A long list of files appears. If I ever doubted her reciprocal influence on my life and work – which I haven't – here it is in black and white. Reviews of my books and hers, in progress and after they are published; letters of recommendation and introductions we wrote for awards; sessions organized to discuss each other's work; email upon email, most sharing our lives, talking about loss and love, admitting secrets, admiring our dogs, exchanging work in its various drafts, editing each other's latest articles, making arrangements to get together in St. Pete on the beach or at conferences, seeking advice from each other and giving it, figuring out what we might do at the next conference, planning meals and walks, celebrating each other's achievements and offering comfort in our trials and disappointments.

I enjoy reviewing, revisioning, and reminiscing about our past together through rereading these many documents. One in particular catches my attention. Laurel wrote a supporting letter when I was nominated for a major distinction at my university. When the Provost presented the award, the only line he used from the five letters of recommendation came from Laurel's text. He read, "One reviewer tellingly connects the scholarship of Dr. Ellis to the reputation of USF when she writes that the 'productivity, visibility, depth, and originality' of Dr. Ellis's scholarship has allowed USF to 'become the premiere university for graduate students interested in pursuing qualitative research methods.' Laurel knows how to write a clincher sentence. In response to her letter, I wrote to Laurel that it was clear from all the insights included

there that she understood me and my work better than I did. As happens frequently in our relationship, I come to know myself better through Laurel's words.

Laurel has been one of my muses, as we experimented over the years with writing and storytelling, form and function, personal essays and autoethnography, vulnerability and emotionality, transgressing and carving new paths. Similar to most in this volume, I do not feel I could have done the work I did without Laurel beside and in front of me. Similar to others, I have felt stronger and more willing to take risks because of her. Our relationship has had a synergistic effect – way more than the sum of its parts.

Similar to how she has assisted others in this volume, she also has helped me to negotiate life passages. She often puts words to my thoughts and feelings, and I find myself following in her footsteps of experience. Now she is immersed in "doing pro bono work" as she calls retirement, and this phase is not all that distant in my life. I find myself eagerly seeking information about what it's like, how she does it, what I can expect, and how to do it well. Though we are not in touch as often now as we have been through the years, Laurel and I still check in and meet when we can, honoring the quieter phase we both seem to have entered. When we are in touch, our connection feels deep and we seem to pick up wherever we left off. As Sacks (2015) says in a recent article entitled "Sabbath," at this later stage of life he finds his thoughts increasingly on "what is meant by living a good and worthwhile life – achieving a sense of peace within oneself." I sense that too. No doubt Laurel does as well, especially after reading the entries in this evocative book that Julie While has lovingly and generously put together.

The storm is over now, the air smells fresh, and the sun is shining brightly, promising possibilities for hiking later in the day. I feel as though I just had a long visit with Laurel. Actually not only with Laurel, but with many of the people – colleagues, elder states people, long-ago students, mid-career academics, new professors, and graduate students – who have been inspired by her, and now inspire others. It was a good visit, one that will sustain and stay with me for a long while, and has me excited for more trail blazing.

LAUREL RICHARDSON

AFTERWORD

One of the major bounties in my life has been my decade long relationship with Dr. Julie White, the author, and "curator" of this book.

Her ideas have a way of becoming realities.

In 2005, Julie emailed asking if I she could nominate me for the Miegunyah Distinguished Fellowship at the University of Melbourne. I was intrigued by the genuineness of Julie's "voice" in that email. I emailed, "yes," and included a list of my wishes – business level flights, housing and food, of course, a reasonable work-load, and a studio for my husband, Ernest, who had taken up painting after his retirement. Like a domestic cat, I have a habit of asking for what I want.

Julie does, too, I think. What a lot of chutzpah for an untenured faculty member to ask that the most distinguished fellowship that Melbourne Uni confers be offered to a person (me) embodying a host of diminished statuses: qualitative sociologist, woman, social-justice feminist. But her nomination of me was accepted and all my requests were more than met. My husband and I were housed in a large apartment on college grounds; Ernest had a studio on campus; and my work-load was fun and interesting for me – workshops with the artist community, dinner with royalty, sessions with graduate students, work with Aboriginal doctoral students, seminars on writing and feminist-theory. My public lecture, "Writing for Your Life," brought Aussies from inside and outside the academy. I still receive emails from some of the attendees.

Perhaps, most important, though, were the hours that Julie and I spent together on and off campus. Our discussions were wide-ranging covering Australian customs, issues, policies and politics, educational opportunities, accommodations for the physically challenged (which my husband had become while we were in Oz), and prices of stuff. We also played. We shopped. We ate. The best meal I have ever had in my life was the one I had at Julie's house. We rode the tram. We walked. We pushed our way into the queue-less coffee shops. Julie ordered "regular" for herself and "American" for me. Hers was creamy-white and mine smooth and black.

Our ten-year long colleagueship and friendship, thus, began on Julie's turf and brought me into communities and ways of knowing from which I have been greatly enriched.

After Australia, our friendship continued to deepen. Julie came to Worthington, Ohio (flyover country) where I live and I stocked creamer for her to put in her coffee. We took trips to Chicago, St. Petersburg Beach, Florida, and most importantly to the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry (ICQI) at the University of Illinois (more flyover country). We became frequent Skype-Mates. Indeed, she is the only

person with whom I routinely Skype. Enduring collegial relationships depend upon both academic and personal connections.

During one of our face-to-face get-togethers, she noted that many others in our qualitative community cited my writings. She asked if I would be interested in her writing a book about how my work gave "permission" to others to do their chosen work. I think I said something noncommittal like, "That would be very nice." But I thought it a pipe dream.

But Julie wasn't smoking. She went to work. She enlisted the support of the Victoria Institute for Education, Diversity and Lifelong Learning, where she holds a research position; she wrote a book proposal, Permission, for the Sense series on "Innovations and Controversies: Interrogating Education Change;" she wrote a general call for short submissions for publication in Permission to the delegates at ICQI and other qualitative researchers; and she asked me for names of possible contributors.

Once again, the timbre and tone of Julie's voice worked: she enlisted institutional and collegial support for the project. She is not a pipe dreamer. One glance at her Curriculum Vita convinces. Her career exemplifies the application of knowledge for social change. She researches fair-access to education for everyone – regardless of race, gender, class, sexuality, or physical ability. She has connected-the-dots between the child with chronic illness whose educational needs are ignored or underserved and the academic with a chronically socially-denigrated heritage. She champions creative approaches that not only transgress limiting disciplinary rules but reach and affect policy makers. She connects scholarship to action. She turns her ideas into realities.

The reality for me, now, is to finish this afterward.

I read the pre-galleys of Julie White's *Permission: The International Interdisciplinary Impact of Laurel Richardson's work*.

My heart pounds. I smile. Laugh. Tear up. Just think! I was – and am – that Laurel Richardson. I go to sleep with Gratitude.

And I have a dream. I am walking behind a long-line of other walkers on a walkway. They stretch way-out in front of me. But I want to move at a different pace, faster than they are. I notice that there is plenty of room on the left-side of the walkway. I get out of line and start running, faster and faster, passing many who have chosen to walk more slowly to stay in line. Then I am nearing what I understand to be the finish line, I notice another runner. He crosses the finish-line an ankle ahead of me. But that doesn't matter. There are no ribbons, here, no cheering crowds. No external rewards. Winning doesn't matter.

What mattered was finding my own pace, following my own path, enjoying the run.

When I wake up, my body energized from its late-night long-distance running, I realize that I had "dreamt" the words of appreciation I want to write to Julie White and the fifty-two contributors to this book. Julie's generosity, feminist rigor, and intellectual acumen brought this book into being. Reading about how its contributors

have found their paths and paces – and how I may have helped them with that – has given me permission to accept the bounties of my life.

Thanks!

And, you have given me the energy to complete a book I've been writing for thirty-five years. Its working title is *Seven Minutes from Home: An American Daughter's Story*. I age, the built-environment is unbuilt and rebuilt, cultural pegs splinter. But I am still here.

Writing for my life.

Like you.

Laurel Richardson
October 28, 2015
Worthington, Ohio
U.S.A.

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Larry Russell has conducted for fifteen years, an ethnography of pilgrim experience on the roads of New Mexico where people have gone for healing at a shrine in

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Pat Sikes is Professor in Qualitative Inquiry at the School of Education at the University of Sheffield. Pat's preoccupations are with developing and using ethical qualitative, particularly narrative auto/biographical, approaches to explore and re-present lives. Recent work includes a study (with Heather Piper) of the perceptions and experiences of male school teachers accused of sexual misconduct with female students which they say they did not commit and of which they have eventually been cleared. Pat is just starting a project looking at what it is like for under 25 year olds to have a parent with dementia. She is also looking at doctoral examiners' 'bad' experiences!

Brett Smith leads the psycho-social health and wellbeing strand within the Peter Harrison Centre for Disability Sport at Loughborough University, UK. His research and teaching interests concern disability, qualitative methods, and narrative inquiry. He *is Editor of the international journal Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise, & Health*, *Associate Editor of Psychology of Sport & Exercise, and actively serves on eight editorial boards*. Brett is co-author of the book *Qualitative Research Methods in Sport, Exercise, and Health: From Process to Product*.

Elaine Speight-Burton is currently completing her PhD, an autoethnography about her lived experiences of teaching, working and studying in a 'modernised' university as an academic language and learning advisor to students.

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Denise Turner is a Lecturer in Social Work at the University of Sussex, UK. Denise is interested in psychosocial ways of understanding the world and her specific research focusses on child death and death education in social work, as well as psychosocial aspects of social media. Denise is drawn to innovative methodologies, including autoethnography and other forms of story-telling and her own work has been heavily influenced by that of Laurel Richardson.

Judith Church Tydings, community activist, author of *Catholic Saints in Charismatic Perspective* (1977), magazine and journal articles, was active for many years as a lay Catholic theologian. She earned a Ph.D. in American Studies in late life with a project on aging women: *Yankee Women: Life Histories and Cultural Significance* (2010). Dr. Tydings is adjunct professor in Gerontology in the Continuing Education Program, Frederick Community College, Frederick, MD, U.S.A., where she teaches social workers, often cross-listing with students from the F.C.C. Institute for Learning in Retirement.

Mary E. Weems is a poet, playwright, imagination-intellect theorist and Social/cultural foundations scholar. Weems is the author and/or editor of twelve books including *Public Education and the Imagination-Intellect: I speak from the Wound in my Mouth, Working Hard for the Money: America's Working Poor in Stories, Poems and Photos,* and two books of poems *An Unmistakable Shade of Red and the Obama Chronicles* and *For(e)closure*, both finalists for Ohioana Book Awards. She has been widely published in journals including *Qualitative Inquiry, The Iowa Journal of Communications, and Cultural Studies <=>Critical Methodologies.* Weems works as an independent artist-scholar through her business *Bringing Woeds to Life.* Her new multi-authored book is *Writings of Healing and Resistance: Empathy and the*

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Jonathan Wyatt is Senior Lecturer and Director of Counselling & Psychotherapy at The University of Edinburgh. His research examines the entanglement of self and other within and beyond the therapeutic encounter; and it troubles what we mean by 'self' and 'other.' His work connects the dots between collaborative inquiry in the context of research and collaborative inquiry in the context of therapy, searching for – and doubting – the transformative resources in each. His most recent books include "On (Writing) Families: Autoethnographies of Presence and Absence, Love and Loss," co-edited with Tony Adams and published by Sense in 2014.

YE Hong is a Professor of Foreign Languages at the National Research Center for Foreign Language Education in Beijing Foreign Studies University in China. She was also a research fellow at The University of Melbourne from 2010–2013, and Post-doctoral research fellow at Beijing Foreign Studies University from 2013–2015. Her research interests include critical writing pedagogy, intercultural education, and qualitative research methodology. She has directed four state-funded research projects and authored a number of articles published in key Chinese academic journals.

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