CHAPTER 3. THE BUSH: A CULTURAL CONTEXT

'The bush', 'the outback', remote Australia: these terms are used to describe a vast area of Australia that is indicative of a particular form of human existence in which specific ways of knowing and learning develop. This study is an exploration of the ways children, living in a remote Australian cultural context, know and learn through performative and constructive practices their place-world; the bush.

Using Bourdieu's (1993) theories and concepts of the *habitus* and the *field*, I argue that the cultural context of the bush is a constructed entity and in this chapter I have mapped the field of the 'bush' through analysing geo-political, linguistic, poetic, filmic, artistic and pedagogic representations and discourses. The examination of these discourses enables the understanding of the constructed entity of 'the bush' and also how these representations are used in the construction and production of the Australian national identity. This analysis also demonstrates that there is a need and a place for this study as it comes from insider knowledge and understanding. These insider ways of knowing offer an opportunity to balance existing discourses and enable an inclusive construction of the cultural context of the bush that stems from children's embodied knowledge, experiences and narratives and practices of place and belonging.

3.1. Cultural context

The cultural context of this study is remote Australia or, as will be explained later in this chapter, the bush; this is the world in which the children in this study live. The bush is a field or a structured social space with rules, practices, values and positions (Bourdieu, 1992) that shapes and defines how agents or people see, understand, experience and construct their place-world. The cultural context of the

bush can be conceived as a constructed entity that can be understood, produced, reproduced and used in many ways.

The ‘context’ element of cultural context can be understood in terms of physical location or positionality ‘in a particular time and at a particular place’ (Hones, 2008, p.319), in that it emphasises interactions and the relational. When context is conceived as a physical location it is seen as a fixed setting that is composed of parts that can be broken down and analysed, Seddon (1993) calls this the ‘atomist’ paradigm. This understanding of context involves individual people, events, phenomena and factors being reduced to data about ‘local understandings’. However, when context is understood to be relational and interactive, it is constructed as a dynamic process where ‘the complexification or mediation or spacing of an event, is not in any sense a backdrop to situated human activity but rather is something active, differentially extensive’ (Thrift, 1996, p.3). This relational paradigm of context can then be understood as ‘local understandings’ that are:

> *‘…socially produced through relations of dependence and mutual implication, through relationships established socially and hierarchically between the near and the far, the local and the distant’* (Radway, 1999, p.15)

Such contextual relations suggest context as a place of interaction between different perspectives, histories, stories, journeys, experiences and pedagogies that are socially produced.

Radway (1999) continues this idea of context as relational by challenging the idea of culture as ‘the simple function of a fixed, isolated and easily mapped territory’ (p.15). She argues that culture is not something someone has as a result of being situated at a specific geographic location (McLeod, 1987) but rather is ‘a meaning effect produced by the hierarchical relationships established between different spaces and the communities and individuals that give them significance’ (Radway, 1999, p.14).

Radway's (1999) notion of culture is underpinned by Bourdieu's (1993) theories and concepts of *the habitus* and *the field.*

Bourdieu's (1993) concept of the field is that it is a structured social space with its own rules, practices, values and positions. Among the main fields in contemporary societies, Bourdieu (1993) cites the arts, education, politics, law and economy; that are all applicable to the bush as it has its own rules, values, practices and positions in relation to language, the arts, geo-politics and pedagogy and consequently can be regarded as a field. However, what is missing within this construction is the subjective or the individual because fields, or the field of the bush does not position or construct itself, it is a structured concept.

To address the absence of the individual Bourdieu (1993) developed the concept of the *habitus* that he defines as:

> *'…the system of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organise practices and representations.'* (p.64)

This lasting and acquired series of attitudes, practices/actions and habits are developed by the individual in response to what is required in the field. In conceiving *habitus*, Bourdieu (1993) attempts to remove the division between object and subject and consequently theorises that the common framework of 'culture is a meaning structure, but it is produced, reproduced and used by acting subjects' (Sulkunen, 1982, p.106).

This results in a relational dimension between *habitus* and field because individuals possess these dispositions (*habitus*) that are necessary to make up the field and also give it meaning. By participating in the field, individuals then incorporate into their *habitus* the proper know-how that will allow them to construct the field. Consequently, the bush can be regarded as a *habitus* in terms of everyday lived

experience, as well as a field in terms of a cultural context. Consequently, this results in various embodied practices, such as chores, going on an ‘abenture’, checking for tracks and yabbies as well as performative forms of greetings and social interactions, as modes of behaviour arising from this *habitus*. In this study I am attempting to explore the ways/*habitus* that children in the bush/field use to construct the field and in so doing, their subjectivities. Through this exploration the *habitus* reveals the structures of the field as the field can be viewed as a structural process with which certain kinds of behaviour, attitudes, ways of living, and ways of learning become defined.

The body is pivotal to these practices because the *habitus*:

> *‘…orients’… actions and inclination without strictly determining them. It gives them a ‘feel for the game’, a sense of what is appropriate in the circumstances and what is not, a ‘practical sense’. This practical sense is not so much a state of mind as a state of the body, a state of being. It is because the body has become a repository of ingrained dispositions that certain actions, certain ways of behaving and responding seem altogether natural.’* (Thompson, 1992, p. 13)

As Thompson (1992) states, this ‘feel for the game’ is where internal structures become embodied and become a state of the body and results in these structures and practices working in a deeper, practical and often pre-reflexive way; a state of being. Through engaging in and learning about the practices that result in the construction of the place-world of the bush, the bush as a field/*habitus* relation can be understood as organising the body through particular practices, or ways of knowing and being. This relational premise of the body and *habitus* will be more fully explored and applied to this study in Chapter 4.

Because of this relationship between the body and the *habitus* there is a need to engage with these ways of knowing that I assert can be described as forms of performed embodied narrative. Even though Bourdieu (1993) does not employ the term ‘performance’ my assertion conceives the *habitus* as performed, rather than as

an unconscious disposition, as a formative site as explored by Goffman (1959), Clarke (2000), Butler (2003), and Lendrum (2005).

Therefore, through the analysis of the performed embodied narratives, as in this study, we are able to see and understand how knowledge of the field of the bush is constructed, produced and performed, thereby addressing the first question of this study: How do children living in a remote Australian cultural context know their place and belonging? Additionally, through the analysis of these performed embodied narratives it may then be possible to consider these ways of knowing pedagogically and thus addressing the second question of this study: How do children living in a remote Australian cultural context learn place and belonging? To further our understanding of the field-*habitus* of the bush it is necessary to examine the existing and persistent representations and their respective discourses that exert force and power. This will enable an understanding of how these existing constructions are produced, reproduced and used and also situate the findings of this study.

3.2. Constructions of remote Australia, 'the bush'

The population of Australia in term of religious, cultural and ethnic complexity is diverse (ABS, 2009), yet a singular representation of remote Australia can be said to figure very strongly in the national identity of Australia and Australians. This fixed construction of 'the bush' is considered to bind Australians together and is used as proof of being Australian,

> *'…the bush, a sunlit landscape of faded blue hills and cloudless skies and noble gum trees…Australians respond to this, as a test of their patriotism, no matter where they originally came from.'* (White, 1981, p.86)

In order to understand this construction, and to situate this research I have analysed, artistic, poetic, filmic, geo-political, linguistic and pedagogic, constructions and discourses of 'the bush' through Bourdieu's theories of habitus and field. The mapping of these representations and discourse reveals a homogenised and fixed

construct of the bush, a stereotype. I argue that these stereotypes are then used to construct Australia as a nation and also to affirm and consolidate the national identity. However, even though these socio-cultural discourses may be constructed to bind and unify Australians together they are also used to marginalise and exclude.

In this chapter artistic, poetic and filmic representations and discourses have been examined because of their persistence in the Australian consciousness as well as to situate the children's artistic, poetic and filmic representations of the bush. Geo-political and linguistic discourses are analysed to clarify where remote Australia is and also to position this study as coming from insider knowledge and understanding. Pedagogic representations and discourses have also been explored in order to position the pedagogical practices of the participants of this study.

3.2.1. What's in a name?

'The bush' and 'the outback' are two linguistic constructions often used to signify the place of remote Australia. These two terms appear to be fairly similar, they both denote an area that is *'sparsely populated', 'beyond . . . big towns'*. Outback, or 'the outback', is a noun that is defined by the Oxford dictionary as 'an isolated or sparsely populated inland area, especially in Australia' (Pearsall, 1999, p.1011). *'Bush'* is derived from the Dutch word *Bosch* meaning woodland. Usage of the word began in Australia in the 19th century from the Cape of Good Hope (Hughes, 1989; Walton, 1993). In Australia this word has eclipsed English terms such as 'woods' and 'forests' as a description of a timbered area and is now a generic term to describe all areas away from cities and towns:

> *' . . . folk who follow a country life are invariably said to live in the bush. Squatters who look after their runs always live in the bush; even though their sheep are pastured on plains . . . nearly every place beyond the influence of the big towns is called 'the bush.'* (Hughes, 1989, p.92).

Bourdieu (1992) conceives language as a method of communication but also as a mechanism of power. According to Bourdieu (1992), the language that we use is determined by our relational position in a field. The use of terms that may have a similar denotation, such as the bush and the outback, can position an individual in the field, indicating their understanding and knowledge of the field and positioning them as either insiders or outsiders. Therefore, when well-meaning people, both in Australia and the UK would ask me during this research "How's your research going in the outback?" or "What's it like in the outback?" they were in fact communicating their relational position to the field and their *habitus* as outsiders.

The place of the 'outback' is conceived as a socially constructed place of difference as it is a place where:

> '*You may not see another human for days but you're guaranteed to stumble across some of the native wildlife that has evolved to survive in the unforgiving outback'* (quoted in Ellis, 2008, p.27)[1]

The 'outback' is a media and Tourism Australia[2] construction of remote Australia as an attraction where tourists, from both overseas and Australia, can visit the non-metropolitan or the exotic Other. Thus, the *habitus* of the field of 'the outback' is that of visiting, not living; to experience the different and unusual and appreciate its value comes from the absence of its opposite, that of the metropolitan or non-bush.

This construction of the 'outback' has a strong connection with traditional ethnography, where researchers ventured to exotic locales and communicated on their return, to the Western world, the lives and cultures of the people in these locales (Price, 2005). Ethnography's strong connection with colonialism and oppression, the objectification of 'natives' from other cultures, and fixed, singular

[1] This quote was stated in a print campaign for Tourism Australia in the Metro, a free newspaper issued in London.

[2] Tourism Australia is the Australia Government agency responsible for the international and domestic marketing of Australia as a destination for leisure and business travel. (Tourism Australia, 2010)

constructions is why it has often been criticised (Willis & Trodman, 2002). Consequently, the field-*habitus* of the 'outback' produces and reproduces a fixed construction or stereotype of remote Australia, playing a pivotal role in the mythologising of this place world.

The usage of the term 'the outback' can also be conceived as inauthentic because, as Relph (1976) contends, it is one that 'involves no awareness of the deep and symbolic…it is merely… an uncritically accepted stereotype… that can be adopted without real involvement' (p.82). Alternatively, t*he bush'* can be conceived as having authenticity as it is constructed by insider *habitus*, those who live in the place of remote Australia, as illustrated by Angela, one of the children involved in this study:

> *"Well I live in the bush. It's trees and dry, mostly dry all the time and lots of animals, native bush animals like kangaroos and kookaburras and birds and echidnas . . . Saying 'the outback' we don't say that, we don't think that, its just the bush or, Thirton is just a bush town."*

Bourdieu (1992) argues that language is a mechanism of power that positions. In this study the use of the term 'the bush' signifies remote Australia but it also positions the discourse and findings, the identity of this research as authentic and coming from insider *habitus*.

3.2.2. The poetic bush

The relationship between language and the construction of identity can also be explored in poetic representations. Remote Australia has been the dominant subject matter of the iconographic poetry of AB 'Banjo' Paterson (1864-1941), Henry Lawson (1867-1922) and Dorothea MacKellar (1885-1968). Paterson and Lawson are significant and prominent Australian 'bush poets', that is Australian poets who wrote about the bush and Australian rural life during colonial times (Hughes, 1989). Paterson and Lawson conceived through their poetry that Australian identity should

come from the landscape and the legends and stories that emanated from a particular landscape, that of the bush (Hughes, 1989). However, there is a tension that exists in their poetry, as they constructed the landscape of Australia in different ways.

Lawson conceived of the struggle with the landscape as central to the Australian identity:

> *'There is nothing to see, however, and not a soul to meet. You might walk for twenty miles along this track without being able to fix a point in your mind, unless you are a bushman. This is because of the everlasting, maddening sameness of the stunted trees'* (Lawson, 1901, p.2)

Lawson's (1901) *habitus* within the field of the bush is one of the outsider where he is not able to possess the habits and practices required in this field such as 'being able to fix a point in your mind ' (Lawson, 1901, p.2), because if you can you are of this place, 'you are a bushman' (Lawson, 1901, p.2). However, rather than construct the acquisition of the *habitus* of the bush as unnecessary, Lawson (1901) constructed this struggle as being central to the process that makes an individual Australian.

In contrast Paterson was more comfortable and at ease with a construction of the bush as wild and ruthless as illustrated in The Plains (1987):

> *'A land, as far as the eye can see, where the waving grasses grow*
> *Or the plains are blackened and burnt and bare, where the false mirages go*
> *Like shifting symbols of hope deferred - land where you never know.*
>
> *Land of plenty or land of want, where the grey Companions dance,*
> *Feast or famine, or hope or fear, and in all things land of chance,*
> *Where Nature pampers or Nature slays, in her ruthless red, romance.*
>
> *And we catch a sound of a fairy's song, as the wind goes whipping by,*
> *Or a scent like incense drifts along from the herbage ripe and dry*
> *- Or the dust storms dance on their ballroom floor, where the bones of the cattle lie.'* (p.2)

Paterson has acquired the *habitus* of the bush. He articulates attitudes and

practices that are characterised by a sense of humour and an intimate knowledge of the bush but in a non-romantic/idealised construct. He accepts the rules and practices and positions of the field, ‘Where Nature pampers or Nature slays’ a ‘land where you never know’ (Paterson, 1987, 2). Paterson’s representation of the bush as one where there is feast and famine, hope and fear is further illustrated in Paterson’s most famous poem, the ballad ‘Waltzing Matilda’:

‘Once a jolly swagman camped by a billabong
Under the shade of a coolabah tree,
And he sang as he watched and waited 'til his billy boiled
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me"

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me"
And he sang as he watched and waited 'til his billy boiled,
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me".

Down came a jumbuck to drink at that billabong,
Up jumped the swagman and grabbed him with glee,
And he sang as he shoved that jumbuck in his tucker bag,
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me".

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me"
And he sang as he shoved that jumbuck in his tucker bag,
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me".

Up rode the squatter, mounted on his thoroughbred,
Down came the troopers, one, two, three,
"Where's that jolly jumbuck you've got in your tucker bag?"
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me".

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me"
"Where's that jolly jumbuck you've got in your tucker bag?",
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me".

Up jumped the swagman and sprang into the billabong,
"You'll never take me alive", said he,
And his ghost may be heard as you pass by that billabong,
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me".

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me"
And his ghost may be heard as you pass by that billabong,
"You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me."
"Oh, You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.’

(Paterson, 1998, original 1895*)*

The title of the poem is Australian slang for travelling by foot, ‘waltzing’ with one's goods in a ‘Matilda’ (bag/swag) slung over one's back (Hughes, 1989). The song narrates the story of a swagman (traveller/itinerant worker) making a drink of tea in a tin with a handle (billy) at a bush camp next to a billabong (small lake/large pond) and catching a jumbuck (sheep) to eat. A squatter (landowner and owner of said sheep) and three troopers (police officers) arrive to arrest the swagman for the theft (a crime punishable by hanging). Subsequently the swagman drowns himself in, and then haunts, the billabong (Hughes, 1989). The persistence and power of Paterson’s representation of the bush and its role in the construction of Australian identity is demonstrated through it being the unofficial national song of Australia (ABS, 2009). The language that is used in the ballad has not altered in over 115 years, yet waltzing, swag, swagman, jumbuck, trooper, squatter, and billabong are no longer used in everyday Australian vernacular. However, this apparently timeless construction of the bush and of Paterson, himself an insider, has persevered as demonstrated by Paterson’s image on the Australian dollar $10 note (Figure 3.1) and ‘Waltzing Matilda’ being serialised on postage stamps (Figure 3.2) issued by Australia Post, the national postal service and network.



Figure 3.1. Australian (AUD) ten dollar note and detail.



Figure 3.2. Waltzing Matilda stamp series, Australia Post

Probably one of the best-known poems in Australia is ‘My Country’ by Dorothea Mackellar (1885-1968), originally published in 1908.

The love of field and coppice,
Of green and shaded lanes.
Of ordered woods and gardens
Is running in your veins,
Strong love of grey-blue distance
Brown streams and soft dim skies
I know but cannot share it,
My love is otherwise.

I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains.
I love her far horizons,
I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror -
The wide brown land for me!

A stark white ring-barked forest
All tragic to the moon,
The sapphire-misted mountains,
The hot gold hush of noon.
Green tangle of the brushes,
Where lithe lianas coil,
And orchids deck the tree-tops
And ferns the warm dark soil.

Core of my heart, my country!
Her pitiless blue sky,
When sick at heart, around us,
We see the cattle die-
But then the grey clouds gather,
And we can bless again
The drumming of an army,
The steady, soaking rain.

Core of my heart, my country!
Land of the Rainbow Gold,
For flood and fire and famine,
She pays us back threefold-
Over the thirsty paddocks,
Watch, after many days,
The filmy veil of greenness
That thickens as we gaze.

An opal-hearted country,
A wilful, lavish land-
All you who have not loved her,
You will not understand-
Though earth holds many splendours,
Wherever I may die,
I know to what brown country

My homing thoughts will fly.

(Mackellar, 1981, p.5)

In the first stanza Mackellar articulates the *habitus* of England, she is sharing an embodied knowledge and understanding of her ancestral home. MacKellar constructs England as Other, communicating an understanding that the Other may be the love of some but she is rejecting it: 'I know but cannot share it, My love is otherwise' (Mackellar, 1981, p.5). Interestingly, the first stanza is relatively unknown by the majority of Australians, whereas most would be able to recite the second stanza by heart (Spender, 1988).

In the second and third stanza Mackellar (1981) defines her love; 'I love a sunburnt country' (p.5), and constructs her identity and *habitus* as that of the insider. She does this through the description of the landscape: ragged mountain ranges, far horizons, sweeping plains, and the climate: sunburnt country, droughts and flooding rains. Mackellar (1981) is not just representing the physical qualities of the land. Through her descriptions of sapphire-misted mountains, the hot gold hush of noon, and an opal-hearted country, she is constructing a socio-cultural understanding of these features to enable a sense of belonging and unity because many Australian readers are able to recall or understand these features through their own experiences of the landscape. These constructions could be conceived as idealised and romantic but Mackellar (1981) balances these through an injection of realism, further articulating her *habitus* of an insider like Paterson before her, by inferring the harshness of this landscape: sunburnt country, flooding rains, fire and famine and a wilful, lavish land. In these stanzas Mackellar (1981) communicates her knowledge and understanding of this landscape, and is clearly identifying and conveying her sense of passion and depth of love for her country.

In the fourth and fifth stanza Mackellar (1981) is inclusive of the Australian reader

who shares this love, thus constructing a sense of national unity. She does this through the use of the pronouns, us and we: ‘When sick at heart, around us, We see the cattle die-, And we can bless again, She pays us back threefold’. However, Mackellar (1981) is also exclusive: ‘All you who have not loved her, you will not understand’ (p.5), the inference being that those who do not identify themselves as Australian can not understand. This creates an insider *habitus*, a sense of belonging, creating a strong sense of identification with other Australians through the author’s image of Australia. In the final stanza, Mackellar (1981) returns to the concept of Other, articulating that no matter where she may roam or live her identity will always be Australian, ‘Though earth holds many splendours, Wherever I may die, I know to what brown country, My homing thoughts will fly’ (p.5).

Mackellar (1981), like Paterson (1982) and Lawson (1901) before her, used language and poetic imagery to represent the Australian landscape of the bush. These poets are communicating their personal understandings and knowledge of what it means to live in this place, ‘the bush’. This discourse is used to produce and reproduce a way of knowing ‘the bush’ and therefore a particular *habitus* to produce and also reproduce social and cultural understandings that construct a particular Australian national identity.

3.2.3. The art of the bush

The work of the Australian artists Tom Roberts (1856-1931), Arthur Streeton (1867-1943), Fredrick McCubbin (1855-1917), Sidney Nolan (1917-1992) and Rosalie Gascoigne (1917-1999) similarly produce and reproduce a construction of the land/place of remote Australia in the Australian identity. The Australian Impressionists, Roberts, McCubbin, and Streeton belonged to a group called The Heidelberg School. This term was initially used to describe a small group of artists that painted *plein air* landscapes outside an area of Melbourne called Heidelberg

(Stuart, 1993). However, The Heidelberg School now has a broader meaning that includes the Australian Impressionist artists of the late Nineteenth Century (Stuart, 1993).

During my last two years at secondary school I was introduced to the work of Roberts, McCubbin and Streeton. My art teacher explained the socio-historical context of these artists and how pivotal they were in seeing, understanding and representing the Australian landscape, not as a mere replication of mother England but as a place that was unique and very different (Figure 3.3 and 3.4).



Figure 3.3. Tom Roberts. A breakaway. 1891.
Australia oil on canvas

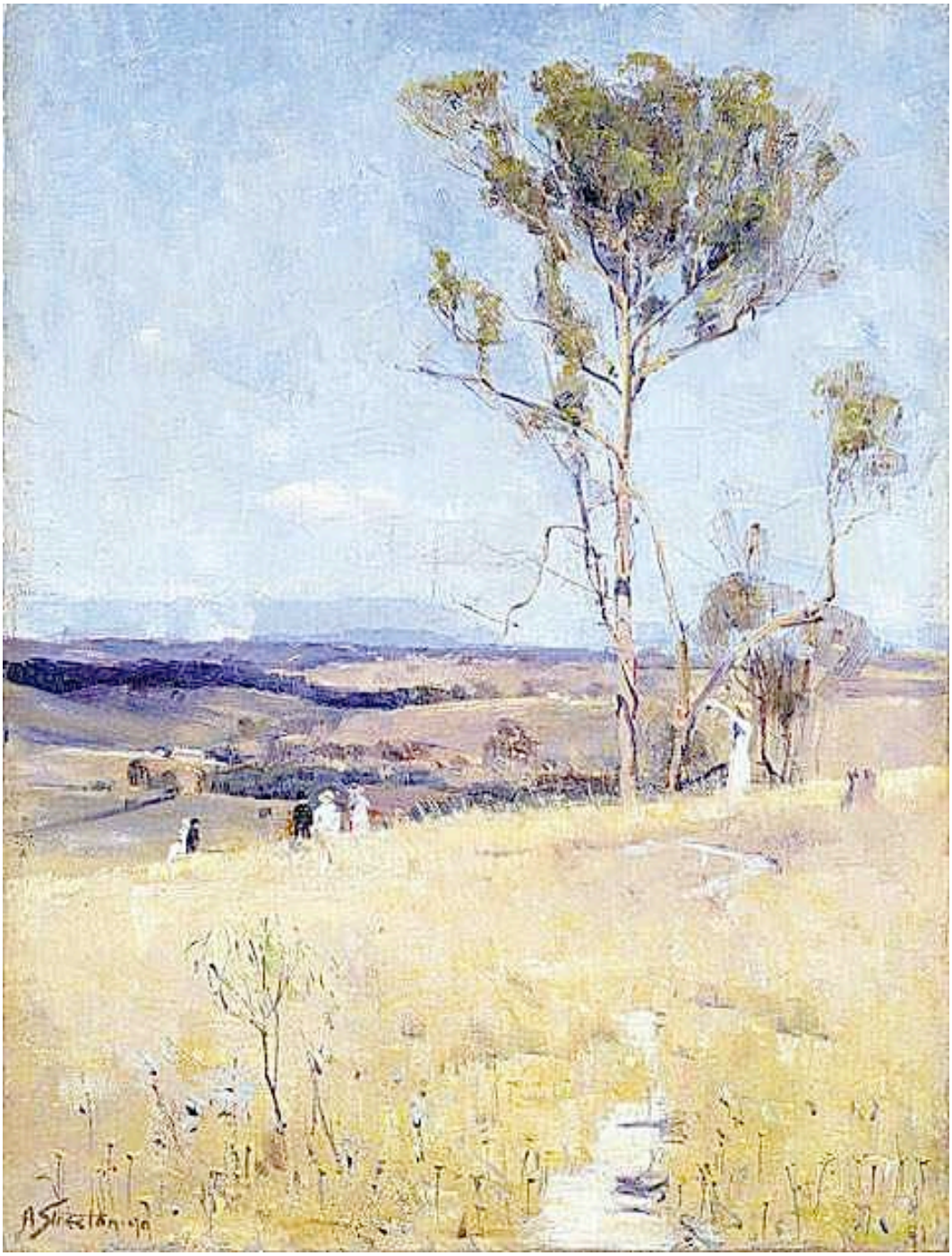


Figure 3.4. Arthur Streeton. Near Heidelberg. 1890.
Australia oil on canvas 53.4 x 43.1 cm

The artists of the Heidelberg School, and McCubbin in particular, represented Australia as Other, not only because of the difference of landscape flora and fauna of Australia to that of England, but also because of the quality of the light, as McCubbin stated:

> *'Nature under our Australian sky, seems to me like a shy, reserved person…but you only have to wait and watch her varying moods, and the light will find all the beauty you can desire.'* (Stuart, 1993, p.102)

The difference in the quality of the light in Australia that McCubbin describes is not something I understood at the time, as I had not experienced the Other.

The first painting we were introduced to was McCubbin's 'Lost' (1866) (Figure 3.5). This painting resonated with me as I remember the smoky blue of the gum (eucalyptus) trees and the way the bark of the tree uncurls, thinking how beautiful the figure of the child was amongst the yellow long grasses, foliage and branches of the 'bush' and that she looked as though she was part of the 'bush'. However, my teacher told us the title of the painting and started deconstructing the image, describing the imposing and all-encompassing surroundings and the obvious threat that these surroundings conveyed. The entire time I was thinking, 'Where? Are we looking at the same work?' From my insider knowledge and understanding of the bush, as described in Chapter 2, I have a sense of belonging and understanding of this place and so I was unable to understand my teacher's interpretation. Yet, this is a theme that runs through the work of The Heidelberg School; the construction of the bush as a place of difference. This difference manifests itself in the artists' representations of the landscape, the flora and fauna, the light and also of 'man' and his struggle living in this landscape and the rebelliousness and courage required to survive. This has served to maintain the construction of the bush, and those that live in the bush as Other.



Figure 3.5 Fredrick McCubbin. Lost. 1886.
Australia oil on canvas 114.3 X 72.4 cm

The work of Sir Sidney Nolan (1917-1992) in his series of Ned Kelly could also be conceived as reproducing this construct of the bush and those that live in the bush as Other. Edward "Ned" Kelly (1854/1855-1880) was an Irish-Australian bushranger (Jones, 1995), ‘a highwayman’ (Bickerton, 2004, p.7), and to some, a folk hero for his defiance of the colonial authorities. According to Jones (1995) during this period there was social unrest in Australia due to the alleged injustices perpetrated against Irish Catholics by the police and the English and Irish Protestant squatters, ‘those who occupied and fenced open land’ (Bickerton, 2004, p.20). Kelly was born in Victoria to an Irish convict father and as a young man he clashed with the Victoria Police. Following an incident at his home in 1878, police parties searched for him in the bush (Jones, 1995) and after he killed three policemen, the colony proclaimed Kelly and his gang wanted outlaws and a final violent confrontation with police took place at Glenrowan, Victoria with Kelly, dressed in homemade plate metal armour and a helmet (Jones 1995). Kelly was eventually captured, sent to gaol and was hanged for murder at Old Melbourne Gaol in 1880 (Drewe, 1991).

This alleged daring and notoriety has made Ned Kelly an iconic figure in Australian history but it is also the folklore and images of Kelly in his armour that has constructed him as outsider, in the mould of Robin Hood, battling the establishment, rather than, one who does not belong. This construction of Kelly’s story and legend has been represented and sustained over 130 years in books (Drewe, 1991; Carey, 2000), film (Tait, 1906; Richardson, 1970 with Mick Jagger in the title role and more recently Jordan, 2003) and art, as in Nolan’s work.

In Nolan’s work, Kelly is depicted as independent and defiant, but also as of the land, the embodiment of the bush. Nolan’s Kelly is on a horse within an empty landscape with little colour and no other human presence. Kelly is depicted as a

bold black shape, central and pivotal, but there is no connection with Kelly to the viewer, as he is facing the landscape, instead the connection is between Kelly and the landscape (Figure 3.6). Nolan's representations of Kelly in the Ned Kelly series are seen as iconic and would be instantly recognisable to many Australians (Rosenthal, 2002). As Reed (1948) states:

> *'Australia has not been an easy country to paint. A number of artists have sensed something of what it holds and one or two, Roberts and Streeton, have succeeded in giving us glimpses of it which were movingly true; but we have waited many years for a mature statement to cover both the landscape and man (sic) in relation to the landscape…necessitating as it has the most sensitive and profound harmony between symbol, legend and visual impact.*' (p.2)

For me, Nolan's series was not an attempt at reproducing Kelly or his story, nor is it a salutation of the Ned Kelly legend. Rather it is a way for Nolan to paint the Australian landscape in new ways where the story gives meaning but also enables an understanding of this place*:*

> *'An understanding of landscape was a motivation: I find the desire to paint the landscape involves a wish to hear more of the stories that take place in the landscape.'* (Nolan, 1948, p.20)

Nolan is attempting to understand place through his painting, his own performed embodied practice. This demonstrates Bourdieu's theories of the relationship between the body and the *habitus*; by engaging with these narratives and practices, an understanding of how we produce ways of knowing of the field, in this case the landscape the bush, because, as Nolan (1948) states, it is about a 'a story arising out of the bush and ending in the bush' (p.20). Also this engagement with these practices and ways of knowing may have enabled Nolan to learn and understand his own subjectivities.



Figure 3.6. **Sidney Nolan. Kelly. 1955.**
Australia oil and enamel paint on composition board
81.5 x 100.0 cm

Rosalie Gascoigne (1917-1999) also explores the issues of an affect connection with the Australian landscape. When studying for my undergraduate degree, I attended an artist talk of Gascoigne's in Brisbane, at the Queensland Art Gallery. I was struck with how unassuming and approachable she was but her passion for the Australian landscape was clearly evident as she described what she saw in the land and her deeply felt experiences of natural phenomena encountered in her local environs around Canberra. However, I assert that Gascoigne's work (1994) does not attempt to represent the bush as Other, rather she observes the 'land that is clean scoured by the sun and wind and frost' (Edwards, 1998, p.5) and attempts to evoke landscape through weathered materials, both natural and human-made, set in broad, orderly, yet open configurations (Figure 3.7).

Through her inventive use of discarded and found materials Gascoigne constructs the Australian landscape as one of hardships and a battle with the environment, just as the bush poets Mackellar, Lawson and Paterson did in their poetry. However, she also presents a metaphorical vision of her meditative and emotional conceptions of the landscape where she lives, her place, where 'I love to roam around, to look, to feel and hear' (Edwards, 1998, p.5). Gascoigne's construct of the bush is from the *habitus* of the insider and she is attempting to present her ways of knowing, the bush, her world through her embodied and sensory engagement; feeling, hearing, roaming, collecting and making and in doing so constructs her identity, just as Nolan attempted in his Ned Kelly series although this representation is of another's narrative.

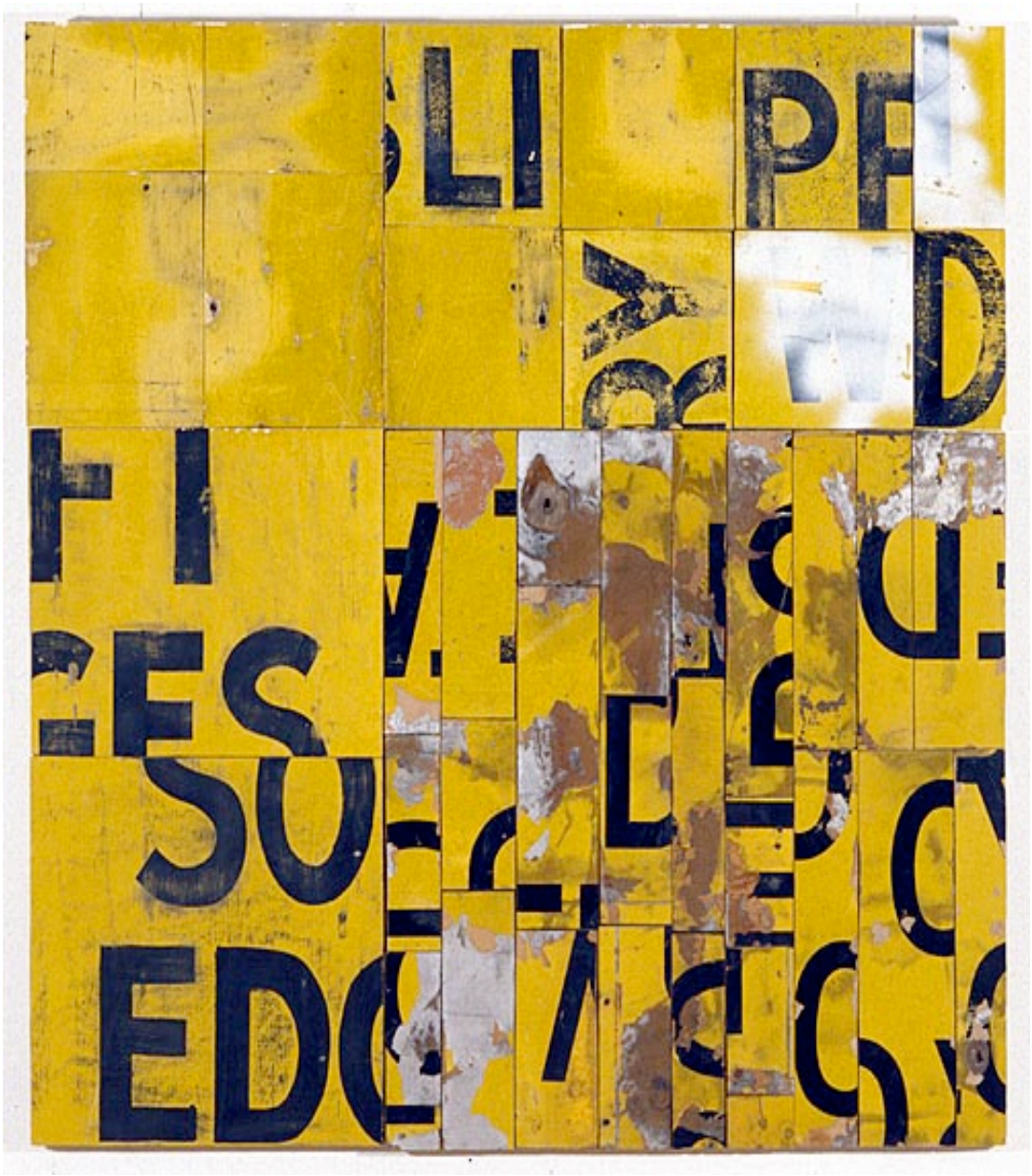


Figure 3.7. Rosalie Gascoigne. News Break.
1994 Australia retro-reflective roadsign on craftboard
130 X 95cm

3.2.4. The bush in film

Some Australian films have also attempted to evoke this way of knowing and understanding the place of remote Australia. In Australian filmic representations such as 'Mad Max' (Miller, 1979), 'Crocodile Dundee' (Faiman, 1986), 'Priscilla Queen of the Desert' (Elliot, 1994), 'Rabbit-Proof Fence' (Noyce, 2002) and 'Australia' (Luhrman, 2008), the bush has a particular construction and is used for different means. In 'Australia'; Luhrman (2008), the director, tries to elicit an emotive response, a connection from the audience and so presents an idealised construction of the remote Australian landscape. He states that:

> *'This part of Australia, the outback . . . is one of the last places in the world that still conjures mystery, excitement and romance in people's minds and that you need to prepare to be bowled over by her stunning overwhelming power and beauty of the biggest star . . .the ancient continent of Australia'* (Robinson, 2008, p.3)

This representation of the Australian 'outback' that has 'overwhelming power' and is 'the biggest star' of the movie is manifested in the opening scene where the long panoramic sweep of the camera shows the space of the land continuing to the horizon, undisturbed by marks of human existence and then a caption flashes up on the screen promising audiences that this is 'where adventure and romance are a way of life' (Luhrman, 2008). This filmic representation is used to reproduce the understanding of remote Australia as the exotic Other, as explained previously, through its use of language and romantic construction. It also reproduces the beauty and hardship, or as in this film, the adventure and romance of remote Australia, as illustrated previously by Paterson, and Mackellar. Lurhmann stated that: 'the film truly is about the landscape and how the outdoor experience can have an effect on your soul' and how 'the awesome power of the landscape has the ability to transform and shape character' (Robinson, 2008, p.3). Again, we have this conception of the connection between self and the landscape, and that those who

live in these places are people who are of the land because they are different, independent and defiant, the very embodiment of the bush.

This construct of the entwined existence of self and place was effectively represented in the late 1970s in a film and eventual trilogy, ‘Mad Max’. This is an action/science fiction/fantasy based around the traditional western genre and ‘Mad Max’ tells the story of the breakdown of society, of murder and vengeance (Dermody & Jacka, 1988). Within the narrative of the film an (at the time) unknown Mel Gibson, plays the title role depicting a quiet hero. He does not say a lot in the 95 minutes of the film instead he is the one who will fight the establishment on behalf of the helpless (Miller, 1979), thereby mirroring the construction of the Ned Kelly legend. This depiction is constructed as a lonely existence of life in the bush, just a man and his dog against the odds (Figure 3.8).



Figure 3.8. Mad Max. 1979.
Photograph.

This embodiment of the bush is further compounded, although with more humour, in the 1986 film 'Crocodile Dundee'. In this story a wealthy female reporter hears about the heroic tale of survival of Mick Dundee (Paul Hogan), also known as 'Crocodile Dundee', and flies to the outback to verify his story (Faiman, 1986). As they travel through 'the outback', retracing his journey of survival she falls in love with his unpretentious honesty and good spirited dishonesty (Faiman, 1986). Hogan, just like Gibson, also portrays a quiet hero, one who is independent, able to survive in the bush, protecting those around him, although with a wink and a smile, depicting the Australian 'larrikin'[3] character in his role. These embodied representations construct the bush in a particular way but they also construct masculinity and maleness as the bushmen, the 'mate,' the 'battler' who quietly struggles with and also is at one with the *habitus* of the bush. This mythologising further perpetuates the powerful images that have been created by the bush poets of Paterson and Lawson, artists of The Heidelberg School and Nolan's work as mentioned previously.

One of the reasons for these fixed filmic representations of the bush is that the Australian film industry had a revitalisation in the 1970s when the government directly bank rolled Australian films, resulting in films being used as a vehicle for representing Australia as a nation and consolidating the national identity both at home and abroad (Dermody & Jacka, 1988). This resulted in Australian films changing in character; they were no longer a commercial enterprise but a cog in the machine of championing official, conservative, fixed representations of Australian culture and consequently films, which presented the nation in a less than favourable light were avoided (Dermody & Jacka, 1988).

[3] A 'larrikin' is denoted as a person who is given to comical, outlandish behaviour (Pearsall, 1999, p.800). Steve Irwin, the Crocodile Hunter was described as a larrikin, *'He was a larrikin: a person who pays little attention to what others think about them, who breaks the rules of social convention and is prone to outlandish behaviour. The thing about Irwin is that he did it with crocodiles.' (Lalor & Brody, 2006, p.1).*

Only recently have alternative representations of Australian culture and the bush come to the fore. However, instead of the bush as a place of quiet heroes and good-natured larrikins, the Australian movie industry began to construct the bush as a place of rednecks, racists, murderers, homophobes and sexists. 'The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert' (Elliot, 1994) is a comedy/drama based around the journey of three drag queens (two homosexual and one transsexual) travelling across the Australian 'Outback' from Sydney to Alice Springs in a tour bus they have named 'Priscilla'. In one scene, Elliot (1994) showed outback men watching a Filipino woman shoot ping-pong balls out of her vagina. Another scene depicted one of the main characters being surrounded by a group of 'locals' with the threat of an imminent beating, just because he was gay (Elliot, 1994). These scenes presented a fixed representation that constructed 'outback' men as uncultured, racist, lewd and intolerant. This stereotype proved contagious and many film critics had trouble differentiating fact from stereotypical fiction:

> *'The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert went further than any of these in attacking the Crocodile Dundee mythology of the essentially harmless heterosexual outback male. These same types of men, usually depicted in bars in Priscilla, can be suspicious, violent, vulgar and extremely intolerant, especially when confronted with alternative definitions of masculinity.*' (Byrnes, 1994, p.3)

These filmic representations of the bush and those that live in the bush, are fairly similar. There is an occasional anomaly however, predominantly they construct a model of the place and the people that is homogenised and fixed, a stereotype. I assert that the function of these stereotypes, of this particular place world, is to provide unity, a sense of commonality and belonging that makes people feel that they are part of a nation and affirming the identity of Australia/Australians. Even though these representations may not be true in practice they may be true in myth, and for this reason, belief in the stereotype is therefore a fact in itself. These

constructed representations of ‘the bush’ may be conceived as binding Australians together. However, these socio-cultural discourses also exclude many, such as women and indigenous Australian, from the national identity.

However, it could be argued that within these discourses the female gender is represented, in the form of the land itself. This is illustrated by Mackellar (1981): ‘I love *her* far horizons, I love *her* jewel-sea, *Her* beauty and *he*r terror’; McCubbin: ‘you only have to wait and watch *her* varying moods’ (Stuart, 1993, p.102); and Luhrman: ‘prepare to be bowled over by *her* stunning overwhelming power’ (Robinson, 2008, p.3), who all personify Australia as a female gender. The function of this construct is to create an inference of a close bond, an innate connection with the landscape, similar to the relationship that indigenous Australians are represented as having. At the same time though, it excludes the voices of real women in the construction of national history and identity, just as it does the voices of indigenous Australians. However, the voices of women and indigenous Australians have been acknowledged at the start of this new century in the film ‘Rabbit-Proof Fence’ (Noyce, 2002).

‘Rabbit-Proof Fence’ (2002) is based on the book ‘Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence’ by Doris Pilkington Garimara (1996). The film tells the story of three Aboriginal girls who are forcibly taken away from their mother to live in a state run home and their subsequent escape and journey, walking for nine weeks along 1500 miles (2,400 km) of the Australian rabbit-proof fence to return to their community (Pilkington Garimara, 1996). The fence of the title, The State Barrier Fence of Western Australia, formerly known as the No. 1 Rabbit-proof Fence, is a pest-exclusion fence constructed between 1901 and 1907, stretching 3253 kilometres, to keep rabbits and other agricultural pests out of Western Australian pastoral areas (Broomhill, 1991). This film represents one narrative of many experiences of

indigenous Australians of the Stolen Generations or stolen children (Brewster, 2007).

The Stolen Generations is a term used to describe those children of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who were removed from their families by the Australian Federal and State government agencies and church missions, under acts of their respective parliaments (Brewster, 2007). The removals occurred in the period between approximately 1869 and 1969, although in some places children were still being taken in the 1970s (Brewster, 2007). Noyce's (2002) film not only gives a voice to the Other but also uses the *habitus* of the insider. Noyce (2002), through this construction, articulates the socio-political tension that still exists in Australia today between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians, illustrating that the construction of the bush and the bush's place in the Australian national identity is one that is contested and is not fixed or timeless.

Using Bourdieu's (1993) theories and examining and analysing poetic, artistic and filmic representations and discourses has enabled an understanding of how these constructions are produced, reproduced and used to produce a particular Australian identity. However, there is a tension in these constructions and discourses; they produce and reproduce a sense of belonging and are constructed to unify but they also exclude. This tension between inclusion and exclusion and the bush as a contested space also exists in the political geography of remote Australia.

3.2.5. Where is the bush?

From my experiences working and living in remote Australia and from initial research the terms, parameters and descriptors of what constitutes remote Australia are also contested. One of the reasons identified by Hugo, et al. (1997) is that Australia is a big place and not many people live there. This seems obvious enough;

most people would understand that Australia is big and that the landmass of Australia is equal to that of the 48 contiguous states of the United States. (US Department of State, 2009). However, the significance of the landmass of Australia comes into perspective when you compare the population of the United States, 307, 212, 000 (CIA, 2010) with that of Australia, 21, 262, 641, where the majority of the population is distributed along the temperate southeastern coastline in cities and suburbs (ABS, 2003a). Consequently, not only is Australia a big place with not many people but the majority live in either cities or suburbs, including Indigenous Australians.

3.2.5.1. Ownership

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population at the last Australian census made up approximately 2.5% of the overall population, 517,174 (ABS, 2008). Contrary to myths and stereotypes, the majority of Indigenous people live in Australian cities with the highest population living in Sydney and only 8% of Indigenous people live in 'remote' Australia (ABS, 2008).

However, a person does not stop being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander because of where they live. The legal definition provided by the Federal Court declares 'a person is Indigenous when they are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, that person identifies with the culture and is accepted as such by the community in which they live' (Gibbs v Capewell, 1995; Shaw v Wolf, 1999), whether that community is in Nhulunbuy, Bondi or Perth. However, the connection to land or 'country' is essential to Australian Aboriginal identity, life and culture, (Plumwood, 2005) as stated in Chapter 1 and further elaborated in Chapter 6 and 8.

This connection or ownership of 'country' is legally recognised by non-Indigenous Australia through native title, the Australian version of the common law doctrine of Aboriginal title (Russel, 2005). Native title is 'the recognition by Australian law that

Indigenous people have rights and interests to their land that come from their traditional laws and customs' (Russel, 2005, 2). Native title can co-exist with non-Indigenous proprietary rights and the Federal Court of Australia mediates claims made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and makes native title determinations (Russel, 2005).

The native title concerns the interaction of two systems of law:

- The traditional laws and customs that regulated the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders prior to Australia's colonisation by the British ("customary Aboriginal law"). Although colonisation wrought social changes upon the Aborigines, customary Aboriginal law continues to regulate the lives of many Indigenous Australians.
- The now dominant, English-derived legal system, which was brought to Australia with colonisation, which includes the common law and enacted laws ("Australian law"). (AIATSIS, 2012).

However, only Australian laws are enforced directly in Australian courts, native title is not a concept that forms part of customary Aboriginal law – rather, it is the term adopted to describe the rights to land and waters possessed by Indigenous Australians under their customary laws that are *recognised* by the Australian legal system and have only been recognised since 1993 (AIATSIS, 2012). Because as articulated by Gale (2005) 'to Aboriginal people their very being is tied to their land' (p.360) and as one Aboringinal woman commented, 'in essence you whites think you can own the land but you are wrong, it is the land that owns you' and that 'our (settler) cultural arrogance, personal greed and complete misunderstanding of the ties that bind people to land are now costing this nation dearly' (p.360) evident in the worst vegetation clearance, land degradation and biodiversity extinction rates in the world (Plumwood, 2005).

Native title can be possessed by a community or individual depending on the content of the traditional laws and customs and ranges from land in cities to remote Australia; access and usage rights such as; water etc and exclusive possession, especially in relation to sacred sites (Russel, 2005). An additional issue to this construction of land, ownership, law and culture is that an area of land may be considered remote in one part of Australia and may not be considered remote in another.

3.2.5.2. Remoteness

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Australia's national statistical agency, did not have an Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) of remoteness (ABS, 2003b), until 2001. Other classifications allowed quantitative comparisons between ‘city’ and ‘country’ but no categorisation existed in relation to remoteness. Before 2001, the ASGC consisted of six parallel structures that divided geographical Australia into different regions and hierarchies of regions, two of which were Urban and Rural (ABS, 2003b), nothing about remote or isolated. However, these structures did not distinguish rural areas on the fringe of Sydney, the most populated city in Australia, from rural areas in the centre of Australia.

One of the reasons for this is that the ABS used population to distinguish geographic areas (ABS, 1996), resulting in those townships that had a population of 999 or below, regardless of proximity to metropolitan areas and dominant industries, being classed together as rural. One of the bases for this classification was that the ABS used residential areas of over 1000 people as data collection points and these areas could not be classified as rural (ABS, 1996). This classification of rural had a significant impact on the research I conducted during 1999-2000 (Page, 2007). At the time, according to the ABS (1996) the community I was conducting my research

in was not rural as it had a population over 999. However, other governing and state bodies classified it not only as rural but also as remote.

In 1998 a Steering Committee, formed by the then (Commonwealth) Department of Health and Aged Care (DH&AC), concluded that the ASGC concept of Urban/Rural did not encompass all the factors that distinguish the ‘city’ from the ‘country' (DH&AC, 2001; ABS, 2003b). Additionally, the terminology used, sometimes interchangeably, such as 'urban', 'metropolitan’, ‘rural', ‘regional’ or even 'the bush' and 'the outback', needed to be addressed (DH&AC, 2001). The Steering Committee concluded that the critical concept of the geography of Australia is 'remoteness' and that what defines 'city' and 'country' in this context is how far one travels to access goods and services (DH&AC, 2001; ABS, 2003b). According to the Steering Committee, remoteness in terms of distance to travel to goods and services:

> *‘…reflects the recognition of the locational disadvantage suffered by Australians residing in areas of low accessibility to services, and that there is a need to embrace different types and standards of government service provision in response to these barriers.’* (DH&AC, 2001, p.21)

The DH&AC (2001), removed the binary of urban and rural, and positioned remoteness on a continuum from accessible to remote and very remote:

> *‘The new Remoteness Structure covers the whole of Australia and classifies Australia into regions which share common characteristics of remoteness.’* (ABS, 2003b, p.3)

There are now six Remoteness Areas: ‘Major Cities of Australia, Inner Regional Australia, Outer Regional Australia, Remote Australia, Very Remote Australia and Migratory’ (Trewin, 2001, p.3). There is also the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) ‘where remoteness is defined on the basis of the road distance from any point to the nearest town/service centre in each of five population size classes’ (ABS, 2003b, p.9). The population size of the town or service centre is

used as a substitute for the availability of a range of services and road distance is used as a proxy for the degree of remoteness from those services (Trewin, 2001).

It would appear that the ARIA might highlight the issues of access and equity facing those living in areas of remote and very remote Australia. However, Trewin (2001) states very clearly that the:

> *'Remoteness classification, like other statistical geographies, provides a framework for the collection, dissemination and analysis of data. It is not intended to be a 'stand alone' indicator of advantage or disadvantage . . . the ASGC Remoteness classification should be used as a framework for statistical analysis and not used as a simplistic answer to complex questions.'* (p.19)

The remoteness classification may not answer complex questions of equity and access but it may assist in addressing them by acknowledging these areas of Australia and those that live there. One interesting outcome of these new classifications and the ARIA is that the community where I conducted my research in 2000, would now be classed as very remote (ABS, 2003b). Why did it take until the 21st century to develop a standard geographical classification of Australia?

According to the ABS (2003a), over 86 percent of Australia's land mass is classified as remote and very remote with only 2.9 percent of the population living there. Consequently, an estimated 97% of the total population resides in only 13 per cent of the country with over two thirds (65.9%) of this population located in Major Cities and the rest residents of Inner and Outer Regional areas (31.1%) (ABS, 2003a) (Figure 3.9). It could be argued that the delay in the geographical classification of Australia has more to do with how few people live in remote/very remote Australia, rather than the large proportion of the landmass of Australia that is classified as remote/very remote.

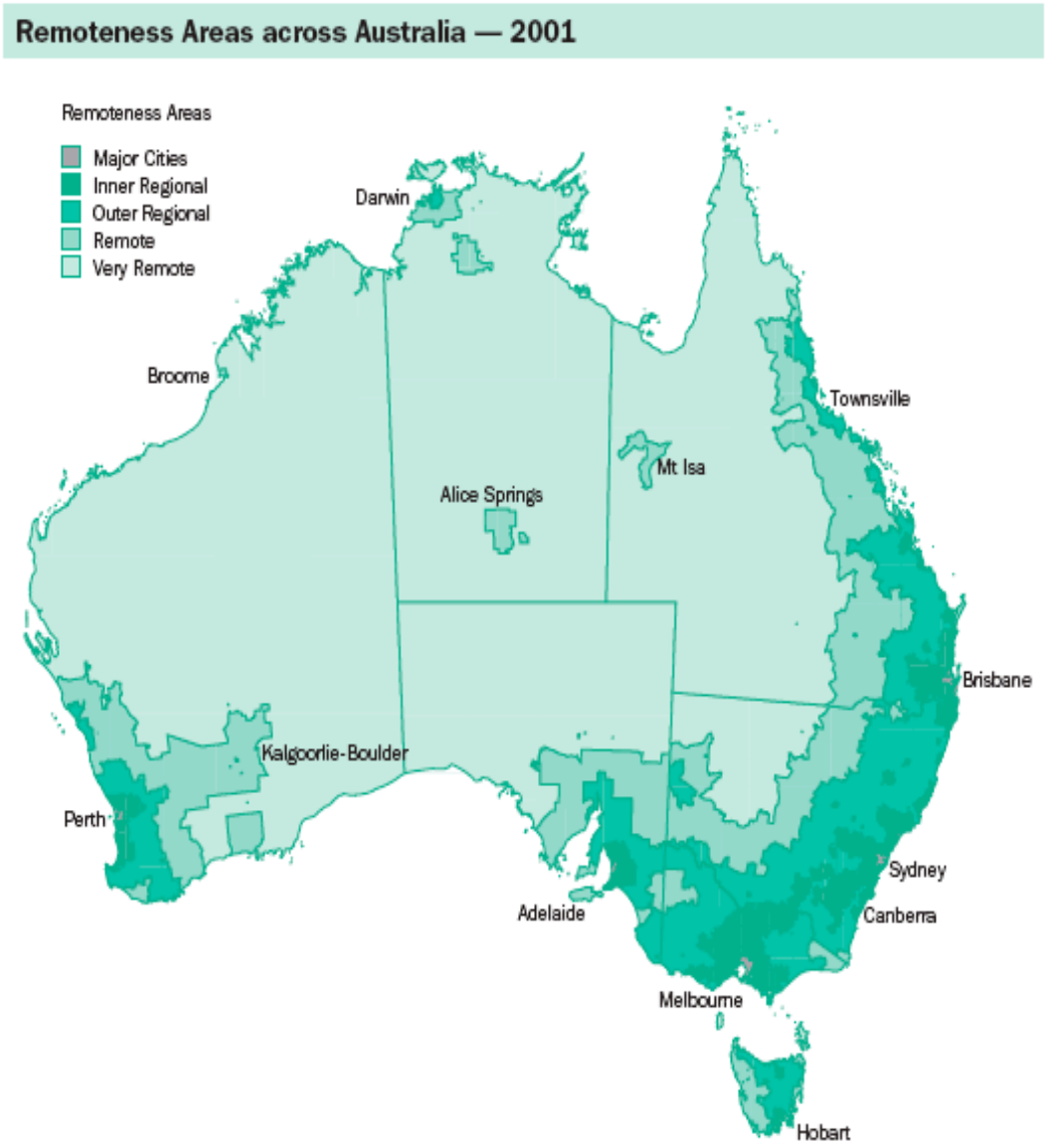


Figure 3.9. Remoteness areas across Australia-2001, ABS.

The ABS (2001) take great pains to state that the: ‘Remoteness classification, . . . is not intended to be a stand alone' indicator of advantage or disadvantage’ (p.12). However, the ARIA is measuring or indicating road distance *from* a range of services and this suggests that those who are not close to these services/facilities and have to travel to these services are disadvantaged. However, if the ARIA were indicating distance from noise or pollution the perhaps then it would indicate an advantage. Additionally, when
remote Australia is constructed as the ‘outback’, as mentioned previously, it is constructed as the exotic Other, a place you want to visit to experience the non-city environment, therefore the lack services and facilities are an advantage.

However, the dominant geo-political construction of remote Australia is that of the devalued Other, as evidenced by: a historical lack of official definition, the confusion of the multiple terms and parameters and the only recent classification that measures distance from a range of services. These geo-political constructions produce ways of knowing that in turn creates a *habitus* of statistics and measurements that are ‘expressions of the structure of domination that are consciously and unconsciously reproduced’ (Sulkunen, 1982, p.103). This can be politically understood as creating and maintaining the domination and oppression of those that live in remote Australia, the bush.

Even though there are issues regarding the geo-political construction of remote Australia, an advantage of the development of the ARIA is that there is now political acknowledgement of the place of remote and very remote Australia, and of those, no matter how few, who live there. The community of this study, according to the ABS (2003b), is classified as very remote.

3.2.6. Pedagogy in the bush

The geo-political constructions of remote Australia also have an impact on the representations and constructions of teaching and learning in the bush. As explained in Chapter 2, I have lived in the cultural context of the bush, and it is through these experiences of living and also of teaching and learning, that I came to understand the many constructions of this cultural context. During this time I conducted research with the school community (parents, students and teachers) on their conceptions of art education (Page, 2003a, 2007). Within this study, the school community also described the profound and diverse impact that the place had on their conceptions contributing to the paucity of research on education in remote communities.

As previously discussed, the ABS (2003b) developed clear descriptors of what categorises the places of remote and rural Australia from the cities of Australia using distance from services and facilities as key criteria. The construction of these categories is clearly based on disadvantage or deficit, even though the ABS clearly stipulates this is not the case (ABS, 2001). This construction is further illustrated by a statement in the landmark policy statement by the Australian Commonwealth Schools Commission in 1988, *Schooling in Rural Australia* in which

> 'Rural Australia was defined as being all of the nation excluding… (seven) greater metropolitan regions and, generally, areas within 50 kilometres of those regions. Areas that are outside the 150 kilometre boundary line are classified as isolated'
>
> (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1988, p.24).

This construction of rural Australia being *not* the 'greater metropolitan region' and 'outside', positions these areas, and the people who live in these areas as Other in relation to the norm of the metropolitan.

Pedagogically this construction of the rural and remote has implications as it results in it being compared to metropolitan services and facilities. Predictably, rural and

remote pedagogy is then represented as lacking or deficit. Research that centres on the deficits or limitations of pedagogy in the bush has highlighted the high cost of transportation and communication (Evans, 2003). An example is the internet where access to broadband is limited, and a dial up connection is at long distance telephone rates (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1988; McKenzie, Harrold & Sturman, 1996; HREOC, 2000a,b,c). Physical access has also been included as a limitation especially in relation to neighbouring communities due to the sheer distances that separate them. Attracting people/staff to these areas has been viewed as a factor of deficit (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1988; McKenzie, Harrold & Sturman, 1996; HREOC, 2000a,b,c, Turpin et al, 2003) as many people are unwilling to live and work in areas that are isolated, where access to services is restricted and sometimes non-existent (Mott, 1987; Newton, 1992; Burgess & Watts, 1994; Mills & Gale, 2003; Roberts, 2004). Consequently, without staff schools cannot offer some subjects and students may then need to be sent to schools that can provide the required subjects. Additionally, many remote communities are represented as having high levels of poverty that can compound the problems generated by isolation (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1988; Young, et al., 1994; HREOC, 2000a,b,c, Turpin, et al. 2003).

This disabling discourse has also persisted within studies that concentrate on youth experience in rural and remote communities (Wynhausen, 1998; Danaher, et al. 2001; Burnell, 2003; McGrath, 2001):

> *'Research generally suggests that between 16 and 20 per cent of children and adolescents have significant mental health problems. The experts tend to agree that in Australia rural youth face the greater risk. They're more likely to commit suicide, to have fatal accidents, and to abuse alcohol*.'
> (Wyhausen, 1998, p.20)

This leads to the stereotypical conception that young people who live in the bush drink alcohol to excess, have fatal accidents and commit suicide. Whilst not discounting the veracity of these studies, it seems that a deficit model underpins

such research because it implies that non-metropolitan Australia is problematic in comparison to metropolitan Australia. Another limiting effect of these representations is that rural and remote experiences are constructed as singular and homogenised.

The majority of research that is undertaken within the context of the bush focuses on one mode of pedagogy, that of the School of the Air and the offerings of distance education (Christinson, 1984; Sims & Sims, 1984; Mott, 1987; Duncum & Cassidy, 1993; Duncum, 1994; Tynan & O'Neill, 2007; Lowrie, 2007). This mode of pedagogy is available for students who live in isolated areas, for example on cattle and sheep stations, and do not have daily access to schools. Although this representation of pedagogy in the bush has validity it produces a one dimensional, fixed construction and excludes those who do not fit within it. Here, I refer to the majority of students who have daily access to school; over 5000 schools are located in remote areas, more than 4000 of which are operated by state education authorities (ABS, 2009). These schools have relatively small student enrolments and concomitantly a small teaching staff (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1988; HREOC, 2000a,b,c, Turpin, et al, 2003).

During 1999/2000, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) attempted to address these issues of fixed, exclusive constructions of pedagogy in the bush through its study of education provision in rural and remote communities (2000a,b,c). Chris Sidoti, the Human Rights Commissioner at the time, called these communities 'forgotten' and the aim of the study was to ascertain 'the impact of this forgetting on their basic human rights' (Sidoti, 1999). According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 'everyone has a right to Education' (United Nations, 1948) because it is instrumental in the realisation of personal and political power and has the ability to break cycles of disadvantage and disempowerment. Education

can also be conceived as fundamental to the full enjoyment of most other human rights, as well as to the exercise of social responsibilities (including respect for human rights):

> 'An empowerment right, education is the primary vehicle by which economically and socially marginalized adults and children can lift themselves out of poverty and obtain the means to participate fully in their communities'
>
> (United Nations, 1948, p.13)

However, the HREOC (2000c) inquiry 'confirmed the disadvantage experienced by rural and remote school students on nearly every indicator of education including availability, accessibility, affordability and acceptability' (p.14). The reports of the inquiry confirmed that Australians who live in rural and remote communities 'do not enjoy the right to education' (Sidoti, 1999) and made 73 recommendations aimed at improving school education in rural and remote Australia (HRECO, 2000a; Turpin, et al, 2003).

Sidoti (1999) in his speech states that his 'work involves bringing to the attention of the government and the wider community, human rights violations against some of the most disadvantaged people in Australia'. This socio-political-pedagogical discourse is obviously attempting to acknowledge the 'forgotten' communities and bring them into the public eye, making them visible to those who have the power to see, acknowledge and address their basic human rights. So, pedagogically the bush is still constructed as one that is disadvantaged, deficit and the devalued Other. Because of the dominance of the deficit conceptions that are constructed by these discourses, there is a failure to represent the place world of the bush as dynamic and complex.

This complexity is illustrated in research that has found that these so-called disadvantages can be seen as opportunities which then in turn create advantages, such as small class sizes resulting in a more personalised learning environment

(Luck, 2003). Additionally, the school and staff are important elements to the community's identity (Hobbs, 1994; Wright-Smith, 1996), resulting in strong school-community links, which results in the school becoming the hub or community gathering point (Burgess & Watts, 1994; Wyn & Stokes, 1998).

As stated above, the nature of rural and remote schools can impose limitations on education. One of these is the small range of subject areas offered, not all rural and remote schools offer art as part of the secondary curriculum (Australian Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1988; Sidoti, 1999) and as a result there is a paucity of research that focuses on formal art education in Australian rural and remote cultural contexts (Duncum, 1994; Marino, 1997, Page, 2007). However, there are programmes that actively include art education activities in the rural and remote educational framework for small and one-teacher schools. The Priority Country Area Program (PCAP) provides funding to students from geographically isolated areas that have restricted access to educational, social and cultural experiences (Sidoti, 1999). The Queensland South West region of PCAP implements cultural activities programmes called; art kits and visiting artists.

The art kits are loaned to schools for four-week periods. These kits include all the materials and equipment needed for a particular art activity. The activities include screen-printing, marbling, creative paper weaving and card making (PCAP, 1996). The visiting artist programme employs artists for four to six weeks at different times of the year (PCAP, 1996, 1997). The artist/s travel the South West visiting PCAP communities, 'spending time, showing, making, talking, giving help and enriching the arts experience for primary and secondary students' (PCAP, 1996, p. 16). This programme of visiting artists was originally fully funded by PCAP with a budget of $50,000 (PCAP, 1998). In 1999 the budget had been increased to $88,000 and schools were also contributing to the costs (PCAP, 1996, 1998). The South West PCAP evaluated the programme,

through a survey, and found that the survey results and the funding from schools indicated a very high level of belief, from artists, principals, teachers and parents, that the programme was effective and offers quality arts pedagogical experiences (PCAP, 1998).

However, from research that I conducted these programmes can contribute to the construction of formal art pedagogy as 'only doing and making' and removed from the curriculum, something that is only done on a special occasion when an "expert" comes into the community (Page, 2007), something that is fun instead of an integral component of education (Stankiewicz, 2001). This construction is compounded by the lack of arts-related vocations in rural and remote communities (Page, 2007). Therefore, art education is constructed as lacking but also having economic value;

> *'There are no careers out here that use art. So they don't see it as a real' choice for a job.* (Parent)'
>
> or
>
> *'Cause I have done art I know I like it a lot and cause of that I what to have a career that is related to art.* (Student)' (Page, 2007, p.51-52)

But, it is with and because of the knowledge that they will have to leave the rural remote cultural context;

> *'They do art cause they want to go in art-related careers, architecture, and design, stuff that is out of Heatherton, they do it 'cause they want to leave.* (Teacher)
>
> *The kids who done [sic} art have left, if you want to leave here, you do art.* (Parent).' (Page, 2007, p.52).

From my own experiences of living, teaching, researching and learning in the bush the pedagogical discourses centred on the majority, the norm of the urban/metropolitan which conceived pedagogy in the bush as deficit and disadvantaged, somewhere you leave, the devalued Other. This disabling urban-

nonurban construct appears to be fixed, inflexible and excluding. However, by emphasizing flexibility and fluidity in the conceptualisation of pedagogy in the bush, this discourse can go beyond the 'bush' versus 'city' debate. This could then enable the mapping and celebration of difference and the promotion of the voices and experiences of those of the cultural context of the bush.

3.3. Overview of the chapter

Australia's national image is strongly rooted in a fixed construction of the bush and of belonging to the remote landscape of Australia. Australians claim to have a proud history of giving everybody, regardless of location and social circumstance, 'a fair go'. However, as illustrated above, such representations can be successfully challenged by anyone who is an indigenous Australian, female and/or who lives in places that are a significant distance from major population centres, ironically the very place that is mythologised, the bush.

Using Bourdieu's (1993) theories and concepts of the *habitus* and the field, I argue that the cultural context of the bush is a constructed entity that can be examined through linguistic, geo-political, poetic, filmic, artistic and pedagogic representations, constructions and discourses. This laying bare and opening up of these conceptions and their respective discourses that exert force and power relations may promote understandings of the constructed entity of 'the bush' and how it is produced, reproduced and used.

However, it also demonstrates that these discourses perpetuate conceptions of a one-dimensional, timeless and fixed place and, as Gill (2005) states: 'practices that promote opacity, insular singularity of place, perspective and life, and diminish variety and complexity by homogenising places are immoral' (p.42). This study, that explores the ways children produce, construct and know their place-world, the bush,

will offer a balance to existing discourses, coming as it does from insiders *habitus*. It will also demonstrate that this place, the bush, is complex and dynamic; there is no single overriding construction, reality, standpoint or meaning. This examination has also illustrated the power of the representations and constructions of place, the landscape, to exclude, include, identify and contribute to who we are:

> *'…forces that have, over the millennia, shaped that very distinctive Australia…kangaroos to gum trees and Aboriginal cultures - are currently working on us, shaping our culture and who we are…'* (Flannery, 2002, speech).

Therefore, I assert that our relationship with place is very pervasive but also complex. But what is *place*? And how do we know and learn a connection to or a sense of place? There are many theoretical understandings of place with different epistemological underpinnings. Through addressing some of these, as in Chapter 4, an exploration and a greater understanding and knowledge of the relationship the children of this study, and also we, have with place can occur.

CHAPTER 4. PLACE: EMBODIED, CONSTRUCTED AND LEARNED

Our relationships and interactions with places construct who we are and how we are. Therefore, place is more than a background for action and thought, it is *at one* with action-thought of the body; a process of embodiment. This study is an exploration and examination of the socially constructed ways of knowing the place of 'the bush' and how within this knowing and subsequent learning, senses of place and senses of belonging are constructed, performed and transformed.

There are many theoretical understandings of place with different epistemological underpinnings. Because of these qualities the theories of place have been on a winding path through philosophical thought from; Aristotle (1983) who recognised place as a key concept centring on the body through the theories and work of Newton (1962), Descartes (1970; 1983), Locke (1975), Leibniz (1956; Jolley, 1984) and Kant (1929; 1985), where the concept of place was gradually subsumed by the absolute concept of space. But, by returning to Aristotle's (1983) premise of the bound relationship between place and the body the resurrection of place is enabled through the work of Kant (1988), Whitehead (1926), Husserl (1970) and especially Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1963).

Through an examination of these philosophers' work I argue that there can be no place without the body and that place is continually constructed through the everyday processes and practices of the body, *habitus*. Using Bourdieu's (1993) theories of bodily *hexis* and *habitus*, I maintain that our ways of knowing and also learning place emerge through our embodied engagement with the world and that the meanings and the materiality, the very fabric of a place, are socially constructed.

Therefore, the way we experience place, our knowledge of place and how we learn to make place, emerge from and through *habitus*. Consequently, through these individual and also shared place-making *habitus,* our senses of place and belonging is performed, constructed and learned.

4.1. The pervasiveness of place

To understand the performed, constructed and learned ways of knowing place it is necessary to examine the theories and concepts of place; what is place, the bound relationship between the body and place and how the meanings of place emerge within and through social relations, practices and learning. According to Casey (1998), we are emplaced beings to begin with, which means that we are always somewhere. Therefore, place can be conceived as very pervasive.

Place may be pervasive but theoretically it is also very complex and more often than not very ambiguous. Through this exploration I have found many philosophers and theorists who have theorised and defined place as; a container, location, site, a region, an element of space, a process. However, the epistemological underpinnings of these terms vary enormously. Consequently, my apparently simple aim of clarifying and defining place for this study meant that I needed to delve into these theories and understand what place *is not*, in order to explain and define what it *is* for this study. As Aristotle (1993) states: ‘an examination of all the relevant facts seems to lead to different conclusions’ (212b pp. 34-35).

4.1.1. The first place

This necessary journey into the history and complexity of place began with Aristotle (2000) (following Plato). Aristotle (2000) recognised place as a key concept in his writings and made ‘where’ one of the ten indispensable categories of every

substance: ‘wherever we turn in the known universe - we find place awaiting us and shaping any move we might wish to make’ (Aristotle, 1983, 208b p.26). So, for Aristotle (1983) place is all around, as an inner surface of a container, as something that is bounded and enveloping that has an indispensable role within the universe and comes before all other things. Within this premise Aristotle (1983) also acknowledges the body and its prominent role in place through his theories regarding the void where void is defined as ‘… place bereft of body’ (208b p.26).

Aristotle (1983) appears to take a phenomenological as well as a physical approach into his considerations of place, as he deals with place ‘in itself’, as it contains, and also how it is ‘relative to other things’ (208b pp.12-22), such as the body. In other words, place is conceived as a characteristic of the physical world that defines its physical presence and then through this presence place is actively, dynamically surrounding and enveloping the body (Aristotle, 1983). Through this premise we could think that the omnipotence and power of place is assured because Aristotle (1983) acknowledged the pervasiveness of place in our very being, and that we are not simply *being*, we are always *being there,*

> ‘It has the power to make things be somewhere and to hold and guard them once they are there. Without place, things would not only fail to be located, they would not even be things: they would have no place to be the things they are … it would be a loss in a kind of being.’ (Casey, 1998, p.71)

However, from the medieval to the early modern age, this phenomenological concept of place was dulled and eventually subsumed by the absolute concept of space, and place was reduced to site and geometrical points.

4.1.2. Place and space

Now, this is where I found things started to get complex and murky. When I was first introduced to the concept of place, it was alongside space; space and place, place and space. However, when I questioned what the difference was it was explained to me that they just go together. In a way this is correct because the rise of the

exploration and theorisation of space, and the fall of place, during the sixteenth and into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was a reaction to Aristotle's phenomenological premise of place resulting in a progressive mathematisation of nature, as evident in the work of Newton (1962), Descartes (1970, 1983), Locke (1975), Leibniz (1956) and Kant (1988) where the affects of phenomenology were deemed irrelevant and for a period became redundant to philosophical thought.

But to understand the theoretical positioning of this study and what specifically I was researching, I needed to understand place and what it is. However, to do this I needed to understand how place is not space and specifically how place became subordinate to, and absorbed within space eventually being conceived as 'merely momentary subdivisions of a universal space quantitatively determined' (Collingwood, 1960, p.112).

The first to reduce place from the all pervasive (Aristotle, 1983) was Newton (1962) who conceived of place as relational, as a part of space, something that determines 'positions and distances' (pp.6-7) and is a mathematical point whose position is in relation to other places or to other surrounding points. Therefore, Newton (1962) conceives of place as having no independent identity or meaning, except for its relationship to space, where it becomes a means of measurement. Therefore, for Newton (1962) space is an absolute, the backdrop or setting within which physical phenomena occur and it is '…divested of all inherent differentiations or forces' (Newton 1962, p. I6), it is 'abstract, infinite, homogeneous and having its own dimensionality' (Newton, 1962, p. I8). Newton's (1962) relational premise of place is supported by Descartes (1970) but his premise of space differs in that space is conceived as an extension of the body.

Descartes (1970) maintains that our understandings of space can only occur corporeally, because it is 'through the extended body that we understand length, breadth and depth' (p.45). Descartes (1970) continues Aristotle's premise of the body's necessity in our understandings however, they are conceived as quantitative understandings, measurements of space rather than the affects of place. Descartes (1970) does not support Newton's (1962) conception of place as a part of space, as he makes the distinction between internal and external place where internal place is the volume of a body that is determined by the body's size and shape and external place is the relationship between bodies:

> 'Place is a hybrid entity: as volumetric, it is like a thing; as situational,' but 'it is unthing-like and purely relational' (Casey, 1998, p.161).

Descartes (1970) almost gives place a place within his philosophy; however, by dividing place into external and internal, I would argue that he weakens the pervasiveness of place because this distinction between the internal and external still considers place within space because external place is still determined by its relative position to other bodies within space. Locke (1975) continued this exploration of space as relational, however he disagreed with Descartes' (1983) conception of space as an extension of the body and purported that space could include nothing, as in pure space.

Locke's (1975) idea of pure space results in distance being crucial in determining place, because space is the 'length between two Beings without considering any thing else between them.' (Locke, 1975, p.167). In other words place, for Locke (1975), is the distance between two points, for example the body's distance to another body and then in relation to another body. This conception results in the understanding that place is not a given as Casey (1998) and Aristotle (1983) purports, but is a human convention, a mode of space, to determine distance and position within space (Locke, 1975).

Newton's (1962), Descartes' (1970; 1983) and Locke's (1975) progressive mathematisation of nature results in the consistent removal of the qualitative characteristics of place such as colour, texture, smell, sound and other sensory qualities that differentiate place. I assert, that this removal is because these qualities are not necessary in calculating the distance between bodies. As Dean and Millar (2005) state: 'place is ever so gradually reduced, elements, characteristics, qualities are removed resulting in the reduction of place to site/situation' (p.16).

The ultimate abstraction of place is achieved by Leibniz (1956) where place disappears altogether and becomes situation, instead of distance (Newton, 1962; Descartes, 1970; Locke, 1975). Leibniz (1956) maintains that entities are situated in relation to each other and are therefore 'reflecting and representing each other, other possible locations, and their spatial character, not their metric distance from each other' (Jolley, 1984, p.78). In other words, for Leibniz (1956), situation is not only the distance between entities but it is also about the space between such entities. Therefore Leibniz (1956) conceives of space as a 'nexus' of abstractly coordinated positions and reduces place to a position or 'simple location', as 'abstract coordinates' (p.1087), upon the axis of analytical space, '*analysis situs'* (p.390).

So through this complex rise of the premise of space and place as a subdivision of space through Newton (1962), Descartes (1970), Locke (1975), Leibniz (1956; Jolley, 1984) and later Kant (1929; 1985) I have found that place is dulled, quantified, abstracted and eventually subsumed by space, where space is conceived as a backdrop that is all consuming and absorbing. An additional consequence of this reductive process of place in philosophical thought is that the distinctive features, multiple meanings and complexities of place, as asserted by

Aristotle (1983), are simplified, homogensied and ultimately made redundant. Place becomes a mere position, a point on the geometrical XYZ axis of space.

Ultimately, this reduction and abstraction of place to mathematical coordinates and their relations removes any qualitative aspects of place and as Dean and Millar (2005) assert 'the world becomes a dull affair, soundless, scentless, colourless, merely the hurrying of material, endless, meaningless' (p.17) and therefore we do acknowledge that we are affected by it nor do we effect it. I argue that place is more than a point or site in space in which we bring ourselves to, as Malpas (2007) asserts: 'our relation to landscape and environment is one of our own affectivity as much as of our ability to effect' (p.1). But to support this premise of the relational construction of place there is need to philosophically and theoretically resurrect the pervasive power of place by revisiting the first place of place.

4.1.3. The resurrection of place

The first place of place, as conceived by Aristotle (1983), was centred on the body and the bound relationship between place and the body and this premise is pivotal in the work of Kant (1988), Whitehead (1926), Husserl (1970) and Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1963). Even though Kant (1998) was involved in the reduction of place, as discussed earlier, he also enabled the re-emergence of place, by demonstrating that the uniqueness and particularity of place is shaped and supported by the physiology of the body and bodily bifurcation[1]. This premise is illustrated in Kant's (1929) description of the reading of a map and the resulting aligning of east and west with the right and left sides of the body where he asserts that 'our geographical knowledge, even our commonest knowledge of the position of places, would be of no aid to us if we could not … reference the sides of our bodies…' (p.23). However,

[1] 'divide into two branches' (Pearsall, 1999, p.131)

Kant (1998) conceives the body as objective and he solely focuses on the body in relation to the perception and sense of direction and orientation.

In contrast, Whitehead (1926, 1978) purports that the body is an active subjective participant in the perception and sensation of place:

> 'You are in a *certain place* perceiving things. Your perception takes place where you are, and it is entirely dependent on how your body is functioning. But this functioning of the body *in one place* exhibits for your cognisance an aspect of the distant environment, fading away into the general knowledge and there are things beyond. If this cognisance conveys knowledge of a transcendent world, it must be because the event which is the body unifies in itself aspects of the universe.'
>
> (Whitehead, 1926, p.92)

This premise of active participation focuses on the body as a 'total event' (Whitehead, 1926, p.73); a sensory process that takes us into place and keeps us there. As Manning (2009) asserts

> 'A body … does not exist – a body *is* not, it *does*. To sense is not simply to receive input – it is to invent … Sense perceptions are not simply "out there" to be analyzed by a static body. They are body-events.' where ' Bodies, senses, and worlds recombine to create (invent) new events' (p.212)

Already through Kant (1988) but especially through Whitehead (1926) the place of place is skilfully being resurrected through the premise of the body. But for Whitehead (1926) the body is not conceived as a passive, objective perceiver of direction, the body is constructed as a process of senses and feelings that informs us about current but also past place-worlds, bodily prehensions[2]

According to Whitehead (1926) these bodily prehensions involve the 'repetition' of the world, and it is through these bodily prehensions 'that the treasures of the past environment are poured into living occasions (events)' (p.339). Manning (2009) in her research regarding touch further explains Whitehead's (1926) premise as:

[2] 'Prehension is the basic, extrasensory awareness, or grasping, that all experiences have of all earlier experiences. One might call it the super intuition on which all conventionally recognized extrasensory perception and sensory perception are built' (Anderson, 2000, p.1).

> ‘We sense on top of senses, one sense experience always embedded in another one: cross-modal repetition with a difference. We conceive the world not through a linear recomposition of the geometric vectors of our experience, but by the overlapping of the folds of sense-presentation emerging alongside pastness’ (p.215)

In other words, through the ‘repetitions’ or practices (*habitus*) of the sensing body, through perception and memory, place is constructed, performed and learned. An example of this premise, as further explained in Chapter 6, is where one of the children’s sense of place is practiced through her sensory perception of tracks in the ground and her sensory memory of past experiences connecting these traces to moving bodies, such as her father on a motorbike and a kangaroo, ‘overlapping folds of sense-presentation emerging alongside pastness.’ (Manning, 2009, p.215).

However, essential to the body’s prehension of place is its *withness.* Whitehead (1926) defines this withness as the way we experience things through the body, as in ‘we see the contemporary chair, but we see it *with* our eyes; and we touch the contemporary chair, but we feel it *with* our hands (p. 62). Whitehead (1926) through his premise of withness is contesting the primacy of vision and asserting the importance of the relational in that it is not important to describe the subject or the object of the chair but the event of where and how we bodily experience the chair; the place of the chair as well as our own place. However,

> ‘We do not simply respond to sense perceptions, we activate them even as they activate us. No two experiences can be exactly the same because they are always made up of different prehensions leading to new actual occasions.’
>
> (Manning, 2009, p.315)

Therefore, not only are we always *with* a body, we are always *with* place. So, not only do we construct place but we are also part of it.

Husserl (1970), the founder of phenomenology, continued the primacy of the body’s role in the constitution and construction of place through the concept of ‘kinaesthesia’, explained as an embodied knowledge or ‘the inner experience of the

moving or resting body as it feels itself moving or pausing in a given moment' (Stroker, 1987, p.180). Husserl states that the '… manifold of places is never without K (i.e. A kinaesthetic sensation), nor is any K experienced without the manifold of places being fulfilled in a changing fashion' (Stroker, 1987, p.180). Consequently, the way we move and feel our own bodies, to use Whitehead's (1926) term prehensions, in a place will have a lot to do with how we experience that place. For example, my own bodily movements and feelings when I was in the bush affected my experience and my sense of place. I was able through everyday practices, such as doing chores, to gain a deeper understanding of not only my own but the participants' ways of knowing and learning place. This embodied understanding and knowledge enabled me to conceive the place of the bush as not only complex and variable but also holistically.

Husserl's (1970) writings on place, by way of the body, were mainly exploratory and this I found sometimes resulted in confusing but also conflicting ideas. This is evident in his conception of place as 'simple location', where he uses the words place and position interchangeably and asserts that place is 'always given' and not something that changes with our experience of it, which is in direct opposition to his premise of K, as discussed previously. He also revisits Kant's (1988) premise that basic dimensions are rooted in the body (Stroker, 1987, 80). However, despite this, Husserl's exploratory premise of the *lived body* was pivotal in the ultimate resurrection of place

> '…in a quite particular way the living body is constantly in the perceptual field … … purely in terms of perception, the physical body and living body are essentially different; living body that is understood as the only one which is actually given to me in perception: my own living body.'
>
> (Husserl, 1970, p.107)

Merleau-Ponty (1962) in his book the *Phenomenology of Perception,* further focussed Husserl's (1970) initial writings on the lived body, where he stated that 'the lived body is our general medium for having a world' (p.146). Merleau-Ponty (1962)

attributes the body with this level of importance because it possesses, as Baldwin (2004) asserts, 'intentionality of consciousness' (p.6) or 'corporeal intentionality' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.387). This is where the lived body integrates itself with its total environment, through perception, remembering and imagining, it is 'an intentional arc binding us to the life world we inhabit, replacing the Cartesian mind body dichotomy' (p.136). The lived body as conceived by Merleau-Ponty (1962) is therefore 'the natural subject of perception' (p.208) but this premise of perception goes beyond vision.

4.1.4. The event of place.

Ingold (2000), drawing on the ideas of Merleau-Ponty states

> 'that the eyes and ears should not be understood as separate keyboards for the registration of sensation but as organs as a whole, in whose movement, within an environment, the activity of perception consists.' (p.268)

The main premise of Merleau-Ponty's (1962; 1963) work is that perception is achieved through the body and of the body and that sensation is at the centre of human perception, similar to Whitehead's (1926) premise of withness. Therefore, perception can be conceived as the way in which the body belongs to its total environment. Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1963), just like Whitehead (1962), maintains that perception is not just a mental or psychological effect but is the body's orientation in the world, and that there is a symbiotic relationship between the act of perception and the environment of the perceiver.

James Gibson (1966), an ecological psychologist, also placed the sensing body at the centre of perception through his ecological theories of perception, in which the senses are a perceptual system that 'emphasises the interrelationship between the different senses … in perception and the integration of sensory bodily and mental processes' (Rodaway, 1994, pp.19-20). Similarly, the anthropologist, Tim Ingold

(2000) places perception at the centre of his research and further develops Gibson's work through the premise that perception

> 'is not the achievement of a mind in a body, but of the organism as a whole in its environment, and is tantamount to the organism's own exploratory movement through the world' (p.3)

Ingold (2000) also maintains that

> '… the perceptual systems not only overlap in their functions, but are also subsumed under a total system of bodily orientation … Looking, listening and touching therefore, are not separate activities, they are just different facets of the same activity: that of the whole organism in its environment' (p.261)

However, sensory perception does not occur in a vacuum. The anthropologist Howes (2003) is critical of the theories of Merleau-Ponty (1962) and Gibson (1966), as he maintains they do not explicitly acknowledge the senses in socio-cultural contexts. Howes (2003) maintains that they are abstracted and theorised and that research that is attuned to sensory perception cannot be achieved acontextually, and that there is a need to 'elicit the sensory models of those who you are studying' (pp.49-50) and that 'Without some sense of how the senses are culturally attuned, there is no telling what information the environment affords' (Howes, 2005, p.144).

However, I would argue that Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1963) and Gibson's (1966) premise of the interconnection of the senses and their overlapping functions, does allow us to understand that our sensory perception is also interconnected with the total environment. Because it is an activity or an event 'of the whole organism in its environment' (Ingold, 2000, p.3) or as Basso (1996) statess 'interanimation'; 'As places animate the ideas and feelings of persons who attend to them, these same ideas and feelings animate the places on which attention has bestowed.' (p.53).

Merleau-Ponty (1962) did not explicitly write about place or the concepts and theories of place, however through his premise of 'the lived body' 'our general

medium for having a world' (p.146) he resurrects the place. But through his theories of perception he consolidates the place of place as event because

> 'if my lived body is the subject, indeed the very source, of expressive and orientated space … place cannot be reduced to a sheer position in objective space' (Casey, 1998, p.231)

Consequently, place can no longer be reduced to a fixed position with defined characteristics and boundaries, in the manner of Newton (1962), Descartes (1970; 1983), Locke (1975) and Leibniz (1956). Place can be conceived as indeterminate in character with no definite representations, it can be imagined (virtual) and also remembered, because place can be somewhere we may come to and also where we may have been.

This understanding of place is possible because the body is not, as mentioned earlier, an object, but as Merleau-Ponty (1962) asserts '… a system of possible actions, a virtual body with its phenomenal *place* defined by its task and situation.' (pp.249-250). The idea of place as phenomenal is similar to Husserl's (1970) notion of how we experience place as kinaesthetically felt situations (Stroker, 1987) or Whitehead's (1926) 'prehensions'. However, I have some issues with this premise of the experience of place as solely felt. This is because our bodily experiences in place are not only about the feelings of the place they are also about how we know place so therefore it is also embodied knowledge:

> ' …it is clear, there is a knowledge of place which is reducible to a sort of co-existence with that place, and which is not simple nothing, even though it cannot be conveyed in the form of an objective description or even pointed out without a word being spoken' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.105)

Downey (2005, 2007) claims that this embodied knowledge is not stored within the body but instead involves a process between humans and their total environments. This then results in understanding embodiment as a process where we know and

learn through our experiencing body; the knowing body that is emplaced[3] where there is a 'sensuous interrelationship of body-mind-environment' (Downey, 2007, p.7). Consequently, we cannot be emplaced without being embodied and that to be embodied is to be emplaced, or as maintained by Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1963) and Whitehead (1926), there can be no place without the body. This premise is also supported by the philosopher Casey (1993) and the human geographers Pile and Thrift (1995) and Nast and Pile (1998), who claim that bodies are relational and are 'woven together with place' (p.4).

Therefore, through Merleau-Ponty's (1962) perception and lived body, I argue that the actual lived body but also the virtual lived body, are anchors in our place worlds and that place is not a subdivision of a absolute space, as in Newton (1962), or a relationship between points, as in Descartes (1970; 1983), Locke (1975) and Leibniz (1956), but is something particular that has porous boundaries, dynamic orientations and is felt, experienced and known *with* the body.

This concept of the bound relationship of the body and place is further demonstrated in the poem 'My Country' by Dorothea MacKellar described in Chapter 3. In this poem, Mackellar (1981) shares an embodied knowledge and understanding of place. In the first stanza the place is that of her ancestral home, and through the rest of the poem the place is that of her adopted Australian home. Mackellar (1981), using the poetic device of personification[4], conveys 'knowledge of place which is reducible to a sort of co-existence with that place' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.105). To actuate further this bound relationship of body and place, Mackellar repeats the line '*Core of my heart, my country',* clearly constructing that

[3] Within this study I use the term emplacement as described by Pink (2009), as situated experiences, knowing and understanding, rather than Casey's (1993) implacement which he describes as 'immediate placement, the action of getting in or into the inhabitation of places.' (p.315)

[4] ' to represent or embody (a quality or concept) in a physical form' (Pearsall, 1999, p.166)

who she is, *the core of her heart*, is her country - Australia. Even though Merleau-Ponty (1962) asserted that this relationship between body and place 'cannot be conveyed in the form of an objective description or even pointed out without a word being spoken' (105), MacKellar (1981) has attempted to convey this interrelationship and that her 'being is synonymous with being situated' (Casey, 1998, p.233)

As stated at the start of this chapter, I needed to clarify what place is and how I would conceive place in this study. Through this long and winding exploration and examination of; Aristotle's (1983) clear and pervading concept of place and the foci of 'where' in his philosophy, the loss of place in the geometrical labyrinth of space (Newton, 1962; Locke, 1975; Leibniz, 1956; Kant, 1985), and then the resurrection of place by way of the body through Kant (1988), Whitehead (1926; 1978) and Husserl (1970), and especially Merleau-Ponty (1962 I have found my place and the place for this study.

Place is everywhere it is not a quantifiable component of space nor a fixed, definite representation. Place is eventmental, a continuous open process (Casey, 1998; Massey, 1997, 2005; Cresswell, 2004) that is constituted through, and constructed by the lived body and:

> 'As such an event, place accomplishes what is begun in body: it possesses an inclusiveness that does not exclude anything but reaches out to everything, … to all constructed as well as natural things. It is something for which we continually have to discover or invent new forms of understanding.' (Casey, 1998, p.336)

Therefore resulting in many different complex effects and affects. Consequently, this study is not about representing the place of the bush but is about understanding the participants' ways of knowing and learning the place of the bush and how through everyday practices it is constructed, performed and learned. Therefore, I assert that

place is made and remade on a daily basis; performed and practiced, open and changing.

4.2. Constructing place.

As extensively explored in Chapter 3, the place of the bush is a field or a structured social space with rules, practices, values and positions (Bourdieu, 1992) that shape and define how people see, understand and experience. The meanings and the materiality, the very fabric of a place; buildings, roads, parks, are socially constructed. The way we experience place, our knowledge of place and how we learn to make place, emerge from social values and forces produced, for example, by the media, government, artists and filmmakers, as demonstrated in Chapter 3 and also by the people in these place-worlds. Therefore, within this study the place of the bush can be conceived as socially constructed. Consequently, place is conceived not as a 'natural' entity, but as a constructed process whose meanings emerge within and through social relations, practices and processes.

4.2.1. *Habitus*

Bourdieu's (1992) *habitus* theory is an important contribution to understanding and learning the ways of knowing place.. As discussed in Chapter 3, Bourdieu's (1993) concept of field is that it is a structured social space with its own rules, practices, values and positions. However, what is missing within this construction is the subjective or the individual, because fields, or the field, does not position or construct it self, it is a structured concept. To address the absence of the individual, Bourdieu (1993) developed the concept of the *habitus;* as a lasting and acquired series of attitudes, practices/actions and habits 'durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures' (p.64) developed by the individual in response to what is required in the field. This premise results in a relational dimension between *habitus*

and field because individuals possess these dispositions (*habitus*) that are necessary to participate in the field but, they also give it meaning. By participating in the field individuals then incorporate into their *habitus* the proper know-how that will enable them to function in that field. Consequently, in this research the various embodied practices, such as doing chores, going on 'abentures', checking for tracks and yabbies, as well as performative forms of greeting and social interaction, produce what Bourdieu (1992) terms a bodily *hexis*, which reflects an orientation in a field, a 'feel for the game', a sense of what is and is not appropriate in the circumstances (Thompson, 1992, p.13).

For Bourdieu (1992):

> 'bodily *hexis* is political mythology realised, embodied, turned into a lasting disposition, a durable manner of standing, speaking and thereby of feeling and thinking.' (p.13)

Consequently, it is the expression of all these factors that make up one's *habitus*, embodied in our physical being, and it is in bodily *hexis* that the individual combines with the social because the body is where and how the 'very basics of culture are imprinted and enacted' (Casey, 1993, p.34). Similarly, Merelau-Ponty (1962) uses the term 'customary body' (p.82) to describe the body that has acquired cultural patterns into its actions and habits, 'a matrix of habitual action' (p.146). For Bourdieu (1984), the ways in which we relate with our bodies reveals the 'deepest dispositions of the *habitus*' (p.190). However, I argue that this implies that not all learning about the ways of knowing place is explicit and gained through discourse, but is gained/performed through the body. This is supported by Bourdieu (1992) who purports that learning or habituation becomes the repeated and affirmed performance of particular repertoires that form the unconscious dispositions of *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1990). This is illustrated by Casey (1998):

> 'As I know my way around my own house, so I know my way round all the familiar places of my "habitat": habitual body memory (which underlies an entire set of accustomed and skillful actions) combines with awareness of

> place … Not only do we discover ever new places by means of bodily movement; we find ourselves in the midst of places we already know thanks to the intimate link between their abiding familiarity and our own corporeal habituality.' (p.233)

Bourdieu (1993) maintains that that these dispositions are preconscious and therefore not 'consciously conceived' (p.5). In other words, we perform them without conscious reflection because they are 'obvious' and commonsensical; in a sense we have forgotten that we have learned them. According to Thompson (1992), this 'feel for the game' (13) of social practice within which *habitus* is learnt, results in these practices working in a deeper, practical and often pre-reflexive way. So, this means that *habitus* occurs as a sort of patterned behaviour, a habit, produced and performed out of observation and pedagogy, which then becomes part of who we are and how we are. However, as Bourdieu (1977) carefully and repeatedly points out, *habitus* does not come down to a simple system of rules or codes of behaviour, he clearly distinguishes *habitus* as:

> 'that regulated disposition to generate regulated and regular behaviour outside any reference rules; … the *habitus* is the principle of most modes of practice.' (Bourdieu,1977, pp.81-2)

I argue that these practices are not and can not be static; *habitus*, just like place, is dynamic, changing with different conditions and circumstances. Weiss (2003) argues *habitus* is continually expanding in response to new situations and thus can be conceived as generative. Sweetman (2003) also suggests that *habitus* should be regarded as an 'adaptive construct, rather than a determinate one' (p.529). Therefore, as our circumstances or place alters, our *habitus* alters and new practices and behaviours can be developed within our *habitus*.

As explored in Chapter 3, place is constructed by practices such as poetry, art, film, pedagogy and politics, which affect us in many different ways. However, more often

than not, the very places that we as individuals and communities construct are those that result from performed everyday practices, through the reiteration and repetition of seemingly mundane daily practices. Through the exploration of these everyday practices and experiences we can, as de Certeau (1984) asserts, engage with ways of knowing and develop knowledge and understanding of, as in this study, senses of place and senses of belonging.

4.2.2. Sense of place

Hillier and Rooksby (2005) assert that '*habitus* is an embodied … sense of place' (21). However, according to Vanclay (2008), it is difficult to define sense of place because sense of place refers to an individual's connection to, and their sensory knowing of, place, not to the definition of place. It is

> ' … an intensely personal response to the environment … which the individual experiences in daily life, and at a broader level it can be the individual's perception of the whole region, state or nation.' (CSIRO, 2001, p.5)

and

> '…a synaesthetic faculty that combines sight, hearing, smell, movement, touch, imagination, memory, purpose and anticipation. It is both an individual and an intersubjective attribute, closely connected to … personal memory and self.'
>
> (Relph, 1976, p.48)

Cresswell (2004) asserts that we usually have a sense of place from where we live and the *habitus* of where and how we live, 'or where we lived when we were children' (p.8). This is supported by Bourdieu (1977; 1990; 1990b), whose concept of the *habitus* emerged from his early work in which the everyday world of social practice is constructed and learned in early childhood. It is also borne out by de Certeau (1984), who maintains that the *habitus* of place making 'is thus to repeat the joyful and silent experience of childhood' (pp.109-110). Birkerts (1986) supports this assertion through his statement that;

> 'No matter what plea or adjustment I make, I cannot catch hold of the peculiar magic of those (childhood) places... No effort of will can restore to

> me that perception that view of the horizon not yet tainted by futility - it runs through me sometimes, but I cannot summon it. And yet everything I would say about place depends on it, and everything I search for in myself involves some deep fantasy of its restoration. My best, truest, I cannot define my terms, self is vitally connected to a few square miles of land.' (p.54)

Woolley et al. (1999), state that children express a strong aesthetic and sensual knowing of place. This is because, as Sartre (1993) argues, a child's development of self is not just internal but involves the embodied interaction (*habitus*) with the social and physical environment. Additionally, Casey (1993) states that 'Freud, Bachelard and Proust all suggest, to refind place … we may need to return if not in actual fact then in memory or imagination, to the very earliest places we have known' (p. x). Casey (1993) is alluding to the fact that to understand the who connected to the where, we need to return to our place-making *habitus*, or ways of knowing and ways of learning the place/s, of our childhood.

The writer and cultural critic hooks (2009) demonstrates this premise in her yearning for a sense of place: 'I need to live where I can walk … Walking, I will establish my presence, as one who is claiming the earth, creating a sense of belonging, a culture of place' (p.2). hooks (2009) is describing her sense of place through the place-making *habitus* of walking. She also articulates that this sense of place came from her sensory memories of childhood where she

> 'was fascinated by the walkers, by the swinging arms and wide strides they made to swiftly move forward, covering miles in a day but always walking a known terrain, leaving, always coming back to the known reality, walking one clear intent - … the certainty of knowing one's place.' (hooks, 2009, p.2)

I can understand and share hooks' (2009) desire for the place-making *habitus* of her childhood. As explained in Chapter 2, I spent the majority of my childhood in isolated places in Australia and so I have an embodied sense of place that was/is constructed through various practices. This means that, no matter the remote place,

I have a ‘feel for the game’, a sense of what is and is not appropriate in the circumstances. However, in my first year in London, I struggled to have a sense of place as I did not have the *habitus* of an urban place, I did not have an embodied knowledge ‘of places by direct and continuing acquaintance with them’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.104). I had to learn and develop new practices and behaviours within my place-making *habitus*.

It is important, as stated previously, not to focus only on the individual *habitus* that constructs senses of place, but to emphasize the importance of social relations in *habitus*, illustrating collective identities, a sense of belonging or home. As Casey (1993) states, ‘the ‘how’ and ‘who’ are intimately linked to the “where” … This implacement (sic) is as social as it is personal. The idiolocal is not merely … individual; it is also collective in character’ (p.23).

4.2.3. Sense of belonging

Bourdieu’s (1992) concept of *habitus* also offers a way to theorise a sense of belonging to a group, a place, and a country. This is because Bourdieu (1992) conceives of *habitus* as a collection of practices and dispositions, what you do and how you feel about it, where you are ‘at one’ with the environment or context in which you live. So, this collection of understandings, often acquired early in life, predisposes members of a society to interact in ways consistent with the specific societal norms of their group, place, country, and consequently to feel at ease and to belong. de Certeau (1984) maintains that the repetition and performance of these practices not only gives a sense of place but is also a way of overcoming alienation and forging a sense of identity. As Wenger (2005) claims:

> ‘Identity in practice is defined socially not merely because it is reified in a social discourse of the self and of social categories, but also because it is produced as lived experience of participation in specific communities.’ (p.151)

Butler (2003) maintains that this sense of identity is based on the 'lived experience of participation' or to use her term, 'performativity', and that it is our performed actions and behaviours (collective and individual), our *habitus* that constitutes and constructs our identity. Butler (2003) explains that performativity is:

> 'not a singular act, for it is always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms, and to the extent that it requires an act-like status in the present, it conceals and dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition.' (p.12)

Performativity like *habitus*, is preconscious. The repeated performances of these norms, as previously stated by de Certeau (1984), enable communities to achieve a connection to place. These repeated performances can be actual but also remembered or imagined, resulting in a sense of belonging being a product of performance.

Rose (1993) asserts that a sense of belonging or home, constructed as 'conflict-free, caring and nurturing and almost mystically venerated' (p.56), fails to recognise the differences between people and their relation to place. This is because home can be a place of discrimination, abuse and neglect, resulting in a lack of a sense of belonging or disbelonging', as examined by Plumwood (2008) who compares the *habitus* of indigenous people with that of white colonisers in Australia. However, hooks (1990) supports the premise that home does enable you to construct your identities. For hooks (2009), home was experienced as a place of resistance where she was able to understand and construct safely and freely who she was, as home was a place free from the oppression of the white world beyond her home. For hooks (2009), home was an empowering place 'where one could escape the world of man-made (sic) constructions of race and identity' (p.7).

In Chapter 3 I examined the socio-cultural structures and discourse of the bush as a political tool in the macro *habitus* of belonging and home in the national identity of

Australia. Rose (1996) claims that 'nationality is often constructed to disconnect certain groups from the national character' (p34). This is demonstrated by Flannery, in his 2002 Australia Day Address, where he stated that the only way Australians could become

> 'a true people is by developing deep sustaining roots in the land' as it is 'the only thing that we all share. It is at once our inheritance, our sustenance, and the only force ubiquitous and powerful enough to craft a truly Australian people'.

Flannery (2002) asserts that the place of Australia:

> 'the land, its climate and creatures and plants – It ought to – and one day will – define us as a people like no other…because for Australians, the land has a special significance. That's because our country is so very different from any other. The Europeans that migrated to North America found a land not so very different from that which they had left, but those that came to Australia sometimes felt that they had arrived on another planet. The environmental forces that have, over the millennia, shaped that very distinctive Australia - from kangaroos to gum trees and Aboriginal cultures - are currently working on us, shaping our culture and who we are…and that the best hope for the future... is that this wide brown land might claim us as its own'.

Interestingly, this notion of Australia as a land of difference constructs what Rose (1996) asserts is 'collective identities … typically fashioned through symbolic contrasts between' (p.34) theirs and ours, also explained as Othering as described in Chapter 5. Additionally, Flannery (2002) has also attempted to convey that the only way to have a sense of belonging is to embed the self *with* the total environment. This entwined relationship between identity and place is integral to many indigenous communities.

Scudder et al. (1979ab) maintains that indigenous peoples communicate a strong link with the land through deeply internalising place and thus place becomes part of their identities. This is supported by Shepard's (1982) work with the Navajo in North America. He states that:

> 'Individual and tribal identities are built up in connection with widely separated places and the paths connecting them. Different places are successfully assimilated and internalised. They become distinct, through unconscious elements of the self, enhanced by mythology and ceremony,

> generating a network of deep emotional attachments that cements personality. Throughout life those places have a role in the evocation of the self and group consciousness.'
>
> (Shepard, 1982, p.58)

In other words, these performative constructs, the actions and behaviours of ceremony etc (*habitus*), constitute and construct individual and collective identities, and it is through the repeated performances of these acts that a connection to place and a sense of belonging are achieved.

This is also illustrated in Gale's (2008) research with Australian Aboriginal women, in which she found that 'their strength came from the land and their place in the eternal Dreaming and the sense of …belonging' (p.359).

> 'To Aboriginal people their very being is tied to the land. In the past, the Dreaming as it is usually called, ancestral beings walked the land and created all present day features. Aboriginal people must care for those features; the water, the plants and the animals and respects and reinvigorate the ancestral beings to ensure the land and its bounty continue.' (Gale, 2008, p.360)

Therefore, the *habitus* of Australian Aboriginal people, just like that of the Navajo, unifies every aspect of their life. Interestingly, Australian Aborigines construct place as not belonging to them, but as them belonging to it: 'you whites think you can own the land but you are wrong, it is the land that owns you' (Gale, 2005, p.360). This concept is further explored in Chapter 6.

So in this study, through exploring and examining the micro place-making *habitus* of the children, their senses of place and belonging, the macro *habitus* of 'social exclusion, marginalization and … the cultural construction of' (Little & Leyshorn, 2003, 269) the bush in the national identity of Australia, may be examined. However, this study can also contribute to a 'deeper and more nuanced exploration of embodiment' … 'one which is grounded in, and contributes to, theoretical ideas on the body as central to the performance and construction of social identity' (Little & Leyshorn, 2003, p.269). This study is about exploring and examining the ways of

knowing and learning place and belonging. Our ways of knowing place are complex and interconnected with the total environment, and just like the total environment they are not fixed but instead fluid, flexible, constructed and subject to change. However, these ways of knowing of place are not produced in isolation; they are produced through social-engagement, through a continuous process of embodied learning that is always emplaced.

4.3. Learning a sense of place and belonging: Implicit pedagogies

As stated above, the body and the process of embodiment are fundamental to our ways of knowing place and belonging. However, it is also fundamental to our ways of *learning,* place and belonging. From *habitus* theory we know that all practices and experiences are profoundly influenced by culture and these include practices of greetings, tonalities of speech and speech recognition. These can all be taken for granted because they are specific to particular contexts or fields and also because we internalise these learnings as we grow into being in the world. Bourdieu (1990a) suggests that these dispositions are produced by a hidden or implicit pedagogy rather than being the product of conscious teaching:

> 'One could endlessly enumerate the values given body, made body, by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy, which can make a whole cosmology through injunctions as insignificant as 'sit up straight' or 'don't hold your knife in your left hand.' (pp.69-70)

In Bourdieu's (1990a) earlier writing, he failed to acknowledge and examine the transformation, or the learning or acquiring of new and different *habitus*. However, in his recent writing, he does articulate clearer ideas, and as stated previously, describes the concept of *habitus* as dynamic: 'new experiences, and especially education, have the potential to alter the *habitus* by raising to consciousness aspects of the old *habitus*' (Bourdieu, 2000, p.191). This understanding of *habitus* as conscious is in direct contrast to Bourdieu's (1990) previous assertions that

habitus is not 'consciously conceived'. Pink (2009) and many other scholars (Ingold, 2000; Geurts, 2002; Downey, 2005, 2007; Grasseni, 2007) assert that learning place, or using Bourdieu (2000) the transformation of *habitus*, should be conceived as coming from social, participatory and embodied pedagogies.

4.3.1. Transformation of habitus

Wenger (2005) developed various theories of learning, including 'knowing in practice' (p.141) and the 'experience of knowing' (p.142), that are conceived as participatory. This means, that the body is a source of knowing and is contingent on its connectedness to the total environment. This then results in the premise that ways of knowing and learning ways of knowing are 'specific, engaged, active and experiential' (Wenger, 2005, p.141). However this also means that learning ways of knowing, just like the previous asserted premise of ways of knowing place and place, are fluid and constantly changing.

This 'knowing in practice' was originally conceived by Lave and Wenger (1991) as 'situated learning', where learning is no longer a passive process of absorbing factual information, but is 'knowing in practice' (p.14), a social and participatory process where theory is incorporated into everyday practice with others, praxis. This is demonstrated in Page et al.'s (2011) research on students on an MA Artist Teacher programme, where students articulated that sharing practices with fellow artist teachers, had an impact on their emerging artistic identity and also increased their technical skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence, through the sharing of *habitus*, therefore *habitus* has been transformed. Consequently, I assert that Lave and Wenger's (1991) situated learning is not only emplaced but also embodied.

As stated above and supported by Adams et al. (2008) and Page et al. (2011), this learning does not just occur within the individual. Just as place is constructed by individuals through everyday practices with others, situated learning is, as Wenger (2005) state*s, 'the ability to negotiate new meanings'* (p.226) that are *'fundamentally experiential and fundamentally social'* (p.227, original italics). Consequently, in Page et al. (2011), the students' learning of ways of knowing is continually being reconceptualised and renegotiated through social relations:

> 'the excitement of feeling part of the creative process, along with the ability to begin to locate my work within critical theory and contemporary practice… moving from an isolated position on the periphery of the community towards feelings of inclusivity within the centre of a group of practitioners.'
>
> (Hyde, 2007. p.298)

These 'communities of practice' (Wenger, 2005), that are based on apprenticeship communities, enable a way of understanding how *habitus* is learned, identities established and knowledge formed and reproduced. However, the emplacement of this learning does not mean it is only specific to a 'particular place and moment' (Harris, 2007). This is because these social, participatory and embodied ways of learning are dynamic in bringing into being shared knowledge that can then be learned, taught, recreated and developed by the community as it inducts *new players to the game.*

I contend that it is no coincidence that Bourdieu's (1990a) previous conservative concept of the *habitus* as static, 'a product of history' that has 'constancy over time' (p.54) and 'permanence' (p.56), has itself been transformed by him in his most recent writing:

> 'The *habitus* is not fate, not a destiny… Being a product of history, it may be changed by history … *habitus* operates as a structuring structure able to selectively perceive and to transform the objective structure according to its own structure while, at the same time, being restructured, transformed in its make up by the pressure of the objective structure.' (Bourdieu, 2005, p.45)

Bourdieu (2005) accepts that *habitus* does change and does so constantly, but only when there is pressure from the internal structures. I assert that Bourdieu's (2005) reinterpretation of *habitus* as dynamic and learned is because *habitus* has prompted a series of critiques in the latter half of the 20th and into the 21st century. This is due to the various geographical, economic, social and cultural shifts that people, and as a result society, make or undergo during their lifetimes. This is demonstrated in Chapter 2, where I discuss that my conscious awareness of, and change in, my own place-making *habitus* occurred because of the geographical and cultural shifts I had undergone. Friedmann (2005) supports this through asserting that

> 'the pace of change makes *habitus* more dynamic, as it strains to respond to the challenges posed from within a society by those groups which are anxious for change' (p.339).

4.4. Overview of the chapter

In this chapter, this study's central theoretical underpinning, namely that place, its meanings and materiality are socially constructed, has been examined. Place is a pervasive and somewhat ambiguous concept that has been on a roller coaster ride through the history of philosophical thought. From Aristotle's central premise to being reduced to positions, sites or points by Newton (1962), Descartes (1970; 1983), Locke (1975), Leibniz (1956) and Kant (1929; 1985), where place became secondary to space. However, place was resurrected by Whitehead (1926), Husserl (1970) and especially Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1963) through the concept of the *lived body* and the idea that place can only be understood as an embodied relationship with the world.

This embodied relationship is constructed and constituted by social practices resulting in the premise of place as eventmental, a fluid, and open, changing process whose meanings emerge within and through *habitus*. Therefore, it is though the children's embodied knowledge (bodily *hexis* or customary body) that we can

understand their ways of knowing the place of the bush and how they are performed and constructed but also how these place-making *habitus* is learned.

As stated previously, our relationships and interactions with places construct who we are and how we are. This premise, and the theoretical concept of place as fluid, open and changing, has resulted in the research process of this study being fluid, open and changing. This is because these very relationships and interactions with the place-world of the bush have evolved through questioning, critical reflection and *being with* the children of this study. Therefore, the methodology, methods and analysis of this study, as discussed in Chapter 5, have been changing, evolving and also reconceptualised through praxis, practice with theory.

CHAPTER 5. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY: GETTING AND BEING IN PLACE

To explore and examine the ways that children living in a remote Australian cultural context know and learn place and belonging, a research design that supported this human experience of place was required. I chose to pursue ethnography as the methodology of this study because as Willis and Trodman (2002) state ethnography:

> 'is a family of methods involving direct and sustained social contact with agents and of richly writing up the encounter, respecting, recording, representing at least partly in its own terms the irreducibility of human experience' (p.394)

However, a methodology is not the sum of its methods; rather, each research methodology has its own philosophical and epistemological underpinnings and by aligning myself with a methodology, I am aligning myself with the beliefs, values, and theory of that methodology. This chapter describes and explains the praxis, the theory with practice, (Frieire, 1970) of the overlapping, interwoven ethnographic methodologies and methods of this study: the relationship and roles of the children and myself within this process of exploration and examination, a critical analysis of the getting and also the negotiation of *being in place* and a description of the remote Australian cultural context and the participants.

5.1. Overlapping, interwoven methodologies

For this study I was in place for 16 weeks over two years (eight weeks/year), during the Australian winter, July-August 2007-2008. The theoretical and methodological underpinnings and practices of this study evolved during this time, all enabled through praxis. I use the term evolution because the aim of this research and the



Figure 5.1. Overlapping, interwoven methodologies

research process of the study was not planned out in detail before I was in place; well it was but then things changed, I changed. I came to realise from being in place and the relationship with the participants that the complexity of the embodied and emplaced ways of learning and knowing this particular place-world were complex and that I needed a methodology that supported this complexity.

I started with my feet and ideas firmly planted in ethnography; then these shifted to critical ethnography and visual ethnography, finally moving to sensory ethnography.

However, this methodological progression was not about leaving one methodology behind and starting anew. This is because I conceived ethnography not only as a family of ethnographic methods, as previously stated, but also as a family of ethnographies with overlapping and interwoven philosophical and epistemological underpinnings that have supported the premise and findings of this research, as illustrated in Figure 5.1.

5.1.1 Ethnography

As stated previously, because of my interest in the human experience of place, I thought that the methodology of ethnography was appropriate for this research. This is because, as Fetterman (1989) claims 'it is the art and science of describing a group or culture, the study of how people see, understand and experience their cultural world' (p.1) and a phenomenological orientated paradigm that accepts multiple realities (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). These underpinnings were particularly important to me because of my experiences in this cultural context; I knew that I wanted to explore and *learn with* participants about their cultural world and the constructions of place. However, I also had reservations about using ethnography as a methodology because of the history of 'Othering', which is discussed in detail later in this chapter, and also the lack of the acknowledgement of the Self (researcher) in classic ethnography.

Traditionally, ethnographic description[1], the main outcome of classic ethnography, is achieved through long, continuous periods of time from six months to two years within the field. This direct and prolonged exposure to a group and/or culture enables the researcher to make *emic* observations i.e. those of the insider, rather than *etic* observations, those of the outsider (Cochran-Smith, 1984). To gather the data necessary to write this narrative description, methods such as participant

[1] Ethnography is sometimes referred to as 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973, p.9)

observation, life histories, interviews, case studies and surveys and other statistical methods are used (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). By using more than one method of data collection an attempt is then made to ensure the internal validity of the data through triangulation (Burns, 1997). However, Fine (1998) contends that classic ethnographers sometimes lack this element in their studies as they portray events from the alien view of the researcher and consequently *judge* rather than *describe*.

Ethnography is the younger sibling of anthropology and historically has been the methodology of choice for researchers venturing to often exotic locales to describe and communicate to the Western world the lives and cultures of these people (Price, 2005). Ethnography's strong connection with colonialism, imperialistic judgements and the objectification of 'natives' from other cultures, underlies some of its criticisms (Willis & Trodman, 2002). These roots, within a tradition of Othering, and a lack both of reflexivity and of acknowledgement of the researcher, discussed later in this chapter, informed my reservations about using this methodology.

However, contemporary forms of ethnography, such as critical ethnography, go beyond viewing culture as a descriptive object and the practice of 'Othering'. These forms of disrupted[2] ethnography openly declare the ideological productions and reproductions of culture, and attempt to produce reflexive ideological open texts (Koro-Ljungberg & Greckhamer, 2005). Koro-Ljungberg & Greckhamer (2005) state that the term 'disrupted' should not have negative connotations - it is simply a term to differentiate between different approaches to ethnography. Disrupted ethnographies such as critical ethnographies critique the culture that they are researching using an intentional and planned theoretical framework that views

[2] 'The term disruption is used to refer to the theoretical approaches that differ from classical ethnography.' (Koro-Ljungberg & Greckhamer, 2005, p.286)

culture through particular political and critical lenses (Dressman, 2006), as demonstrated in Chapters 3 and 4. This results in knowledge that can be 'reproduced, remapped and decentred' (Koro-Ljungberg & Greckhamer, 2005, p.293). Critical ethnography also conceives that all observations are emplaced.

Within classic ethnographies, the researcher and observations are conceived as neutral or purely objective (Atkinson, et al. 2007). However, critical ethnography acknowledges that the researcher is part of the world being studied, and that the researcher alters and the context is also altered by the researcher (Koro-Ljungberg & Greckhamer, 2005). Therefore, observations are always emplaced and therefore there is a need to be explicit about the nature of the reflexivity that frames them (Tierney, 2002; Muecke, 1994) in order to reveal existing conceptions, presumptions, background, experience etc, as demonstrated in Chapter 2. Because of this epistemological underpinning one of the criticisms levelled at critical ethnography is that its resultant data and findings are *too* subjective (Collier and Collier, 1996; Becker, 1958, 1986).

However, I assert that through acknowledging and embracing the subjective and reflexive character of ethnography, that it is emplaced and part of the world it studies, addresses this criticism of ethnography. Additionally, conceiving ethnography as reflexive active engagement acknowledges that it involves participating in the social world and also reflecting on the products and processes of that participation. Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) further emphasise that the patterns and theories that are drawn from this process of participation should then be applied to the researcher and their products and processes, be they research strategies or explicitly 'putting the Self into the study.'

Through using the methodology of critical ethnography I was able to be explicit about the nature of the reflexivity that initiated and framed this research, embrace subjectivity, critique the culture that I was researching and also reflect not only on the products of this participation but also on the practices and processes, because as Calhoun (2000) states, knowing and understanding 'social life requires our active engagement in its games' (p.710). However, through these processes I started to feel that critical ethnography was not able to fully support who I am as an artist teacher, or enable a greater breadth of outcomes and practices that the participants and I could and did create/construct.

> *'On my first day I sat in a corner, quietly watching, observing the children and the teacher and occasionally writing notes. Then a few of the younger students started to ask questions of me and immediately an older student told them to stop being nosey and then apologised for them. However, very quickly I started to become just a part of the classroom and the school life, nothing special.*
>
> *After two days of 'just observing' the students would come to me to ask for help or to check their work, yep I still do not like maths. The Principal asked me whether I would some art lessons with the students. But is this what I should be doing, I feel really strange about this. Do I get actively involved or just stay in my corner and say no to helping out. I am feeling really wobbly about what I am doing. Is this how I want to research or be as a researcher, am I meant to shut off me as an artist teacher and not be involved, just watch.*
>
> *I've decided I just can't do that. Stuff my research plan and what I planned and should be doing and how I should be doing it. I will just see what happens. I will hang out at school, teach, help, get involved and see what happens. I am not going to get all caught up with research plans, questions, methods and data. I will just see what happens, I'm just going to be.'(Page, 2007, p.3)*

From my letting go of particular fixed constructs of research and researcher, and being open and flexible to surprises, during the first eight weeks in place, I became an active participant in the school community. I achieved this through doing playground duty, interacting with the children, having lunch with the staff in the staff room talking about the weather, events in the community, personal experiences and working with the Principal and teaching assistants in designing and teaching lessons on the cross-curricular theme of 'Life in Action'.

Through this collaborative project we (the children and myself) explored how plants grow, built a vegetable garden and a 'chook run' (chicken coop) complete with 'chooks'. The children, with me, made photographs, collages/montages and drawing reflected on our lives and what makes our life. Through all of these practices and media we discussed, individually and in groups, and wrote about where they/we live and our ideas and experiences that were audio recorded, copied and collected. With the Principal's permission we continued working in this way when I left and maintained contact and shared our work over the following twelve months through email. By being more open and flexible, my collaborative methods and practices as researcher came closer to my philosophy and collaborative practices as an artist teacher.

As previously stated, the main outcome of ethnography is thick description, where witnessing and observing are translated into written language: the human experience is transformed into linguistic descriptions and so culture is represented through the medium of words: 'a science of words' (Mead, 1975, p.5). Therefore, through all of these experiences in my first eight weeks I was writing observational and personal experiences I was writing observational and personal notes and questioning what I was observing, thinking and feeling. However, through this process and reflecting on these notes and practices and especially through the experience of being in place, I found that 'language is doing the work of the eyes' (Tyler, 1986, p.137) and so I needed to integrate the methodology of critical ethnography with one that embraces the visual.

5.1.2 Visual ethnography

The use of images within ethnographic research has been hotly debated since the turn of the 20th century and there are many conflicting views on their value and use

(Holliday, 2000; Chaplin, 1994). Many of these debates regarding the use of still and moving images focus on images as a supplementary method, a way of documenting or confirming text descriptions, as in Frank's (1969) study of US culture, Berger and Mohr's (1975, 1977, 1982) portrait of intra-European labour-based migrancy and Levi-Strauss' (1995) fieldwork in Brazil between 1935 and 1939. The problem with this scientific-realist approach is that visuals are not analysed or integrated within the theoretical arguments but are instead considered as a support to observations, and as such are constructed as an observation of reality. Visual data (Plummer, 1983; Collier and Collier, 1996; Walker, 1993; Emmison and Smith, 2000) simply becomes an adjunct to the written text.

One of the first studies that incorporated photographs into the text and used photographs to generate theory was Bateson and Mead's (1942) study of Balinese culture. Here the name of the study defined the purpose of the images: *Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis*, and the photographs show performed rituals and everyday activities and routines. These still images were used in the same way as time-lapse images, to record the events as they unfolded (Jacknis, 1988). Since this groundbreaking study, visual ethnography has developed the visual with philosophical and epistemological underpinnings that support a reflexive approach, where the visual are regarded as an equally meaningful element of ethnographic research.

The Society for Visual Anthropology describes visual ethnography as:

> 'The use of images for the description, analysis, communication and interpretation of human behaviour, proxemics and related forms of body communication as visual aspects of culture . . . It includes the use of image and auditory media, including still photography, film, video and non camera generated images . . .It is the study of how indigenous, professional and amateur forms of pictorial/auditory materials are grounded in personal, social, cultural and ideological contexts.' (Taylor, 1994, p.xi)

Just as ethnography has faced criticism for its association with colonialism and 'Othering', so too has visual ethnography. This is because ethnographic film has been used to capture the 'noble savagery' of exotic cultures, diminishing the political context and serving to confirm racist stereotypes (Marks, 1995; Singh, 1992; Ball and Smith, 1992). This was also recently demonstrated at Tate Modern (2011) in which the exhibition, Contested Terrains featured four artists Kader Attia, Sammy Baloji, Michael MacGarry and Adolphus Opara who attempted to explore and subvert constructed narratives of the past using anthropological photographs of Black African people juxtaposed with their contemporary sculptures. The British Museum (2011) also perpetuated these visual constructions in their recent exhibition, 'Baskets and Belonging: Indigenous Australian Histories', where Indigenous handcrafted baskets, both historical and contemporary, are displayed with photographs and films of groups of Indigenous Australian basket-makers working in the landscape.

However, contemporary visual ethnography 'addresses the polysemic quality of the image' (Harper, 2003, p.244), its many connotations and interpretations and the constructions of meaning. It uses images to create dialogues around multiple meanings rather than claiming 'this is what it is or looks like'. Visual ethnography embraces many interests, methods and specialisations, such as the multiple meanings of body for female prostitutes through performance art (O'Neill et al, 2000), the changes in traditional dairy communities in Maine and Minnesota using archival images (Harper, 2003), and the meaning of visual communication in a 'middle' American community (Ruby, 1981).

Just as critical ethnography is criticised for being *too* subjective, one of the criticisms of the use of images and films in ethnographic research is that they too can be conceived as subjective expressions or representations (Holliday, 2000). However, Schaeffer (1995) attempts to address the subjectivity of images by outlining guidelines for the 'training of objectivity' and by employing the technique of 'minimising', based on Collier and Collier (1996). This includes minimising the intrusion of the camera through camouflage so that there is a de-emphasis on the individual ethnographer and also ensuring that the researcher uses 'standardised skills instead of artistic expression' (p.225). Additionally, as editing of films is seen as reinforcing bias in the data (Proust, 1995), an unedited film is also conceived as 'scientific' rather than subjective. However, as stated earlier, I do not subscribe to this scientific-realist approach to research nor to the idea that the role of the researcher has to be objective and that the purpose of research is to reveal the 'truth'.

By using the methodology of visual ethnography, I am able to acknowledge and embrace the artistic and subjective, and the complexity of the visual because as O'Neill et al. (2002) asserts, you are revealing the many layers of meaning that enrich our understanding and knowledge of lived human experiences and broader social structures and processes. This then enables an exploration and examination of the ways of knowing and learning the place-world of the bush *with* the participants; *with* their visual, textual and performative products of images and words, such as we produced in the previously described school project, 'Life in Action'.

One of the underpinnings of visual ethnography is that images are constructed as visual products or objects to be deconstructed (Prosser, 1991; 1998; Collier, 1967,

1979; Collier & Collier, 1996) and it was towards the end of my first eight weeks in place, staying the weekend with a family on a station[3] a 45-minute drive from the town and school, that I realised that place and the ways of knowing place were more than the children's and my own images and narratives to be deconstructed, there was more going on here and it involved more than what was seen.

This epiphany occurred when I was invited to go on an 'abenture', (see this Chapter and Chapter 6), where I w*alked with* three children, and through our conversations, stories they told me, films and photographs they made, they shared and taught me their embodied knowledge and understanding of their place world. This experience was pivotal and stayed with me. On my return to London, through analysing and questioning this experience of the 'abenture', the images and film the children had made, and listening to and transcribing my recordings the children's ways of knowing and also my own ways of knowing, my methodology, methods and my approach to this research became more open, flexible and socially-engaged. I was enabled to understand what was hidden, what we were feeling, hearing, smelling; the embodied, sensory, ways of knowing and learning place and belonging. This process started to enable very subtle, nuanced but also complex data of human difference and similarity to emerge. Consequently, I needed a methodology that was able to support this complexity but could also be layered with, and not philosophically in opposition to, both critical and visual ethnography.

5.1.3 Sensory ethnography

Pink (2009) describes sensory ethnography as 'a developing field of practice' (p.10), that explicitly accounts for the senses which:

[3] 'Large sheep or cattle farm (Bickerton, 2004, p.20)

> ‘entails taking a series of conceptual and practical steps that allow the researcher to rethink both established and new participatory and collaborative ethnographic research techniques in terms of sensory perception, categories, meanings, values, ways of knowing and practices. It involves the researcher self-consciously and reflexively attending to the senses throughout the research process’ (p.10).

Pink (2009) is adamant that this developing field of practice is not about a prescriptive way of conducting research or about favouring one type of data or method, it is about being ‘open to multiple ways of knowing and to the exploration of and reflection on new routes to knowledge’ (p.8). Because sensory ethnography is a developing practice one of the issues with this approach is that there is a paucity of research addressing sensorality and the possible forms this approach may take and also where this study is situated. However, sensoriality, or the ‘sensorial turn’ (Howes, 2003, p.xii) has been addressed within the academic fields of human geography, social and cultural anthropology and sociology.

Simmel’s (1997) seminal work, ‘Sociology of the senses’, originally published in 1907, focused on the sensory perception of others and the key role this plays in human interaction. Largey and Watson (2006) and Low (2005) built on Simmel’s premise through focusing their research on the examination of smell and social interaction. Bull (2000) however, went in another direction focusing on sound and how sound is an invisible presence in everyday life, and Hindmarsh and Pilnick (2007) and Lammer (2007) used sociological approaches to explore social and multisensory interactions in clinical contexts.

Sensoriality has also been examined within the field of human geography by Tuan (1977) and Porteus (1990) who examined the different modalities of sensory experience in the way the environment and landscape is experienced. However, this work did not explore sensorality ethnographically but instead drew on existing social

studies, philosophy and literature. However, there was a definite stance against focusing primarily on vision '…vision drives out the other senses' (Porteus, 1990, p.5). Rodaway (1994) offers a more integrated conception of the role of the senses in geographical understanding as in 'the sense both as relationship to a world and the sense as themselves a kind of structuring of space and defining of place' (p.4) sharing a common thread with social and cultural anthropologists Howes and Classen (1991), Howes (2005), Stoller (1989; 1997), Feld (1982) and Feld and Basso (1996) who primarily mapped a cross-cultural comparison of how sense experience varies from one culture to the next and the meanings and emphasis attached to each modality of perception. However, there have been some criticisms of these approaches, as the focus has been on the collective sensory and the senses as cultural models rather than on the specificity of individuals' practice and experience (Ingold, 2000).

Therefore, for this study, rather than using a methodology that focuses on one sense and isolating and deconstructing the visual (the children's drawings, montages, and photographs) as products or objects, a sensory ethnographic approach acknowledges that sensoriality, through sensory perceptions and memories, are fundamental to how we learn about, understand and present other people's lives, experiences, values and social worlds (Pink, 2008). What is also emphasised in this approach is that the senses are not fragmented and should not be addressed separately (as in the work of Pink, 2004; Howes, 2005; and Atkinson et al. 2007), but are conceived as 'interconnected', embodied 'and …emplaced' (Pink, 2009, p.2), consequently supporting the premise of this study: the human experience of place and how the ways of knowing and learning place and belonging are embodied and relational.

Pink (2009) purports that sensory ethnography is particularly attuned to the theories of place. In her book *Doing Sensory Ethnography,* Pink (2009) proposes an 'ethnographic process through a theory of place and space that can engage with both the phenomenology of place and the politics of space' (p.23), the reason being that

> 'it recognises the emplaced ethnographer as her or himself part of a social, sensory, and material environment and acknowledges the political and power relations integral to the contexts and circumstances of ethnographic process.' (p.23)

According to Pink (2009), this understanding of place as a political construct can be achieved through an analysis of existing knowledge and representations such as poetry, artworks, film, etc as demonstrated in Chapter 3. Pink (2008) maintains that multisensory products can be used to gain insight into how the sensory experiences of cultural situations are represented as they form part of the cultural knowledge that comes from everyday practices and local ideologies. However, I argue that this insight can also be gained from being with people and learning their ways of knowing. This is demonstrated in the cultural geographer Tolia-Kelly's (2007) research on participants' embodied interdependency with landscape.

The aim of Tolia-Kelly's (2007) research was to create a sensory archive and reflect the ideal landscapes of belonging, citizenship, and home for South Asian women. Tolia-Kelly (2007) used collaborative arts practice based methods, to explore how the landscape of the Lake District National Park in England was 'experienced beyond the frame of a singular English sensibility by working with migrants from Eastern Europe, India, Ireland and Scotland' (p.329). The research methods employed were drawing and painting and also walking and talking with the participants (the participants and Tolia-Kelly took walks through the Lake District). These methods were enabled through biographical workshops; acknowledging the

role of biography, and memory and art-based workshops; where the participants produced collages of their own ‘valued landscapes’ (Tolia-Kelly, 2007, p.330).

Tolia-Kelly (2007) claims that these practices and methods enabled ‘a set of affective registers that are not normally encountered in representations of this cultural landscape’ and that these practices aimed to ‘make tangible a divergent set of sensory responses to this landscape and show how affect and emotion are experienced’ (Tolia-Kelly, 2007, p.331). Tolia-Kelly’s (2007) emphasis on the multiple and varied connections to place and landscape that shape belonging, identity, and citizenship contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the value of race, landscape and memory for postcolonial migrants living in Britain. Just like Tolia-Kelly (2007), in this study I am attempting to focus on the sensory, experiencing body of myself and the participants to explore the relationship with the landscape, in this case the place of ‘the bush’ but also the relationship with others. This may then reveal insights into not only how we learn these ways of knowing and understanding but also how our identities are constructed within a relational process.

Pink (2004; 2005b; 2006) also examined how everyday, seemingly mundane practices construct identities and moralities in her research of people’s cleaning, home decorating and laundry practices. These studies were ‘an exploration of people’s multisensory relationships to the materialities and environments of their everyday lives, and to their feelings about them’ (p.19). Through audiovisual methods and interviews Pink (2004; 2005b; 2006) explored how participants thought about different sensory modalities as ways of understanding cleanliness and dirt, specifically relating their experience to Western five-sense sensorium. Through a multiphase exploration Pink (2005b) was able to ‘build a picture of when different

people thought that the smell, feel and visual appearance of their laundry became an important signifier of its cleanliness' (p.80). Through the participants responses Pink (2005) asserts that she was able to assess how the participants constructed their self-identities through their approaches to the sensorial quality of their laundry but also how the participants then made moral judgements about the sensory state of the laundry and cleaning practices of others.

Pink (2007a) further explored everyday practices and events through her study of the Cittàslow[4] (Slow City) movement, focussing on the inhabitants of and events in Aylsham, Norfolk, Britain's second Cittàslow Town. The slow living aim is that 'suitable doses of guaranteed sensual pleasure and slow, long-lasting enjoyment [may] preserve us from the contagion of the multitude who mistake frenzy for efficiency' (Slow Food, 2005, p.6). Pink (2007a) used research methods such as 'sensory sociality of walking, eating, imagining, drinking, photographing, audio- and video-recording' (pp.175-176) to explore the ideology and practices of Cittàslow where it is assumed that a 'better' life involves heightened sensory experience and pleasure. Pink (2007a) states that the policies, events and everyday practices in a Cittaslow town are re-educating the senses and that intersubjectivity and local participation result in a better appreciation of the environment of the 'city' and the creation of a 'better world in which to live, together' (p.62), a 'sensory city' (p.63).

In the above examples Pink (2004; 2005b; 2006; 2007c) and Tolia Kelly (2007) demonstrate how the various ways we are sensing the world; individually, gendered, generational, ethnic, class-based and culturally specific, impact on how we recount

[4] An 'off shoot of the better known Slow Food Movement' … that aims to promote' (Pink, 2008, p.176) 'the use of technology oriented to improving the quality of the environment and of the urban fabric, and in addition the safe-guarding of the production of unique foods and wine … that … contribute to the character of the region' (Slow Food, 2005, p.6).

and experience our lives. These ways of knowing offer us routes into understanding how people situate themselves and their experiences through multisensory relationships. Pink (2004; 2005b; 2006; 2007c) and Tolia-Kelly (2007) use a variety of research methods, 'a family of methods' that can also be theorised as place-making practices that can enable an understanding of how people, and/with researchers, construct place through 'embodied and imaginative practices' (Pink, 2008, p.176). In this study, I am also using a 'family of methods': active participation, events, walking with and audiovisual-arts practice (explained in detail in this chapter, 5.5 Methods) to not only enable an exploration of both my own sensory *habitus*, and that of the participants, but also to learn how everyday practices make place (place-making *habitus*), contributing to a sense of place and belonging.

This open continuous analytic process of attempting to understand embodied ways of knowing and learning continued in my second period of time *being in place*. However, during this time I was able to achieve a greater depth of exploration and understanding through being welcomed and invited into people's homes, staying with families, house/dog sitting for the Principal and supply teaching for extended periods of time where I was constructed as a returned insider. This process and experience also contributed to self-reflexivity because, as I was attempting to understand place-making *habitus*, I became aware of my own that produced, as Pink (2009) asserts, a connection between experienced reality and academic knowledge.

For this study, I initially followed a particular line of enquiry using a methodology that at the time supported the questions and premise of the study. I had initially planned to be solely situated within the community through Thirton State School, working with pupils, teachers and staff, observing, formally interviewing and contributing to

ways of knowing and understanding place. However, from these initial experiences and involvement in the school community, I was welcomed and invited into people's homes, staying with families for extended periods of time. Consequently, my methodology evolved to enable a deeper exploration of the complex, but also the subtle and sometimes hidden ways of knowing place. Therefore, through praxis, an evolution of overlapping and interwoven methodologies has taken place, whereby my practices and products as an artist researcher teacher along with the practices and products of the participants, have been reflected upon and analysed and through this process and by being open to diverse ways of knowing and understanding, new routes to knowing and understanding have been forged.

5.2. Subjectivities and reflexivity

Because of my existing socially-engaged practices as artist, it was important to me that the research process of this study was me *with* the participants making, researching, teaching and learning from and *with* each other and that the identities of artist, researcher, teacher, participant, learner would be fluid, enabling overlapping, interweaving and blurring. Atkinson's (2002) work on teacher and learner identities in institutional art education suggests that these are largely constructed according to the particular discourses and practices employed in such contexts. This essentially means that the performance of particular discourses and practices leads to the production of specific identities. However, these identities also involve positioning and power relations that 'activate or produce certain kinds of individuals' (Atkinson, 2002, p.97).

Therefore, using ethnographic methodologies involves performing particular practices and discourse that produce ethnographic ways of knowing and which construct particular identities; the ethnographer as research subject (Self) and that which is studied, the participant, as the research object (Other) (Ellis & Bochner,

2000). Hall (1996) asserts that: ‘identities are constructed through, not outside difference’ (p.5), therefore it is only through the relation to the ‘Other’, ‘that which is distinct from, different from, or opposite to oneself‘ (Pearsall, 1999, p. 1009), that identities are constructed. This relationship of identities constructed *through* practices and discourse can be illustrated by linking Self and the Other with a hyphen (Self-Other) where the hyphen ‘separates and merges personal identities with our inventions of Others’ (Fine, 1994, p.131).

However, my uneasiness with classic ethnography, as mentioned previously, is the practice of ‘Othering’, where researchers are speaking ‘of’ and/or ‘for’ participants that Alcoff (1991) argues reflects a desire for mastery and domination, and perpetuates the concepts of ‘universal truths, scientific neutrality and researcher dispassion’ (Fine, 1994, p.131), and objectivity (Atkinson, et al, 2007). This is because the researcher is not acknowledging or even recognising the impact that they themselves are having on the participants or the impact that the participants are having on them. They are denying the relationship (hyphen) between Self and Other.

Fine (1998) and Humphrey (2007) claim that by working the Self-Other hyphen, we are not only acknowledging the relationship between Self and Other, but are also eliminating the hierarchy of Self above the Other and disrupting the practices and discourse of Othering. Within this study, I have attempted to work the hyphen through research strategies such as:

- acknowledging and embracing the subjective and reflexive character of ethnography, that it is part of the world it studies
- conceiving the research process as being *with* participants, where the participants and I share and learn activities, practices and experiences

- explicitly reflecting on the product and processes of participation, individually and with participants
- conceiving fieldwork as 'being in place'
- reconceiving classic ethnographic methods
- putting my Self into the study.

Through these strategies I am being explicit about the nature of the reflexivity that initiated and framed this research and am paying attention to the effects and affects of my position and roles within the community, my own sensory *habitus* and how these are likely to distort or prejudice the research. However, even though I have constructed these strategies to work the hyphen and attempt to disrupt Othering, I acknowledge that I can never achieve a complete picture; only one that is determined by the methods I use and the questions I ask.

Probyn (1993) and Butterwick (2001) are particularly critical of the way in which reflexivity can be approached and the perceived lack of detailed documentation of the reflexive process. Probyn (1993) maintains that the effectiveness of reflexivity depends on the way in which it is practised: 'what exactly a self-reflexive self is reflecting upon … where that self is positioned and whether it is a physical or textual entity' (Probyn, 1993, p.62). Stoller (1989; 1997), Seremetakis (1994) and Okley (1994) also acknowledge that reflexivity in sensory

> 'anthropological practice is a corporeal process that involves the ethnographer engaging not only with the ideas of others, but in learning about their understandings through her or his own physical and sensorial experiences.' (Pink, 2009, p.14)

In other words, for reflexivity to be effective in this study I needed to be sensory reflexive; I needed to become aware of and to engage with how my own sensory

experiences are produced through research encounters and how these may assist in understanding those of others. As Geurts (2003) states:

> 'We [ethnographers] often find ourselves drenched - not just in discourse and words, but in sensations, imaginations and emotions … And yet, if we have become drenched, those we work with may also be soaked through and through. Such moments open up space, or sound a call, to body forth fine-tuned accounts replete with an ethical aesthetics of relationship in the field' (p.386).

However, to be sensory reflexive and enable this understanding of sensory experiences, I must first be aware of my own sensory subjectivity and also intersubjectivities.

Pink (2009) asserts that our sensory subjectivity is the awareness of our own sensory knowledge, values and practices, such as how we categorise and classify our senses culturally and/or personally. For example, in the West we divide the senses into vision, hearing, touch, taste and smell. However, Howes and Classen (1991) stress that *'other cultures do not necessarily divide the sensorium as we do,* the Hausa have two senses and the Japanese five, and these senses do not coincide with modern western ones.' (pp.257-8 original italics). As researchers we also need to be aware that there are additional variations within cultures: gender, ethnicity, generation, etc. and so these sensory categories may be used in different ways and also mean different things. Howes and Classen (1991) maintain that sensory subjectivity may be deconstructed before starting the research, or generated during the research.

In relation to this study I possessed an embodied knowledge of the place of study but at the same time I did not. Just as Hockey (2006) in his auto-ethnography of long-distance running and Hahn (2007) in his exploration of knowledge transmission in Japanese dance, had sensory experiences of these activities before they began their respective researches, I also had conducted research and lived in a community

that is geographically described as very remote. I therefore possessed some insight into the culturally specific sensory world of the place of this study. However, at the same time, the research and learning from the participants' knowledge, beliefs and values led me to a different and deeper consciousness of my own sensory knowledge, values and practices. This awareness of my own sensory knowledge that began before I started the research was also developed and enriched during the research process. This enabled a comparison but also acted as a reference point that I was able to share and discuss with the participants, such as the noise the barbwire makes when it vibrates, or the various blues of the sky.

This sensory subjectivity should also be understood with other identity indicators such as gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age etc. However, it is important not to construct these subjectivities as fixed, as they shift depending on the total environment (Pink, 2009). This results in our identities continually being renegotiated in collaboration with others and with the total environment. However, if our identity is continually being reworked through our intersubjective relations with others, between researcher and participant, and also between participants and the environment, there is a need to acknowledge and analyse how this works during the research encounter and leads to new ways of ethnographic awareness and knowing, as addressed in 5.3. Getting and in place.

Through the research process being *with* the participants of this study and the continual reflexive analysis, I developed an awareness and understanding of the sensory place-making *habitus* of participants, and also that of my own. In this study I have attempted to disrupt 'Othering' through various research strategies and also by explicitly putting my Self into the research. Through these processes I have come to understand my own sensory subjectivity but also how my and others' sensory subjectivity shifts in relation to, and in negotiation with, others in place.

5.3. Getting in and being in place.

Previously in this chapter I have addressed the evolving methodological underpinnings and practices of this study enabled through praxis (Frieire, 1970). But, also through praxis I have come to realise the complexity of getting in place, choosing the particular place world of this study and being in place.

So, how did I get *here*? To be honest, with a few tears and a lot of book throwing. As discussed in Chapter 2, questions about the human experience of place, and specifically how we make place and have a feeling of belonging, have always been with me; a strong sense of place from the embodied experiences of vast open space and a sense of belonging in great expanses of sky, from horizon to horizon. However, when embarking on this research journey, which coincided with my emplacement in London, I neatly put these questions and fascinations aside, because how could I possibly explore and learn about place and belonging from people who lived in Australia when I was living and had work commitments on the other side of the world?

'As I manoeuvre weaving left, right, around people on the platform with the train tracks disappearing into the distance, a gentle breeze and the sun blinds my left eye. I realise the sun is shining and there is a blue sky in London! People are smiling. It is amazing how a change in the weather dramatically influences people. I can actually feel London now. Up until now there has been this curtain, only allowing me to see or feel part of London. But this curtain is not mist, or the constant drizzle and grey cloud blanket, London is being selective in what and how it reveals, when London is ready and when it thinks I am ready I will know.

The sun is blinding my left side as I lean waiting for the East London line, the electronic sign said 10 minutes, it has been 15 minutes, but then this must be 10 minutes London transport time.

Here it comes... slowly inching along the platform- never in a hurry - just happy to saunter its rear end along the track. Ok, it is the oldest and it takes its time, it is not the most stylish but to be honest, today I don't care, it is a beautiful day. I am in London and now I can see London.' (Page, 2006a, p.1)[5]

As described above, being *here* had its own fascinations that needed exploring and examining: an urban place, and a new and very different job. My initial leanings regarding research started to centre on these new and different things; initial teacher education, social identities and the transformation and formation of new identities. But, there was that itch that needed to be scratched and it would not go away. This resulted in the above-mentioned book throwing and also a newly acquired ability to rant, because how on earth could I research *there* when I am *here* and also how could I research *there* when *there* is home?

5.3.1. Field and home.

Fetterman (1989) asserts that the basis for all ethnographic research is fieldwork and that this is exploratory in nature. A key assumption within classic ethnography is that the field or being in the field is 'there', which is constructed as a distant locale away from home (Johnson, 1975). This assumption is embedded in the long

[5] I have included extracts of informal writing from past journal entries, in a different font, to enable a connecting to past places and experiences that have contributed to the story of this research. The content of these extracts adds layers to the research but also gives depth, texture, and complexity to this multisensory story.

tradition of ethnographies where researchers travelled to exotic locations to be within and study a culture (Bateson & Mead, 1942; Freilich, 1970; Gow, 1995; Pink, 1997; Price, 2005); however, this discourse constructs the field, 'there' as Other. Therefore to address this discourse, enable reflexivity and attempt to disrupt Othering, I have examined the place world of this study as *home.*

The construct of home as a sense of belonging, as explored in Chapter 4, is where *habitus* enables you to feel at ease and achieve a connection to a group, place or country. Knowles (2000) and Pink (2000) have both explored the issues of the field, there, being home and home being the field. Their research is constructed from the position of the transnational, one who has lived in one place but chooses to live in another place and 'the impact of their own transnationalism on their research' (Knowles, 2000, p.54).

To understand my relationship between home and field requires reflexivity regarding my constructions of and relationship with home as a place of research. In other words, what I am doing and why am I doing it *there*. Knowles (2000) asserts that this can be achieved through the examination of the researcher's autobiography; a selection of stories about life, experiences and memories, that positions Self in the world. Therefore, just as I needed to be sensorially reflexive, as discussed in Chapter 4 and this chapter, I also needed to be reflexive of my own sense of belonging *habitus*, to become aware of and to engage with how my own senses of belonging are produced and how these may assist in understanding those of others.

For this study, the place of remote Australia, the bush, is the field but it is also home, where I have senses of belonging. These senses are gained from past experiences and practices and also through familial relationships that maintain the

connections to place. However, entwined with these experiences, practices and relationships are my issues that make Australia easy to leave. Consequently, this place is not home and I have a sense of disbelonging, but *it is* also home and I also have a strong sense of belonging. However, this tension and contestation gives me the opportunity, as Knowles (2000) states, 'of reconnection to a former life' and 'it sustains … senses of belonging and Self, deftly buried in conceptions of work and intellectual enterprise' (p.60) and at the same time it allows me to examine the issues and relationships that were and are easy to leave.

Even though the field for this research and my autobiography are closely connected, they are not the same. This is because the fieldwork in this study is a process centred on a study from my autobiography. However, Pink (2000) asserts that the field and autobiography do not always have a predictive relationship. This means that a researcher's autobiography does not always locate the field of study. The field can be conceived of as more of an adjunct to autobiography, as they are connected through the positioning of the Self.

The relationship between Self and home was pivotal in my selection of the field for this study as it broadly defined the where, what and who of this research. As Knowles (2000) states ' the field is about us as researchers in ways that we need to reflect upon and subject to critical analysis' (p.67), but this cannot be achieved by simply putting the Self in the research frame. It can only be done by critically analysing the ways in which I have generated the research frame. According to Aptekar (2002), fieldwork is a highly personal experience and the goal in ethnographic description should *not* be the elimination of the effects of personality or affects of the Self and that that this can be avoided through the inclusion of internal dialogue. Therefore, through the inclusion of this particular voice I can

openly disclose the Self and how I have became aware of and engaged with my own place-making and sense of belonging *habitus* and also how I have negotiated and addressed choosing place, getting in place, and being in place.

5.3.2. Place and participants

Before choosing the place of this study, the following factors needed to be taken into consideration: The place needed to be constructed as 'the bush' and be classified as remote/very remote according to the ABS classification and whether the place would limit or facilitate the investigation. Jorgensen (1989) discusses the concepts of visible and open settings in relation to ethnographic research; a visible setting is where information about the community is accessible and an open setting is where access to the community and its members requires little negotiation. However, the use of the term *setting* may construct the place of the research as a mere backdrop, rather than as integral to the research, as is the case with this study. Therefore, rather than using the construct of setting and to disrupt 'Othering', 'place' will be used not only theoretically, as discussed in Chapter 4, but also methodologically. Consequently, I have reconceptualised the field as place and fieldwork as *being in place*

Thirton,[6] Queensland, Australia was chosen as the place of this study because I was able to access the community and its members with some negotiation through familial connections[7] and because it was defined by the ABS (2003b) and also the state government education department, Education Queensland (2006), as remote/very remote.

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[6] For ethical reasons the name of the place has been changed however, the description of physical and demographic characteristics has not been altered.

[7] My sister-in-law who has lived in Thirton for 20 years and her husband who was born and raised in Thirton.

At over 107,000 square kilometres (100,000 square miles), Queensland is the second largest state in Australia and although this makes it six times the area of the United Kingdom, it has only one-fifteenth the population with only two persons per square kilometre (ABS, 1996). Most people live in the southern coastal area, leaving the rest of the state sparsely populated (ABS, 2005), see Figure 5.2. Queensland is promoted as the ‘Sunshine State’ and within its borders are the Great Barrier Reef, idyllic beaches, lush tropical rainforests and a harsh, arid interior (Tourism Australia, 2010).

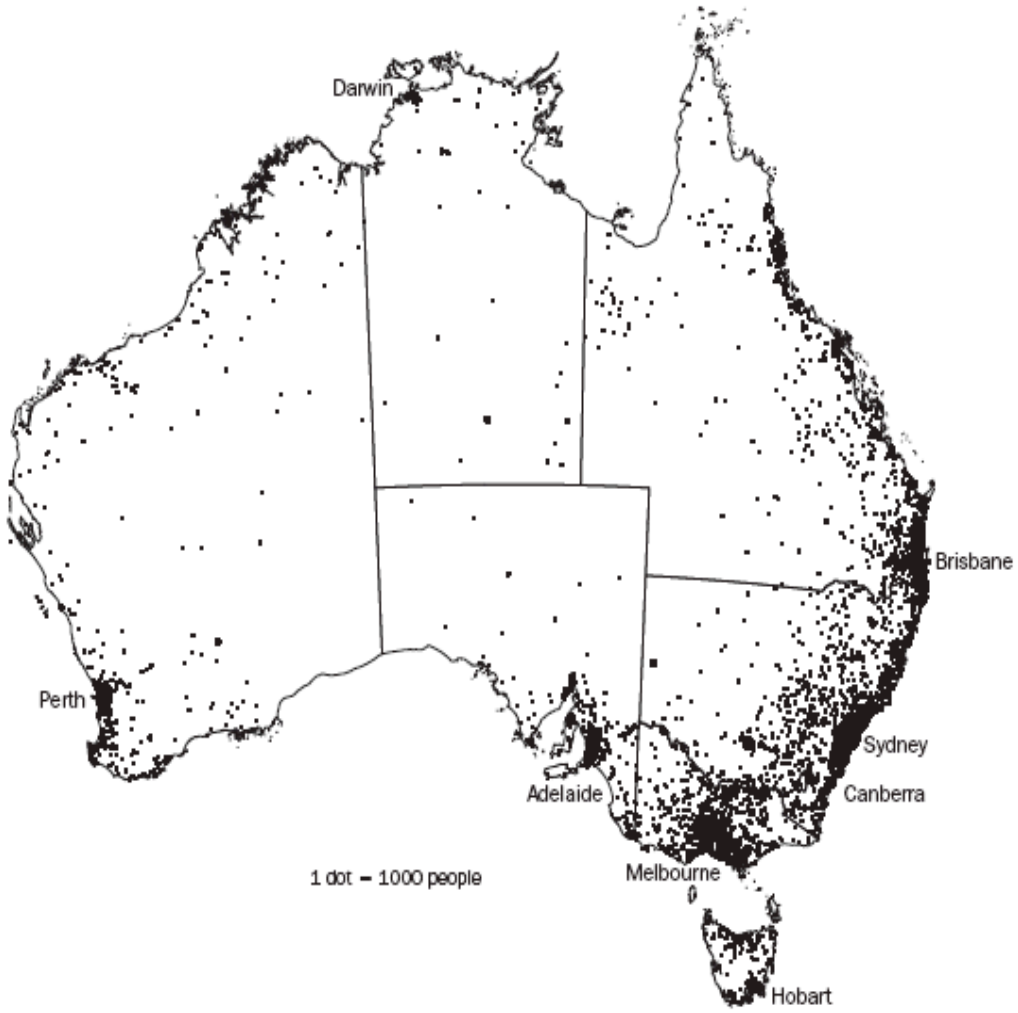


Figure 5.2. Population Distribution- 30 June 2006 (ABS, 2008, p.2).

Inland Queensland is mainly agricultural, relying on beef and wool production, and is punctuated by areas of intense mining (ABS, 2009). The sparse population of rural Queensland is concentrated in small towns and large ranches, locally known as ‘stations’. Traditionally, the stations have been affluent and owned by generations of established families, with the small rural towns consisting of agricultural support, commercial and transport industry workers and their families (ABS, 2005). Consequently, the economies of these rural communities are very dependent on the health of the agricultural and mining industries (ABS, 2009).

Public education in Queensland is offered and administered by a single, large, state government department, Education Queensland (ABS, 2009). Although this large department is centralised in the state capital, Brisbane, the schools’ administration is being increasingly decentralised to become the responsibility of both the schools and regional offices (Education Queensland, 2003).

Thirton, according to the ABS (2003b) ARIA is classified as ‘very remote’. Thirton is in the south west of Queensland where the majority of communities, using ARIA, are classified as ‘remote’ or ‘very remote’ (ABS, 2010). This classification highlights the inaccessibility of the region, as distances between towns are considerable and access to services is limited.

Additionally, Education Queensland uses a Transfer Rating Scheme to determine the relative weighting given to a school for the purpose of differentiating between applicants for teacher transfer (Education Queensland, 2003). The ratings are used to compensate those who transfer to remote areas. Each school is allocated a series of points based on a range of factors (e.g. remoteness, level of community services, complexity of school environment, etc.). There are seven rating levels with seven being the most remote. Thirton is rated as six. Education Queensland

has also developed a new classification system for identifying state schools as rural and remote. This is based on the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) Geographic Location Classification (Jones, 2000). Jones (2000) drew on the work of the ARIA, as discussed in Chapter 3. Within this classification, Thirton is also considered to be very remote.

Thirton has a semi-arid climate with very hot summers and relatively warm, dry winters (ABS, 2005). Temperatures commonly reach the low to mid 40s (Celsius) in summer, while minimum overnight temperatures below freezing are relatively common during winter (ABS, 2005). Rainfall is highly seasonal and irregular, with most rain occurring during the summer (October–March), either as heavy thunderstorms or as tropical rain depressions (ABS, 2005) and is extremely variable. In 1974 Thirton received 16 inches of rain (400mm) in a single night and in 2002 had barely 9 inches (225mm) during the whole year (ABS, 2005). The only predictable conditions are during the August-September period when it is invariably dry (ABS, 2005).

Because of this great contrast in geographical conditions, the industries in southwest Queensland also vary. Primary industries, including agriculture and mining, are the largest industry groups in the region. Livestock is the main agricultural industry with very little vegetable and fruit grown in the area (ABS, 2010). According to ABS (2010), southwest Queensland has a low population density, in other words a small population of people living across a large geographical area. The largest town within the region, Paville, has a population of 2500 persons and the remainder of the population is widely dispersed, living in small towns, on agricultural properties or around the major mining sites in the region (ABS, 2010). These towns vary dramatically in size and the services available to them also vary dramatically (ABS, 2010).

Thirton and the surrounding area have a population of 292 (ABS, 2010). It is around 700[8] kilometres west of Brisbane, and is a major wheat, wool growing and meat cattle area (ABS, 2010). At the time of the 2006 census, 25% of the population of Bamorrow[9], the region in which Thirton is located, were aged under 14, with 16% aged between 35 and 44 (ABS, 2008). The age profile of Bamorrow differs to that of the Queensland population as a whole as it has comparatively more children (aged 0-14 years), fewer persons in the younger working age groups (aged 15-24 years), more in the middle working age groups (aged 25-49 years) and fewer in the older age groups (over 50 years) (ABS, 2008).

The Regional Plan of Bamorrow (Department of Infrastructure and Planning, 2009) indicated that the issues confronting inhabitants of the region were those relating to labour supply shortages, due to young people leaving the region or moving to work in other industries. In Bamorrow there is a high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (10.3%, 2530 people), compared to the Queensland average (3.1%). (DIP, 2009) The majority of the indigenous population identify themselves as Aboriginal (approximately 2500 people) and very few people as Torres Strait Islanders (approximately 30 people) (DIP, 2009). Aboriginal people in the region do not live in discrete communities managed by an indigenous council, but within the local government areas and towns (DIP, 2009).

There is only one major rural activity centre in the region, Paville[10], with an approximate population of 2500[11] (DIP, 2009). Thirton provides a limited range of

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[8] Exact distance not given to protect participants
[9] Name changed
[10] Name changed
[11] 'Major rural activity centres serve as catchments of subregional to regional significance, with populations of 2000 to 5000 residents. These centres accommodate concentrations of employment, businesses and convenience retail shopping opportunities' (DIP, 2009, p.8).

services, with a single convenience store, a service station and a public bar (From observations). Individual income levels are higher in Bamorrow; however, the family and household incomes are lower than the State averages (Queensland Government, 2004):

- median weekly individual income was $401 in 2001 (Qld average $460)
- median weekly family income was $838 in 2001 (Qld average $871)
- median weekly household income was $688 (Qld average $736).

28% of the population were Labourers and Related Workers and 15% were Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers (ABS, 2010). In Bamorrow, whether indigenous or non-indigenous, a higher proportion of people live in disadvantaged circumstances compared to the population of Queensland as a whole. Thirton has a single state primary school catering for students from transition (age 4) to Year 7 (age 12). The closest neighbouring school is in Paville (Pre school – Year 12, P-12, the last year of secondary school) that is approximately 100 kilometres north (Thirton, 2009).

Over half of all state schools in Queensland are classified as remote/very remote (ABS, 2008). As of February 2006, there were 121,520 students enrolled in state schools in remote/very remote Queensland, accounting for 24.8% of the total student population (Education Queensland, 2006, p.iv). In the southwest region of Queensland over 82% of schools are classified as remote/very remote (Education Queensland, 2006, p.v). Thirton State School is described as:

> ‘a small primary school with 30-40 students depending on seasonal employment opportunities. There is a stable population of approximately 30 students. The students of Thirton State School come from varied socio-economic backgrounds and cultures. There are a small number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, predominantly from the lands of the Kamilaroi people. Thirton State School operates on a budget made up of local and Government grants with an active Parents and Citizens Association who annually donate for equipment and resources’
>
> (Education Queensland, 2006, p.55)

The teaching staff consists of a teaching Principal and one part-time and one full-time teacher. The classes have a mix of age groups in the one classroom. The support staff consists of five teaching assistants, three full-time and two part-time. There is also a part-time administrator (Education Queensland, 2006).

The school is located on the main thoroughfare of Thirton and has large grounds with stairs leading to two elevated classrooms. Under the classrooms are the school office, storage, water taps/troughs, refrigerators and covered recreational areas. The refrigerators are provided for pupils' packed lunches from home (as there are no catering facilitates on site), and are necessary due to the yearlong high ambient temperatures (Thirton State School, 2009ab). Within the grounds of the school there are two uncovered tennis/netball courts, a large, shade cloth-covered play/sand pit area and a very large, open, grassed field bordered by eucalyptus trees. The teaching principal's residence is located within the grounds of the school.[12]

The academic year in Queensland begins at the end of January and ends in early December. The structure of the school year consists of four terms/two semesters per year. The average length of a term is 10-12 weeks, separated by a ten day/two week holiday, with the summer/Christmas holidays being six weeks long (Education Queensland, 1998c). At Thirton State School, the school day in Terms 2 and 3 (the cooler and darker months) begins at 9am, with a short break from 11-11.20am and a longer break from 1-1.45pm, finishing at 3pm. In Terms 1 and 4 (the warmer months) the school day begins at 8.30am with a longer break from 10.45-11.30am and a shorter break from 12.45-1.05pm, finishing at 2.30pm (Thirton State School, 2009b). The rationale for the altered beginning and break times is that in the warmer months the pupils are beginning the school day and having a longer break in the

[12] From observations

cooler part of the day (Thirton State School, 2009b), consequently spending less time in the sun and heat.

The participants of this study included 30, pre-school - Year 7 pupils, aged 3-12 years, their parents, and teaching and support staff at Thirton Sate School.[13]

5.3.3. A journey

> *'A journey, what a cliché, it sounds like a pilgrimage to see the wise old Sage and all of my questions; who am I and what am I doing will be answered. I don't know maybe they will, more than likely knowing me I am just going to have more questions, and they won't be any old Sage just me with just a little bit of naval gazing going on.*
>
> *I have to admit I was nervous I haven't driven this far, by myself, in a very long time. But the preparations and the planning was familiar, check the car; spare tyre, jack, water (for me and the car) food, maps, directions, and detailed descriptions of where to go. It all gave me a little bit of a tingle, a bit of I know this, as I remembered what I did and how I felt when I went to Heatherton for the first time[14]. But I was ok with this trip because it is only half the time, only 10 hours, yeah only.*
>
> *Dad and Don had listed the issues and what to be cautious of; narrow sealed roads so "if road trains are heading your way, get over, two wheels on two wheels off, keep going and hold on tight and be steady", the roos, "keep an eye out and slow down" and the road kill "use your horn to scare the birds away and carefully go around em" and of course "if you get tired pull over have a break and if you want to sleep that is OK too".*
>
> *The drive was good I set off at 6am and it was dark, the sun was just peaking over the ridge but there was mist and fog hanging over the road and as I turned onto the highway from Mum and Dads I could see the dams off to the side*.
>
> *As the landscape changed from lush, green, wet, dense with a heavy perfume of frangipanis and wet earth to brittle, dry, brownie red, with nose twitching eucalyptus with a hint of dust I started to get a bit upset and weepy; remembering what it was like living in this space and how very quickly it became home and my place and somehow still is home and my place. It is who I was and now being within this again I am realising it is still who I am. But how has it made me and why is it all having such a profound effect.*

[13] To protect the rights of the participants, pseudonyms will be used
[14] See Chapter 2.

Maybe because where I am now is so totally different or that the rural and remote space is totally different and that is what it does to you, you are different.

I think the difference is the bared down bones of it all. There are no distractions, not a lot of people, no cacophony of competing noises. There is a lot of sky, a lot of space and not much in and around you, just you, very still. Nothing to lean on, depend on or become dependent on. It is stripped of all the stuff, no grey out here, a lot of back and white, live or leave.

People in London keep on asking me why do they live out there why do people live in these places. I suppose if you have to ask that question, you will never truly understand. But do those who do live in these places understand why?

The roads were sealed all the way out and the roads were not that narrow. Got a bit monotonous after a little while, straight road, lots of scrub and trees, I started to become fascinated with the view in my side mirror. Interesting all the stuff behind me, I could get a bit deep about what I was leaving behind but it was more about seeing and feeling things differently as I moved forward.

There were a couple of road trains and I over took one and almost had a heart attack as I was half on the road and half off, hurtling along at 120km, life and death stuff. My heart finally left my throat and went back into my chest.

In the final stretch I turned left, after two hours of straight road and not a car in sight, and it was all dirt road and really rough so I slowed right down. It's different to Heatherton, more trees, but still flat and really dry. I've had the window down the entire journey and even the smell and how the air feels against my face and right arm feels differently to when I started. There is a rawness but it is also gentle, like someone stroking you gently with calloused hands. That's when I noticed the suns not so gently touch on my right arm.

I've been told to look out for a sign 'Clapend"[15] *'hanging below a metal drum, follow the track and you are here. I got out of the car to open and move the gate and I had to literally lift the gate up and shuffle along to open it up. Then drive over the cattle grid; get back out walk/balance over the cattle grid to shut the gate. Ok, I cannot see anything, no sign of a house, no gates, no fences. A lot of very scrawny looking sheep a sort of ruddy beige colour, lots of red dirt, tufts of long straw coloured spindly dry grass and a narrow red dirt track winding its way into the distance.*

OK, Toto we are not in Kansas anymore. What am I doing? And where the hell am I? This feels sort of the same and sort of what I remember, but it is also not the same and not what I imagined.' (Research notes/audio, 2007, pp.1-2) (see at the end of the chapter, Figure 5.3. A journey, series, 2007)

[15] Pseudonym for confidentiality

5.3.4. Being in place.

As previously stated, I have reconceptualised 'fieldwork' as *being in place* and I was in place for 16 weeks over two years (eight weeks/year) and during this time through praxis I was open, flexible and questioned the process of the research but also in negotiating the constructions of my identity and my roles and social positions within the community.

Jorgensen (1989) asserts that in society all members are defined by their social location, 'where they are located in relation to, and in association with, other members of their community' (p.53). According to Jorgensen (1989) and Stacey (1994), the extremes of social location are *outsider* and *insider,* and these exist on a continuum. They also argue that in qualitative research the social location of a researcher within a community determines what can be described, the types of description and the opportunity to describe. In this study I was able to slide between these two extremes, from complete outsider, having not lived within this particular community, to almost insider as I had previously lived in geographically similar communities, therefore I had some understanding and knowledge of the ways of knowing (MacNamara, 1980).

My social location within this community was very important in regards to accessing insider meanings. This is because comments, behaviours and actions that may appear to be meaningless from the social location of an outsider, may be highly significant to an insider. Jorgenssen (1989) also maintains that insider meanings are not usually accessible or displayed for outsiders, as they are primarily available to people to whom these meanings constitute a way of life. Also, Elliot (1988) asserts that gaining access to members of a small, relatively tight knit community, such as in this study, can be particularly difficult as people are more inclined to share their

insider world of meaning and action to a person who is, or has been, a community member. One parent communicated this;

> *"You cannot just step into a small town, a small community and we tell you everything then and there. You step into a small town and you be yourself. You learn to mingle and get on with people. You should just sit down, shut up, see what is happening, say nothing, do nothing, go nowhere. That is what you have got to do. Come in and suss it out" (2007).*

Stacey (1994) asserts that one of the reasons for this is that in small communities, social roles and expectations are learned early and outsiders must create roles for themselves or play those roles already in the local repertoire, as explained by the Principal (teacher) of the school:

> *"Here your professional life and your personal life are bound up together . . . What people see you as in this community is your job and you will always be that. You are never just you. You are your job all the time . . . You are seen that way all the time. Your personal life intermingles with your professional life and you have to work out the pecking order and where you can fit.*" (2008)

To address these possible issues, six months prior to leaving for Australia through my familial connections I made contact, emails and phone calls, with Miss FM, the Principal of Thirton State School. I introduced myself and my experiences of education in particular in remote Australia and that I was an artist teacher. Miss FM communicated that she was very enthusiastic about the research and was eager for me to contribute to the school while I was there. This resulted in me being introduced as a visiting teacher to the children, when I arrived at the school: *"Miss Page will be finding out about how we do it out here in the country, she will be reporting to the big wigs in London, she is here all the way from London."* (2007).

By taking on the role of visiting teacher and being within the school environment I was positioned within the community in a role in the local repertoire. Also, though sharing my skills and knowledge I demonstrated that I was not an exploitive

interloper, I was not just there to take, that I had something to give and contribute. Wenger (2005) reiterates the importance of the identity that an outsider takes on:

> 'newcomers are forging their own identities; they do not necessarily want to emphasise discontinuity more than continuity. They must find a place in relation to the past. In order to participate, they must gain some access- vicarious as it is maybe- to the history they want to contribute to they must make it part of their own identities.' (p.157)

Initially, I was apprehensive about going to Thirton because it had been some time since I had spent time in a small community. Because as Wagner (1979) asserts people who have socialised in large metropolitan settings have difficulty grasping the dynamics of what anthropologists call 'face to face societies' (p.141), where everyone has knowledge of all the members of the community: *"everyone knows you and what you are doing, it's all the time*" (Parent, 2007*).* However, because of my previous experience of living in geographically similar contexts I was able to be more unobtrusive than possibly someone who is new to a 'face to face' community. My previous experiences of living and working in these particular communities also gave me an 'insider passport', as I was able to communicate that I was no stranger to the issues involved: "*Oh, you worked at Heatherton, you understand how it is."* (Parent, 2007*).* However, from these experiences I also knew that I would not be a complete insider and that there was likely to be a high level of curiosity and possibly mistrust about what I was doing and why I was *really* in this place.

However, my concerns were unfounded, people did not seem to be overly concerned with my research or exactly what I was doing and why I was doing it; they seemed to be more interested in me and also me in relation to them: "*So, tell me about yourself?" (Teacher, 2007*) and "*Why on earth did you choose us and why here?" (Parent, 2007).* According to Goffman's seminal text (1959), people are often more concerned with what kind of person the researcher is than with the research

itself and they will try to gauge how far a person can be trusted and what they might be able to offer as an acquaintance or friend.

This issue of trust, according to Hammersly and Atkinson (1995), would result in the community viewing me as a complete outsider and this would adversely affect the insider knowledge I was privy to. However, this did not happen and on the contrary, conversations and what I initially thought was just 'small talk' quickly escalated into conversations that were almost confessional in nature. People were confiding in me and *letting me in* on a lot of personal information and feelings, relationships with others in the community and their place and role within the community. At first I was very uncomfortable with this as it was in complete opposition to the theories and research I had read regarding insider and outsider relationships, particularly within close-knit face-to-face communities (Stacey, 1994).

However, I assert that these 'confessions' happened because of my sliding positions along the insider-outsider continuum; I was considered more an insider as I took on a role within the community and I had disclosed that I had grown up in and worked in similar contexts, so I shared an understanding. However, I was also an outsider, as I did not live and work in this particular community and therefore I was conceived as not having allegiances or alliances within the community: *"It's OK I can tell you this because you don't know them"* (Parent), 2008. Because I was going to leave the community, it made it OK to confide in me: '*See, I knew you would understand, you get this, I feel so much better talking about this. So, I suppose you won't be here much longer will you? … When are you leaving?'* (Teacher, 2008).

To understand the decisions, processes and negotiation of getting in, choosing and being in place requires an examination of the places in between theory, methodology and analysis. So far in this chapter, I have explained how I have

attempted to disrupt Othering and enable reflexivity by exploring the issues of the field being home, choosing place, sharing my journey to place and being in place. Through a flexible process of praxis that allowed me to be open to the surprises of being in place, I also negotiated my roles and social location in this 'face-to-face' community on a sliding continuum between outsider and insider. This continuous analytic interplay of practice and theory has enabled a deeper exploration of not only other people's embodied place-making habitus but also of my own through the methods of active participation, events, walking with and audiovisual-arts practices.

5.4. Methods

Because of the developing nature of sensory ethnography, Pink (2009) conceives that, as a methodology, it is open to innovative practices and has a flexible and less structured approach that can facilitate reflexive and analytical engagement. In other words, no matter how much preparation a sensory ethnographer feels he/she has made, unforeseen sensory experiences may arise and it is important to be open to these, as discussed previously regarding an 'abenture'.

In classic ethnography the researcher is the primary tool for collecting data, and the data is collected through human interaction and from an *emic,* or insider's, perspective. As a result, data collection methods have to facilitate description and be able to tap into local points of view. The classic methods of ethnography are participant observation and formal interviews. These 'funds of knowledge' (Moll & Greenberg, 1990) are a means of identifying significant categories of human experience up close and cannot be structured around any predetermined categories or biases (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Within this study I started out using these classic methods of ethnography, I also used visual ethnographic methods in order to capture the participants' *representations* of place, as previously discussed.

Initially, the photographs, montages and drawings that the children had made, as part of the 'Life in Action' project were used as objects or stimuli for talking points within the interviews; image elicitation. However, as stated previously, by being in place and through conducting the research I started to become more aware of my and the participants' embodied ways of knowing and learning place. Consequently, I needed to use methods that supported these emerging ways of knowing and learning.

To enable this exploration and examination of sensory perception and memory methods were required that did not fragment or address the senses separately but also allowed a flexible and less structured approach. However, these methods also needed to be interwoven with, and not philosophically or epistemologically in opposition to, the methods of both critical and visual ethnography. Therefore, I have used the methods of walking with and audiovisual-arts practices and have reconceived the classic ethnographic methods of interview as event and participant observation as active participation.

5.4.1. From participant observation to active participation

Classic ethnographic fieldwork refers to participant observation as a conscious decision to get close to the participants within the setting (Genzuk, 2003). However, this method can be conceived as an opportunity to access lived experiences that incorporates but also transcends language. This conception of participant observation is reiterated by Atkinson, et al. (2007), who used participant observation to reveal how sensory phenomena were culturally significant to a given group of participants. In their study, Atkinson, et al. (2007) were attempting to understand sensory codes within cultural and social systems, but this was done through 'the visual … the most important mode of understanding' (p.180). However, I assert that this conception of classic participant observation privileges visual observation,

resulting in a lack of attention to the experiential, multisensory aspects of ethnography such as; taste, hearing, smell, and touch.

Through conceiving participant observation as a method to focus on practices, subjectivities and explanations, rather than as objective descriptions of what is seen, it can become possible to learn about ways of knowing and understanding that are embodied, emplaced, sensorial and empathic. This is demonstrated in Okely's (1994, 1996) research on the 'changing conditions and experience of the aged in rural France' (1994, p.44). Okely (1994) asserts that through active participation she was able to find routes into understanding people's biographical experiences, both in the present but also in the past: 'my residence in the villages and work on a small farm similar to those the aged had once known, gave embodied knowledge of something of their past' (p.44). Consequently, active participation can be conceived as accessing 'knowledge beyond language' where knowledge is 'embodied through sight, taste, sound, touch and smell' and 'bodily movement, its vigour, stillness or unsteadiness is … absorbed' (Okely, 1994, p.45).

Okely's (1994, 1996) conception of active participation can be underpinned by Whitehead's (1926; 1978) premise, as discussed in Chapter 4; that the body is not just an objective perceiver for the registration of direction or even sensation, but that it is actively participating in the practices of perception. Therefore, learning about ways of knowing and understanding through active participation can occur by 'being with'; through our own embodied experiences, through sharing a physical environment and through actively participating in planned and unplanned everyday life practices. This is demonstrated in this study where I followed the structure of the school day in regards to lunch and break times; I actively participated in the practices of eating, listening and talking in the staff room and playground or when I 'did chores' with the children.

Stoller (1997) maintains that this active participation requires 'ethnographers to open themselves up to others and absorb their worlds' (p.23) and I maintain that this also disrupts the traditional practices of Othering. However, this method is and was not only about sharing and learning about embodied experiences and everyday practices, but was also about how I emplaced myself in the place of 'the bush' and how these practices of active participation became my place-making *habitus.* The thoughts, feelings, reflections, discussions, conversations, films, photographs and practices of this active participation were reflected upon and questioned through personal and reflective writing and also audio recordings (transcribed) where appropriate.

5.4.2. Walking with

Through my active participation in everyday practices, I was invited to go on an 'abenture', as discussed previously (see Chapter 6), where I *walked with* children, sharing and learning ways of knowing; the sounds, the tastes, the smells, the touch and the sights of this particular place. This method also enabled me to participate in and learn from the participants' place-making *habitus*. This method of *walking with* (Lee & Ingold, 2006; Pink, 2009) or *go-along* (Kusenbach, 2003), is described by Lee and Ingold (2006) as 'participant observation in the form of sharing walks with a variety of people' (p.68) or a hybrid between the interview and participant observation where you are able to apprehend and comprehend the ephemeral, embodied and 'reflexive aspects of lived experience as grounded in place' (Kusenbach, 2003, p.456).

Kusenbach (2003) used the go-along as an ethnographic research 'tool' in her collaborative ethnographic study that explored how residents in urban neighbourhoods understand local environmental issues and how their daily activities

and social interactions relate to these understandings. Kusenbach (2003) describes the process of the go-along as 'accompanying informants' (p.457) constructing a distance from whom she was researching. I assert that this then results in a positioning of the researcher outside the research process and consequently constructs the research participants as 'Other' resulting in a discourse and practices that may result in 'Othering'. Additionally, Kusenbach (2003) in her writing does not include any of her own thoughts or the impact that 'accompanying informants' has on her and therefore her research; she is not acknowledging or recognising the Self within the research process.

Kusenbach (2003) also conceives these 'trips' as 'natural' (p.457). In contrast, I conceive them as *habitus* developed by the individual in the structured social space with rules, practices, values and positions (Bourdieu, 1992) that shape and define how the individual sees, understands, experiences and ultimately constructs their place-world. Kusenbach (2003) also conceives the go-along as a combination of two classic ethnographic methods, whereas I conceive this method as something more: it is a method that creates a new place event to understand ways of knowing that is 'walking *with* others' (Lee & Ingold, 2006, p.68 original italics).

Classic ethnographic studies that have walked or run with research participants have described the enhanced relationship this has enabled, whether with Mbuti Pygmies, where Turnbull (1961) describes the approval and acceptance of him because of his ability to walk through the forest, or Geertz (1973) who had to run away from a police raid of a cockfight with the local people. However, more recent work has been done on the history of walking (Solnit, 2001), the ethnography of walking (Ingold & Vergunst, 2008) and the role of walking in ethnography (Lee & Ingold, 2006) where 'sharing or creating a walking rhythm with other people can lead to a very particular closeness and bond between people involved' (Lee &

Ingold, 2006, p.69). During this study, it became apparent that the initial 'abenture' and also consequent abentures, during the second period of time in place, were an opportunity for the children, and just the children to 'suss me out'[16] by asking me questions about my life, but also to share their knowledge and understanding with me and consequently we created a shared experience and a connection. Additionally, Lee and Ingold (2006) maintain that these walking routes and practices can also be conceived as a form of place making.

'Walking with' as a research method clearly demonstrates the premise that places are made through people's embodied and multisensory participation in their environments (Pink, 2009). de Certeau (1984) maintains that through these habitual processes and practices of movement, we come to familiarise ourselves with place and also find meaning in that place. Therefore, walking with as a method, not only enables participation in, but also learning about the place-making *habitus* of participants. However, it is also about our own place-making practices as researchers. An example of this is Lund's (2005) research on the relationship of the senses when hill walking in Scotland where she describes:

> 'walking as a bodily movement that not only connects the body to the ground, but also includes different postures, speeds, rhythms … that … shape the tactile interactions between the moving body and the ground, and play a fundamental part in how the surroundings are sensually experienced.' (p.28)

This description of walking gives an understanding of Lund's own embodied experiences and just like Lund (2005), I am attempting to reflect on my own place-making practices and how they relate to those of this study.

[16] 'to figure something out, or to uncover something/someone' (Hughes, 1989, p.234)

5.4.3. Audiovisual - arts practice.

As stated previously, the use of audiovisual media in ethnography, particularly visual ethnographic research, is quite common and usually in the form of illustrations, cultural texts, representations of ethnographic data, documentary videos or multimedia online texts (Banks, 1992; Harper, 2003; O'Neill et al, 2002; Ruby, 1981; 2000; Pink, 2006; 2007b). However, audiovisual practices and outcomes can also be used as a method in sensory ethnography, as they support the underpinning premise of sensory ethnography, that the senses are interconnected.

Anthropological studies that use audiovisual media relating to sensory experience such as Stoller's (1997) work on the physical and sensorial experience of pain and illness, MacDougall's (1998) examination of the interconnection of the senses, and Grimshaw's (2001) exploration of the relationship between vision and knowledge, have all used audiovisual as a research method. However, they have been used to represent other people's sensory experiences rather than, as Pink (2009) suggests, using them to communicate about and understand sensory experience:

> 'When the lone ethnographer is working with her or his own materials, these materials become meaningful in terms of the ethnographer's whole biographical experience of the research process. In this situation, the materials help to evoke the sensorality of the research encounter itself (and concomitant memories and imaginaries), rather than just suggesting, for instance, textures and smells. In contrast, in representations, such as ethnographic film, this biographical and cultural contextualisation is problematically missing. The viewer must grasp at her or his own experiences and memories and engage her or his imagination in trying to reach the sensory experience of others' (p.100).

Therefore, through using audiovisual as a research method in this study and conceiving it as a way of researching multisensory understandings and experiences, rather than representing them, the senses are not fragmented; constructed as only visual and/or auditory observational and objectifying tools, as in visual ethnography. This premise enables audiovisual as a research method within this study to be

conceived as *embodied* active participation that can be used to examine, explore and learn about sensory experiences.

MacDougall (2006) supports this idea of audiovisual practices as embodied active participation through basing his premise on the work of Merleau-Ponty (1962) and emphasising how:

> 'Filmmaking requires interaction of the body with the world in registering qualities of texture and shape, which do not exist independently of such encounters' and that 'The world is not apart from, but around and *within* the filmmaker and the viewer' (p.50 original italics).

In other words, the camera and filmmaking not only enable ways to experience the total environment but are also a way of actively participating as the camera moves *with* the body. MacDougall (2006) extends this premise to emphasise that;

> '… images' can be conceived as 'not just the images of other bodies; they are also the images of the body behind the camera and its relations with the world'. These are then reflexive as they 'refer back to the photographer at the moment of their creation … further locating the author in relation to the subjects.' (MacDougall, 2006, p.3).

Consequently, audiovisual practices are not only embodied active participation they can also be conceived as place making.

Therefore any research event, activity or engagement that is filmed or photographed in this study, such as 'abentures' can be understood as place making. This is because place is made through the coming together of the social, material and sensorial of the research event and then place is remade as it is recorded in the camera as a presentation of experienced reality, then remade again when viewers/listeners use their own ways of knowing and understanding to create personal and cultural understandings of the representation. Therefore, audiovisual practices and outcomes in this study, just like walking with and active participation, can be conceived as a method to explore and examine sensory experiences. However, they are not just presentations or practices of the place of the bush. They

are *art* (product and practice) that are relational to the place, the community, the total environment and how we, the participants and myself, make and learn place and belonging; they are our place-making *habitus*.

Audiovisual practices and outcomes are part of my subjectivity as an artist teacher, as discussed in Chapter 2, but they also became integral to my relationship with the participants and how we understood and learnt from each other. This was enabled during both periods of time in place through our individual and collaborative practices and production of photographs, film, drawings, poetry and performances that communicated and expressed our, me *with* the participants, embodied and emplaced sensory ways of knowing and understanding the place of the bush.

Arts practices, performances and products as research is supported by Sullivan (2005) and Stewart (2010) who maintain that arts practice can be explored as a site for inquiry where there is 'creative and critical features of artistic knowing' (Sullivan, 2005, p.62) that 'embraces numerous and personal meanings and gives voice to experiences'. (Stewart, 2010, p.132). It is important to note that arts practice as research is not about isolating, contextualising and deconstructing an arts product, rather it is about understanding and learning the socio-cultural processes and relationships that construct these practices and products. As Crossley (1996) asserts 'meaning is not contained within a form itself, say a painting or a poem, but exists within a network of social relations and discourse' (p.71).

However, both Sullivan (2005) and Stewart (2010) focus on arts practice within the site of the studio, 'studio-based inquiry in the visual arts … visual research methods grounded within the practices of the studio.' (Sullivan, 2005, p.xiii);

> 'my work now explores the possibilities of research for the artist as studio practitioner … I approach practitioner-based research as a way of working, investigating and theorising what it is to practice in the studio as researcher' (Stewart, 2010, p.125).

These conceptions construct arts practice as research conducted by the individual lone artist creating and making in their studio. However, Tolia-Kelly (2007), Irwin et al. (2009) Irwin & Springgay (2008) and this study, examine and explore art (product and practices) collaboratively *with* participants/communities as socially engaged research.

Clements (2011) contends that socially engaged arts practices are collaborative approaches that distance themselves from the traditional focus of individual self-expression and the authority of the institutional gallery system;

> '…a reflexive, less egocentric and *feminine* notion of responsive art focusing on wider interaction where artists can participate and re-engage with art and audiences outside the gallery system, for example working with ecological themes and a range of communities in a less individualised and competitive fashion.' (20 original italics).

However, hooks (1994b) asserts that the aim of these practices is more than mere participation and inclusion it is about questioning social and political conventions and orthodoxies through promoting 'engagements with …practices …that are defined as on the edge, as pushing limits, disturbing the conventional, acceptable politics of representation' (pp.4-5) and are consequently emancipatory. Therefore, socially engaged arts research can be defined as the practices and outcomes of the arts that explore and examine (research) the effects and affects of social practices and promote debate and social change of

> 'the neglected …the forgotten, … the irrational, the insignificant, the repressed, the borderline, the eccentric, the sublimated, the rejected, the non-essential, the marginal, the peripheral, the excluded, the silenced, the accidental, the deferred, the disjointed…' everything 'the modern age has never cared to understand in any particular detail, with any sort of specificity' (Nelson, 1987, p.217).

Irwin et al. (2009) and Irwin and Springgay (2008) assert that socially engaged research, particularly arts based research in education, holds true to the very principles of socially engaged practice. Irwin and Springgay (2008) developed the

methodology of a/r/t/ography, a community-engaged research process that is attentive to the in-between of art making, researching and teaching:

> *'* where meanings reside in the simultaneous use of language, images, materials, situations, space and time.' and where 'theory is understood as a critical exchange that is reflective, responsive and relational … theory-as-practice-as-process-as complication' that ' is an embodied, living space of inquiry.' (p.106)

I assert that this premise of research is about a process of exchange and relations that are corporeal, and are enabled through social engagement, *with* others, not a lone artist in their studio.

Irwin et al. (2009) used the methodology of a/r/t/ography in their research with the community of Richmond, British Columbia. The aim of the research was to use socially engaged arts practice to explore ideas of identity, place, displacement, community and the changing environment of the city; what is home and 'what it means to *feel at home'* (Irwin et al., 2009, p.62), using collective artistic and educational praxis;

> 'as artist educators we initiated several community-engaged arts projects, working from the premise that the arts are powerful forces for rearranging and re-engaging patterns of community through public art and public pedagogy' (p.62)

A variety of 'texts', such as personal narratives, artefacts, photographs and videos were produced focusing on the concepts of 'home' and 'away'. Irwin et al. (2009) asset that this overlapping of 'art' and 'graphy' (63) enables relationships through a process of dialogue, and using Frieire (2000) they assert that everyone becomes co-authors of actions performed on and in the world, and that public art creates a place for the continuous making of meaning.

Consequently, through this research process, the community of Richmond have created 'places of learning' where the relationships between people and place and thereby the space of community can be examined and explored (Irwin, et al. 2009). However, Irwin, et al. (2009) assert that from their research it is important that

socially-engaged arts based research is not constructed as a particular visual style or visual presentation but that it is about social purpose, ‘education cannot be limited to personal achievement’ it must ‘involve social understanding and contribution’ (p.68).

In this study, the audiovisual and arts practices, of the participants with me are not confined to the role of passive recordings or visual representations. They are active embodied collaborative socially engaged ways of researching and learning that interrogate this place-world, its relations, practices, pedagogy and structures. These then produce knowledge and understanding in terms of place-making *habitus* and also subjectivity. These products and practices were also part of the *events* with participants.

5.4.4. From interview to event

In classic ethnography, interviews are ‘social interactions structured by both researcher and participant’ (Marcus, 1998, p.112). In the process of an interview, the responses form a verbal exchange through which an interviewer seeks to elicit personal knowledge, experiences, beliefs, opinions, perceptions or conceptions from a participant that cannot be directly observed (Burns, 1997). Oakley (2000), Seale (1998) and Rapley (2004) assert that talking plays a central role in the interview. It is a ‘social event’ (Seale, 1998, p.202) where ‘two people, often relative strangers, sit down and talk about a specific topic’ (Rapley, 2004, 15) that attempts to ‘imitate conversations’ (Oakley, 2000, p.200).

However, I assert that this understanding of interviews as simply face-to-face conversations limits the way they can be understood, as they are so much more than this. In this study, the interview is conceived as having material and sensorial components as the participants and I talked about the sensoriality of our

experiences verbally but also through metaphor, memories, gesture, actual touching and sharing of smells, sounds, images and tastes; for example the bacon quiche which one parent shared, tasted particularly good. Through not only the acknowledgement of the total environment and our relationship with the total environment, the interviews of this study can then be conceived as sensory emplaced social events, and just like active participation, walking with and audiovisual-art, are productive of place.

This is because the interview includes and goes beyond a verbal exchange. It is a situation where researcher and participant together create a shared place, communicating as embodied, emplaced persons, as Pink (2009) asserts:

> 'the narrative of the interview is a process through which verbal, experiential, emotional, sensory, material, social and other encounters are brought together. This process creates a place from which the researcher can better understand how the interviewee experiences her or his world …this way offers a means of understanding the interview encounter as a place-event.' (p.95)

Through this reconceptualisation, the interview then becomes 'a route to understanding' and learning 'about other people's emplacement', but also our own, 'through collaborative and reflexive exploration' (Pink, 2009, p.83). This was clearly evident when the participants and I collaborated through producing and sharing our art (product and processes) with each other, as demonstrated in Chapter 6. However, this was not about displaying and showing off an art product, the collaborative practice was more concerned with *withness;* sharing learning and understanding, together, our ways of knowing and understanding the place of the bush. Therefore, together we were reflecting, defining, explaining and communicating about sensory experiences, and through this process, creating a place-event.

However, this understanding of the interview as place-event does not just happen. Everything about the interview, from the approach, to the style, the developing relationship, language and environment, needs to be and was, in this study, continually negotiated, flexible and socially engaged (Elwood & Martin, 2000). This holistic sensory approach to interviewing has commonalities with a feminist approach, which Rubin and Rubin (2005) explain 'humanizes (sic) both researcher and the interviewee' and also empowers by enabling and 'allowing people to 'talk back' (hooks, 1989) and therefore 'gives a voice through interviews to those who have been silenced' (p.26). Rubin and Rubin (2005) maintain that this feminist approach also acknowledges the emotive nature of the interview and the need for researchers to be reflexive about their own emotions. This approach also acknowledges and supports the need for researchers to be reflexive about their own sensory experiences during the interview.

This process of 'reflexive interviewing' (Marcus, 1998, p. 110) enables flexibility in the interviewing process. This is because the discussion follows whatever direction may be appropriate. For example, in this study, the participants (children, parents and teachers) and I talked and shared at length and in our own way, about various topics and experiences.[17]This then facilitated an open expression of their and my own ways of knowing and understanding the place of the bush. These conversations did not always randomly wander, as I did ask questions to gradually focus and probe areas that I thought were relevant or problematic in terms of the research and also my own understandings, hooks (1981) calls this technique 'funnelling'. However, the participants also 'funnelled' the conversations through asking questions, possibly also to probe areas that they thought were relevant or problematic in terms of their understandings and ways of knowing and learning.

[17] These conversations were conducted with individuals and groups of 2-3 and were audio recorded with personal reflective notes written/audio recorded post conversation. They were situated in the participants' homes, at Thirton State School and during walking withs.

To achieve this reflexive interviewing it is important to acknowledge and negotiate power relations. This can be done through positionality and nonunitary subjectivity (Sands, 1996). Positionality is another word for the biases, experiences and interpersonal contexts that we (researcher and participants) bring to the research process (hooks, 1984). Nonunitary subjectivity is the 'multiple subject positions people occupy which influence the formation of subjectivity' (Bloom, 1998, p.3). In this study, the process of the interview is conceived as an interaction of emplaced persons whose subjectivities are multiple, fluid and complex, and manifest and alter in different contexts, moments and through time. Sands and Krumer-Nevo (2006) maintain that by adopting this conception of the interviewing process 'Othering' may be interrupted and it 'locates interviewing in the social contexts, exploring the influence of power relations on the interaction of interviewer and interviewee' (p.969).[18]

The interviews in this study were not only about talk, as stated earlier they were about the shared performed embodied narratives of everyday life. This is demonstrated in this study where one of the participants pointed out to me that *'Some of the words you say sound real Pommie and then the others sound just like us'*. Through her statement about me sounding Australian and Pommie (English) we discussed and shared experiences and stories and she asked questions about living in the UK and what I missed about Australia, food, smells, sounds etc. This supports Pink's (2009) premise that 'both ethnographers and research participants continue to be active participants in their environments' (p.85) during the interview event. This is also demonstrated in: Spinney's (2006) research where he and participants would share stories about cycling, while riding alongside each other, Pink's (2004;

[18] Some of these interviews/conversations were initiated by participants and as stated previously, were confessional in nature, and as such audio recordings were not appropriate however, I made post conversational audio recordings and written notes.

2005b) research regarding laundry practices, when she arrived at participants' homes they would prepare and share cups of tea during the interview, and in this study where stories were shared during walking with.

The interviews in this study are conceived as socially emplaced *events* that engage the performing, sensing body, of both researcher and participant, in relation to their total environment. During these *events,* the participants with me are using our bodies and all of our senses to emplace, narrate, perform, communicate (verbally and non-verbally through metaphor, gesture, movement), share and present our experiences. Together, we are learning about our embodied ways of knowing and learning the place of the bush, constructing and negotiating our identities and ultimately, making place.

The research methods used in this study include but go beyond the verbal and the visual, they are interwoven and overlapping, as illustrated in Figure 5.4, enabling research of sensory perceptions, memories and experiences that are productive of place and belonging. However, these sensory research experiences and practices are insufficient. To make this meaningful as ethnographic knowledge, an analysis of existing ways of knowing, such as poetry, artworks, film, governmental texts, and pedagogical discourse research, all underpinned by theoretical understandings is needed, as evident in Chapter 3, but also these sensory research experiences and practices need to be layered, interwoven and underpinned with theory, as evident in this chapter and Chapter 6 and 7.

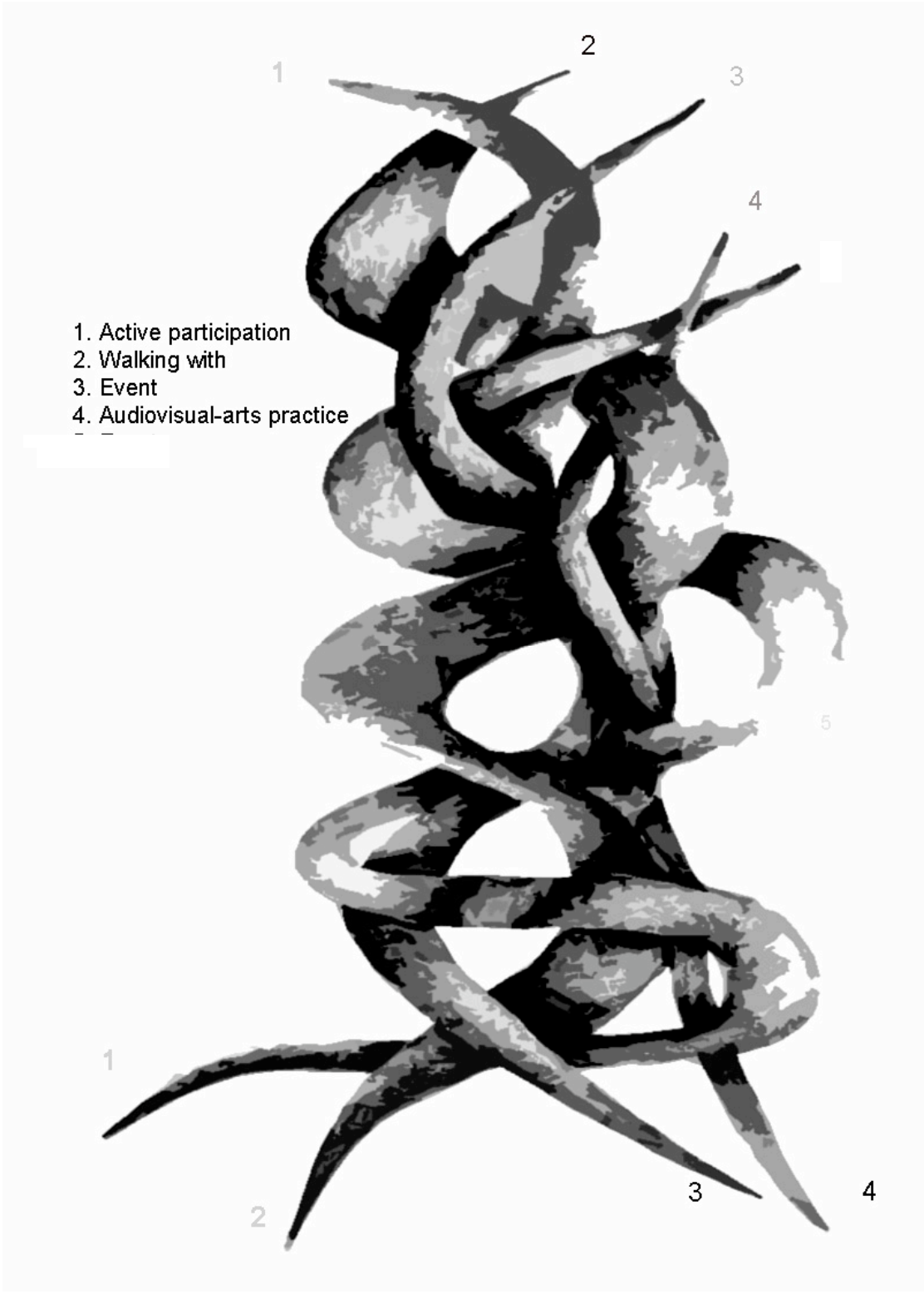


Figure 5.4. Overlapping, interwoven methods

5.5. Analysis and presentation

According to Pink (2009), the analysis of research materials and experiences is rarely explicitly written about in research that involves the senses. One of the reasons for this is because there is rarely a clear distinction made between 'being in the field', or as in this study *being in place*, and the data analysis. In effect they are bound together, layered and interwoven not separated or fragmented. Therefore, in this study there was not a separate stage or steps/rules of analysis or a distinction made between being in-out of place by divorcing the embodied and emplaced experiences of being in place from an out of place analysis. Just as this study's methodological approach evolved through praxis, so too has there been a praxic entwining or interweaving of being in-out of place *with* analysis.

Pink (2009) is also adamant that there are no standard practices or templates for sensory analysis. Rather, she conceives it as 'a process of abstraction which serves to connect the phenomenology of experienced reality into academic debate or policy recommendations' (p.120). Pink (2009) states that this lack of analytical explicitness is telling in that it implies that the 'analysis of experiential, imaginative, sensorial and emotional dimension of ethnography is itself often an intuitive, messy and sometime serendipitous task' (p.119).

However, I argue that an analysis of the ways of knowing and learning place and belonging is necessary because it can become another way of knowing and understanding. The analytical process in this study has been conceived as a drawing of relationships between the sensory experiences of the research and the practices of academia. This was enabled through a continuous process of interweaving perception, memory, embodied experience, social practices, theory and power relations to make them meaningful and then framing this abstracted knowledge as issues and questions to be debated and/or translated into policy and

practice. As stated previously, this process was not constructed as separate or removed from being in place however; this is not to say that this interplay was different being in and out of place.

While being in place: I audio-recorded interviews/events, walking withs and reflective thoughts and questions; wrote notes/thick description that were a blurring of; the pragmatic (time of day, date, location), the felt (sensory, embodied), the personal, the critically reflective and theory and made and reflected on my photographs, films and drawings and also those from the children. Downey (2005, 2007) asserts, analysis does not just involve the cognitive, it also involves the physiological and the affective; it is not just in our minds but it is embodied.

Therefore, when I was out of place I listened to the audio-recordings of sounds and voices over and over again, transcribing the recordings, rereading them and my notes/thick description over and over again while also viewing the films and photographs so I was able to; remember, embody feelings, relationships, question and make theoretical connections. But, this out of place embodied analytical process, enabled through audio-recordings, also enabled me to re-insert myself into place through both memory and imagination so that I could connect and overlap the present to moments and experiences in the past, resulting in the premise that the 'places of doing ethnography and of ethnographic analysis are mutually open' (Pink, 2009, p.120) and that being in-out of place is *with* analysis following Whitehead's (1926) premise of *withness*.

This embodied process of analysing ways of knowing and learning place are complex; however, I have also found a tension in the presentation of these ways, particularly in the form of a doctoral thesis where the dominant and traditional presentation is written text. Pink (2009) maintains that:

> ‘scholarly writing remains a central, and I believe crucial, medium for the description, evocation, argument and theoretical debating of ethnographic research that attends to the senses’ (p.132)

But, as a artist researcher teacher I maintain that if the purpose of the presentation of ‘ethnographic research that attends to the senses’ is to enable ‘description, evocation, argument and theoretical debating’ (Pink, 2009, p.135) and also to learn about our social worlds, it is essential to seek ways and media that not only produce scholarship but do so in ways that are appropriate and accessible. I maintain that it is not a choice of either one or the other.

However, I am operating within the prevailing hegemonic structures of an academic postgraduate degree, a PhD that is awarded predominantly on the basis of a written thesis. Therefore, I have attempted to address the above issues by interweaving my experiential and sensorial prose and art (practices and products) with that of the participants and with theoretical discussion and debate. By doing so I am attempting to share all the processes and practices of knowing and learning but also evoke a particular place in which the reader may be able to gain awareness/understanding and learn, as Areses Huertas et al. (2012) state, regarding written texts:

> “It can make you feel something or think something or take you to that place or to revisit that place … Like Heaney’s poetry where through language he communicates how places and landscapes makes us human but also we make these landscapes human, … a very poetic use of language, and when you say that then you’ve got a book that takes you to those places it is because it coalesces language and memory. You can smell the earth. You can hear the shovel going into the turf and you know that woman down the road. It’s that sort of beautiful use of language. Soulful pictures and experiences.’ (in press)

However, Stoller (2004) maintains that written text cannot achieve the full experiential awareness that video-recordings, images, sound-recordings or scent can. However, I contend that Sutton’s work (2006) on modern cooking practices has been able to present the sensoriality of the ethnographic experience both descriptively and analytically through interweaving analysis, information about the

participants, descriptions of the practices, participants' quotations and commentary, links to research and theory, and descriptions of his and the participants' images. Sutton's (2006) narrative moves between a range of voices and therefore gives you an understanding of the sensorial experience and the ways of knowing which then creates an ethnographic place.

For this study to become an ethnographic place where there is theoretical debate, written description and visual evocation, I have interwoven the written text in a range of voices: theoretical, descriptive, autobiographical, participants' narrative, with my own and those of the participants' art. I have intentionally sought textures, colour, forms and sensory experiences in an attempt to enable embodied knowledge and understanding; what it feels like to be in, and of, this place. Additionally, as the reader/audience is engaged in this way, their own theoretical and biographical threads may become entwined in the narrative[19].

5.6. Ethical considerations

Pink (2005b; 2007a) asserts that the way to guarantee that research practice is as ethical as possible is to ensure that it is *with* participants. By ensuring that the participants are just that, participants in the study, and not the objects of an experiment, a socially engaged and reflexive approach is enabled, as discussed previously in this chapter. As Pink (2009) asserts:

> 'the ideas behind sensory ethnography is not so much as to study other people's sensory values and behaviours, but to collaborate with them to explore and identify these.' (p.58)

As I was participating within a state funded educational context, Education

[19] I acknowledge that this approach may still fall short in evoking the richness of this ethnographic place and therefore propose, for future research/dissemination, web-based platforms that support video and audio-recordings, and maybe sometime in the distant future scent and touch.

Queensland, ethical approval was required. This was applied for in February 2006 and granted in March 2006 (Appendix 3). Additionally, together with the staff of Thirton State School, an introductory letter was sent to all parents introducing myself, my background and explaining my research focus (Appendix 1). I also attended a Thirton State School staff meeting and parents' meeting to introduce myself and to address any queries that they may have had.

In relation to issues of privacy and confidentiality (Burns, 1997), within this thesis the name of the place is not cited and pseudonyms are used for the name of the community, surrounding communities, the region and also participants. Consent and photographic release forms were issued to and signed by all participants and their guardians/parents and the blank forms are included in Appendix 2. However, the right to privacy is explicit in both international (UN Declaration of Human Rights) and national legislation, so even though photographic release was granted and the participants were informed of the purpose and procedures involved in relation to their images, the undisclosed images of children, will only be used for examination purposes. This decision has been made because of the greater accessibility to electronic versions of theses completed within higher education:

> 'Goldsmiths Research Online is a repository of research publications and other research output conducted during the course of academic work at Goldsmiths. The repository also holds Goldsmiths' collection of doctoral theses. These are added by the Library… The repository is intended to provide long-term, public, free access to these materials on the web.' (http://eprints.gold.ac.uk/information.html, 10th Jan, 2012).

5.7. Overview of chapter

In this chapter I have attempted to tackle the complexities of how, who, where and why of this study. I have addressed the evolution of the interwoven overlapping methodologies of critical contemporary, visual and sensory ethnography, and their philosophical and epistemological underpinnings. Because of this process and my own practices as artist researcher teacher, it was necessary to disrupt the practices

and discourses that construct the identities of researcher as subject and participant as research object that perpetuate the concept of objectivity and researcher neutrality. By disrupting identity constructions, conceiving the research process as *with* the participants and continual reflexive analysis, I have attempted to disrupt 'Othering' resulting in an understanding of sensory subjectivities and intersubjectivities.

Because of this continual negotiation, to be reflexive, I have been explicit about the effects and affects of my position and roles within the 'face-to-face' community of Thirton and also about the complexity and issues of choosing, getting and being in this particular place-world. Within this chapter, I have discussed the reconceptualising of 'fieldwork' as being in place and also the classic ethnographic research methods of participant observation and interviews. This resulted in active participation, through embodied experience of the participants shared everyday practices and their knowledge and understanding of their total environment and events, where through sharing dialogue and multisensory experiences we, me with the children, created sensory emplaced events. This less structured and open approach also enabled the research methods walking with and arts practices, to reveal ways of knowing and learning through different routes and pathways.

This evolving and continuous reflexive and analytical engagement has resulted in an entwined, embodied and emplaced research process where practice is with analysis, not a separate stage. This is demonstrated in Chapter 6 where through interweaving written text, in and from a range of voices, with art practice and product a socially engaged exploration of the complex but also subtle ways of knowing and learning place and belonging is enabled.

Figure 5.3. A journey, series, 2007.




































K & S FREIGHTERS
K & S FREIGHTERS













CHAPTER 6. WAYS OF KNOWING PLACE AND BELONGING

How we do we understand and know the places where we are and the places where we belong? Through our bodies we know place, whether we are walking, talking, working, commuting, doing the washing up or reading. It is through all of these embodied ways of knowing that we have a sense of place, a connection to or a sensory knowing of place. This also gives us a sense of where we belong, where we have a sense of fitting, of being at one with the total environment.

Bourdieu (1992) maintains that *habitus,* these collections of bodily practices and dispositions, enables us to have these senses of place and belonging. Therefore, I argue that it is these collections of acquired forms of habitus, of ways of knowing and understanding place, often acquired early in life, that predispose members of a society to interact in ways consistent with the specific societal norms of their group, place, country, and consequently to feel at ease and to belong.

de Certeau (1984) also maintains that the repetition of these practices enables a sense of place and is a way of overcoming alienation and forging a sense of identity or belonging. Through weaving together the theories of place, embodiment, bodily *hexis* and *habitus,* with my own and the participants' narratives, reflections, art (product and practices) I explore and examine these socially constructed embodied ways of knowing the place of the Australian bush, and how, within this knowledge and subsequent learning, a sense of place and belonging is performed, constructed and transformed.

The process of constructing this chapter has been that of layering and weaving; an entwinement of the children's and my own way of knowing, unpicking our practices, conceptions, sensing and art, with theory in order to understand the embodied ways

of knowing and learning place and belonging. However, instead of a flat, two-dimensional construction I have attempted to form something that is richer and three-dimensional that may evoke a sense of place (albeit one that may be unfamiliar) rather than, as Basso (1996) asserts 'trying to describe a sense of place, or somehow attempting to characterize it' (p.90). This weaving may also enable a deeper understanding of embodied ways of knowing and learning about place and belonging. Therefore, in this chapter when images/film are presented with the text, it signifies a point at which my own learning overlaps with that of the children. This usually occurs when we are journeying together or in interviews; however, where the images/film is separated from the text, it signifies a journeying (both mine and the participants), a continuing progressive sequence where one image leads to the next.

6.1. 'Abentures' and art

As explained in Chapter 5, I initially had a very set, planned idea of what I was researching and how I was going to collect the 'data'- easy, or so I thought. One of the many things I have learnt from this research process is that things change, you change, and you are continually learning and need to be open to all the many pathways and routes, not just those you see. One of these pathways that opened up for me was 'abentures', *walking with,* Jenny, Henry and Hettie. This abenture was an adventure in the literal sense as I began to learn and understand how these children really know their place but also that such ways of knowing are multisensory; what they smell, hear, see, taste and feel. Through the children sharing their embodied production of knowledge through abentures and also through 'doing chores' and art (products and practices), I became more conscious of my own habitus and I realised that not only do we have sensorial knowing of place, but that this enables a feeling of belonging to place. So, *place* is not only socially constructed through our embodied practices, but it is part of who we are.

'After a very long ten hours of driving, I had arrived. The children, Jenny aged 6, Henry aged 4 and Hettie, 2, were waiting for me at their house gate; they seemed very apprehensive and quiet when I arrived. Who was this person who had travelled all this way, from England and "Mummy why does she talk funny?" It was then explained to them by their parents that I lived in London, England, that I sound funny because I have an English accent, that I would be staying with them and that I was going to teach and do art with them at their school.

The first morning and I can see the red orange intensity of the sun slowly rising, with its colour blasted across the sky. Slowly a clear blue sky materializes as the saturated colour dissipates and the sun rises further above the horizon. There are no clouds and the trees and shearing shed are glowing with light, as though they are going to explode into flames. It all looks idyllic, matching the tourist-orientated images that you see in magazines and newspapers promoting 'the outback' as a holiday destination.

These images and their associations make no difference to the temperature. It is freezing. I have two duvets/doonas and a quilt and am hunkered down, cocooned in wool, cotton and feathers. These old Queenslander[1] *houses are absolutely freezing: no insulation, bare floorboards, and corrugated iron roofs. Tendrils of breath were snaking below my nose. I dare not say anything (and I mean moan about the cold) as it has been stated, several times, 'You come from London, you must be used to the cold'. Oh how I love central heating, because walking around inside with two woollen hats on and thermal underwear is just not right.'*
(Research notes/audio, 2007, p. 3)

The children are up at 7am and after *brekky* (breakfast) it has been decided that we are off; at the kitchen table Jenny tells me "*We're going to show you our place",* with Henry nodding beside her, *"C'mon, we've got stuff to do and you can come*." This familiarity and confidence is in direct contrast to the shyness and apprehension that the children had displayed the day before.

This 'showing you our place' I took as an opportunity to get to know the children and I thought that it would be a shared experience that might 'lead to a very particular

[1] Queenslander describes the structure of houses built in Queensland. They usually consist of houses on stilts, which enables airflow beneath the house in order to reduce the temperature inside the house, and wrap around verandas, that are sometimes covered in to provide additional living space (ABS, 2009, p.15).

closeness and bond' (Lee & Ingold, 2006, p.69). However, I did not anticipate that this experience of *walking with* would not only enable the children to learn about me but also, through movement and active participating, in their environment, I would learn about their place-making *habitus* and my own place-making practices. Kusenbach (2003) describes this process as an opportunity where you are able to apprehend and comprehend the ephemeral, embodied and 'reflexive aspects of lived experience as grounded in place' (Kusenbach, 2003, p.456). At the time, I just thought it would be fun.

Henry and Hettie bolt out of the door, Jenny grabs a digital camera[2] and follows Henry and Hettie and "*See ya, mum,"* is yelled in unison.

"Where are we going?" I yell and Jenny yells back

"Over to the shearing shed,"

Hettie and Henry have taken off ahead. The space between the house and the fence surrounding the house is three metres and it is sparsely grassed as bore water is used to water this precious green element in a largely monochromatic red landscape. The earth in this part of Australia is very distinctive, a deep rust red with a very fine texture, like talcum powder. Advertising and tourist information describes this part of the world as the Red Centre. This fine dust gets everywhere and is on everything, so that not only is the ground red with occasional spindly straw-coloured tufts of long grass, but so too are the buildings, trees and anything else that stands in the way of this colloquially called 'bull dust'[3]. Jenny is walking slowly, moving the camera around, and looking at the large screen on the back. She is taking photos consistently but it appears to me as though she is shooting at random, not really considering the content of the images.

I ask her "*What are you taking photos of?"* and she says "*My stuff and where I live"*.

[2] According to Jenny's mother, taking the camera along for their chores has occurred a number of times.

[3] 'fine dust found on outback *(qv*) roads/ bullshit *(colloq.)*(Bickerton, 2004, p.7)

"W*hy do you take photos?"*

"So I can remember stuff."

"Like what stuff?"'

"When I go to Grandmas and Poppy's I can remember the ponies and the dogs and all the stuff, the way it looks, and I can then remember how everything feels, you know my place."

I thought that Jenny was taking photographs randomly but she was consciously constructing the images, while doing her chores, for a purpose. She was demonstrating her ways of knowing the places of her childhood through art (practices and product) and sensory memories.

After this discussion with Jenny about memories and the feeling of place, I started to reflect on my own sensory memories of the places of my childhood, as discussed in Chapter 2;

'the cold, tickling the hairs inside my nose, the stillness with a heavy weight of all the layers of wool on my body and the fog slowly clearing bringing with it a clarity of every sound.' (Page, 2002, p.1)

These sensory memories are my embodied ways of knowing, and just like Jenny's, they construct the places of our childhood and are therefore are our place-making *habitus;* however, they also contribute to our sense of belonging and connection.

This role of memory in belonging is also articulated by Thomas Hardy in Woodlanders (1887), who stated that it was to:

> 'know all about those invisible ones of the days gone by, whose feet have traversed the fields; … what bygone domestic dramas of love, jealousy, revenge, or disappointment have been enacted in the cottages, the mansion, the street or the green. The spot may have beauty, grandeur, salubrity, convenience; but if it lacks memories it will ultimately pall upon him (sic) who settles there without opportunity of intercourse with his (sic) kind.' (p.146).

6.1.1. ‘So you know it too’

After Jenny explained her art practices she stopped talking and was very quiet. There was a hot wind whipping at my face and arms, and as we neared the shearing shed I could hear Henry and Hettie chatting about the sheep. The shed is about 250 metres from the house and is about the size of four English bungalows. It is raised on two-metre high wooden stumps, ‘*because when the rains come the waters can get pretty high’* but it looks like it is about to fall down. The wood is weathered and worn you can feel the knots and grooves of the grain- no polished or smooth surfaces here. The large nails are the same colour of the earth, however this is real rust. As we get closer to the shed I can smell the acrid aroma of sheep poo but I do not see any lying outside the shed or even in it. As I enter the dark, yet pleasingly cool interior, there is a mingling smell of sheep poo, musky sweat and greasy lanolin. Harry is moving about the shed explaining and performing the process and practices of shearing,

“*We shear the sheep because they need to be sheared. We take the wool off them or they will probably get flyblown. They get flyblown when there are flies around their bottoms and stuff when they are really woolly. Then there is where we put the sheep after they’ve been shorn. Bruce does the shearing, he’s our shearer.”*

Then Jenny piped up, *“You know stuff too”*

“Sorry, what did you say?”

“Well, with photos you think you know stuff, like what the ponies and dogs look like but then it changes, you see it differently and so you just know it differently, you know, all this stuff in my place.”

I asked Jenny to explain what she had said, and she began to articulate that through her art practices and reflecting on the art products she has a deeper knowledge and understanding of her place. For Jenny this knowledge and

understanding goes beyond just sight or perception, these are the multisensory ways in which she knows and *feels* her place-world.

Traditionally, in visual ethnography, images are used as an observational and objectifying product, a visual index, that is deconstructed after fieldwork (Prosser, 1998; Ball & Smith, 1992). However, Jenny conceives art as a process that enables and enriches her relationship and knowledge of the total environment of the bush. As stated in Chapter 5, this premise of art practice as research is supported by Sullivan (2005) and Stewart (2010), who maintain that art (practice and product) can be explored as a site for inquiry where there are 'creative and critical features of artistic knowing' (Sullivan, 2005, p.62) 'that embrace numerous and personal meanings and give voice to experiences '(Stewart, 2010, p.132).

As explored in Chapter 3, the Australian artists Tom Roberts (1856-1931), Arthur Streeton (1867-1943), Fredrick McCubbin (1855-1917), Sidney Nolan (1917-1992) and Rosalie Gascoigne (1917-1999) also produced and reproduced a construction of place through their art (practice and product). It is, in particular, the work and processes of both Nolan and Gascoigne that makes possible an embodied knowledge of the place of the bush. Gascoigne constructs a metaphorical vision of her meditative and emotional conceptions of the place where she lives, the bush, just as Nolan did in his Ned Kelly series. Although Nolan's representation is of another's narrative, it is about 'a story arising out of the bush and ending in the bush' (Nolan, 1948, p.20). However, Gascoigne and Nolan's performed embodied art practices and products also enable and enhance our ways of knowing and understanding the place of the bush. Similarly, the art practices and products of contemporary artists such as Laurie Anderson (1947-), Ingrid Pollard (1953-) and Francis Alys (1959-) also evoke a sense of place and therefore a knowledge and understanding of place. However, it is important to note that I do not privilege the art

product over art practice and that using the word art signifies both product and practice. As Sullivan (2005) asserts, it 'is not so much about trying to describe visual content' …but 'to understand how those who make … construct their meanings' (p.63).

This premise of Jenny's everyday practices and photographs/film as research, the embodied production of knowledge, contrasts with Bourdieu and Bourdieu (2004), Stokes (1992) and Van House et al. (2004), who maintain that photographs and the personal production of photographs are mainly taken on special occasions, birthdays, weddings, holidays, highlighting and memorialising events and occasions. However, with the increased availability and accessibility of mobile phones with cameras, digital photography and platforms that support the social use and sharing of photography and films, such as Flickr, youtube and Facebook, photography and filmmaking is becoming something we are able to do every day. Holland (2000) and Murray (2008) assert that because the technology and the means of production have moved into the realm of the everyday, the meanings of photographs and of photography have also changed; they are not about special or rarefied moments, as Bourdieu and Bourdieu (2004) and Van House et al. (2004) maintain, but are 'more alive, immediate, fleeting' (Murray, 2008, p.151) and therefore how we construct, know and learn has also altered.

Walking with Jenny, Henry and Hettie as they went about their chores, they explained to me what they were doing and why it was important. During this time Jenny rarely had the camera hanging from her neck, she was constantly holding it up and moving around with it in front of her face at eye level. She did not look through the viewfinder but at the large screen at the back of the camera. Back at the house, after their chores were done, I asked Jenny if I could look at her photographs; they were of toys, her house, vegetable patch, the shearing shed, the

bore drain, sheep, Henry and Hettie, and the landscape but there were also a lot of photographs of the ground (see at the end of the chapter, Figure 6.1. Doing chores, series, 2007.)

I asked Jenny why she took so many of the ground. With a withering look and irritation in her voice she told me quite sternly:
"*They're not of the ground, they're of tracks."* As she stomped over to me she explained, *"Look…see, this one's Dad's motorbike, see he is going to the shed. This's Horny (name of the Merino ram), this's Dad's truck, this is a roo (kangaroo) see…you can know all about them from their tracks."*

Initially, these images signified very little to me, I thought that Jenny had accidentally taken these photos because she was not concentrating. However, Jenny had explained the tracks and taught me the difference between them and the significance of direction and depth. I learnt that these traces signified the everyday practices of members of her family and the bodily movements of animals and machines in her place. Through reading these traces, of seemingly mundane daily practices Jenny was constructing a sense of place, but she was also teaching me the embodied ways of knowing her place world.

Jenny's art of these everyday practices are, as Barthes (1984) contends, 'transparent envelopes' (p.88), cultural products that reflect her culture's way with the world and the expression of her as an individual. Therefore, Jenny's art are her construction of reality refracted through her subjectivity; in other words they are her way of knowing her place - her embodied place-making *habitus*. Barthes (1984) also maintains that photographs signify reality rather than reflecting or representing it, suggesting that Jenny's images are an index of the once physical presence of the object/scene. Therefore, the tracks in the earth are an index of the once physical

presence of animals and people, and their everyday practices. However, the reading of these traces is how Jenny *performs* her place-making *habitus* and *constructs* a sense of place and belonging.

So, art and abentures, *walking with,* in this study can be conceived of as embodied active engagement, where together the children and I actively experience the total environment through our bodies, and consequently construct and perform our sense of place and belonging. Because place is made through the coming together of the social, material and sensorial of the research event, place is then remade as it is constructed with the camera as a presentation of our experienced reality and remade again when viewers/listeners use their own ways of knowing and understanding to create personal and cultural understandings of the presentation. The children's and my own art and *walking with* practices can be conceived as place-making *habitus*, where together we shared our socially constructed and embodied ways of knowing place.

While the children, aged 6, 4, and 2, performed their chores I was the only adult with them and they did not defer to me or ask for permission. They took on the role of teacher, demonstrating and explaining what happens and how things work in their place, sharing their embodied ways of knowing and understanding with me, the learner, the outsider. This knowledge of their place world comes from their lived bodies, as Casey (2002) asserts, as a 'means of ingress into a familiar setting resulting in the body knowing places through direct and continuing relationship with them' (p.10). The children's knowledge of place is, as Merleau-Ponty (1962) states, 'reducible to a sort of co-existence with that place, which is not simple or nothing and it '*can not* always be communicated through an description or even pointed out without a word being spoken.' (p.105). Sometimes it is just about *being there*.

Through walking with the children, doing chores and art (practices and products) I was able to share and learn their ways of knowing: the sounds, the tastes, the smells, the feel and the sights of this place. This enabled me to learn from and also participate in their place-making *habitus* that shapes and defines how they know, understand, and ultimately construct their place-world. As Jenny explained "… *it's important … so you know it too".*

Within this cultural context the children have certain roles and responsibilities in terms of the daily running and maintenance of the properties they live on. The chores that these children perform are part of their everyday practices, their *habitus*; I listened, questioned, observed and actively explored their 'stream of experiences and practices as they moved through and interacted with their physical and social environment.' (Kusenbach, 2003, p.463). As de Certeau (1984) maintains, through the habitual processes and practices of movement, we come to familiarise ourselves with place but we can also find meaning in that place.

Walking with the children was more than the simple and straightforward act of them showing me their place. It was about sharing with me their knowledge and understanding of their place world, their sense of place and belonging through embodied everyday practices as they were occurring, but also reflecting on those events and experiences from the past.

6.1.2. 'An abenture'

The next morning I wake freezing cold, again, the tip of my nose cold and wet like a puppy's; my mind and body buzzing from the - for want of a more apt phrase - sensory overload. As I walk into the kitchen, there is lots of activity with Jenny, Henry and Hettie sitting on the kitchen floor with their school backpacks packing water bottles and asking their mother for snacks. I ask what's going on and Henry

tells me *"we're going on an abenture (sic), we're going to take you to the red dam' today[4]".* I assumed that this 'abenture' would be like doing the chores that we had done the previous day, and would be a short walk or activity. Apparently not, we would be gone for over four hours, hence the need for food and water.

The children have their backpacks and hats: "*Can't go outside without one."* As we walk along, Henry and Jenny continue to tell me the stories and events of their place. All the while Jenny continues to make photographs and films;

"*That was where Dad bulldozed, he had to bulldoze all those trees all the way along for the new fence, see you can see it there* (indicating the tracks in the ground*) it was really muddy and wet. That's why the tracks are so deep and hard."*

"You know you can smell when it's going to rain."

"'Yeah everything starts to feel different, the air, noises, it's like really heavy."

"And then you can see the black clouds coming in'

As the children are talking and explaining things to me I realise we have been walking for half an hour. I have been so intent on listening and asking questions and trying to understand that I have not been paying attention to where we are going or what direction we have been walking in. I look around and realize we are literally in the middle of nothingness: 360 degrees and there is no sign of people or habitation, just a few tall imposing gum trees, some silvery grey scrubby bushes/grass, red earth and us, that's it. I start to feel slightly wobbly, where am I and what am I doing out in this place that feels familiar but also doesn't and with three kids I hardly know?

[4] One of the dams on the property.





The only noise is the children chatting and the singing barbed wire fence as it vibrates in the wind. The air is dry and brittle, heightening every sound and sight and making the inside of my nose tingle. I sense the soothing, reassuring smell of Vicks eucalyptus, mingled with dust and the occasional familiar assault of a dead animal, somewhere in the distance. It creeps up on me slowly, but I have this growing feeling of being totally overwhelmed; there is just so much but at the same time there is nothing. There is bush and scrub and long spindly grasses and the blue, blue sky that goes on forever. The land is predominantly flat so you can see from horizon line to horizon line and in between is blue, just blue. This blue changes hue and is occasionally interrupted by clouds, but the majority of the time it is just this blanket above you, for miles and miles, all-surrounding and vast. It is all so much, but also nothing and I experience a sense of loss in this vast place. It is not a feeling of being lost, but a loss or release of everything that you hold onto so tightly, because out here in this place all that stuff does not matter, it is you and the land and nothing else.









Jenny, Henry and Hettie are chatting, self-assured and confident, still walking, leading me along without any regard for the lack of adults or habitation, *"C'mon we are almost there, can't you hear the cows*". According to John[5] their place is a small property *"Out here some would call it a hobby farm, too small to make a decent living out of, but I reckon it's a start … it takes about two hours to drive around the perimeter. We've got a couple of dams, a lot of dirt, trees, 1000 head of sheep, 100 head of cattle and those large bushes, they're our weeds.*"

As we near the red dam we disturb a mob[6] of kangaroos, I say disturbed, as they seem scared as they scurry around and scamper about like interrupted overgrown mice, taking off in all directions. I tried to capture them on film but they were too fast, *"Bloody pests"*, Jenny chimes in as we lose sight of the roos. *"Eat all the grass, break fences they do, not good for the sheep, need a licence to shoot them too." "Dad skins them, and we use them for rugs in the house, we gave one to Grandma and Poppy as a Christmas present, Grandma calls it Skippy."*

As we open the gate that allows us into the red paddock that houses the red dam, we hear high pitched bleating and the kids run over to a sheep that is lying on the ground, "H*ave to tell Dad about this one."*
I ask Harry what's wrong with it, "*Pregnant probably, that's why it can't get up, too big. Dad will pick her up in the back of the truck and put her in the yards, back at the house."*
The children and I settle down on a large dirt mound on the edge of the red dam, that is literally red; a red dirt surround and rust red water. Cattle have gathered on the far side about 50 metres away, and they are startled by our presence and increase the volume of their baying. Jenny warns me *"We don't want to spook them too much - they can charge at you if you aren't careful.*" The cattle in this area of

[5] Jenny, Henry and Hettie's father
[6] 'family/group of kangaroos' (Bickerton, 2004, p.15)

Australia have always intrigued me. These are not your lovable, benign-looking, long-lashed Jerseys or Friesians made for lush grassy rolling hills and temperate climes, instead in these places they are predominantly scrawny, see-their-ribs, long-pointed horns, aggressive with camel-like humps on the tops of their necks cattle, made for little-to-no-grass and hot and harsh environments.

As the baying decreases, the children are quiet, I assume tired from the 90-minute walk, as they tuck into their packed snacks. I breathe in the light warm air and reflect on my experiences of this place so far and the things the children have told me. I realise that they have been communicating a deep knowledge of and familiarity with their place and the everyday processes and practices; the very close and complex relationship between them and their total environment. Interestingly, as I reflect on this relationship and how the children, in a very short period of time, have been sharing stories, events, experiences and their ways of knowing, I start to feel more comfortable and at ease. I begin to relax and I remember; I know this, I have done this, it is not feeling as alien and for the first time I started to truly have a sense of place but also have an increasing sense of belonging, stemming from my bodily prehensions (Whitehead, 1926).

The children also have a bodily knowledge of place 'that is reducible to a sort of co-existence with place' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.105), a very strong sensorial knowing of and belonging to place. They know and understand that not only does the land belong to them, but that they also belong to it.

"*I'm a bush kid, that's what we do."*

"What do you mean Henry?"

"Well this is my place, the bush, I'm a bush kid." Jenny turns around and agrees with Henry, *"Yeah, we will always be bush kids, the bush is where we live, it's where we are … you know it's us."*

Mead (1964) states that 'The Self…is essentially a social structure and it arises in social experience' (p.247), 'it is how we become aware of ourselves as objects and how we come to see, assess, judge self and create identities' (Charon, 1995, p.151). As demonstrated by both Henry and Jenny they know and understand that their identity, their sense of belonging is entwined with the place of their childhood, the bush. That who they are is where they are and where they are is who they are. As discussed in Chapter 4, this entwined relationship between identity and place is integral to many indigenous communities, where performed actions and behaviours (*habitus*) constitute and construct individual and collective identities, and through the repeated performances of these practices a connection to place and a sense of belonging, are achieved (Scudder, 1979ab; Shepard, 1982; Gale, 2008). It would also seem that Jenny's and Henry's very being is tied to the socially constructed place-world of the bush, and, just like indigenous communities they conceive that 'the land … owns you' (Gale, 2008, p.360).

6.2. Sense of place and belonging: Journeying with Mary

As discussed in Chapter 5, the journey to Clapend and Thirton was long and it gave me the opportunity to think and reflect not only on this research but also about myself and my relationships and what I am doing and also why I am doing it.

> *'I started to get a bit upset and weepy; remembering what it was like living in places like this and how very quickly it became home and my place and somehow still is home and my place. It is who I was and now being within this again I am realising it is still who I am. But how has it made me and why is it all having such a profound effect? (Research notes/audio, 2007, p.4)'*

I realised that these processes and practices of my journey or what I have called *journeying*; because journeying goes beyond 'walking with' whether it is journeying to school, doing chores, or going on an 'abenture', is a way of knowing place, having a sense of place and a sense of belonging and that journeying is a place-making *habitus* that enables the time but also the opportunity to reflect.

'I thought that not having driven in three years I would hate it but I am really enjoying the drive to and from school each day, it is about 40 minutes, by car, and it is all dirt, red dirt, road. You have to really slow down and get over one side of the road if another car is coming the other way. You cannot follow anyone too closely as you cannot see anything as there is just dust and rocks flying everywhere. I never understood the term bull dust. I get the dust bit, but it is more like a fine powder that is impenetrable but that can get everywhere; up your nose, in your ears and that dry caking film in your mouth.

In the mornings I have to be really careful because of the roos; as they are constantly jumping out in front of the car as they bound across the road. I don't want to hit one of them because they cause far too much damage; to the car and the roo. As John explained to me, swerving is not an option as you can lose control of the car on these dirt roads and go off the road and possibly roll the car. However, in the afternoon it's not the roos that are an issue, it is all about the emus, bloody big awkward birds that cause even more damage than a roo.

The sides of the road are lined with gum trees. Some of the paddocks are full of long weedy grass and trees, and then there are the ones that have been cleared for cotton etc. It is not a pretty sight, acres and acres of dirt and nothing else. However, there is the space and of course, all the blue sky. Many poems and songs have been written about the skies out here, so everything I write and say about them has been said or just sounds trite and clichéd. But, there is a whole lot of it out here and it does dominate the landscape and is in direct contrast to the landscape, so I suppose that is why it dominates my thoughts and feelings about this place.' (Research notes/audio, 2007, p.14).

6.2.1. 'We just do it'

I had not really paid attention to this process of *journeying* before or even been conscious of the significance of what I was doing and why I was doing it. This may be because growing up in similar cultural contexts, it is just one of those things that you do because of the distances between where you are and where everyone and everything else is; services and facilities you need to access, dentists, doctors, chemists, food shopping. As Mary, one of the children explained, *"I suppose it's a long way … But not really for us cause we do it all the time. You know I don't think about it, we just do it."*

I remember when I lived in Heatherton returning from a 'day trip' of shopping and my sister phoning me and asking where had I been all day. I explained that I went

shopping - “What, all day?” I had left at 6am, driven the three hours to start shopping at the supermarket, that opened at 9am, I had done a little clothes shopping at the two clothes stores, picked up some buttons and fabric at the sewing shop, had an early lunch, and at 12pm when everything closed driving three hours back home. Mary was right, you *“don’t think about it, we just do it.”*

Mary, aged 10, was one of the children I had been teaching and learning with at Thirton State School. From the outset Mary was very keen and excited and threw herself into all the things we did and learnt about in the classroom, as discussed in Chapter 5. She talked to me about taking photographs at home and what she did at home and was very articulate in explaining to me her thinking and motives for doing things. Mary also experimented with the film function of the camera and was very comfortable sharing with me and teaching me her knowledge and awareness of not only of her total environment, but also her journeying as a way of knowing place; her sense of belonging and how journeying is her place-making *habitus*.

The majority of school children, 25 out of 30 (Thirton, 2009) in Thirton travel to school by bus. There are two buses, one heads north and the other south, and the journey to school can take anywhere from 15-80 minutes (from my observations and discussions). Mary talked about and reflected on this journey she makes every school day:

> *“These are us kids on the bus that’s how we get to school it takes about an hour.It would have been a good photo; I just don’t like that bit that’s a bit blurry and the stuff moving behind. It’s all just as we were going home, out on the highway. That’s what I see on the bus, not really exciting, it can be pretty boring cause you see it twice a day and for so long … but we talk and muck around and get really noisy so that makes it a bit better.” (see Figure 6.2. Going home, series, 2008)*

> *“You know out here it’s a totally different world, all space. I know this because I’ve seen heaps of pictures of the city and I have been to Toowoomba I know it’s not really a city, just a big town really. But, here it is different, the days are either really short in winter like by 5.30 its dark nearly and that happens in June and then in summer at 6.30 its just getting dark so*

> *its just a little crazy and there's just so much space. One time, I always used to go out with Dad, he was sitting there fixing the tractor and I was like, can I do something for you, can I help? and he said, you've got 1600 hectares out here go out and do something. So I suppose, yeah it's a lot of space to do stuff."*

It was very important to Mary to not only tell me about her place, but also to share the particular ways of her place and its people. We would have long conversations where she would ask me questions about London and I would ask her about her photographs and film. She was very at ease with me and seemed to enjoy the opportunity to take the time to 'show off' where she lives; "*My Nana said I am really lucky that you gave us these cameras and that in London they wouldn't know about this stuff so it's up to me to tell and show them so they can then know and understand too.''*

In addition to the constant and consistent journey to school, Mary also focused on the regular journey that she and her sister make to play netball in the closest town of Paville[7], a two hour journey that her mother drives almost every Saturday.

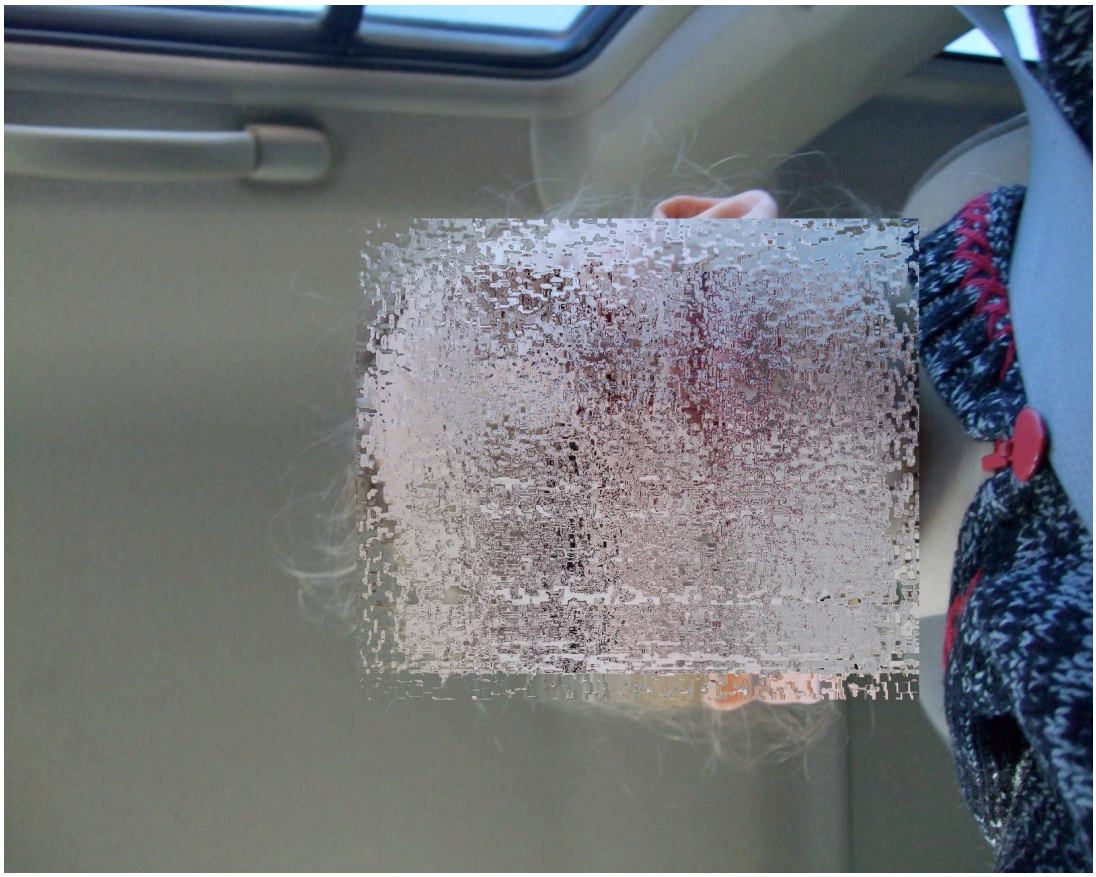
[7] Name changed for confidentiality.



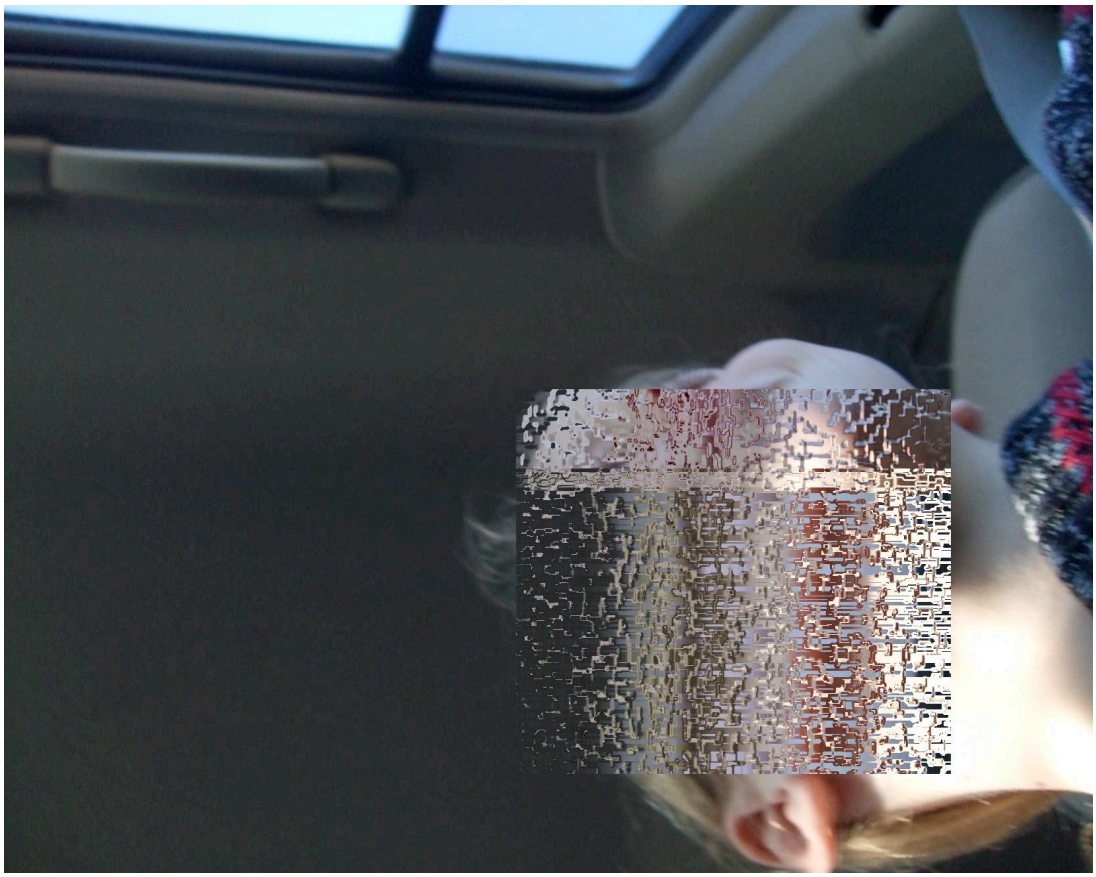
“That’s my car, I don’t mean mine, it’s not mine its our car, we spend a lot of time in it. On Saturdays we have netball and soccer so yeah pretty muchly we are in it all the time. And then you’ve got Mum’s work car which she always drives to pick us up from the bus, cause it’s a long way from the bus stop to home”.



“That’s the number plate, heaps of squashed mosquitoes.”



“So I don’t know what I was doing, I was on the way to netball and I thought I want to take a picture of myself. I just haven’t taken a photo of myself, it’s OK too.”



“I just didn’t want to be looking straight into the camera, because I don’t know sometimes it’s just like it is a bit odd. I like that one a lot. I like it cause I’m above it looking in another direction and that’s sort of how I like to see everything out here, looking above.”



“This one is as you’re going into Paville, you sort of don’t know in photos where you are unless it says so, so that’s why I took it. That’s at the Paville River, it’s really pretty, sorta green. That’s like close to here, I like the reflection of the water and the trees going over it. It’s, sort of, cause you’ve got the trees going over the water I just like the way it moves and you can hear it, I just like it.”



“There’s another one, I like that bush a lot. It’s not always full, the river, it’s been pretty dry.”



“That’s the war memorial and that’s near the river and that’s a clump of trees, over behind it.”





"That's just how far away we were from Thirton."[8]

[8] Information obscured to protect participants



“That’s just the road ahead; it doesn’t change much just keeps on going and going. That’s sort of what you see all the time.”

Mary conveys knowledge of place through the journeys that she performs so that she is able to play sport and go to school. This knowledge and understanding of place is enabled through movement and mobility, where journeying is her place-making *habitus*, just as place is constructed by and through the practices of poetry, art, film, pedagogy and politics, as discussed in Chapter 3. Therefore, the place of the bush is constructed from and through the everyday practices of journeying, the reiteration and repetition of this seemingly mundane daily practice. Through the exploration of Mary's everyday practices and experiences we can, as de Certeau (1984) maintains, engage with ways of knowing and develop knowledge and understanding of her senses of place.

6.2.2. Sharing a sense of place

Relph (1976) asserts that:

> 'Sense of place is a synaesthetic faculty that combines sight, hearing, smell, movement, touch, imagination, memory, purpose and anticipation. It is both an individual and an intersubjective attribute, closely connected to … personal memory and self' (Relph, 1976, p. 48).

Mary was very open and comfortable sharing her ways of knowing place, taking photographs and taking me on her journeys to school and netball, talking to me about her place and sharing her place and her the ways of knowing it. Mary was a very good story teller, explaining the processes and stories of her place and what she was thinking and feeling, going beyond the visual; her embodied knowledge and understanding of place. It was also very important for her to share this with me,

> *"cause I get to share with you how we live, our places, and that was fun. Other people might think I'm a bit bozo at times but besides from that I think they might think they're pretty good. I really enjoyed taking the photos and especially the video, cause I can really share my place and all of it with you, it's more than just what you see; it's all the other stuff too."*

Mary was very at ease with the camera, particularly the video function and she would use it to present her everyday journeys, such as doing her chores narrating and explaining as she walked. *"I always started with the camera pointing to me and*

that's how I usually did it. Because I watch heaps of shows on TV and they always start off introducing, so I thought that's how you do it and I just wanted to share the everyday stuff."



“Sometimes though I would get twisted up with the camera. Like when I had to feed the cats. I did this cause as you saw they just go really psycho when I pick up the purple thing of food. The other day I said to the two of them, that purple packet is good and they went, meow, they just know.



“I feed them everyday, except Monday cause we get home at 6.30 cause of netball training. We usually finish at 4.30pm but grown ups have to talk about how we’re going to do it next time, who’s driving, all that stuff, so we leave at 5.30 and get home at 6.30, it’s not that bad I suppose. His name is Bows, his father was a house cat and his mother was a feral. In most of the films I took it didn’t always work out like I thought but I might as well keep them ‘cause nothing’s ever perfect.”



“That’s like they have to muster. Mustering is sort of like getting a mob of cattle together and taking them from their paddock into the yards and branding and ear marking them and stuff like that.”



"*That's some of the cattle; they've been cutting their horns. Some cattle get horns and they brand them and ear tag them. Branding is putting our brand on them, in case they go missing.*"



”Ear tagging is like, that’s a photo of one, see that white thing. It’s where you put a number and our property has a number I think you’ll find and every cow has a different number as well. So they can just type up the property and see which cow that was and stuff.”



“That’s James our uncle and his horse, Belle. He works on our farm but he doesn’t live on our farm. He just lives not very far away at all, about 50 kms away.”



“That’s Poppy’s horse Peter; they live close to us, not far away at all. We see them nearly every day.”



“I love that photo he looks like he wants to talk to me. Its really clear with his eye and you can still see our entire place behind.”



“This is Dads horse, he’s a bestest friend he always come around. He’s very greedy and he always thinks I have food he comes up close and goes um, um, um, um. You can see the tongue just there and there’s his eye. I thought that was quite good ‘cause I like the eye and the sky. Usually, I don’t notice it that much ‘cause the sky is just there and everywhere.”



“That’s a tyre swing near our house, that’s our bikes and that’s our driveway and our house is just about there.”



“That’s Hilly, she’s my only sister, and sometimes I wish I had another.”



“That’s here, around here somewhere, the sun just reflected through those trees I just like those sort of photos. I don’t know why, they sort of look, I don’t know, I just like looking at the sun but they say if you look at the sun too much you’ll go blind, so I don’t. But if you take pictures of it you don’t. I just like how it comes through the trees sort of how I imagined it in drawings and if you would like to draw it.”



"That's the back of Thirton. There was heaps of tourists that day. They're sort of like visitors. Sometimes we get a lot through Thirton especially in the winter when it's cooler. Thirton is just a quiet place to rest as they are usually on their way to Brisbane or someplace else, they don't stay long usually one night and they have a look around the town and stuff."

"I want to be an actress, but I also might train to be a PE teacher as well because I like sport a lot. I'll have to leave Callawera[9] too, to do that and that's going to make me really sad, 'cause this is home out here. I don't know how I'll cope in the city, but I go to high school in two years. I'm either going to go to Toowoomba or the Gold Coast, to boarding school, I have to go to boarding school of course because you can't be coming five hours home every afternoon. It's a long way and you get tired of that."

[9] Name of property.



“I was walking and ‘cause there was heaps of sticks and I had to be careful I didn’t trip.”



“It was chilly that day it was about 5.30 in the afternoon. I just wanted to video some of our place.”



“I sort of wanted to introduce, like teach what we do. You can hardly see it but there were Alice and all them they were practising, you know netball, so I thought ‘Id video them practising, we do it at school at the back. There are the Midoo people coming in too. There are three on our team from Midoo, Emily, Jane and Lara.

Schools pretty important cause that’s where I see all my friends and we play sport together. It’s pretty hard to see each other at other times cause we all live a long way from each other.”



“This one is a bit strange. I was in the back of our car and driving along and Hilly says gee whiz today there doesn’t look like there’s much dust. Nana said turn around and there was heaps of it. There’s always a lot of dust usually ‘cause it’s so dry out here. It just comes up. And there was lines on the back windscreen and I just though it made it look a bit weird.”

“Most of the roads around here are dirt roads. There is usually a few dust storms, what I tried to do was get a photo of this huge dust storm cause it was a rainy day, like those other pictures and the dust just came up it looked really nice cause there was this green scenery around it and I’ve got a picture of it but its got my reflection in it.

“ It didn’t really work. It was just a rainy day with all the clouds around and then all of a sudden the wind built up and it just got heaps stronger and cause in the start of winter when all the crops where pretty dry there was heaps of red dirt and it just looked really nice.”

Mary's journeying as active participation takes us into place and keeps us there, and it is this process and practices of her knowing and remembering body that inform and teach us about her place world.

Throughout Mary's journeys her bodily knowledge of her place in the past overlaps with that of the present, just as Jenny does in her linking traces in the ground with moving bodies: her father, kangaroos, sheep. Essential to these bodily prehensions of place is the body's *withness,* or as Whitehead (1926) describes, 'the way we experience things *with* the body' (p.62). So, Mary's images, film and stories of her journeys are not only about her describing the subject or the object of the journeys, but the many events where she experiences the places of her journey, therefore sharing her sense of place and sense of belonging. Mary's journeying supports the premise of the bound relationship between place and the body, as explored in Chapter 4 through the work of Kant (1988), Whitehead (1926), Husserl (1970) and Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1963).

This concept of *withness* can be further applied to Mary's bodily withness with the camera, where she is with the camera; moving, feeling, narrating, learning and sharing. This is supported by MacDougall (2006) who asserts that image making and filmmaking practices are corporeal because the camera and filmmaking are embodied, as the camera moves - *with* the body:

> ' … we see with our whole bodies, and any image we make carries the imprint of our bodies; that is to say of our being as well as the images we intend to convey'. Therefore 'corporeal images' can be seen as 'not just the images of other bodies; they are also the images of the body behind the camera and its relations with the world.' (p.3)

Therefore, Mary's images and narration are not just the images and stories of her sister, roads, signs, horses and her father. They are images and stories of her *with* the camera and her relations *with* the world, therefore constructing her senses of place and the place-world of the bush. So, Mary's journeys *with* the camera are her

embodied ways of knowing, learning, sharing and teaching place and her sense of place; her place-making *habitus*.

Journeying as place-making *habitus* further supports the concept that place is eventmental rather than static, as discussed in Chapter 4. It is a continuous open process that is constantly changing and can be redefined resulting in the construction of place in many different complex ways, resulting in many different complex effects and affects. This premise of place as a fluid open process is underpinned by Whitehead (1926; 1978) and Merleau-Ponty (1962), as it acknowledges that place is constituted through, and of, the lived body. Therefore, rather than focusing on Mary's interpretation and representations of the place of the bush, this study deals with understanding her embodied ways of knowing the place of the bush and how through everyday practices, such as journeying, her senses of place is performed and constructed. But this then results in senses of place being made and remade on a daily basis; performed and practiced, open and changing, therefore it is a sensing[10] of place.

It was through Mary sharing her journeys with me that I learnt the importance and significance of these practices to place making. I also learnt the importance and significance of *my own* journeying practices to my place-making *habitus*. Mary taught me to go beyond the surface, to explore the hidden, because it is not always about what you see, but about what and how you feel and that this process does not always need to be immediately understood, *"I like the feeling I get from it, like it just is. I don't know why, but that's OK"*. For Mary the final product, the destination, the film was not important; *"In most of the films I made it didn't always work out like I thought. But I might as well keep them 'cause not everything works out like you think …".* What was important was Mary sharing her journeys, an embodied active

[10] Rather than sense, as conveys action rather than a state.

engagement in the shared social, material and sensory environment of her place-the bush, "*but you sort of get the feeling of here and that's the important stuff* ".

6.2.3. Journeying, a sense of belonging

de Certeau (1984) maintains that the repetition of these practices, such as Mary's journeying, not only gives a sense of place but is also a way of overcoming alienation or displacement and gaining a sense of identity. Mary's journeying not only enables her sense of place but also her sense of belonging because it is these repeated performed practices that constitute and construct an connection or sense of identity or belonging to place. Butler (2003) explains that performativity is:

> 'not a singular act, for it is always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms, and to the extent that it requires an act-like status in the present, it conceals and dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition.' (p.12)

Performativity, *like habitus*, is also preconscious. The repeated performances of these norms, as previously stated by de Certeau (1984), also enable communities to achieve a connection to place that can be actual but also remembered. Therefore, I assert that belonging and a sense of belonging can be conceived of as products of journeying. Interestingly, this interrelationship between journeying-movement and sense of belonging-knowledge is integral to many indigenous communities, such the Malaysian Batek, Canadian Dene and Australian Aborigines.

Tuck-Po (2008) discusses her research on the 'phenomenology of walking for the Batek people of Malaysia' (p.21), forest-dwelling hunter-gatherers who do not have a division between knowledge and movement. According to Tuck-Po (2008), the Batek teach their children in the arts of negotiating the forest not through the imposition of rules or getting them to follow the adults but through allowing the children to take the lead and enabling them to find and learn their own way:

> 'For the Batek, walking comprises a suite of bodily performances that include observing, monitoring, remembering, talking, listening, touching, crouching and climbing. And it is through these performances … that their knowledge is forged. Movement, here, is not adjunct to knowledge, the movement of

walking is itself a way of knowing.' (Tuck-Po, 2008, p.26).

Additionally, Legat (2008) in her research walking with the hunter-gatherers of the northwest of Canada, the Tåîchô (Dogrib) Dene people, in their boreal forest environment discusses the link between knowledge and walking and also the interrelationship of walking, talking (story-telling) and learning. Legat (2008) came to see the links between telling stories and walking, and experiencing place as a form of validating the walking stories. Legat (2008) asserts that Dene children grow up listening to stories about walks and paths; 'relations with places are initiated as soon as children first hear the narratives' (p.36). Then, as the children grow older they get to walk these very same paths they had heard of through stories: 'the period between listening to stories and walking them marks an in-between phase of learning during which people who have heard 'talk' do not yet know the 'truth' or reality of a narrative' (Legat, 2008, p.37). From these observations, Legat (2008) states that walking is 'the experience that binds narrative to the acquisition of personal knowledge' (p.35), or as the practice that 'validates the reality of the past in the present' (p.35). As Tuck-Po (2008) states:

> 'Talking and walking are inseparable ... If walking creates the path and if walking itself is an act of sociality, then can the path have any meaning without the stories of the people using it? ... Paths are social phenomena, and are remembered in relation to social events.' (p.26)

Similarly, the conflation of narration and walking is also evident in Australian Aboriginal culture. Tawa's (2002) research with the Ngaanyatjarra communities around Patjarr and Warbarton Ranges, in the Gibson Desert Western Australian found that the practices of walking entail not simply moving through but, moving with and being aware of the speeds and shapes of movement and of the various systems and networks that operate in the country;

> 'Walking… is a process of reading, in great detail, its current state and

> condition-its ecology, geology, meteorology, astronomy … this prepares a caring for country through various adjustments made in terms of cultural and environmental practices, behaviours and protocols necessary for its sustainment- ranging from ceremonial activities, to hunting and gathering, and fire management practices.' (Tawa, 2002, p.48).

For the Ngaanyatjarra, the performance of walking and narration is about learning to care, keep and tend the country and also to remember and recollect the various relationships and configurations of the country, and to confirm familial lineage and cultural links to communities and regions (Graham, 1999; Tawa, 2002).

The songlines of Aboriginal culture are one the most well-known examples of the indigenous conflation of movement and narrative and are sometimes referred to as The Dreaming or Dreaming-tracks:

> '… each totemic ancestor, while traveling through the country, was thought to have scattered a trail of words and musical notes along the line of his/her footprints … and these Dreaming-tracks lay over the land as 'ways' of communication between the most far flung tribes.' (Huggan, 1991, p.62)

These narratives, whether spoken, sung or danced, are then used as maps and directions and are also a means by which communities identify who has the right to live in an area and the sacra associated with it (Myers, 1986; James, 2008; Long, 2008). For Australian aborigines[11], 'Walking initiates a remembrance of genealogical, mythical and geographical networks of inheritance and descent and announces that experience through narration' (Tawa, 2002, p.48), and just like the Dene and the Batek, these movement practices and narration, learning and knowledge can not be separated.

For the Australian Aborigines, the Dene and the Batek, the stories are stories and walking is walking, they are not coded messages. Simply having heard the stories is not a way of knowing. Ways of knowing depend on the confirmation of stories in personal experience, to walk, to travel, to journey along these paths and to know

[11] There are thousands of Aboriginal communities and this generalisation of all Aboriginal cultures is based on the research and writings of Myers (1986); Tawa (2002); James (2008) and Long (2008).

and to learn the places of these stories, usually in the company of already knowledgeable elders (Tuck Po, 2008; Legat, 2008). Therefore, Mary's walking and journeying are not an adjunct to knowledge but are in themselves a way of her knowing and learning, and just like the Dene, Batek and Aborigines, through these journeying practices (*habitus*) of Mary's sensing body (memory and perception) her sense of place and sense of belonging is performed and constructed.

As I listened and talked to Mary, sharing and learning from her journeys and stories, light bulbs were going off in my head: 'oh I get it now'. Mary, just like Jenny, Henry and Hettie, was my elder. I had heard the stories and I had seen the journeys (images and films) but it was only through Mary sharing and teaching me her ways of knowing and also my own personal journeying that I came to know and understand journeying as a way of knowing and learning the place-world of the bush. As Casey (1993) maintains, journeys have very little to do with speed, distance and destination, they are more concerned with exploration and depth. Therefore, these performative constructs; the actions and behaviours of practices such as walking and journeying, constitute and construct individual and also collective identities, and it is then through these repeated bodily performances that we have a sense of place and a connection to place - a sense of belonging.

6.3. The beauty and terror: Land and the body

> *It was a beautiful morning, cold of course, but there was clarity to the landscape, all raw and clean - a feeling of freshness, everything renewed. "Big frost this morning, wets everything, wont be much dust" Jenny tells me as she stand at my side. Jenny hurries in front of me rushing towards the car. We are all strapped in for the 60 minute trip to school.*
>
> *I trundle along slowly, 30km or thereabouts as I am wary of the mixture of slippery dirt roads and speed and also I have someone else's daughter as a passenger. The avenue of gum trees with their grey green bark curling back to reveal white fresh insides; it always evokes images of skin peeling after a really bad case of sunburn.*

Most of the track is flat. However, deceptively the track dips, and we are driving through pea-soup fog. It envelops not only the car but also its surroundings. I can't see anything, so I slow down even more, a snail would be proud. I can hear the crunch of the tyres on the rocks and dirt of the track as we slowly eke our way along, concentrating on the road directly in front, for anything coming the other way and also on the side of the road keeping the trees parallel, so I don't end up off the track.

"Stop!" Jenny yells from the back. As I slam on the brakes, I see it too, a small dark mound literally waddling across the road. "What is it?"
"Don't know let's see." I hear the sound of metal on metal as Jenny slams the door, and as she rushes up to the waddling mound she excitedly yells at me to come quickly.

I rush over to Jenny, "I can't believe it, I have never seen one in the bush before," I can hear a strange snorting and wheezing. As I connect the strange noises with the waddling mass of knitting needles I immediately recognize the animal on the Australian five-cent piece - an echidna. It slowly makes its way across to the side of the road and up the bank through the grass and scrub, disappearing under a dead tree.

In all my time living in Australia I, just like Jenny, had never seen an echidna outside of a zoo. With all my experiences of travelling and living in remote places, the sight, and sound of an echidna waddling along the road, turned me into an excited seven-year-old, filming its journey and being fascinated by its movements, the shape and direction of its quills and how it curled by into a tight ball when it sensed our presence, amazing.

I reflected on the experience with the echidna and the many other fascinating and beautiful things and events of this place, even the daily occurrences when the temperature rises so the blue of the sky can at times be a little hazy, and that it is at its best in the morning, as the sun comes up. Or, in the evenings when the clouds can smear the sky as the colour changes to reds, oranges and yellows. This is when the shadows are longer and softness replaces the hard outlines during the day.

John's voice broke into my thoughts, "I experience it everyday and it's beautiful, I know that. But it still surprises me. Just when you think you know it and it is yours, it all changes. You can't take it for granted … cause it can get you, you know, that's it lights out." (Research notes/audio, 2008, p.3)

It is interesting that I was caught up with the sensory and memory overload of this place, revisiting a strong sense of who I am and a renewed strength in what I am, and through this process acknowledging that places of my childhood gave me that; they identify and ultimately own me. This premise is supported by Gale's (1983, 2008) research with Australian Aboriginal women who construct place not as one of

ownership where they own it or it belongs to them, but on the premise that they belong to it. John reiterates this, and that this beauty catches you out. However, there is also a tension within this construct, a warning that to romanticise or underestimate this place can lead to dire consequences.

6.3.1. 'Beauty and terror'

This construction of the tension between the land and the body, the Australian bush as both beautiful and difficult to survive, figures very strongly in the construction of the national identity of Australia and Australians. This enduring premise is constructed by and constituted through artistic, poetic, filmic, geo-political, linguistic and pedagogic discourses, as discussed in Chapter 3.

This conflict between beauty and survival is demonstrated by Paterson (1982) in his poetry, as discussed in Chapter 3, but one of the best examples of this construction is 'My Country' by Dorothea Mackellar, as cited previously. The second stanza can be recited by heart by most Australians (Spender, 1988), and it is this stanza that best articulates the tension described above:

I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains.
I love her far horizons,
I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror -
The wide brown land for me!

In this stanza Mackellar (1981) communicates her knowledge and understanding of the place of Australia. She does this through the description of the landscape: 'sweeping plains, far horizons, jewel-sea'. These constructions, just like my own at the start of this section, could be conceived as idealised and romantic. However, Mackellar (1981) juxtaposes these romantic constructions with a harsh reality; sunburnt country, ragged mountain ranges, droughts, flooding rains, further conveying her embodied knowledge of this land and the tensions that exits, 'her

beauty and her terror'.

This construction of the Australian bush as a place of both 'droughts and flooding rains' figures very strongly in Australian cultural discourses. This may be because this is what is experienced in this place-world; dry, wet and usually more of the former than the later. When I spoke to the children, their knowledge and understanding of the place of the bush is that of a place where there is not a lot of water;

> *It's dry here and hardly any grass and like heaps of trees and red dirt. I say I live in the bush, it's small towns and everybody knows each other and what they do and well everyone is friendly and they know each other." (Mary).*
>
> *"Well I live in a bush town. It's trees and dry, mostly dry all the time and lots of animals, native bush animals like kangaroos and kookaburras and birds and echidnas. Toowoomba is a city and it's the closest city, it has trees but it's not as dry. They have more water." (Alison)*
>
> *"Midoo[12] is bush too, because it's not huge, as in like as big as Toowoomba, a city like that. They have a fair few things, more than here but it's still a bush town, real dry." (Harper).*

This embodied knowledge of the land and the importance and preciousness of water figures very strongly in the knowledge and practices of those who live in the bush. For these children, their *habitus* is to preserve water, from saving their bath and shower water to only flushing the toilet when you do number two to using different waters for different purposes. Within the Thirton school all the taps have different labels either; BORE WATER, TOWN WATER or TANK WATER,

> *"Don't waste that water Miss, because that's the only stuff you can drink, we can only get that water when it rains, which is not much out here … Yeah tank water is the good stuff. You can see the two tanks there. Bore water is collected from the school's artesian bore. It has a distinct smell of sulphur and is only used if it boiled first or for washing hands and brushes and stuff. Town water is from the town tanks. You don't drink that stuff it's got a funny brown colour, tastes funny too."* (Harper)

Mary further conveyed this embodied knowledge of the importance of water and its significance to the community;

[12] The closest town to Thirton, population 800 (From observations).



“I really liked that Hilly was on the mailbox. But I thought with the background, with all the clouds it would look really good, that’s what I thought. That was only yesterday.”



“I also took this picture of a huge blue cloud, the darkest cloud I could see. I never really took a photo of the sky before and I just thought it was a really good idea and it came up really good so I thought I might keep that. I just liked how it’ the darkness of it and then the light and it’s the first sight of rain.”







“Rain is really important out here. We don’t get much of it really. It’s been really, really dry. I would say this summer is going to be the worst because usually towards the winter we have this huge downpour of rain, and it helps us through the summer. But like we’ll have little showers to keep it going. But this year we didn’t have that. It helps the crops and the dams of water and stuff like that, the crops we have are oats for the cattle and barley and wheat.”

“We have our own dams and the bore drain that runs through the paddocks for the cattle. A bore drain it’s sort of like a river but its really narrow with banks, and then, its not really a big bank at all, its sort of up near my knee, which is one foot probably and sometimes they have a pipe that runs through it. Well, what happens here it runs through all the paddocks and it runs through everyone’s place and we share the water for the cattle and that.”

“We only have cattle, we did have sheep but wild dogs ate them ages ago. We did have both which gave us more money but then the drought doesn’t really work with sheep that well. I’ve seen our next-door neighbours sheep and they’re looking real bad and they’ve got more grass than us so, I would say they don’t work really well with drought. Yeah, we’re in a drought at the moment”

Mary talks about her embodied knowledge and understanding of the processes of obtaining, preserving and the sharing of water and the impact of the lack of water. She also articulates her embodied knowledge of the possibility of rain as she reads the clouds, "*I also took this picture of a huge blue cloud, the darkest cloud I could see ... I just liked the darkness of it and then the light and it's the first sight of rain.'* Jenny also conveyed this embodied knowledge to me, *"Can you smell it? Rains coming, big storm too"* and Henry, *"Ants have been going nuts the last couple of days."*

> *'Apparently the forecast for Friday and the weekend is rain, every conversation is consumed by the topic all the staff and kids are talking about the rain they are expecting. " A front is coming in from the east and we should get rain for three-four days."*
> *"We really need it too, the tanks are getting low."*
> *Many conversations centred a round the rain forecasted and what needs to be done before the rain comes. There seems to be a lot of preparations required before the rain, during and then after. John warned me that if it starts to rain while I am at school to head back immediately, "Don't wait around." The reason being that if there is too much rain the road will be too boggy for me to drive on and I will not get home or will be stuck as I do not have 4WD.*
> *"You can get stuck for days"*
> *John and his family have been preparing for this rain for the past 2-3 days. Bringing cattle in, checking sheep, loading up on supplies/groceries etc. But, there is not a cloud in the all this blue sky.*
>
> *I wake in the middle of the night to the subtle thumping on the iron roof, rain. It smells different too, dampness but not offensive, just wet and clean. The rhythm is soothing, slowly lulling me back to sleep, I know this.*
>
> *I wake up to a lot of rain. Even John is still in bed and he stays inside the house, all day. I now get it. Because of the conditions out here, the red dirt just turns to mud and sticks to everything. It is very boggy and you cannot go outside.*
>
> *I was thinking, what is the big fuss over some rain? I even suggested taking the kids for a walk, thinking that it would be all right if we had gumboots and rain jackets on. It was quickly explained to me that we would not get far as it is like walking through very very thick porridge and is very slippery.'*
> *(Research notes/audio, 2008, p.5)*



‘So, for two whole days we were all inside.’



'… even the cattle dogs.'

Upon my return to London I shared these images and my experiences with a few colleagues and they all stated similar things; ‘amazing’, ‘beautiful place’, ‘but how do people survive? it’s just all dirt and really dry’. This construction of the place of the bush as a dichotomy, of a tension between beauty and terror, is constructed through Othering discourses; such as those discussed in Chapter 3. These discourses are used to construct the bush as a place of difference; the flora and fauna, the light and also of ‘man’ and his struggle to live in this landscape and the rebelliousness and courage required to survive in a place that lacks sustaining water. This has served to maintain the construction of the bush, and those that live in the bush as Other. However, Mary, Harper and Jenny do not communicate this tension, this terror does not exist for them.

6.3.2. Belonging to the land

> *‘Miss FM started to explain homework that would be due at the end of the week. “ I want you to go into your garden at home like the one in the video and list all the plants, herbs and vegetables that are growing there.”*
> *One student called out, “But Miss, we don’t have a veggie garden, we have trees, sheep and cows and lots of weeds.”*
> *“You have to have pretty tough plants to survive out here.”*
> *“Yeah life is tough for plants and stuff out here, most die, few survive.”*
> *A titter of giggling spreads through the class.’ (Research notes/audio, 2007, p.1-2)*

This was my first lesson in the school and John and Peter - 8 and 10 respectively, were calmly telling their teacher why they did not have a veggie patch. It had been over six years since I had lived in Australia, and Australians I quickly found out have an overseas reputation for their direct verbal communication, to the point and blunt, and here I was, an Australian not necessarily shocked, but jolted by the ‘matter of factness’ of life and death that was being conveyed in a geography lesson by an 8 and a 10 year old. My experience and learning of how this ‘matter of factness’ related to life and death in this particular place world was to continue.



“That’s a photo of our little lamb, we haven’t come up with a name for it yet, it doesn’t have a mum. We found it when we were drafting sheep over in the paddock. So, we take it home and bottle feed it and we have another sheep at home which is bigger, much bigger we have had it nearly a year, yeah its about a year old we have had it since it was really little like that one. I look after it, feed it, brekky, lunch and dinner, when its really small we feed it a couple of times a day”

“What happened to its Mum?”

“Well sometimes when they’re pregnant and they have the lamb, they are lying down and the crows come down and pick their eyes out and they can’t do anything, that sometimes happens, so then the Mum dies, or the Mum goes off to die and leaves the lamb.”



"That's our pet kangaroo, Zena. Kate, my sister called her that cause she sucks her thumb or her big toe, they only have three toes. She looks fat cause she's got a joey in her pouch.

"It hasn't got its head out yet. She's not very big and she's already having a 'joey'. She must have had it a while now, cause they start out really small. So we might have two pet kangaroos. But, if it's a boy I think Dad will probable kill it. Because boy roos, when they grow up they can kill ya, they just get aggressive in mating season and stuff."

"How are you going to feel about that?"

"Oh well, he kills lots of things. He kills puppies that the dogs have too."

"But she could leave us before it pops out, cause I think she stays at our place cause there is grass and stuff."

"So what does your Dad do?"

"Ah, I don't know … he works with sheep, he grows wheat. It doesn't always turn out, it either always dies cause there's not enough rain or the frost kills it. It gets up green and then it goes down and doesn't live. So I suppose I'd call him a farmer."



“It’s a bit of machinery and the silos and all this we have on our place. They’ve got nothing in them, they usually have wheat. Its good because of the shadows and the sun just gets the silos and so it’s like the centre of the picture. And the trees there makes it better.”

“Why does it make it better?”

“I don’t know, I just know, cause I was just thinking about that before, why’s it good.”



“That’s a just a picture of the paddock, sadly it’s been bulldozed. You can tell cause there’s a dead tree there and when you drive up you can see it cause there’s shadows over it and just over there there’s a bore drain.”

“I have noticed that in your photos there is a lot of sky.”

“What do you mean a lot, it’s the sky, it’s just there. You see the stars at night and the moon last night was huge when it first comes up it was really yellow because of the sun shining on it.”



“That’s a bore drain, a big bore drain. I took that cause of the grass. All that grass there. The grass doesn’t really go green, it’ll go green when it first grows and then it’ll go like that but its not dead, its still OK, its buffel grass.”



“There’s no water in the bore drain.”



“There’s a weird paddock in the background. It looks green but not when you get close up, its wheat so it pretty much dies straight away. Dad either feeds the wheat to the sheep or harvests it and sells it.”









“There’s a sheep that’s been stuck in the dam. We always have them. That ones been there a while so its got no mouth, no eyes.”

“Don’t you take it out and bury it.”

“You don’t bury it (indignant). We tried to take it out ‘cause you see bits of wool; it just came off when we pulled on it. So we left it there.”

“So you don’t bury it?”

“No! (spoken in a don’t be silly tone of voice). You don’t dig a hole; you have to leave something for the birds. The crows eat ‘em, eagles; we’ve got a lot of crows. Crows actually come and get the eyes and then they leave it for a while. But there’s always sheep like that, most of them aren’t dead, they’re still alive so you pull them out and then they sit there cause they can’t walk and then they might die so you have to try and lift them up behind and help them and then they might go away. There was a bone here and there was more bones over there, but we couldn’t get it out so we left it.”



“There’s a pig trap, the pigs eat the lambs and the wheat and that, wild pigs. See there’s gate there, Dad puts a trail of wheat, this is near the dam, and a big pile in the trap and the pigs come in and bump their head and that opens and then it can’t get out cause the sides go over there and then it can’t get out so it stays there till we come and shoot it. Dad might take it to the dogs, or something or catch it and keep it put in the pigpen, fatten it up and eat it. That’s just behind there; you drag them out and leave them there. We caught a wallaby once but we left the gate open so it could get out.”



“Then there are all the bones where we dragged them out and left them. We have to help out a lot, cause we just have to, cause you need more than one person to do it.”

Initially, this blunt attitude towards life and death conveyed by the children was surprising. Perhaps because I had spent a number of years away from Australia and I had to relearn this *habitus* of communication, or maybe because I was surprised at these very young children's embodied knowledge of life and death. However, this embodied knowledge is how they understand the place of the bush.

The children do not construct the places of their childhood as having a tension between life and death, because it is part of their place-making *habitus, "it happens, what can you do*?" Similarly, when my art teacher introduced me to McCubbin's 'Lost' (1866), as discussed in Chapter 3, and she described the imposing and all-encompassing surroundings and the obvious threat that these surroundings conveyed, the entire time I was thinking, 'Where? Are we looking at the same work?' I maintain that this occurred because this painting with its smoky blue of the gum (eucalyptus) trees and the way the bark of the tree uncurls reminded me of the places of my childhood, my place-making *habitus*. So, I argue that the children in this study do not articulate this tension, instead they embrace this landscape, as they have 'deep sustaining roots in the land' (Flannery, 2002, speech). This is because, who they are and how they are, their practices and behaviours, are shaped by the land and as a result the land is part of who they are, 'the land does . . .claim us as its own' (Flannery, 2002). Rather than conceiving of these places as something to battle and be at odds with, the children have a sense of belonging, a connectedness.

This link with the land and body in constructing and constituting place and roots in the land; connection to place, is supported by research into the experiences of the Dineh Indians in northeastern Arizona. (Casey, 1993). Since 1974, the Dineh, Navajo, have been 'relocated' by the American government enacting the 1974 Act of Settlement to separate the Navajo from the Hopi (Casey, 1993). This forced

relocation has resulted in displacement; a lack of a sense of belonging and connectedness to the land. This premise is supported by Scudder et al. (1979a) report that states that:

> 'The results of over 25 studies around the world indicate, with no exceptions, that the execution of compulsory relocation among rural populations with strong ties to their land and homes is a traumatic experience.' (p.69)

This trauma can be manifested physically and psychologically, as in the case of the Navajo where 'a quarter of those relocated have died, including an unusually high number of suicides. Alcoholism, memory loss (and) depression is also rampant' (Scudder, et al. 1979b, p.69). Casey (1993) asserts that the Navajo loss of land is a loss of life, and that the major cause of these illnesses is the loss of place and a sense of belonging to place. According to the Navajo, illness is the result of a distorted relationship with the land; 'To take from the Earth without reciprocating, without having first become a part of the life of the place, is to disrupt a sacred balance and ultimately to grow ill' (Lassiter, 1987, p.228).

As previously discussed in this chapter, Australian Aborigines also have an embodied relationship with the land, and similarly they too have also suffered from forced relocation from their land. The Stolen Generations is a term used to describe those children of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who were 'captured from their families by the Australian Federal and State government agencies and church missions, under acts of their respective parliaments' (Brewster, 2007, 143). The removals occurred in the period between approximately 1869 and 1969 although in some places children were still being taken away in the 1970s (Brewster, 2007). Gale's (2005) research with Australian Aboriginal women describes their experiences and 'the 'trauma of being removed from their mothers, and their land and cultural roots that are so embedded in that land' (p.359). For the Aborigines, Tawa (2002) asserts:

> ‘Land is not ‘landscape’ but *country*- a culturally qualified entity conjoining people, land and myth…and it contextualizes a remembrance and renewal of cultural lineage and identity’ and the ’apprenticeship or initiation into the narration of country is fundamental to Indigenous identity’ (p.45).

Therefore, this removal from the land results in; a loss of religion, language, cultural history and identity (Wilson, 1997). Gale (2005) and Plumwood (2005) also attribute the decline in Aboriginal health and the high rate of infant mortality and morbidity to the trauma of displacement, and I assert a resulting sense of disbelonging.

Just as the indigenous cultures of the Navajo and the Aborigines have an embodied knowledge and relationship with the land, or a sense of connectedness and belonging, so too do the children in this study. The children of this study have conveyed this *withness* of body, land and identity because their practices and behaviours (*habitus*), and thus who they are, are shaped by the land and as a result the land is a part of who they are. Casey (1993) asserts that ‘place is what takes between body and (land) landscape’ (p.29), meaning that it is the repetition of embodied practices with the total environment that constructs place, giving us a sense of place and a connection to place. As Cresswell (2004) maintains, we usually have a sense of place from where we live and the *habitus* of where and how we live, ‘or where we lived when we were children’ (p.8). This premise, demonstrated in this study, that place-making *habitus* is performed, constructed and learned in early childhood, is also supported by Bourdieu (1977; 1990ab) and de Certeau (1984), who maintains that the *habitus* of place-making ‘is thus to repeat the joyful and silent experience of childhood’ (pp.109-110).

6.4. Overview of the chapter

In this chapter I have explored the socially constructed embodied ways of knowing the place of the Australian bush and how within this knowing, sense of place and belonging is performed and constructed. The children’s ways of knowing place

emerged through their embodied participation in the world. The meanings and the materiality, the very fabric of the place world of the bush are socially constructed and the way the children and myself experience place, our knowledge of place and how we learn to make place, emerged from and through our *habitus*.

The children's and my own place-making *habitus*, as the concept of place itself, were fluid, dynamic and continuous because of the fluid, dynamic and continuous way in which we perform and construct our place-world. However, I was also reflecting and sometimes relearning the place-making *habitus* of my childhood places. It was because of the children's acute thoughts and feelings regarding their surroundings and relationships to their place that were vividly and sometimes bluntly expressed and remembered that I was able to transform my own personal place-making *habitus*. In terms of this study, it is the children's sensitivity to their embodied knowledge and understanding that opens up and takes us into their place-world and that reflects the complex character of the place of the Australian bush. However, this chapter is not about recreating or defining the place of the bush or the children's sense of place, but about evoking a sense of place and understanding, and learning the embodied ways of knowing the place of the bush and how through everyday practices a sense of place and belonging is performed and constructed.

To know and learn about senses of place and belonging we need to know about and learn the ways in which the body encounters the total environment, and how the body through sensory perception and memory is fundamental to knowing and the ways in which we know. Our ways of knowing place are complex and are interconnected with the total environment, and as with the total environment they are not fixed but are fluid, flexible and subject to change. However, I argue that this embodied knowledge of place is not produced in isolation, and as discussed in

Chapter 7 I assert that it is produced through social-engagement, through a continuous process of embodied learning that is always emplaced with others.

Figure 6.1. Doing chores, series, 2007.








































Gerbera
Paternals



Figure 6.2. Going home, series, 2008.


NO SMOKING
ON SCHOOL
PROPERTY






POST




SCHOOL BUS















CHAPTER 7. WAYS OF LEARNING PLACE AND BELONGING

The previous chapter was an exploration and examination, with the children of this study, of the ways of knowing the place of the Australian bush, and how within these ways of knowing senses of place and belonging are performed and constructed. However, these ways of knowing place and belonging or place making *habitus* are not magically known by the children, they are learned through embodied, socially engaged pedagogies but also by just *being there.*

Pedagogy is defined as the 'theory and instruction of teaching and learning (Pearsall, 1999, p.1051). The word comes from the Greek and literally means 'to lead the child' (Pearsall, 1999, p.1051). This definition resonates with Freire's (1970) concept of 'banking' where teaching and learning is solely concerned with transmission, 'where students are regarded merely as passive consumers' (hooks, 1994, p. 40). However, within this study pedagogy is underpinned by hooks (1994) and Freire (1970) and is conceived as 'a union of the mind, body and spirit, not just for striving for knowledge in books, but knowledge about how to live in the world' (hooks, 1994, p.15) or in the case of this study, the children's place-world, the bush. Atkinson (2011) conceives this as understanding local learning processes, 'local curations of learning' (p.11); I would also include teaching in this premise, local curations of learning and teaching. Therefore, local curations of pedagogy occur everywhere, not only in the classroom (Sameshima, 2008) and can be personal/individual and/or public/collective (Irwin et al., 2009).

7.1. Embodied pedagogies

In Chapter 4, I asserted that 'there can be no place without the body'; that place is an event or process with no definite representations continually being constructed through the everyday process and practices of the body, *habitus*, and that our ways

of knowing place emerge with and through our embodied participation in the world. Therefore, just as we know place through the body, we learn place-making *habitus* with the body, and our *habitus* is transformed through embodied pedagogies. Therefore, we know, understand and learn place and belonging through embodied habits and practices.

However, instead of dividing body and mind into the constructs of doing (practices) and knowing, following Merleau-Ponty (1962), I assert that the body is not a source of experience and activity but is rather a source of knowledge, 'the customary body' (p.82) or the knowing body and it is also the source of memories, the remembering body. Consequently, through our interactions with the total environment we perform *habitus* that are constructed and learned and taught through individual and collective sensory perceptions and memories.

7.1.1. Sensory perception

As discussed in Chapter 4, the main premise of Merleau-Ponty's (1962; 1963) work is the lived body. For Merleau-Ponty (1962), 'the lived body is our general medium for having a world' (p.146), this is because it has 'corporeal intentionality' (p.387), where the lived body integrates itself with its total environment, either through perception and/or remembering, it is 'an intentional arc binding us to the life world we inhabit, replacing the Cartesian mind body dichotomy' (p.136).

The lived body is therefore 'the natural subject of perception' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p.208) however, this perception goes beyond vision because perception is achieved through and of the body, and sensation is at the centre of human perception. Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1963) highlights that perception is not just a mental or psychological effect, but is the body's orientation in the world, and that there is a symbiotic relationship between the act of perception and the environment of the

perceiver. Therefore, perception is achieved through and of the body, and sensing is at the centre of human perception.

Merleau-Ponty's (1962) premise of the interconnection of the senses and their overlapping functions allows us to understand that our sensory perception is interconnected with the total environment; it is an activity 'of the whole organism in its environment' (p.234). This knowledge of the world that we gain through all our senses was conceived by Aristotle (1986) as *aisthesis,*

> *'*our perception of the world through our five senses … as an undividable whole … our total sensorial experience of the world and to our sensitive knowledge of it' (Verrips, 2007, p.30).

This was demonstrated by Mary and her sensing of place through everyday practices, such as journeying; her sensing of place is performed and constructed resulting in her senses of place being made and remade on a daily basis, performed and practiced, open and changing. Similarly, Bourdieu's (1984) premise of bodily *hexis*, or 'a feel for the game', a sense of what is appropriate/inappropriate, echoes this because it is in bodily *hexis* that the personal sensory combines with the socio-cultural. As Casey (1993) asserts, the (sensing) body is where and how the 'very basics of culture are imprinted and enacted' (Casey, 1993, p.34).

Merelau-Ponty (1962) uses the term 'customary body' (p.82) to describe the body that has acquired cultural patterns into its actions and habits, 'a matrix of habitual action' (p.146). For Bourdieu (1984), these ways in which we relate with our bodies reveal the 'deepest dispositions of the *habitus*' (p.190). However, this knowing is not stored within the body but involves a process between the body and the total environment. This then results in understanding embodiment as a process whereby we know and learn through our experiencing body, 'the knowing body', as ceramic artist Edmund de Waal (2011) articulates;

> ‘Centering the clay, bringing the small ball into perfect reactivity for throwing, involved a ripple of different movements from hand and wrist, an inclination in the head and neck a slight tautening in the shoulders. It was … learning that I could not articulate’ (p.1).

and as Jenny asserted,

> *“Can you smell it? Smells different, and feels different like heavy but clearer, usually you can only smell the dust and the heat, so when it changes you just know, rains coming.”*

Therefore, as explored and discussed in Chapter 4 I argue that learning the ways of knowing place and belonging is implicit and embodied.

7.1.2. Sensory memory

According to Seremetakis (1994) Marks (2000) and Sutton (2001), research indicates that sensory memory as a way of learning supports the premise that sensory memories make and are also made through *habitus*. This is underpinned by Bourdieu (1990) who asserts that;

> ‘The *habitus*, a product of history, produces individual and collective practices -more history - in accordance with the schemes generated by history. It ensures the active presence of past experiences.’ (p.54)

My own and Jenny’s embodied ways of knowing also support this premise, as explored and discussed in Chapter 6.

Therefore, the learning of place-making *habitus* is inextricable from the invocation, creation and investment of sensory memories because ‘the body imports its own emplaced past into its present’ (Casey, 1988, 194). Just as the body can be conceived as the source of knowledge, the knowing body, I assert that it can then also be conceived as the source of memories, the remembering body. As hooks (2009) states:

> ‘We are born and have our being in a place of memory. We chart our lives by everything we remember from the mundane moment to the majestic. We know ourselves through the art and act of remembering. Memories offer us a world where there is no death, where we are sustained by rituals of regard and recollection.’ (p.5).

As established above, sensory memory is a way of learning place as an individual practice, but they can also be a way of learning *belonging* through collective memories and practices in ritual, as Casey (1993) asserts; 'This emplacement … is not merely … individual; it is also collective in character' (p.23). Connerton's work (1989) on collective memory indicates that 'social memory is embedded in the performativity of 'commemorative ceremonies' (p.4) in which the body is central. This is demonstrated in the collective, journeying practices of the children in this study and also the ceremonies and journeying practices of the indigenous people of Australia, North America, Canada and Malaysia as discussed in Chapter 6. Therefore, through the repeated performance of acts such as; walking, journeying, ceremonies and rituals - *habitus*, groups, communities and cultures can share sensory memories or, as Seremetakis (1994) calls them, 'mediation on the historical substance of experience' (p.7).

However, Seremetakis (1994) maintains that these sensory memories are not fixed in repetition, but are continually reconstituted through the practices of bringing the past into the present, and so become an inextricable element in our ways of learning place and belonging. Whitehead (1926) terms this practice 'bodily prehensions', where our *habitus*, or bodily knowledge of a place in the past pours into the present environment. Manning (2009) explains, 'We conceive the world … by the overlapping of the folds of sense-presentation emerging alongside pastness' (p.215). What is evident within this understanding of sensory memory (both collective and individual) as a way of learning is that it further supports the premise that sensory memories make up and are also made through *habitus*.

To learn place-making *habitus,* and to have a feeling of belonging we need to learn the ways in which the body encounters the total environment and how the body

through sensory perception and memory is fundamental to the ways in which we learn. The children of this study have conveyed this *withness*; as the way they experience and learn place *with* the body. Just as Whitehead (1926) defines 'withness' as the way we experience things through the body, 'We see the contemporary chair, but we see it with our eyes; and we touch the contemporary chair, but we feel it with our hands' (p.62). Therefore, as we learn place and belonging *with* the body, it is not about describing the sensory perception or memories of place, but learning and teaching the bodily experience of place, the repetition of embodied practices *with* the total environment that constructs place enabling a sense of place and also a connection to place.

7.2. Socially engaged pedagogies

One of the main findings of this study is that we learn place and belonging through embodied practices and processes *with* the total environment, and that these practices are not produced and performed in isolation. They are socially constructed through engagement; a continuous process of embodied learning and teaching that is always emplaced with others; collaborative and critical.

7.2.1. Collaborative pedagogy

As discussed in Chapter 4, Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (2005) developed various theories of learning, including 'knowing in practice' (p.141) and the 'experience of knowing' (p.142). Using Lave and Wenger's (1991) theories of learning, I contend that the collective practices of knowing place and belonging becomes a 'learning community with temporary, strategic and ad hoc collaborations' (Adams et. al, 2008, p.27).

These collaborations then result in practices and structures, *habitus*, of this community and offer new ways in which practices are learned and taught, identities

are established, and ways of knowing are formed and reproduced (Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger, 2005), as demonstrated when I went on an 'abenture' with Jenny, Henry and Hettie. Through the children and I sharing our embodied production of knowledge, through doing chores, journeying and art (practices and products), I learnt that not only do we have a sensorial knowing of place, but that this knowledge enables a feeling of belonging to that particular place.

This understanding of learning structured as a collaborative learning community disrupts the idea that learning is a passive process where factual information is 'acquired'. Learning is conceived as a social engaged process where theory is incorporated into everyday practice, praxis, with others. (Wenger, 2005). Socially engaged can be understood as 'meaningful activity where meaning is developed through relationships and shared identities' (Handley et al. 2006, p.651). However, individuals can contribute to multiple communities of practice, either at the same time or at various points during their lifetime, and each community will have their own practices and identities. Consequently, collaborative learning communities are not all 'conflict-free, caring and nurturing' (Rose 1993, p.56); there may be tensions and conflicts within these communities (Wenger, 2005) resulting in disbelonging and feelings of exclusion.

Therefore, learning ways of knowing place is not just about developing one's knowledge and practices of place making, it also involves a process of understanding who we are and in which communities of practice we belong. However, as Wenger (2005) asserts, knowing and learning these ways of knowing is not dependent on 'individual dispositions' (Bourdieu, 1990b), p.64) but on connectedness, or using Whitehead's (1926) concept *withness* with others in the practices of the community; 'as happens with people when you live with them … resulting in more and more refined knowledge' (de Waal, 2011, p.1). This premise

of praxis is supported by the collaborative practices of the learning communities of the children involved in this study, and also the Australian Aborigines, the Canadian Dene and Malaysian Batek, where theory and the community practices of walking and narration, learning and knowledge cannot be separated. Therefore, I assert that it is through social engagement that a community of individuals learn their practices and identities that enable senses of place and belonging.

Consequently, this engagement is 'specific, engaged, active and experiential' (Wenger, 2005, p.141), and not permanent or always unconscious as asserted by Bourdieu (1992) in his earlier writing. Because, as Handley et al. (2006) states:

> 'Individuals maintain a sense of agency through the adoption and adaptation of different forms of participation and identity construction within different communities. This approach recognizes (sic) that attempts to adapt will generate tensions within individuals, and instabilities within the communities in which they participate. These tensions are likely to be continually negotiated.' (p.653)

A community of practice exists in Thirton, particularly with the children because as demonstrated in Chapter 6 it produces shared meanings and practices as the children engage in collective and collaborative pedagogical processes, and through these collaborative pedagogies a dialectical critical pedagogy emerges. As Wenger (2005) asserts, 'knowing in practice involves an interaction between the local and the global' (p.141).

7.2.2. Critical pedagogy

The theories of critical pedagogy and the work of Frieire (1970) draw on theory from anarchism, feminism and Marxism, and are a teaching and learning approach that attempts to enable the questioning and challenging of domination, and the beliefs and practices that dominate (Shor, 1992). Shor (1992) defines critical pedagogy as;

> 'Habits of thought, reading, writing, and speaking which go beneath surface meaning, first impressions, dominant myths, official pronouncements, traditional clichés, received wisdom, and mere opinions, to understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context, ideology, and personal

> consequences of any action, event, object, process, organization, experience, text, subject matter, policy, mass media, or discourse.' (p.129)

The three assumptions of critical pedagogy are that praxis can enable social transformation, as discussed above, that learning and teaching are not neutral, and that society can be transformed by the engagement of those who are critically conscious (Grunewald, 2003).

Just as learning and teaching are not neutral, neither is the social embodied construction of the place of the bush, the local, this is because these constructions are entangled with wider global discourses and power relations. As discussed in Chapter 3, the cultural context of the place of the bush is constructed and can be examined through linguistic, geo-political, poetic, filmic, artistic and pedagogic representations, constructions and discourses. This laying bare and unpicking of these conceptions and their respective discourses that exert force and power relations may enable ways of knowing the constructed place of the bush, as well as how these ways of knowing are produced, reproduced and used.

This examination also demonstrates that these discourses perpetuate conceptions of a one-dimensional, timeless and fixed place. Whereas this study, where the children with me explored the ways of knowing and learning the place of the bush, offers a balanced but also critical awareness of existing discourses, as Mary stated, *'… they wouldn't know about this stuff, so it's up to me to tell and show them so they can then know and understand."* Additionally, this examination also demonstrates that place, sense of place and sense of belonging are complex and dynamic events, and that there is no single, overriding construction, reality, standpoint or meaning.

These collaborative critical learning and teaching practices also enable a blurring of

identities, as Frieire (1970) states;

> ‘Through dialogue, the teachers-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teachers cease to exist and a new term emerges; teacher-student with student-teacher, the teacher is no longer merely the one who teaches, but the one who is himself [sic] taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for the process in which all grow’ (p.80).

I would like to reword Frieire’s statement replacing the word ‘student’ with ‘participant’ and ‘teacher’ with ‘researcher’, which results in the following,

> Through dialogue, the researcher-of-the-participants and the participants-of-the-researcher cease to exist and a new term emerges; researcher-participant with participant-researcher, the researcher is no longer merely the one who researches, but the one who is himself [sic] a participant in dialogue with the participants, who in turn while participating also research. They become jointly responsible for the process in which all grow’.

This reconceptualising of Frieire’s statement enables our identities of researcher, participant, teacher, learner, and artist to be continually renegotiated, in collaboration with each other. This then leads to learning ways of knowing place and belonging;

> *‘it was only through Mary sharing and teaching me her ways of knowing and also my own personal journeying that I came to know and understand journeying as a way of knowing and learning the place-world of the bush’* (Research notes/audio, 2008, p. 10*)*

and together, a ‘shared place of discovery and learning is created’ (Page, 2012, p.73). Therefore, in this study I am learning and the children are teaching me whilst also learning from and teaching each other their ways of knowing place and belonging, that is structured on our shared knowledge, understanding and practices, ‘local curations of learning’ (Atkinson, 2011, p.11) and teaching. However, I am also learning through these pedagogical practices how I embody this knowing and how these practices are attached to wider, global, discourses and power relations.

This results in learning and teaching, pedagogy, ‘that becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world’ (Frieire, 1970, p.16). As stated in Page (2012) it is “… about how we learn together and

make changes together." (p.73). This crucial examination of the ways of learning and teaching place and belonging illustrates the power of representations, practices and constructions of place to exclude, include, identify and also contribute to who we are, our very being.

7.3. Place *with* being

Throughout this thesis I have asserted that there can be no place without the body; however, there can also be no body without place. This is not about a competition or hierarchy of which came first (body or place), but about the entwined relationship of body *with* place. As discussed above and in Chapter 6, senses of place and belonging are constructed through embodied, social engaged pedagogical practices. However, place can also be conceived as part of who we are, part of our very being.

According to Casey (1998), we are emplaced beings to begin with and 'without place' we would experience '… a loss of a kind of being' (p.71). Aristotle (1983) acknowledges the pervasiveness of place in our very being, and that we are not simply being, we are 'being there'. Malpas (2007) also maintains that place is a 'necessary part of what it is to be human' (p.326) or as Merleau-Ponty (1962) states 'being is synonymous with being situated' (p.252). Casey (1998), Aristotle (1983), Malpas (2007) and even Merelau-Ponty (1962) suggest that place runs a lot deeper than socio-cultural constructions. They are asserting that place not only brings together the social, natural and cultural but it is also involved in producing these worlds, part of our very being.

Malpas (2007), using Heidegger's (1962) philosophies of place in the structure of human existence (Dasein), maintains that place is essential to being in the world as we are 'pre given publicly shared parts of an environing world' (p.145) and that

place also provides a practical basis for the everyday demands and relations in which human beings are entangled;

> 'Dasein should be understood, … as the place which Being requires. Dasein is the there … Hence we say that Daesin's being is in the strict sense of the word "being-there' (Da-sein). (Heidegger, 1959, p.205)

Consequently, to be human is to already be there, in place, and to be in place is to be human. Maybe, then, what we need to do is no longer maintain the idea that 'I think therefore I am', but instead acknowledge the place of *place with being* and maintain that 'I am with place, therefore I am'. By doing this it may be possible to recognise that place is the experiential fact of our very existence and is fundamental to the construction of human meaning and social relations.

This premise of place as being primary to human existence is supported by the research and writing of Gayton (1996) and Measham (2006), who have examined the earliest places of childhood. Measham (2006) and Gayton (1996) state that our childhood experiences of place form 'primal landscapes' that shape place throughout our life;

> ' My wife grew up in a seaside community near Seattle and, even though she has no real desire to live near the ocean now, she finds the smell of tide flats and the sound of waves breaking at night to be urgent, compelling messages. It is as if certain sights, sounds and smells by pass the senses and speak directly to her being.' (Gayton, 1996, p.2)

and as asserted by Henry and Jenny;

> "*I'm a bush kid, that's what we do."*
> *"What do you mean Henry?"*
> *"Well this is my place, the bush, I'm a bush kid."* Jenny turns around and agrees with Henry,
> *"Yeah, we will always be bush kids, the bush is where we live, it's where we are … you know it's us."*

This premise of a special bond between our 'primal landscapes' and the formation of part of our identities, and also underpinning our learning of place and belonging later in life is supported by Bourdieu (1977, 1990ab), Cresswell (2004), de Certeau (1984), Birkerts (1986) and Casey (1993), as discussed in Chapter 4.

But, rather than returning to the place-making experiences and practices*, habitus*, of our childhood, our primal places can be conceived as 'learning that is … being in place' (Measham, 2006, p.429), where our ways of knowing are part of our very human existence that we have not yet unlearned. Therefore, this relationship between the place of our childhood and who we are can be conceived as, we are human beings therefore we are shaped by place, as the Australian Aboriginal women assert; 'it is the land that owns you' (Gale, 2008, p.360). However, as discussed above, we also shape place, as Seamus Heaney (1984) states, the landscape is both 'humanised and humanising' (p.145) and therefore we may effect the places where we live, but these places also affect us in deep, sometimes subtle or hidden inescapable ways.

As I stated at the start of this section, this is not an either/or position but a *with* relationship, *withness*; the social construction of place-*with*-place as part of our human existence, place *with* being where;

> 'place … is a construction of humanity but a necessary one - one that human life is impossible to conceive of without … there was no 'place' before there was humanity but once we came into existence then place did too … place is a kind of necessary social construction- something we have to construct in order to be human.' (Cresswell, 2004, p.33)

Therefore, just as we know and learn place and belonging through embodied, socially engaged pedagogies we also know and learn place just by *being there*.

7.4. Overview of the chapter

Place and belonging are learned through the sensing, knowing and remembering body. These embodied, but also critical and collaborative pedagogical practices construct meaning and identities that can be used to exclude and include. However, the learning and teaching of place and belonging are not only socio-culturally constructed and performed, it is also part of who we are, our very being.

CHAPTER 8. SUMMARY, SIGNIFICANCE AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Journey, 'an act of travelling from one place to another' (Pearsall, 1999, p.764). Some consider the use of *journey* in this context (research, thesis, phD) to be clichéd; I am usually one of those people. However, the term cliché is defined as an 'overused phrase' (Pearsall, 1999, 266), and perhaps journey is overused because it is a very appropriate metaphor. As stated, an act of travelling can involve literal movement from one place to another; however, I argue it can also be a metaphoric movement as in learning and understanding ways of knowing. Interestingly this dual premise of journey still involves process and practices of the body. Therefore, as I near the destination of this journey, literally and metaphorically, I reflect on the what?; summary of findings, so what?; significance of findings, and what is next?; recommendations for further research, of this study.

8.1. Summary of the findings

The aim of this study was to explore and examine the ways in which a group of children, living in a remote Australian cultural context, the bush, know and learn place and belonging. The research questions were: How do children living in a remote Australian cultural context know (construct, perform, understand, sense) place and belonging? and How do children living in a remote Australian cultural context, learn these ways of knowing (constructing, performing, understanding, sensing) place and belonging?

The children know place and belonging through their embodied (sensory perception and memory) engagement in the world. The meanings and the materiality, the very fabric of the place-world of the bush are socially constructed, performed and transformed. The ways the children, and myself, experience place, our knowledge

of place and how we learn to make place, emerged from and through our *habitus*. This place-making *habitus*, just like the concept of place itself, was fluid, dynamic and continuous.

The children's ways of knowing place and belonging are learned through embodied (through sensory perception and memory) and socially engaged pedagogies (understood as collaborative and critical pedagogy) but also by just *being there.* Place and belonging are learned through the sensing, knowing and remembering body. These embodied, but also critical and collaborative pedagogical practices, construct meaning and identities that can be used to exclude and include. However, not only is the learning of place and belonging socio-political-culturally constructed and performed it is also part of who we are, our very being. This is because to be human is to already be in place, and to be in place is to be human, body *with* place, place *with* body. Therefore, place is the experiential fact of our very existence. However, it is also a necessary one, as it is necessary to the construction of human meaning and social relations. Just as we know and learn place and belonging through embodied and socially engaged pedagogies, we also know and learn place just from *being there*.

8.2. Significance of the findings

Shove (2003) states that research that explores socio-cultural process and involves conducting cultural analysis is usually preoccupied 'with the explicit, the visible and the dramatic' (p.1). However, I argue that this may be because sensory perception and memory; feelings, sense, sensing etc, can be fleeting, hard to describe, verbalise and sometimes hard to pin down to the specific. However, regardless of how difficult it is to capture or articulate these feelings, the evoking of a sense of place, as demonstrated in this study, can enable an understanding and learning of the embodied ways of knowing a particular place world, and how through everyday

practices and processes a sense of place and belonging is performed and constructed. This is significant because;

> '… these processes … of cultural maintenance … should be seen as a strong undercurrent in everyday life, gaining their power from their invisibility and their being taken for granted … this then means that there is a need for a greater interest in the backstage, the prosaic construction of props and preparation rather than the stage itself.' (Löfgren & Wilk, 2007, p.9)

As stated in Chapter 1, this may then contribute to a more profound but also a subtle examination of embodiment … 'one which is grounded in, and contributes to, theoretical ideas on the body as central to the performance and construction of social identity' (Little & Leyshorn, 2003, p.269) through producing new analytical insights and also by developing the theoretical relationship between the where and the who.

Just as the indigenous cultures of the North American Navajo and the Australian Aborigines have an embodied knowledge of and relationship with the land, a sense of connectedness and belonging, so too do the children in this study. They have conveyed this *withness* of body, land and identity through their practices and behaviours (*habitus),* and thus who they are, are shaped by the land and as a result the land is a part of who they are. Casey (1993) asserts that 'place is what takes between body and (land) landscape' (p.29), therefore it is the repetition of embodied practices with the total environment that constructs place, giving us a sense of place and connection to place. As Cresswell (2004) maintains, we usually have a sense of place from where we live and the *habitus* of where and how we live, 'or where we lived when we were children' (p.8).

This premise, demonstrated by the children in this study, that place-making *habitus* is performed, constructed and learned in early childhood, is also supported by Bourdieu (1977, 1990a, 1990b) and de Certeau (1984), who maintain that the *habitus* of place-making 'is to repeat the joyful and silent experience of childhood'

(pp.109-110). Therefore, through exploring and examining the micro *habitus* of the children, their senses of place and belonging, the macro *habitus* of 'social exclusion, marginalization and … the cultural construction of' (Little & Leyshorn, 2003, p.269) the bush in the national identity of Australia may also be examined and consequently questioned.

As explored in Chapter 3 a fixed, exclusionary, construction of the place of the Australian bush is very powerful in artistic, poetic, filmic, geo-political, linguistic and pedagogical representations and their respective discourses. However, through exploring and examining the children's ways of knowing and also learning, place and belonging, we are able to understand this place, the place of the bush as a *living* place that is continually constructed through the everyday processes and practices of the body. These fluid constructions balance the fixed cultural constructions of the bush as deficit and disadvantaged and therefore, demonstrate that place, belonging and senses of, are complex and dynamic and that there is no one single, overriding construction, reality, standpoint or meaning. This may then result in an empowering and an emancipation of those that live in these places constructing them as places of opportunities.

The understanding of these micro ways of knowing and learning can also contribute to knowledge and understanding of the loss of connection with place or displacement. Casey (1993) and Augé (2008) maintain that the assurgency of society searching for a sense of place is because of our increasingly 'placeless' or non-place world. This placelessness Cresswell (2004) states is because of a;

> '… combination of mass communication, increased mobility and a consumer society … that leads to an accelerating erosion of place … and a rapidly accelerating homongenization (sic) of the world.' (p.43)

This premise is also asserted by Paul Kelly (b.1955-), an Australian singer songwriter in his song ‘Every Fucking City’ (2008) where he describes his journey following a lover through Europe;

> ‘We argued on the channel train to Paris
> The vin rouge helped us make it sweet again
> But by the time that we got down to Lyon
> Everything I said was wrong and you cursed me in the rain
> We split up for a while in Barcelona
> We met up six days later in Madrid
> I was hoping that the break would make things go a little better for us
> And for a little while it almost did
> Now I'm in a bar in Copenhagen
> And i'm trying hard to forget your name
> And I'm staring at the label on a bottle of cerveza
> And every fucking city feels the same
>
> You said to call you when I got to London
> A French girl told me that you'd left a note
> I said to her 'I like your accent' and she thought I sounded funny
> So we ended up drinking in Soho
> Foolishly I followed you to Dublin
> Like a ghost I walked the streets of Temple Bar
> And all the bright young things were throwing up their Guinness in the gutters
> And once I thought I saw you from afar
> Now I'm in a nightclub in Helsinki
> And they're playing La Vida Loca once again
> And I can't believe I'm dancing to this crap but I'm a chance here
> And every fucking city sounds the same
>
> At a cafe in the port of Amsterdam
> An e-mail from you said you'd gone to Rome
> For a minute I thought maybe but my funds were running low
>
> And anyway it sounded like you weren't alone
> So I headed north until I got to Hamburg
> A chilly city suits a troubled soul
> And on the Reeperbahn I paid a woman far too much
> To kick me out before I'd even reached my goal
> Now I'm in a restaurant in Stockholm
> And the waiter here wants me to know his name
> And I can order sandwiches in seven different languages
> But every fucking city looks the same
> Arriverderci, au revoir, aufwiedersehen, hasta la vista baby
> Yeah, every fucking city's just the same.’ (Kelly, 2008)

Through Kelly's journeying and sensory experiences of his modern day 'grand tour'[1] of Europe he concludes that there is little difference between some of Europe's cities/districts, 'Yeah, every fucking city's just the same.' This ubiquity and homogenisation of mass communication and culture, that Kelly (2008) conveys, can be largely attributed to the processes of globalisation and technologies, as Relph (1976) maintains they:

> 'encourage placelessness, that is, a weakening of the identity of places to the point where they not only look alike and feel alike and offer the same bland possibilities for experience' (p.90).

The impact of this lack of a sense of place results in a disbelonging where there is no sense of connection to place. These discourses of disbelonging and placelessness or displacement, also discussed in Chapter 3, 6 and 7, do not construct place as romantic, idealised, where everything is rose-coloured; instead place is constructed as lacking and as previously asserted, exclusive, exploitive, and contested.

However, what is evident is that ways of knowing and learning place and belonging are social processes that can be analysed as political practices and therefore, can be used to understand our society as a whole. Perhaps because place is central to who we are as humans, as explored in Chapter 7, place becomes an even more powerful political force in its social constructions, as Cresswell (2004) states;

> '… the very fact that place is such a crucial site of contestation points towards its fundamental role in human life… The basic unavoidability of place in human life makes it a very important object of politics.' (p.122)

8.3. Recommendations for further research.

As stated above, a journey is defined as an act of travelling from one place to another, literally and/or metaphorically. However, I construct *journeying* as similar to

[1] 'n. *historica*l a cultural tour of Europe conventionally undertaken by a young man of the upper classes' (Pearsall, 1999, p. 617).

the theoretical premise of place; ongoing, fluid and dynamic, there is no fixed destination or end.

Therefore, through this continuing journey of questioning additional questions have arisen that stem from the very issues I have had within this research process; the hegemonic structures of an academic postgraduate degree such as what is socially engaged praxis (practice-art and pedagogical and theory), where is it positioned and how can this be presented and communicated, without a predominance of or reliance on written text? The answers to these questions I assert lies in the in-between, where 'theory-as-practice-as-process-as complication intentionally unsettles perception and knowing through living inquiry' (Irwin and Springgay, 2008, xxi).

However, in many ways this research process has also enabled me to gain new understandings of Self; to have a sense of place and belonging as artist researcher teacher through valuing and acknowledging that these identities and practices blur and are entwined. Therefore answering my questions, who am I and where do I fit/where am I positioned? As a consequence, I am wanting to pursue questions related to ways of knowing and learning place and belonging especially in contested places, such as Ireland, the Middle East and the urban using the theories of Lefebrve (1991) to examine the politics of place where place is used as a strategy and technique of power and social control.

A more recent question that I have been exploring *with* my students and my colleagues is, what are the implications for place and belonging in their pedagogies? (Johnston and Page, 2011; Areses Huertas, et al., 2012; Page, 2012). Because I argue that no matter the place, whether remote Australia or inner city London, place and belonging are learned through a process of embodiment.

Therefore, it is important for teachers in formal and informal learning contexts not to disconnect the cognitive from the corporeal and that through valuing and acknowledging these embodied, but also critical and collaborative pedagogical practices a greater understanding of how the relational constructions of place and self can be used to include but also exclude.

8.4. Conclusion

As stated at the beginning of the thesis, this study is an exploration and examination of the ways in which a group of children living in remote Australia, the bush, perform, construct, know and learn place and belonging. The research questions were: How do children living in a remote Australian cultural context *know,* that is to say*,* construct, perform, understand and sense*, place and belonging*? and; How do children living in a remote Australian cultural context, *learn these ways of knowing* (constructing, performing, understanding, sensing) *place and belonging*? Through the overlapping methodologies of critical, visual and sensory ethnography, and using reconceptualised traditional ethnographic research methods with methods of audiovisual-arts practice and the practices of 'walking with', I was able to analyse the children's and, also my own, ways of knowing and learning the place-world of the bush.

Through this research process I concluded that the children's and my ways of knowing place emerged through our embodied processes and practices: our *habitus*. This place-making *habitus* was and is fluid, dynamic and continuous and therefore I argue that through these everyday practices a sense of place and belonging is performed and constructed. However, I also found that this knowledge of the place world of the bush is not produced in isolation. In researching these ways of knowing I revealed that they are learned or transformed through embodied (sensory perception and memory) and socially-engaged (collaborative and critical)

pedagogies but also by *being there.* I argue that we learn and know place and belonging through the sensing, knowing and remembering body and it is these embodied, but also critical and collaborative pedagogical practices that construct meanings and identities. I conclude that there is a relational construction of place and self and that 'who we are' and 'what we are', are entwined with 'where we are'. *Place* is therefore not something fixed or objective but is a series of dynamic evolving relationships, a continuous open process that is constituted through, and constructed by the lived body.

Through exploring and examining the children's and my own, hidden and sometimes taken for granted corporeal ways of knowing and learning place and belonging, I have argued that attempts to represent place as singular or fixed constructs place as something to be owned, controlled or even excluded from. This can then result in misunderstanding ourselves and ultimately, in an ever increasing globalised and homengenised world, having a sense of displacement and disbelonging. I conclude therefore that we need to learn, understand and value the everyday individual and collective, ways we know and learn '*being* in place and, more particularly, *becoming part of place*.' (Casey, 1993, 33), we need to learn from Indigenous cultures, and the children of this study, and acknowledge that we are 'owned by the places we inhabit' and also 'own up to the complexity and mutuality of place' (Malpas, 2007, p.331) and being human. This study contributes to this discourse of understanding by listening to and presenting insider voices, it demonstrates that ways of knowing and learning place and belonging is powerful, complex and dynamic and that there is no single, overriding, fixed meaning of place and belonging.

APPENDIX 1. INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Tara Page
Goldsmiths University of London
New Cross London
SE14 6NW
United Kingdom

Dear Parents/Guardians,

My name is Tara Page and I will be visiting XXXXXXXXXXXXX as an artist in residence/teacher from the 10th July 2006 – 22nd August 2007.

I am currently living and working in London at the University of London. I grew up in Queensland and have taught at both a secondary and primary level at schools in rural and remote areas of Queensland and the Northern Territory.

Living and teaching in rural and remote communities I experienced the lack of understanding that many people have about what it is like living in these areas. So, Miss FM and I have arranged that I conduct art classes with the students exploring the idea of where they live and what it is like to live in XXXXXXX. The students will be using digital and disposable cameras and their own drawings and I will also be talking to them about their artworks.

The aim is that the students' artwork, what they say about their artwork and what they say about living in XXXXX will assist people in understanding what it is like living and growing up in XXXXXX. The art classes are for all the students and will be in school time.

I will be in XXXXXX from the 10th July 2007 however, if you have any questions or queries before then please email me at t.page@gold.ac.uk or pass them onto Miss FM. A permission form is attached, please read and complete.

Yours faithfully,
Tara Page

APPENDIX 2. CONSENT FORM

Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

Principal researcher
Tara Page Department of Educational Studies
Goldsmith University of London New Cross London SE14 6NW
t.page@gold.ac.uk

Project title

The lived experience of children in a rural and isolated Australian environment.

The research study

The aim of this research is to explore how children visual interpret the Australian rural and isolated community/environment they are living in, how they see and interpret where they live.

Purpose of the research

The purpose of this research is to contribute to research about the rural and isolated environment, living within this environment and how children see themselves within this environment.

Duration of the participant's involvement.

This project will involve taking part in art workshops/lessons (photography, filmmaking, drawing) over a 6 week period in July/August 2007 during school time, communication through email and then further workshops in July/August 2008. Conversations/discussions with children about their artworks will be recorded and later summarised as transcripts. All photography/art materials/equipment will be provided. Participation in this project is voluntary and you may elect to withdraw at any time without comment or penalty. A decision not to participate, or to withdraw, will have no impact upon the service you receive from Goldsmith University of London.

Possible material risks to participants

Participation in this project does not involve any known risk to the participants.

Benefits that may result from the research

This research can lead to knowledge and an understanding of what it is like living in a rural and isolated environment/community. This can then lead to education, business, governments and national institutions acknowledging and being more responsive to the needs of country people.

Confidentiality of the data

Only the principal research will know the identities of the participants, false names will be used. All tapes and summaries of the conversations will be kept in a secure place, with limited access. No identifying information about the participants or town will be used in any publications that may result from this research,

Questions or concerns

You are welcome to contact the principal research, Tara Page, regarding any questions or concerns you may have about this project. Should you have any concerns relating to the ethical conduct of this research please feel free to contact Roslyn George Reader/Head of PhD Goldsmith University of London on Tel: +44 (0)20 7919 7333 email**:** r.george@gold.ac.uk

Feedback to participants

Feedback will be provided to participants in this study through correspondence and publications.

Consent

By completing the section below you indicate that you:

1. acknowledge that the nature of this research and your involvement in the project has been explained to you;
2. understand that confidentiality will be maintained and no identifying information will be released;
3. understand that artworks/photographs/film etc produced by participants, and of participants, will be used for the research project. However, anonymity of participants will be ensured in any publications;
4. understand that you may withdraw from this study at any time, without comment or penalty;
5. understand that your participation in the study is voluntary.

Participant's Name …… ..……..…….....

Participant's Guardian/Parent

Name
…….....Signature .....……Date .....//...../....

APPENDIX 3. OFFICIAL APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN AN EDUCATION QUEENSLAND SCHOOL.

Queensland Government
Education Queensland

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN EDUCATION QUEENSLAND STATE SCHOOLS AND OTHER UNITS

Please note that the information presented on this form should stand alone in conveying the salient features of the research proposal. Supporting information can be attached as required.

SECTION 1 ***Principal Researcher***

Name: Surname: PAGE	**Title:** Mr/Miss/Mrs/Ms/Prof/Dr/other MS
First name: TARA	**Designation:** LECTURER
Organisation: GOLDSMITH UNIVERSITY OF LONDON	
Contact Address: Flat 26 250 Hermit Road LONDON	**Suburb:**
State:	**Postcode:** E16 4LG
Telephone: *Work* +44 20 7078 5123 Home. +44 20 7474 4078	**Fax:**
E-mail: t.page@gold.ac.uk	

SECTION 2 ***Research Information***

Title of research: The lived experience of children in an Australian rural and isolated cultural context
Research aim and purpose: (1 paragraph max) The aim of this research is to explore how children visual interpret the Australian rural and isolated cultural context they are living within, their vision, their world through their eyes, and their artistic interpretations of the rural and isolated space they live within. The purpose of this research is to contribute to the body of knowledge about the rural and isolated cultural context, living within this cultural context and how children see themselves within this cultural context.
Schools and/or organisational units to be approached: (include names) XXXXXXX State School
Summary of the research approach, design and strategies employed to ensure validity and reliability: **(1 paragraph max)** The research methodology is ethnographic in nature; it will be conducted in two stages over twelve month. Each stage will be 6 weeks in duration with contact maintained between the stages through email and the internet. Data will be observations, the children's artworks/images and narrations/commentary/interviews of the artwork.

Start date:	**Finish date:**
July 2007	September 2008

SECTION 3 ***Research Method***

Subjects and sample sizes (e.g. 10 students, 50 teachers):
55 students

Strategy/procedure:

Stage One

Consent will be obtained from all participants and their parents/guardians. July/August 2006 I will be within the setting for six weeks as a visiting artist/teacher. During school time I will be conducting workshops with the participants exploring film photography, digital photography, filmmaking, drawing, collage and photomontage.

I will introduce the concept of where they live and asking the participants to explore the visual interpretation of where they live. During this time I will observe and interview/discuss with the participants their ideas and experiences. The students will be asked to choose an individual/selection of their artwork/s and create a narrative or words to accompany their image/s. The final outcome may be in the form of a book with images and text, a performance, a presentation or a visual display. All conversations/interviews will be recorded.

To facilitate dialogue over the twelve months between Stages One and Two, I will show the participants how to upload images and email me over the twelve months.

Stage Two

July/August 2008 further workshops will be carried out. Interviews/conversations will be initiated with the participants. From the analysis of data in stage one questions and issues that have emerged may be clarified. Within this stage the parents/guardians and teachers may also be interviewed, if consent is granted. As in stage one the conversations will be recorded.

Instruments: (e.g. Survey form, interview questions, reliability, validity)
PLEASE ATTACH DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS and/or QUESTIONS
The children will be using photographs, photomontage and drawings to create their artistic and visual interpretations of where they live, so this will be the visual data. The other data will be observation and the children's interviews, commentary/narration of their artworks.

Administration: (How will research be administered, by whom? e.g. interview, survey form distributed by researcher)

PLEASE ATTACH CONSENT FORMS
All administration and communicated will be conducted by the principal research.

Research stages: (e.g. description, duration, anticipated research timeline)
July/August 2007. Stage 1.
July/August 2008. Stage 2

SECTION 4 ***Principal Researcher's Declaration***

(this section must be completed by the **lead researcher** and the original must be **mailed to** the **relevant officer** (School Principal, District - Manager (Education Services) or Senior Research Officer – Strategic Policy and Education Futures in Central Office) as outlined in the **Research Guidelines** document.

Conditions applicable to all research:

- All data to be treated as confidential, anonymity of participants to be preserved.
- An executive summary of the research findings to be provided to the participating schools and approval authority.
- Audiotapes and videotapes to be used only for the purposes of research.
- Parental/caregiver permission to be obtained for participating students.
- Permission to be obtained by participating teachers/staff.

Please read the following information carefully before signing.

- I declare that the information I have supplied in this form is true and correct.
- I declare that the identifying documents shown in order for me to complete my research are true and correct.
- I understand that if I or any of my research team/associates will come into contact with children that I must provide evidence of registration with the Board of Teacher Registration or a Suitability for Working with Children Card ("Blue Card" for each individual or demonstrate why the relevant individuals are exempt form such provisions.)
- I guarantee that I will immediately advise the Department of Education and the Arts if the nature of Teacher Registration, Suitability for Working with Children, or relevant exemption change during the period of research indicated above.
- In submitting this application I give approval for my name, email, organisation, start/finish dates and information in sections 2 and 3 to be included in the Department's on-line Research Register that will be made publicly available via the internet on the Department's web site.

Principal Researcher:

Signature: ____Tara Page **Date: _22nd Feb 2006___**

Note: it is an offence under the Oaths Act to deliberately make a false or misleading statement.

SECTION 5 ***Statement of verification and support***

Should we need verification of details contained in this approval or of the ethical considerations that have been taken into account, please complete contact details below for the authorising officer:

PLEASE PRINT ALL DETAILS

Name: _____TARA PAGE_____
Designation: _____LECTURER_____
Dept/Organisation:_____EDUCATIONAL STUDIES GOLDSMITH UNIVERSITY OF LONDON_____
Telephone: (020)_7474 4078_____ Fax: ( ) _____
Email: _____t.page@gold.ac.uk_____

Signature: _____ Date:____/___/___

Before sending your application, please ensure you have attached all supporting documents (e.g. certified evidence of having undergone a Working with Children Check, Ethics Clearance, data collection instruments, consent forms and other relevant details).

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