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**Towards an auto-ethnography of an occupational therapist's
published body of work.**

New ethnographies and critical creativity stream

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Towards an auto-ethnography of an occupational therapist's published body of work.

Abstract

My inquiry into writing concerns the place of arts-based inquiry in the occupational therapy profession and ways in which auto-ethnography can potentially contribute to a critical reading of an occupational therapist's published body of work. I am using writing as a method of inquiry, re-reading my publications written over two decades as occupational therapist at a metropolitan children's hospital and, more recently, a regional university. My new writing intends to be fictive and poetic, problematising those institutional ways of knowing (and writing) that I have taken for granted. The autobiographical story boards are entitled "Always a writer", "Being a therapist" and "Becoming academic". The new corpus will be a collection of untold stories from an auto-ethnographic inquiry into my published body of work. My hope is that these untold stories may recover a counter-historical imagination for occupational therapy, opening space for more reflexive, ethical practice.

Key words

arts-based inquiry, auto-ethnography, body of work, new corpus, occupational therapy, writing as inquiry.

1. Introduction

My PhD in education, commenced this year, is based on my body of published work and writing is the thread at every level. It was originally conceived as a PhD by publication based on appropriate publications forming the body of a thesis. It is now a hybrid work in the spirit of a PhD by publication, an auto-ethnographic inquiry into my body of published writing. Getting ready to write an auto-ethnography in the context of a doctorate can feel daunting and this paper describes my preparations so far with focus on occupational therapy, writing as knowing and auto-ethnography.

After some introductory remarks about what occupational therapists do and who we are, I consider some competing ways of knowing in occupational therapy. Questions underpinning this inquiry concern first, the place of arts-based inquiry in the occupational therapy profession and second, ways in which auto-ethnography can potentially contribute to a critical reading of an occupational therapist's published body of work.

The body of the paper proposes three autobiographical stories. A brief overview of my published body of work with some reflection on university and hospital as spaces in which to write gives background to the stories. Genre, narrator, scene, characters, plot/theme are suggested as well as the cluster of writings from my existing body of work to which each story loosely corresponds. Writers who seem to be informing and inspiring my work-in-progress are noted. The paper concludes with the motif emblematic of the creative energy necessary for the writing tasks ahead.

2. The practice profession of occupational therapy

Occupational therapy is a little known practice profession concerned with the local, commonplace things that people need and want to do. Occupational therapists usually work with people following some disruption to their lives. We commonly address skills needed for everyday living such as dressing, bathing and going shopping, doing creative problem solving with individuals, groups and even communities to facilitate the self-care, work and leisure skills that are taken-for-granted - until you lose them. The Australian occupational therapy workforce is estimated at 11,500, i.e., 10% of the "allied health" workforce (Productivity Commission Health Workforce Study, 2005). 93% of Australian occupational therapists are women and 59% work part-time.

Between the ages of thirty and forty years we are under-represented compared to other professions, presumably due to family responsibilities although this data is not collected. Occupational therapy has a low retention rate and a high degree of professional mobility. Outside metropolitan centres there appear to be few bi-lingual therapists and no indigenous practitioners that I know of. In my experience, there seems to be a slightly higher representation of people with disabilities in the profession than in the general population. Less than half of all occupational therapists are members of the professional association.

So here we are, predominantly Anglo, middle class women, mostly urban and young. As with other feminised professions, dilemmas of status, power and visibility are perceived within and attributed to this profession. Currently, there is a national shortage of occupational therapists. In the twenty-first century occupational therapy has been remade as one of the “allied health professions”. This term has become common parlance in governmental and managerial discourse for any health profession outside medicine or nursing and the national professional body has embraced it uncritically. Such attribution makes it a colonising term.

Ways of knowing and occupational therapy texts

As a practice profession, occupational therapy draws on principles from architecture and design, philosophy and aesthetics (Mosey, 1981) in addition to our legacy to medicine and the social and behavioural sciences. I see this as our unpaid debt to humanities. This inter-disciplinarity means we have more in common with the human-related professions such as social work, teaching and anthropology (Colleen Mullavey-O’Byrne, pers. comm., 1999) rather than with the mainstream therapies. According to the most widely used occupational therapy text-book, ultimately our job is nothing less than “to help people realise their humanity through occupational engagement” (Crepeau, Cohn and Schell, 2003, p. 30).

Of course professed ideals do not always translate in practice. Typically, occupational therapists have tended to be pragmatic activists who appear intent on doing rather than on pausing to reflect and write in what has become the efficiency-driven climate of service delivery (Eraut, 1994). There are relentless demands on therapists for records, reports and documents to maintain professional accreditation

and accountability. If anyone fits in writing for publication – and most journal articles are published by academics – then her interpretation of evidence is often regulated, resulting in the disembodied writing common in professional journals. Such writing erases the writer from their text. Freer (and more dangerous) writing practices, what I have begun to accept as “literary ways of knowing” (Tai Peseta, pers. comm. May 2006) feel less tenable in the present climate.

A profession disseminates its formal knowledge through conference papers, textbooks and journal articles. This published literature both establishes the parameters for debate and serves as a journalistic gate-keeper (Spender, 1981, cited in MacMahon, 2002). That the journal should be a priority was not taken for granted by the professional body. A full-time editor and monthly journal publication formally recommended since 1989 (Madill et al., 1989; Smith, 1989) are still unrealised in 2006. Bell (1991) and others have emphasised the irretrievable nature of much of our knowledge. These early editors made indelible connections between writing and knowing. Ruptures, tensions and recent gaps apparent in the history of occupational therapy have been reflected in my historical reading of editorials from the late twentieth century. I am coming to realise that this is also a re-reading of my own history as a practitioner and writer.

Scholarly standpoints have been slow to develop within the practice profession of occupational therapy. There has been an over-reliance on medical patronage and external authority at all levels, with little authority claimed and debate occurring within the profession until recently (Farnworth and Whiteford, 2002). The emerging discipline of occupational science attempts to address the disciplinary gap, promoting ideals of humans as “occupational beings” with the right to do what is personally meaningful in journals such as the *Journal of Occupational Science*. Meanwhile, although reports of qualitative studies and accounts of professional artistry can be found, more clinically –oriented writing still tends to dominate the professional literature.

When we document our experiences and locate ourselves within the literature then our voices are heard (Irigaray, 1993). Reflecting on having her work on public record,

psychoanalyst and writer Luce Irigaray (1993) is breaking the objective/subjective opposition that much knowledge in the emergent professions still assumes:

writing enables me to transmit my thought to many people whom I don't know, who don't speak the same language as I do, don't live at the same time as I do. In this respect, writing means creating a corpus and a code of meaning which can be stored and circulated, and which is likely to go down in History (p. 51-52).

Lindsey Nicholls from South Africa suggests in her unpublished manuscript "Dreaming as thinking" that recently occupational therapists have pursued professional credibility through their allegiance to current models of practice. Authors who maintain a view of the world that is wholly conscious have subsumed the early psychoanalytic views of activity and the therapeutic relationship (Fidler and Fidler, 1963). There has been a loss of the imaginative potential of the unconscious as a consequence. We need to recover our "unique but repressed history" (Wilcock, 1998, p. 246). This includes the fictive, qualitative dimensions of what ethnographers Cheryl Mattingly and Maureen Haynes Fleming (1994) refer to as "underground practice" (p. 4) that is under-documented because it is suppressed.

There is an intellectual challenge in seeing the ordinary and mundane as important (Florey, 1996) and the everyday as scholarly. You can see that we are experiencing a crisis of representation like other new professions. Practices are constructed in interaction with people. This is not the case in evidence-based practice settings however, which are more concerned with measuring outcomes that "threaten(s) to empty practice of its moral dimension" (Kemmis, 2007, p. 25).

However, some occupational therapy authors in what were once called the "caring professions" reach a point where they need to tell narratives of care-giving, writing down their experiences of caring for the people in their personal lives, rather than focussing solely on those receiving care professionally. For example, Rachel Thibeault's (1997) moving account of her father's dementia, where she writes as a daughter and an occupational therapist and Betty Hasselkus' (1993) personal account of looking after her mother in her last years, while not identified as auto-ethnography,

seem to connect the author's personal experiences with the collective, to some extent. I give further examples of this later in the paper.

Text can simply be taken for granted as a technical vehicle to convey meaning and ideas (MacLure, 2003). But writing can never be reduced to this subsidiary role because "it is what allows us to represent reality and to produce meaning, and it also inexorably distances us from those coveted entities" (p. 106). Indeed, writing can be a way of knowing, a method of inquiry (Richardson, 2000). Currently, however, it seems to me that the full story in occupational therapy does not often reach the text.

3. My arts-based inquiry into writing

Rationale

This inquiry challenges ways of knowing, how things can and must be thought, offering the reader opportunities to look differently. Rather than a new way of thinking the inquiry recovers subjugated knowledges of the ordinary, mundane and everyday from lost and repressed places. Influenced by Foucault (1985), my inquiry needs to ask what domains of relations are the loci of intense problematisation of writing practices in occupational therapy. Conventional oppositions, notably between self and other, will inform customary ways of knowing. I am interested in the potential impact experimenting with auto-ethnography from early on could have on service delivery in terms of creating new possibilities within relationships (Mackey, 2006).

In our quest for professional legitimacy, we subjugate the telling of our personal experiences in favour of regulated evidences. Whenever we do this, we risk becoming regulated beings, censoring the emotional, intuitive, creative aspects of what we experience as artistic practitioners in order to "be professional". We limit communication about the profession because we restrict what we say in order to conform to be accepted by more established professions. In this way we block the path to knowing the core of the profession and the underground values that guide it. In other words, we get in our own way. Beyond occupational therapy, there are calls for the blending of form and content (Clough, 2002; Brodkey, 1996) through arts-based inquiry. I believe that these are calls therapists need to heed.

Barone (2001, pp. 24-26) shows us what arts-based inquiry can bring into view. Researchers using this mode of inquiry typically endow features of experience with more than one meaning. They have a playful, exploratory attitude toward interpretation, generating previously unasked questions and ongoing conversation rather than closure. Most often they use *literary* [italics added] media such as everyday language, metaphor, analogy, heightened ambiguity to “lay bare questions that have been hidden by the answers” (Baldwin, 1962, cited in Barone).

Baldwin’s definition of art is pertinent to the recovery work of this inquiry. Critically re-working a body of work to create a new corpus could reveal a counter-historical imagination. Writing as a method of inquiry could also enrich the autobiography of the profession, recovering subjugated knowledges and expressing occupational therapy identities that are more complex and reflexive. Thus, this sort of inquiry may be arts-based rather than being fully-fledged art. An arts-based researcher can disturb the taken-for granted with appropriate design elements, in this case writing as inquiry.

Finley (2005) argues for the radical potential of arts-based inquiry in critical post-colonial contexts. She advocates performativity, that is to say “the writing and re-writing of meanings that continually disrupts the authority of texts” (p. 687) and dramaturgy, a form of inquiry drawing from “the rich history of politically motivated, activist theatre used to resist oppression” (p. 687). Inevitably, these types of research activities raise questions about evaluation criteria and qualifications of artist and researcher (Finley, 2005) and I am not unfamiliar with such debates.

Questions

Questions regarding writing as knowing constitute a major problematic for the practice field of occupational therapy. This is supported in the literature (see, inter alia, Blair and Robertson, 2005). Two questions underpin my inquiry:

1. What is the place of arts-based inquiry, in particular literary ways of knowing, in the occupational therapy profession?
2. How can auto-ethnography contribute to a critical reading of an occupational therapist’s published body of work?

4. Story boarding the new corpus

The stories are starting to come, showing glimpses of their inner workings individually (and as a triptych). The working titles “Always a writer”, “Being a therapist” and “Becoming academic” are sub-headings in this section. A brief overview of my published body of work with some reflection on regional university and metropolitan teaching hospital as spaces in which to write provides some background to the stories. Each story board gives some indication of genre, narrator, scene, characters, plot/theme and the loosely corresponding cluster of writings from my existing body of work. See Figures 1, 2 and 3. I also note those writers who inform and inspire me.

A body of work produced in institutional spaces

Unlike many occupational therapists I have always written, sometimes against the grain. My career and life to date are charted in a published body of work (1985 - 2005). My writings are congruent with the current directions in qualitative inquiry in occupational therapy. However they also differ from the mainstream in some important respects. Much of what occupational therapists are currently writing (and reading) is still discussed in clinical terms, even though there is some new literature on the social, political and even spiritual vision of occupational therapy, particularly with people in the majority world (see for example, Watson and Swartz, 2004; Kronenberg, Algado and Pollard, 2005). People seeking occupational therapy are often constructed as clients. There is an over-emphasis in my view on so called “client-centred” approaches that inappropriately retain connotations of compliance. Claims of objectivity erase therapists’ everyday worlds and restrict interpretation of “evidence” in practice.

The contexts that a writer finds herself in necessarily impacts on her writing. The teaching hospital and regional university as work places and places for the production of written texts and the theme of space – institutional spaces – are symbolically very important in telling the story of this work. In both settings I am positioned as a reluctant authority, as a quiet author. My published body of work traces the contours of my career as an academic, living and working in regional Australia and before that as a metropolitan occupational therapy practitioner.

When I think about it, initially there was little evidence of a culture of writing at this regional university. There was no university press but an olive press, cellar door and cheese studio were established on another campus. It is great to see my immediate colleagues starting to publish and I have enjoyed writing with honours students. Publication imperatives are escalating with the introduction of the culture of the Research Quality Framework. Ongoing processes of academicisation, such as the supervision of honours students by staff trying to complete their own post graduate qualifications at the same time, must create additional pressures. Although we are housed in picturesque cottages ringed with rosemary and lavender, this workplace was and is overwhelmingly an electronic environment with few people around.

My recent papers written from this pastoral academy are more conceptually developed than the earlier ones in so far as they begin to consider ways of interpreting and understanding practice, explicating and critiquing simple description. These methodological papers are concerned with reflexive, historical ways of coming to understand practice, unpacking both its literal and metaphoric meanings and also constructing an autobiographical model of practice (Denshire, 1996; Denshire, 2002a; Denshire and Mullavey-O'Byrne, 2003; Denshire, 2004; Denshire, 2005a; Denshire, 2005b).

When I first arrived at this regional university what I experienced was a void. That I was no longer within a medicalised environment should have felt liberating. But the resources and infrastructure that I had taken for granted at a metropolitan teaching hospital just weren't there. During the years starting up the occupational therapy course our teaching reasonably took precedence. Nevertheless, there were tensions between simultaneous teaching, undergraduate marking and producing scholarly writing. I can recall that having to act as course coordinator affected my writing up grant due to conflicting responsibilities and demands.

The transitional papers written soon after re-locating with a young family and commencing post-graduate study attempt to articulate the personal from the sometimes precarious vantage point of the "juggled life" (Maushart, 1997) as a mother, lecturer and Masters student simultaneously (Denshire and Ryan, 2001;

Denshire, 2002b). I did enjoy some collaborative writing with supervisors and colleagues at a writers' retreat while doing my Masters. A co-authored supervision narrative that is unpublished also sheds some light on this time.

Thinking even further back to when I was working in a metropolitan teaching hospital I recall that pale green environment, the aroma of Weston's biscuit factory outside Outpatients, the fairy tale maidens painted on the walls of Wade House by Australian artist Pixie O'Harris, and, opposite the hospital, the sounds of Annie Lennox or Duran Duran out the back in the youth centre painted sunshine yellow and sea blue...

The multiple locations of this place of work felt conducive to particular sorts of discourse, submissions that observed broad conventions of academic writing, written in third person, with substantiating references and organised under subheadings. Adolescent Unit staff had to come to terms with institutional expectations to document innovative demonstration programs in adolescent health and focus on successes. Doctors in a teaching hospital were expected to publish and writing for publication was easier for any of us to accomplish in a medical environment where we had access to mentors, some secretarial help pre-computers, library services and colleagues who were writing.

The early papers that I produced there began to describe the occupational therapy of place-making with young people in a hospital for children, touching on issues of representation and interpretation with examples from the Youth Arts Program (Denshire, 1984; Denshire and Bennett, 1985; Denshire, 1985; Denshire, 1993). Ways of knowing creativity-based group experiences arising in institutions feel particularly challenging to document in the current climate of regulated evidence. Perhaps in part, because our professional culture has yet to establish a shared vocabulary that goes beyond the clinical.

I experience some complexity, resistance and emotional overlay when (and to) re-reading my body of work. Although my papers can be clustered into early, transitional and recent writings I do not perceive these as discrete papers. Rather they flow into each other with inevitable recapitulations. I regard my body of work reflexively as more of a whole, so my stories will play off that body of work. The

departure points for the present stratum of writing seem to be what I managed to say (and not say) in different roles and eras – now as an academic, then as a therapist and always as a writer.

Ultimately my writings are influenced by ways of knowing that are current in the humanities and social sciences. An uncritical reading of my body of work may suggest that it turns on the “shared humanity” (Muecke, 1997) between young people and youth workers, on ethical ways of valuing practice and being obligated to the other (Mackey, 2006). More critical readings may suggest otherwise.

I have come to realise that this scholarly work over the last twenty years has been concerned with coming to know multiple relationships – contextual, interpersonal, intrapersonal and discursive - which inevitably occur in the course of lived experiences of professional practice in the human-related professions while sometimes trying to catch those elusive, ineffable, intangible moments that linger outside the text. David Malouf (Bennie, 2006) describes his experiences learning to write prose through writing poetry. I believe we can learn from these literary ways of knowing.

Always a writer

- A series of poems including “At the Altar of Lexicon”
- Narrated in second person “you”
- Set in institutional spaces
- Featuring uni student, young therapist, mid life academic, supervisor
- Dictionary, metaphors, archiving, model construction themes
- Playing off more conceptually developed recent writings.

Fig 1: Story board for “Always a writer”

Linda Brodkey, a prominent thinker on critical writing pedagogy, introduces her auto-ethnography *Writing on the bias* by saying that “the relatively unfamiliar and admittedly ungainly term auto-ethnography” (1990, p. 28) was coined to describe a genre of autobiography that, Francoise Lionnet argues, “opens up a space between the individual (*auto-*) and the collective (*-ethno-*) where the writing (*-graphy*) of

singularity cannot be foreclosed” (1990, p. 391 cited in Brodkey). In her piece on being a child writer, Brodkey uses auto-ethnography as Pratt defines it, as those instances when, “colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that *engage with* the coloniser’s own terms” (1992, p. 7 cited in Brodkey, p. 172-3). In this way she claims her class origins and cultural background in ways reminiscent of the recovery work I intend to do.

I am still trying to figure out the extent of literary ways of knowing necessary for this doctoral work. I am inspired by the ways Australians Bronwyn Davies (2000) and particularly Beverley Farmer (1990) explain their bodies of work. In starting her year’s notebook Beverley Farmer writes, “This new writing: I want it to be an interweaving of visual images – more open, loose and rich, and free of angst. And if I keep a notebook this time as I go, it will grow side by side with the stories, like a placenta and the baby in the womb” (p. 3).

I am interested in creating word pictures as Farmer does. Ekphrasis, in other words writing that is inspired by visual and aural arts forms (Holman Jones, 2005), is relevant to meditations on paintings by Cossington Smith and Monet on water and bridge symbolising fluidity and relationship that already exist in my body of work and perhaps in the new corpus. I am interested in bringing in the work of other authors in an uncluttered way using a more unobtrusive referencing system rather than succumbing to conventional referencing as usual. Laurel Richardson (1997) has described academic referencing conventions as having to get up and answer the doorbell in the middle of a lively conversation.

Being a therapist

- Contrasts children’s story “The Picture” with Cahnmann’s (2003) rap poem
- Voices of children and young people – participants in occupational therapy
- Set in wards and youth centre of metropolitan teaching hospital
- Featuring teens in hospital, young therapist (as gypsy nomad/Pied Piper), colleagues, plus super-natural beings - hospital as a living being, creativity as firelight
- A day in the life of teens in hospital plot

- A counter-narrative to characterisations of self and other in the early writings

Fig 2: Story board for “Being a therapist”

My style of writing is influenced by Catherine Brighton’s “The picture”, an illustrated children’s story of illness experience using declarative language. She evokes telling images with very scant lines, “I go, I go into the picture... she takes my hand, ... she gives me a drink, it tastes of cloves...” Themes of children healing through doing are apparent in Hodgson-Burnett’s (1911) “The Secret Garden”. In his sonnet “Skylight”, Seamus Heaney transports the reader by keenly observing the wisdom in architectural “things” (Paterson, 1999, p. 120). The second part of his poem has a spiritual quality referring to the biblical miracle of the lame man who got up and walked. Dorothy Porter’s (1999) darkly ethical verse novel “What a piece of work” penetrates the exploitative relationships in an institutional setting. These accomplished poets and writers open up new ways of composition in the spirit of auto-ethnography. I share their interests in the nature of relationships in institutions, architectural spirituality, sense of place and illness experience.

I plan to draw on some key auto-ethnographic pieces by occupational therapists to construct my own. Occupational therapy journals are starting to publish auto-ethnography. See, for example, the work of social science researcher and occupational therapy academic Ann Neville-Jan (2003). As a woman living with the pain of spina bifida most professionals she saw did not believe her pain, treating her as if it was invisible, unsanctioned, unauthorised. She uses the term impairment “to draw attention to the bodily struggles involved in participation in everyday activities” (p. 115), taking an “embodied perspective of disability” (p. 116). She has recently published another auto-ethnography on her quest for a child (Neville-Jan, 2004) in the journal *Disability and Society*. As Hammel (2006) points out, the extensive literature of disability studies exists as a parallel literature that has been largely ignored by health professionals.

Nancy Salmon’s narrative of care-giving is breaking new ground in the *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*. Her account, which crosses between personal and professional life spaces, is more than autobiographical in that she also takes a socio-political perspective on community-based care giving. An auto-ethnography

describes one life to illustrate a way of life, connecting personal and cultural worlds (Ellis and Bochner, 2000). Salmon juxtaposes waiting and living in her personal narrative that recalls the enduring concern of occupational therapists for quality of life. Her professional understanding of a waiting room is flipped as a relinquishing daughter.

Salmon expands her personal diary entries for public gaze. Her quirky reference to “The Waiting Place” by children’s author Dr Seuss provides a telling image, emblematic of the strangeness for both parties living with dementia. She has evoked the limbo she found herself in, the transit zone of a woman in change. She portrays the oscillation of an intense relationship between mother and daughter. In sharing a chaos narrative, including understandable depression at this draining situation unravelling, she highlights some of the inequities of care giving and the lack of respite.

Becoming academic

- An allegorical poem with accompanying personal narrative
 - Supervisor and candidate in conversation
 - Set in regional and metropolitan universities and in a nunnery
 - Featuring mid-life academic/postgrad student/ mother /woman; her supervisor, colleagues, students, head of school, Mother Superior.
 - Themes may include doing a Masters while teaching; “You write like a mother superior when you’re only a supplicant”
 - Further develops the transitional writings with unpublished material.
- Fig 3: Story board for “Becoming academic”**

Barbara Jago (2002) sketches the structure of an auto-ethnography. She has courageously published a “layered account” (Ronai, cited in Jago, 2002) of what she terms her “academic depression”(p. 729). She explores her lived experiences in the context of a role shift and geographical relocation to shed light on multiple forces shaping her experiences of major depression as a North American academic seeking tenure. She does not “posit a cause and effect relationship”, rather illustrates the

“puzzled co-existence” (p. 733) of all the pieces. She began by using “emotional introspection” (Ellis, 1991 cited in Jago, 2002) to guide her inquiry. Her memory was pivotal in writing her personal stories drawn from her last four years and she also drew on notes made during that time. She included a meta-narrative about the process of crafting her story, including the voices of others whose writings have informed her thinking.

Also relevant is the work of sociologist Laurel Richardson who has recorded her intellectual journey over ten years, considering issues of authority and disciplinarity in her academic life and coming to a public identity as a writer. She considers how the specific circumstances in which we write affect what we write and how what we write affects who we become. Each representation or “writing-story” she produced on re-reading an existing piece of writing, becomes increasingly evocative, “illuminat(ing) a different facet of the complexity of a writing-life” ... as “Forewords” or “Afterwords” (p. 5). Her reflections on the co-authored ethnographic drama “The Sea Monster” gave rise to the writing-story genre, the story of how a text is constructed. She found the power of this genre by writing the story of co-authorship as *her* story, “not allowing another voice to penetrate the text” (p. 74).

Embodied writing about practice draws on different philosophies of what it means to be human, valuing creative, engaged ways of being which can be viewed with caution by mainstream journals in the human-related professions. Drusilla Modjeska (2006), writing on the gap between the academy and the public, observes that researchers are “trained to write in ways that use highly specialised vocabulary, that efface the personal and flatten the voice, that avoid narrative in deference to the theories and methodologies of the social sciences” (p. 31). What I take from this is to address your readers and use plain English.

5. The emerging motif

The personal and literary orientation of political scientist DeLysa Burnier (2006) is familiar to me. At the moment of theory her discipline, like mine, also turned to science. The spirit of auto-ethnography may in fact be no stranger to earlier occupational therapists who explicitly valued the human right to engage in all manner of ordinary, everyday activities. These values have become obscured and need

recovery work. Burnier also maintains that to write auto-ethnography you can't feel completely at home in your discipline. I experience a similar "sense of displacement" (p. 412) in relation to some concerning directions of the profession mentioned at the beginning of the paper.

So here I am standing within and without the profession and the discipline. Poised to write from both personal and social standpoints, between inner and outer worlds, moving from autobiographical to cultural and back again. Keeping all this in mind – easier said than done – the motif that emerges to convey the restless, wandering spirit and creative application necessary to generate this new corpus is "within and without".

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